



Moulton Parish Council

<https://moultonpc.org.uk>



Public Consultation

MUGA Lighting – 2020/21

Introduction

The Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Playing Field is illuminated by four floodlights on a timer. Up to 2018 the facility was lit until 23:00 but when Honeyvale Gardens estate was built the council received a number of complaints about the MUGA being used at this time. The parish council took a decision to adjust the switch off time of floodlights to 22:30 throughout the year.

In autumn 2020 following further complaints the council agreed to trial a cut-off time of 22:00. This was in addition to bespoke engineering modifications to the MUGA to eliminate vibration noise which was a main cause of complaints about the usage of the facility. The council announced a consultation with the parish at the end of the trial period.

The parish council acknowledge that this is an emotive issue. Previous limitations during the first Covid lockdown saw multiple complaints made to us, our unitary authority representatives and our MP. We recognise the role the MUGA and the seating shelters have in providing a space for physical recreation and social contact; especially in the teenage and young adult generation and it is vital that our park has facilities for all age groups.

Although best practice states that no housing should be built within 30m of a MUGA, the council acknowledge that there are houses built closer to the facilities and might be impacted by the users of the park. The council is therefore keen to find a long-term solution that balances the needs of the parish to have a venue they can use for sports and recreation throughout the morning and evening all-year round and to eliminate excess noise at unreasonable hours.

Before a decision and expenditure is made for signage the parish council is keen to gather the opinions of the parish to ensure **all** views are taken in account.

Respondents should note that the MUGA floodlights are currently disabled due to the high number of Coronavirus lockdown breaches that have occurred on the park. Cheshire Police have issued fines to over two dozen non-parish residents. This is a temporary situation and will be reversed as lockdown measures permit.

Other parishes

Moulton Parish Council have researched other parish councils /planning permissions to ascertain how other parish councils and sporting bodies managed equivalent facilities. From London to Hampshire to Scotland, most floodlights on MUGAs were on an automated timer that shut-off between 22:00 and 23:00.

Another English authority, when considering the installation of floodlights at a local MUGA, set a time limit of 22:00 and stated “any further reduction [in time] could jeopardise the viability of public use of the facilities.”

Due to the lack of standardisation in this matter, the council believe that they are free to choose a suitable time for the parish that takes in account to the challenges listed above, but will not choose any time later than 23:00.

Proposal

At the beginning and end of British Summer Time, the parish council need to adjust the timer and can therefore set different times during the summer and the winter. The MUGA being available for a longer duration during the summer due to the warmer, lighter evenings.

Alongside any adjustment to lighting would be new/updated signage which would detail the times the MUGA is floodlit as well as a request for users of the facility to be mindful of the neighbouring residents.

Questions

1. Should Moulton Parish Council consider shorter availability of the MUGA during the winter months compared to the summer months?
2. What time in the evening is it reasonable to stop illuminating the MUGA during winter months?
3. What time in the evening is it reasonable to stop illuminating the MUGA during summer months?

How to respond

The consultation is available at <https://consultations.moultonpc.org.uk>

The consultation closes at 23:59 on 4th April 2021.