

**NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL  
RECREATION & AMENITIES COMMITTEE  
Minutes of a meeting held on 14 August 2012**

Present	Cllr S E Thorpe (Chair) Cllr N I Kay Cllr S Robinson
Apologies	Cllr J L Duckworth Cllr A Elliott Cllr M P Robinson Cllr S M Reed
In Attendance	15 members of the public

The Chair welcomed the members of the public and explained that she intended to take Item 4 on the agenda (Mortimer Gardens and Town Gardening) immediately after Item 1 (Matters Arising from Previous Minutes) and that they would be invited to address the meeting at that point.

**Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Cllr S Robinson reported that he understood that Cllr Duckworth was still in discussion with Peter Wilson, Neighbourhood Warden, regarding the regulations governing the **'spray painting' of dog waste** to highlight offending areas. The **Chess Garden project** in Market Street was ongoing.

**Mortimer Gardens and Town Gardening**

The Clerk reported that the Town Groundsman had successfully **cleared the blocked drain** in the Mortimer Gardens and had been doing some research to source a new, more substantial drain cover which hopefully would prevent a recurrence of the problem. Contractors were due to undertake some repair work to the wall of 'Green Spirit', and had sought permission to **utilise the flowerbed adjacent to the wall** to erect the necessary scaffolding. It was agreed that permission would be granted on the condition that the contractors would make good any damage caused to the flowerbed.

The Mayor briefly summarised the action which and Cllr Kay had been taking on behalf of NTC regarding **anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre**. He reported that he and Cllr Kay had personally experienced verbal abuse from street drinkers when crossing the small bridge in the Mortimer Gardens some nine months ago, so they had first hand experience of how intimidating this could be. The Mayor had subsequently met with Philip Sullivan of SDC Community Safety team on several occasions to discuss ways of dealing with the problem. The main options would appear to be either to seek to place Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) on the offenders or to consider a street drinking ban in the Mortimer Gardens. Feeling that that a drinking ban would only move the problem to other parts of the town, NTC's current preference was the ASBO route, and Mr Sullivan had given advice on how this could be pursued. The removal of the shelter and seat outside the Library, where the street drinkers tended to congregate, had been recommended by the police, and this was ongoing. The Mayor reported that, acting on evidence from the community that the level and degree

of anti-social behaviour had escalated in recent weeks, he had tried the day before to contact the police for an update on the current situation, and was disappointed that there had been no response so far. Cllr Kay expressed his frustration that, in his view, NTC's influence on the police was extremely limited, particularly since the recent reorganisation of policing in the District and the closure of Nailsworth Police Station. The Mayor assured the public that NTC would continue to work with SDC Community Safety Team and with the police to seek a solution to the problem. He had been informed that one of the offenders was due to appear in court later in the week on various charges and the outcome could be a custodial sentence. However, he was mindful that this would be unlikely to solve the problem in the long term.

The Chair then invited the members of the public in attendance to outline their experiences and concerns. The main issues raised were:

- the individuals concerned were becoming increasingly confrontational, using bad language and verbally abusing passers-by, and sometimes threatening physical violence to each other and to members of the public
- levels of intimidation had increased to the point where some residents, especially young people and children, had become reluctant to walk through various parts of the town, particularly the Mortimer Gardens area
- it appeared that the number of individuals engaging in street drinking had been increasing, possibly drawing in people from outside the town
- consumption of illegal drugs as well as under age drinking of alcohol appeared to be occurring
- the behaviour of the individuals concerned was a negative influence on young people and children, especially since it appeared that the authorities were unable or unwilling to deal with it
- Nailsworth's reputation as a pleasant place to visit and to shop was being undermined
- some residents felt that the police were not using their full powers to address the situation
- there seemed to be a particular problem with drinkers congregating in the porch of St George's church, creating a disturbance during the daytime and well into the night
- some residents expressed a fear that if the situation was not addressed urgently, physical injury could result, and that people might be tempted to take the law into their own hands
- some residents expressed the view that a street drinking ban which covered the whole town centre would help to reduce the problem, whilst others felt that this might have the effect of displacing the problem to surrounding residential areas.

The Chair thanked residents for their input, and for the letters and emails which had been sent to NTC on this matter, which would be helpful in supporting the Council's negotiations with the police and the Community Safety Team. The Clerk agreed to forward these letters and emails to the police, subject to the agreement of the writers. The Mayor agreed to attempt to **organise a public meeting** with representatives of the police and the Community Safety team in the Town Hall and to publicise this. The Mayor and Cllr Thorpe agreed to **draft a letter** to be sent to Gloucester Constabulary's Chief Inspector, to be copied to the Chief Constable, requesting urgent action.

