

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 11th May 2005

Present:	Mr. Poulton (Chariman)	Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mrs. C. Dinnin	Mr. V. Dunhill
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. McCash
	Mr. M. Smith	Mr. D. Stock

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Clark and Mr. Filer.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

Mrs. McCash declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Annual audits (on page 6 of these minutes).

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that the meeting will be closed to allow discussion (under 'Exclusion of press and public') of item 9 e, Hedge at Old School Orchard – letters from HCC and Mr. and Mrs. Brett (on page 11 of these minutes).

Mr. Poulton said that Pam Filer had asked if the Parish Council would write in support of a grant-application to tarmac the car park area of the Memorial Hall. Because the application needed to be submitted no later than 6th May, Mr. Poulton wrote as follows.

'To Whom it may concern

Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall application for Community Capital Grant

Members of the Parish Council are in agreement with and support the project to tarmac the car park area of the village Memorial Hall.

However, the Parish Council does not have money to financially support this very necessary refurbishment.'

All Parish Councillors agreed with Mr. Poulton's action.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

• Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th April 2005

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th April 2005.

Page 7, item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – bulleted item

- 'Estimate re work to two Oak trees on the Lammas'

should read

- 'Estimate re work to two Oak trees on the sportsfield'

Mrs. McCash proposed that the minutes as amended be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Mr. Stock seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

• Write to Rodney Ranzetta re Community Service on 3rd July

This action point has been completed.

• Write to Cricket Club and Sports and Social Club re Community Service

This action point has been completed.

• Repair of the broken cross-rail welds on MPPA fencing

This action point is still outstanding because the ground has been too soft for heavy machinery.

Mr. Meischke said that he hoped the work would be done soon now that drier weather had arrived.

Action: J. Meischke

• Copy revised budget headings to all Parish Councillors

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that because Mr. Filer could not be present at this meeting, the revised budget headings will be discussed at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 8th June 2005.

Agenda: 06/06

• Write to Planning Department re Watton-at-Stone Playgroup, School Lane

This action point has been completed.

- **Installation of new Notice Board at the junction of High Street/Great Innings**
This item to be discussed under 7 a, Specific items - Installation of new Notice Board at the junction of High Street/Great Innings (on page 3 of these minutes).
- **Write to Mr. Bishop asking for a timetable for agreed work in village**
This action point has been completed.
- **E-mail Val Weaver to ask what the statutory requirements are regarding street lighting**
This item to be discussed under 7 d, Specific items, -Lammas Road street lighting (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Arrange meeting to identify & agree the financial commitments re the future maintenance of our assets**
Mr. Poulton said that he had not completed this action point. Instead, he asked that Parish Councillors identify, via e-mail, any major expenditure items to be considered as long-term financial commitments.
Action: Parish Councillors
He will then obtain costings for each item. **Action: N. Poulton**
This item to be placed on the agenda for September 2005. **Agenda: 09/05**
- **Produce summary statement of accounts to be presented at the Annual Parish meeting on 11th May**
This action point has been completed.
- **Arrange for internal audit of Parish Council accounts to be done by Jim Morrissey**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Audit of Parish Council accounts (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for Community Hall accounts to be audited by McCash and Hay**
This action point has been completed.
- **Renew CPRE membership**
This action point has been completed.
- **Renew Parish Council and Community Hall annual insurance with Allianz Cornhill**
This action point has been completed.
- **Arrange for Mr. Poulton to sign the Sports and Social Club Hire Agreement**
This item to be discussed under 7 e, Specific items - Sports and Social Club hire agreement (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Search the internet for the best service providers for Gas and Electricity**
Mr. Meischke said that this is in progress.
This item to remain an action point. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Chase Turner's re repair to broken fan in Community Hall**
Mr. Meischke said that the thermostat for the fans was not working properly and the filters needed cleaning. This work has now been done, however, Turners still need to supply and fit a new motor for the broken fan.
Mr. Meischke to chase Turner's. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Contact the Environment Agency re branch overhanging the footpath**
This action point has been completed and the branch has now been removed.
- **Investigate report that youngsters have been digging on the Lammas**
Mr. Poulton said that Mrs. McCash, Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Stock inspected the area and found no evidence of digging or encroachment onto the Lammas. He said that he had also inspected the area himself.
Mrs. McCash said that last week she had received a complaint that youngsters were jumping out onto the footpath on their bikes. She spoke to the youngsters concerned, but one of them got a bit abusive.
Mr. Stock said that there is a problem of encroachment on the banked area where we are planting trees. It was agreed that a small area of the bank be allocated to the bike-riders so that they do not cause additional damage in the area. **Action: C. Dinnin/N. Poulton**
- **Inspect graffiti on Great Innings play area sign**
Mr. Poulton that when he visited the site last week with Trevor Waldock (Monitoring Officer, EHC), the graffiti had not been removed from the sign. Mrs. McCash confirmed that when she visited the site today it had still not been removed.
Mr. Poulton to chase Mr. Waldock to get the graffiti removed. **Action: N. Poulton**
- **Write to John Love asking him to remove the barbed-wire on disused allotment-gate**
Mr. Poulton said he spoke to John Love about the removal of the barbed-wire and was informed that John Phillips was responsible for putting it there.
After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council's policy should be to write to the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association regarding any problems that arise on the allotments and not to individual allotment holders. However, on this occasion Mr. Poulton is to speak to Mr. Phillips to inform him that barbed-wire near a public footpath is illegal and he must remove it without delay. **Action: N. Poulton**

