

NAILSEA TOWN COUNCIL

A meeting of the Nailsea Town Council will be held on Wednesday
**16 November 2016, following the Community Engagement Committee,
which starts at 7.30pm at The Tithe Barn.**



AGENDA

Please turn off mobile phones before the meeting

1. Apologies
2. Declaration of Interests
3. Public Participation
4. Chairman's Remarks
5. Presentation by Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Club followed by discussion regarding the implications to the Club of options regarding the potential sale of land at Engine Lane.
6. Any Other Business



**Ian Morrell – Town Clerk
Tithe Barn, Church Lane, Nailsea BS48 4NG**

9 November 2016

NAILSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Wednesday 16 November 2016 at 8.15pm in the Tithe Barn, Church Lane, Nailsea.

PRESENT: Cllr Packham in the Chair, Cllr Barber, Cllr Barclay, Cllr Bird, Cllr Frappell, Cllr Hamblin, Cllr Heapey, Cllr Holt, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Jameel, Cllr Lees, Cllr Middleton, Cllr Petford, Cllr Ponsonby, Cllr J.Tonkin, Cllr Wilson and the Clerk.



137/16 APOLOGIES were received and accepted from Cllr Phillips and Cllr A.Tonkin.

138/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Hamblin declared a personal interest as her son-in-law is a coach at Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Club.

Cllr Petford declared a personal interest as her son plays at the Rugby Club.

139/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

140/16 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

None.

141/16 PRESENTATION BY NAILSEA AND BACKWELL RUGBY CLUB FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION REGARDING THE IMPLICATIONS TO THE CLUB OF OPTIONS REGARDING THE POTENTIAL SALE OF LAND AT ENGINE LANE

The Chairman introduced Tony Warren, the Treasurer at the Rugby Club. Mr Warren introduced Rossco Parsons, Club Chairman, Justin Siedle, Secretary and Phil Matthews, Junior Chairman.

Mr Warren explained that he would not be discussing any commercially sensitive information, and he would prefer to take questions at the end. The purpose of his presentation was to address the following issues: what is the Rugby Club? what does the Rugby Club do for the Community? what does the future hold for the Club? what is the impact on the Club from the proposed development of the land it leases from the Town Council?

The Club played its first match at the new ground in 1996. It has expanded considerably since that time and now consists of about 290 junior members ranging in age from 5 – 18. It includes 2 girl's sides (under 13s and under 15s) with around 30 members. There are 2 senior league sides with an occasional veteran's team. Mixed sex and mixed age group touch rugby has been played for the last two years at the all-weather pitch at Nailsea School. The Club owns the land on which the clubhouse and main pitches are located, and leases land from the Town Council, which is used by the U6-U10 age groups.

The Rugby Club has a membership of 511, but is an 'open' club and is used by many more people than that. The membership spans junior and senior players, touch rugby and non-playing members. Mr Warren showed an analysis of the demographics of the membership and highlighted that 86% of juniors come from

Nailsea and Backwell (92% if Wraxall is included), but this drops to 68% for senior players (70% including Wraxall). This highlights a big challenge which is that young players move away because they cannot afford to live in Nailsea. This is compounded by the challenge of retaining players who have gone to university.

The junior section of the Club continues to grow, and since 2013 there has been an increase of 10%. Particular growth has been seen in the pre-senior school age groups. The introduction of a girls' team in 2015 has proved to be extremely successful: participation has increased from zero to 29, enough for two age groups. To support this, there are 57 volunteer coaches throughout the junior section of the Club, equating to over 190 volunteer hours per week during the September to May season. The Club pays for all its coaches to obtain Rugby Football Union (RFU) qualifications.

The Club has an ethos of being inclusive, but its commitment to quality coaching and facilities also creates opportunities for players to excel. It has a former player who is a professional at Gloucester RFC, has current south west U18 players, female south west and Somerset players, Bath and Bristol academy players and a number who represent Somerset. The development of girl's rugby should result in a women's team in the next 2-5 years.

The Club is home to several other organisations. The running club, boxing club, MG owners club, three skittles teams and two darts teams are based there. Nailsea Junior Football Club runs an annual 6-a-side tournament, there is a senior summer 5-a-side football team and the Tough As Nailsea event uses the Club. From 2010-2013 the Club housed the Army Cadets after their hut was destroyed.

The Club has a Bonfire Night and Fireworks event, which is the only organised firework display in Nailsea. For nine years, a Pink Ladies Day has been organised at the Club to raise money for the breast cancer charity, BUST. To date this has raised over £20,000. The Beer and Cider Festival is the largest of its type in the South West, attended by over 5,000 people each year. It has raised around £90,000 for charity in the 13 years it has been running.

In summary, Nailsea and Backwell Rugby Football Club is an integral part of the community, and does much more than provide facilities for the playing of rugby.

Mr Warren explained the Club's plans for the future. The key objective is to improve its facilities to accommodate current and future users of the Club for the next 30 years. Planning permission has been granted for a single-story extension which will house 4 new en-suite changing rooms, physiotherapy room, referees facilities, training room, internal storage and strength and conditioning room. The planning consent also includes the provision of a disabled access lift at the front of the building. This will improve the facilities for female users of the Club so that changing rooms can be segregated for simultaneous use by males and females. Completion of the development will bring the changing facilities up to Sport England standard, and the plan is supported by the RFU, Sport England and Dr Liam Fox.

