MUGA Information Evening – Tuesday 7th October 2025 in the Town Hall, 7pm

Present: Councillors Adshead, Chantler, Dales (Chair), Daniels, Mrs M Drabble, Drabble, Foreshew-Cain, Gilfillan, Ockenden, Perkins (beginning of meeting only) Williams and Young

Also Present: District Councillor DePee and c30 members of the public.

The Chair, Tony Dales opened the meeting by stating that the meeting had been organised because the Parish Council wanted to acknowledge the strength and feeling in the community about the removal of the MUGA.

The decision to remove the MUGA was not one that the Parish Council wanted to make, however its hand was forced by the Noise Abatement Order. Legally the Parish Council had no option but to comply, even though this outcome is upsetting and frustrating.

The Parish Council are all local people who volunteer because they care about their community. They all live, work and raise their families in Chapel so feel the loss of the MUGA just as much as the rest of the community.

The situation was inherited by current Councillors, and they are trying to get through this situation and move forward.

The issue has been ongoing for a considerable amount of time and the parish Council feel that it's not responsible to keep flogging this point. Instead, we need to change the focus and look at how we can make things better.

We are therefore going to take this opportunity to look at all five parks in the Parish, not just the Memorial Park and explore how we can improve facilities across the board for all ages.

As a temporary offer, the Parish Council proposes to mark out a 5 aside football pitch with new goals and nets on the Memorial Park.

For insurance reasons the Council is not able to hire a MUGA at the Leisure Centre. This is because the Parish Council does not own the land and therefore any use of the MUGA would need to be supervised at all times.

Everyone here tonight has shown compassion for the Memorial Park by turning up. That tells the Parish Council how much the park means to the community. The Parish Council believes that the way forward is for everyone to work together, forming a group of willing volunteers to shape the next stage whether that's new fitness facilities, improved play spaces, or other ideas that will strengthen the parks for the future.

The Parish Council are stronger with community support. This isn't about the Council working in isolation, it's about community voices guiding community spaces. So tonight Councillors want to listen to you, to gather your ideas, and invite you to be part of building something positive together.

The Parish Council is looking to set up a working group made up of people from the local community to work together to identify solutions.

If interested in being part of the working group, please provide your contact details at the end of the meeting.

Then followed a Q&A session where residents were given the opportunity to raise any concerns and make any comments:

Question: Why has so little been said about the court case?

Council Response: Legal Advice from the Council's legal team is to say no more until after the hearing in November as we'll be in contempt of court.

Question: It's not gone unnoticed that you have arranged the meeting on the same evening as the High School's parents evening.

Council Response: This is purely co-incidental, we were unaware that there is a parents evening at the school. The meeting was arranged at short notice and so the only time when the Town Hall was available was before the Parish Council's monthly meeting.

Comment: Chris Jackson, stated that he is a retired Civil Engineer, and his offer to Parish Council is that when trying to replace MUGA. He is willing to be the Project Manager for whatever is decided that is needed. He envisages that this will involve getting volunteer labour and local plant hire companies involved.

Question: Why was only 1 hour allocated to this event. Surely an issue of this magnitude should be given more time?

Council Response: This is just the initial meeting that will lead onto the formation of a Working Group.

Question: Please confirm it is completely false that the people who complained about the noise either asked for or received any compensation at all?

Council Response: No compensation has been given to the Complainants.

Question: Please confirm it is correct that the Council said they would relocate the MUGA in 2021, before legal proceedings started, and if they had done so no legal costs would have been incurred?

Council Response: This is not true from the research that we have done. Lots of things have been talked about but there was no suggestion that the MUGA should be removed from its current location.

Question: Why has a new location for the MUGA not been selected already? It has been obvious for some time that the MUGA would be taken away due to the legal action brought by the small group of residents. Options, appraisals and site selection could have taken place before it was removed, thereby minimising the time the people of Chapel-en-le-Frith are without this much loved and much used facility?

Council Response: Up until recently the Parish Council were fighting hard to keep the MUGA, still with the focus that the MUGA would remain where it was. In August it became clear that the MUGA would need to be removed. This focused Councillors minds about removing the MUGA and what could be provided in the short term.

Statement: We don't want to be stuck here in a year's time with no MUGA provision. The alternative provision isn't going to work as the pitch is waterlogged most of the winter.

Kids shouldn't be on their phones inside, they should be outside in the fresh air.

The community don't want a 12 Month consultation period.

Council Response We need to make sure we know what you want and provide a safe provision for our young people.

You don't want us to make those decisions, we could do that at the next meeting, but it might not be what you want. Rushing the process is not in anyone's interest.

Julie Armishaw stated that she would be willing to take over from Rosie, who did the fundraising for the initial MUGA.

Question: We need a ballpark time frame. In the meantime, kids are out robbing cars, taking drugs etc.

Rosie was asked how long it took to get the last MUGA in situ, to which she responded over a year.

Council Response: The Parish Council would hope that it would take less than a year.

Question: The Court didn't order that the MUGA be taken down so why have you taken it down?

Council Response: The Abatement Order is for the whole park. The Complainants made it clear the removal of the MUGA was the only option they would accept as a way that the noise could be abated.

Removing the MUGA gives us the opportunity to go back to court and apply for the Noise Abatement Order to be removed.

The Noise Abatement Order is specific to the Memorial Park, not the other parks in the area.

District Councillor Sally DePee – we need to work together and work as a community to move forward. Would be more than happy to support any community group to move forward to make that happen.

Question: Can we get a hard standing area in the Park?

Council Response: This is something that will be looked at during the consultation.

Question: Can you confirm that the MUGA location was against advice from the Borough Council Environmental Officer, as it should have been at least 30 m away from homes, and as such it was always going to be necessary for it to be relocated as a result of this mistake.

Council Response: High Peak Borough Council approved the planning application presumably after taking the Environmental Officer's advice into consideration.

A person involved in the original project commented 'don't ask the police where to re-site the MUGA because the MUGA was put where they asked us to put it'.

Question: Is there any record of the decibel levels inside the property from the MUGA? Was there any mediation put forward before the court case?

Council Response: Councillor Young stated that a decibel meter was put in and the noise levels were below the level required to constitute a nuisance.

Question: Can the Parish Council confirm that it owns the Memorial Park because it's not on the land registry.

Council Response: Councillor Williams - yes it was gifted as various parcels of land and can't be sold.

Comment: Let's take the opportunity to work together and not against each other. You wouldn't have been happy if the Parish Council had just made a decision, you would want to be involved.

There has been lots of negative energy on Facebook. Use the energy to make something positive.

Comment: People that live next to the park say that it's very loud but if they are inside a house with windows closed how can they hear one stomp?

Comment: Every day of the week in the summer I spent time in the park on the MUGA playing football. Many people absolutely love football.

Question: Can a summary of what has been said be put up in the park?

Yes absolutely.

Comment: The Council needs to use social media to get out notices rather than just noticeboards and the website.

TikTok, Instagram, there are plenty of places where stuff can be posted.

District Councillor Sally DePee – can we use the positivity to set up a Go Fund Me page so that the ball is rolling.

Question: Can we use the football club?

Council Response: It is unlikely as it will be fully utilised by the football club

Question: Could the boggy area of the park be made into an all-weather surface?

Council Response: This is something that can be explored during the consultation.

Comment: Why move near a park if you don't like noise?

Comment: 'Friends of the Parish Park' has more access to funds than just a Parish Council.

There being no further comments or questions the Chair closed the meeting at 20.15.