- **Write to EHC re naming of ‘The Cottage, Woodhall Park’**
This action point has been completed.
 - **Purchase litterbins for the changing rooms**
This action point has been completed.
 - **Obtain a copy of the HCC school travel plan**
This action point has been completed.
This item is currently on circulation.
 - **Write article for Parish News**
This action point has been completed.
- c) **Action points outstanding for more than two months**
- **Purchase key for external cupboard at Community Hall**
This action point has been completed.

6 Planning

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions

i) **Lamp 36, Ware Road, Watton-at-Stone**

12.1 meter high street light replacement mast with three integral omni-directional antenna & three equipment cabinets
-East Herts Council – Permission granted

ii) **Blue Hill Farm, High Elms Lane**

Variation to planning permission 3/02/2405/fp, to replace the office space with a residential unit
-East Herts Council – Permission granted

7 Specific items

a) **Installation of new Notice Board at the junction of High Street/Great Innings**

Mr. Meischke has now installed the new notice board on steel posts.

b) **Councillors’ issues relating to Station Road, Walkern Road and the High Street from Station Road to the War Memorial**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) dated 13th April.

‘High Street, Walkern Road and Station Road, Watton-at-Stone

Thank you for a copy of the notes on the meeting with Ian on the 1st April 2005, in particular item 6. You are aware from our recent correspondence that we have programmed preliminary investigation this financial year for the above scheme.

We are about to finalise the brief for our design team and it is therefore important that we have the most up to date interpretation of the local problems at this location. To help with this please provide me with a summary of the current issues, which I will use in the preparation of my brief.

I appreciate your co-operation with this matter.’

After discussion, the following problems areas were identified.

- Safety of pedestrians crossing the High Street near the Bull public house
- Safety of pedestrians crossing between Hazeldell and Rectory Lane
- Speeding in the High Street, Station Road and Walkern Road, especially on entering the village
- Speeding in Walkern Road, especially entering the village

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

c) **Youth Club feasibility-report from Stuart Pittman - Hertfordshire Association 4 Young People (HAYP)**

Mr. Poulton said that he was disappointed that having given us the impression that he could tell us where we could obtain revenue funding from, Stuart Pittman has now said that he has no contacts to give us.

Stuart Pittman has provided the following costs for a one night a week Youth Club

- Youth worker at £7.34p per hour x 3 hours over 46 week year =£1012.92
- Insurance for one night per week = £75 (approx)
- Affiliation to HAYP to obtain insurance above and other services= £53
- Hire of venue = £7 x 3 hours x 46 weeks = £966

Estimated total annual running cost = £2106.92

Basic start-up equipment

- TV/Play Station 2/CD player, Dance Mat = £300
- Arts pack £30

Although HAYP has no budget to pay for staffing, it could help to find someone suitably qualified and also help a little with the cost of the start-up equipment (maximum grant funding of £250).

HAYP could also help to train any volunteers.

Mr. Poulton said that he has written to Stuart Pittman informing him that until we have some very definite funding the opening of a youth club in Watton-at-Stone will have to remain on hold.

d) Lammas Road street lighting

Mr. Poulton said that further to his report at our meeting held on 13th May, in which he informed the Parish Council that he had spoken to PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston about this subject and they both indicated that additional street lighting in Lammas Road would not deter a burglar. Mr. Poulton has now received the following e-mail from PC Woodward.

‘Just to let you know Paul Weston and I have had a look around both Lammas Road and Rivershill to have a look at the street lighting issue we spoke about. Our view was that Rivershill is fairly well lit already, especially at the newer end of the street. Lammas Road is not so well lit at night and I think it could use another street light or even two. I am not sure whether this improvement would prove to be cost effective, however, and I do not know about the feasibility of actually installing new lighting. If funding could be found for new lighting then I think Lammas Road should be more of a focus than Rivershill.’

An e-mail was sent to Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) to ask her what the statutory requirements regarding street lighting are (e.g. spacing between street lights in residential areas such as Lammas Road) and the following response was received on 4th May.

‘An instruction has gone to the street lighting engineer but in spite of this it may have a low priority due to existing works being undertaken.

I will give him a ring next week to chase how its going and then hopefully you can have some information to perhaps to be able to consult the residents.’