## **KGV Playing Field including extension field – rental charges and pitch usage**

Cllr S Robinson proposed that the KGV field and tennis court rental charges be increased in line with the recent rise in rental charges for other Council facilities, to start in September 2012. This was approved.

Facility	Current Rental Charge	Revised Rental Charge
Football: Adult	Match: £34.00 Training: £16.00	<b>Match: £36.00</b> <b>Training: £17.00</b>
Football: Youth	£16.00	<b>£17.00</b>
Tennis	Adult: £4.00 per hour Junior: £2.00 per hour	<b>Adult: £5.00 per hour</b> <b>Junior: £2.50 per hour</b>

The Clerk agreed to write to the Taverners Football Club to inform them of the revised charges.

The Clerk confirmed that a quote for £2,200 for **repairs to the skateboard ramp** had been received. Joe Davies would be writing to local organisations to seek funding. The ramps had now been repainted by a team including Peter Wilson, Joe Davies and local young people.

## **MUGA at Forest Green**

The Chair thanked Cllrs S Robinson and N Kay for their efforts in securing a **meeting with all stakeholders** on the provision of a MUGA. It had become clear at this meeting that FGR was no longer interested in using the proposed MUGA and was unwilling to have it on its land. FGR would prefer to use the allocated area for additional car parking and had been in negotiation with SDC about how the Section 106 agreement relating to the provision of a MUGA could be removed. Subsequent to this meeting, the Diocese had requested that NTC should underwrite the costs of preparation of a lease agreement between it and the Diocese to enable the provision of a MUGA on an alternative site near the school playground. Preparation of the lease agreement had been estimated at £900 - £1,200 plus VAT for the solicitor and £1,000 plus VAT for the valuer.

Discussion ensued on whether it was in the town's best interests for NTC to agree to this arrangement, given that it would include a **break clause** which could be terminated by the Diocese at any time, and no 'letter of comfort' could be provided by the Diocese as to the period the MUGA would remain in community use. Cllr Kay reported that it was his understanding that SDC was critical of the proposed break clause and he wondered if it would be prepared to release the funding it was holding for the MUGA if NTC signed the proposed lease. Cllr Kay expressed the view that it would be more appropriate for Nailsworth Primary School to underwrite the lease since the school would appear to be the major beneficiary of the MUGA. The Clerk pointed out that there remained some uncertainty as to who would be responsible for **the maintenance and hiring out** of the MUGA. In her view, the level of use outside daytime hours would be questionable, and therefore rental income would be minimal. Cllr S Robinson expressed the view that, if FGR was released from the Section 106 agreement and the MUGA was to be sited on school land, this would help reduce parking pressure in Forest Green on match days which would be beneficial to the community.

Councillors were sympathetic to the view expressed by Forest Green Residents Association that the MUGA would only be of real benefit to the community if there was open access to it. There was some discussion of possible sites for a MUGA elsewhere in the town, but it was agreed that it would not be appropriate for the Miles Marling or the KGV fields.

Given the complexity of the issues surrounding the project, it was agreed to **recommend to Council that a Special Council Meeting be arranged**, to which representatives from Nailsworth Recreation Centre and Nailsworth Primary School would be invited to present their respective ideas on how a MUGA facility at the school could best be run for the benefit of the town.

### **Miles Marling Field**

The Clerk agreed to seek quotes for tidying up and levelling off the sections of the field where local youth had made earth ramps in the past.

### **Children's Play Areas**

There was nothing to report.

### **Youth Provision**

It was agreed that Tracy Young, the Nailsworth Youth and Community Officer, would be invited to give a report to the next Committee meeting.

### **Clock Tower Banners**

Cllr Kay explained that, in his view, the new policy on the Clock Tower banner posts, agreed by Council on 17 July 2012, was too restrictive in limiting use to Nailsworth organisations and events. He proposed that the following amendment be made to point 1, and this was **agreed**.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

1. Use of the banner posts is restricted to organisations or events within the parish of Nailsworth, **Horsley and Woodchester, to be reviewed in 6 months' time**.

### **Peter Reed – Olympics 2012 Gold Medal Celebration Event**

Cllr S Robinson reported that an event, organised and funded by SDC and Stroud Life newspaper, would be taking place **on Saturday 15 September** to celebrate Peter Reed's achievement. It would commence with a reception at Stroud Subscription Rooms at 11 am, followed by an open-topped bus tour of Stroud for Peter, his family, David Hagg of SDC and other invited guests, ending at Nailsworth Town Hall, where refreshments would be provided for local residents. The bus would then take Peter up to Forest Green Rovers at 3.30 pm in order for him to address the crowd during the half-time break. Carole Delacroix

had agreed to produce posters for the event. Councillors were invited to the Stroud reception and were required to inform SDC if they planned to attend.

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Date

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Chair