Funding for the development had been identified as possibly coming from the following sources: RFU Grant (£50,000), Sport England Grant (£75,000), RFU

interest-free loan (£100,000) and the balance from Club Funds. The plans were put on hold to await the outcome of discussions with the Town Council and Barratt Homes. If the extension does not proceed, the Club's ability to execute its development of the women's team and the increase in junior teams will be put in jeopardy. The completion of the extension will underpin the future development of the Club.

As the Club uses the land leased to it for the playing of sport, Sport England will object to the plans if these pitches cannot be replaced. The current plan allows for this replacement. This will be true for future disposal of the land as well as this proposed development.

The Club and its membership fully supports the current mitigation strategy for loss of these pitches. Delays in the decision-making process will have a large impact on the Club if this proposal does not proceed. The Club will be approximately £125,000 worse off as the RFU no longer offers a £50,000 grant and so this amount will have to be added to an interest free loan. Sport England have widened the criteria for applicants of their grants and so the likelihood of receiving the £75,000 grant are significantly reduced. The Club is incurring legal fees as this process continues.

If the proposed development proceeds and the mitigation for the lost playing land is agreed, the Rugby Club will be able to develop to provide better facilities for more members of the community. With the proposed general increase in housing in Nailsea, this is a great opportunity to ensure that sporting facilities for juniors and adults are improved to accommodate the likely increased participation.

In conclusion, the Club has a community focussed vision, and makes a significant contribution to Nailsea. Club members invest over 6,500 hours of volunteer time per season in running the Club and coaching juniors. Any investment in the Club will be beneficial to the community, not just a small number of individuals.

The Chairman thanked Mr Warren for his presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Cllr Ponsonby said she was impressed with what the Rugby Club does, and had the following comments. Firstly, there is no need to sell the land if the Town Council continues to lease it to the Rugby Club. Secondly, she said that it appeared the Club needed a further £175,000 to fund the extension scheme and asked why it should get "substantially more" from the deal with Barratt Homes. Mr Warren said that the delay in implementing the plan whilst the outcome of the proposed deal was awaited had meant that some of the proposed funding was no longer available. As Treasurer, he could not see the Club over-burdened with debt. Further, the costs of the extension would also have increased from original estimates.

Cllr Bird said the Club is clearly being affected by the demographic changes in the Town. Mr Warren confirmed that new homes should bring more children and young adults in to the town. A few years ago the Club ran four senior teams and now runs two, so the trend in relation to the demographics of the town is clear.

Cllr Heappey asked why the Club stopped its development because of discussions with Barratts. Mr Warren said that none of the projected funding was in place and was therefore an aspiration, so the Club hoped funding for its development would come from the land sale.

The Chairman then introduced Matt Regan and Chris Dolling from Barratt Homes.

Mr Dolling explained that they had recently had a pre-application meeting with North Somerset Council. The main technical constraints relate to ecology and undergrounding electricity cables.

Mr Regan said that with all the landowners and the various legal complications this was not an easy project, but all the parties are lined up. Whilst the 10 acres could be developed in isolation it would not make for a comprehensive design. He presented some maps showing the extent of the proposed scheme and the various landholdings involved. He raised the issue of why he thought the four-acre area should be included in the scheme now. The reasons he gave were:

- This is a complex land assembly unlikely to be achieved again.
- There has been positive engagement from Sport England and the RFU.
- The development at the Rugby Club would be a step change in sporting facilities for Nailsea.
- The integrated scheme delivers a comprehensive design.
- Nailsea Town Council controls the design, appearance and mix of the homes.
- Around 58 homes would be lost, including 17 affordable homes (30%) which would have to be found elsewhere in Nailsea.
- There would be a loss of Section 106 money (paid by the developer to the planning authority to mitigate the impact of schemes) for the town of around £300,000.
- The four acres is the most 'efficient' part of the site in development terms with limited physical and ecological constraints.
- It would result in a loss of land value and consequences for other Town Council projects

Cllr Petford said she was very disappointed by the effect that not selling the four acres leased to the Club would have on its future, but the problem is justifying to residents the cost of lifting the covenant.

Cllr Packham said that the option of developing the four acres at a later date was not straightforward. The deal with other landowners is integral to the whole scheme working, and this may not be available in the future.

Cllr Ponsonby asked whether Barratts would want to proceed with developing the 10 acres if the Town Council did not sell the four acres. Mr Regan said that each parcel of land could be developed in isolation. However, a lot of goodwill has been generated to get to this stage and if the comprehensive deal was not agreed other landowners could go elsewhere. Further, the four acres boosts the value of the rest of the land because it is not as affected by ecological and other 'abnormal costs'.

Cllr Ponsonby said that the £300,000 of estimated Section 106 income to Nailsea was not guaranteed.

Cllr Hunt said she was convinced that the right thing to do was proceed with the original plan. The money to lift the covenant comes from the land, not from the tax payers, and with this development the Town Council can choose the kind of homes it wants. The benefit that the Rugby Club would get should be seen as a benefit to the wider community.

Cllr Bird said that the Council is losing focus on its main objective, which is to build new homes, so it should proceed with selling the 14 acres.

At this point the Chairman suggested the Council needed some input from its adviser Gordon Isgrove of GVA and that the meeting should go into closed session.

Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 it was

RESOLVED: **that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the above. The meeting therefore closed at 9.10pm.**

The representatives of Barratt Homes were requested to leave at 9.24pm.

The meeting reconvened at 9.42pm.

142/16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The meeting closed at 9.43pm.

Chairman's signature: _____

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Chairman.

Date: _____

21.12.16