It was agreed to write to Mrs. Margaret Wynes (6 Lammas Road) informing her that we are seeking the advice of the Hertfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Highways before we proceed further. **Action: J. Allsop**

e) Sports and Social Club hire agreement

Mr. Knight noticed that the Sports and Social Club hire agreement needs amending. There are several references to the caretaker and because we no longer have one, it was agreed that the following struck-through text be removed.

‘**PAVILION** (includes kitchen, pavilion, changing room and showers, but not the main hall)

- ~~1. Pavilion keys remain in the possession of the caretaker. He has to be contacted before any authorised use of the pavilion for a match or scheduled tournament, to open up the pavilion. He will then lock the pavilion at the end of the match.~~
- ~~2. A list of fixtures for cricket and football shall be provided for the Caretaker and the Clerk to the Parish Council, at the start of each season, and any changes notified as soon as they are known. Use for any netball or tennis matches again must be notified at least one week in advance. Failure to provide advance notice may result in the caretaker being unavailable.’~~

The Clerk to arrange for Mr. Poulton to sign two copies of the amended agreement and pass them to Mr. Knight for the Sports and Social Club chairman to sign. **Action: J. Allsop**

The Clerk asked if she should issue individual Community Hall hire agreements if the Sports and Social Club and their members are hiring the facilities on a casual hire basis (i.e. paying over and above the annual hire charge).

After discussion, it was agreed to write to the Sports and Social Club informing them that if any of their members or groups hire the Community Hall facilities on a casual hire basis, they will be required to sign a copy of the ‘Agreement for Community Hall hirings’. **Action: J. Allsop**

f) Emergency access to 5 Rectory Lane

No response has been received from Hertford Fire Brigade to our request that they inspect the property to see if they would be able to gain access 5 Rectory Lane in the event of an emergency.

It was agreed to chase Hertford Fire Brigade for a response. **Action: J. Allsop**

g) Parish Council land at Rivershill

Mr. Poulton said that Tim Clark had quoted £70 for doing the annual-clearance work on the Parish Council land at Rivershill. This is an increase of £20 on the amount he charged in the years 2003 and 2004.

Mr. Dunhill said that there is a tree growing in the entrance to the Parish Council land at Rivershill.

It was agreed to accept Tim Clark's quotation and to ask him to remove the tree obstructing the entrance.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

In the absence of Mr. Filer, Mr. Poulton reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Bank accounts**

The opening of new Alliance and Leicester accounts for both the Parish Council and Community Hall is progressing slowly. Alliance and Leicester have asked for more information relating to the Community Hall trust. This has now been sent to them.

- **Annual audits**

Mrs. McCash left the meeting while this item was discussed.

- **Approval of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2004**

McCash and Hay have completed the audit of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2004. Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors present were given a copy of the accounts.

Mr. Meischke proposed that Mr. Poulton sign the audited accounts for the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

A copy of the signed accounts to be sent to McCash and Hay.

Action: J. Allsop

Mrs. McCash returned to the meeting.

- **Audit of Parish Council accounts**

Mr. Poulton reported that the Parish Council accounts are going to Jim Morrissey for the internal audit tomorrow.

Action: J. Allsop

Lubbock Fine, the external auditors, have written to inform us that the Annual Return and all relevant documentation need to be returned to them by 30th June 2005.

Notices will be placed on the two village notice-boards tomorrow to state that the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2005 are available for public inspection from 27th May to 24th June 2004.

Any person interested has the opportunity to inspect and make copies of the Annual Return and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them.

It was agreed by Parish Councillors that the notice should state that copies of the accounts will be available for a nominal charge.

Action: J. Allsop

During our meeting to be held on 8th June 2005, the Parish Council will need to approve the figures in the Annual Return (which will have been completed by Jim Morrissey) and sign the statement of assurance.

Agenda: 06/05

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following item concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Repair of the low brick-wall adjacent to the Community Hall**

A building contractor has started work the repair work. Mr. Poulton said that all the top layer of bricks had been removed and work has started on installing the single row of grey engineering-bricks. He said that he was very pleased with the work done so far and the job is expected to be finished by the weekend.

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items concerning the Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee.

- **MPPA – general**

Mr. Knight said that if the weather remains dry, the floodlighting bulbs are scheduled to be fitted and realigned this coming weekend.

Mr. Knight said that IRS Leisure had done the pressure-wash and moss kill on the MPPA. They have also been asked to supply a report on the condition of the MPPA.

- **Additional tennis court**

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) consultants have inspected the site and are going to provide two design specifications. One for the new court and the other for its lighting. Because the Tennis Club is an affiliate member of the LTA, this service (which would normally cost around £700) is being provided free of charge.

- **Goal Posts**

Mr. Poulton said that Mrs. McCash was correct when she reported that there were two goal posts on the Great Innings Play area, when there should only be one. He said that the additional goal post is the one missing from the sportsfield. Subsequently, Sodexho Land Technology removed it from the Great Innings site when they were doing the grass cutting and are now keeping it in safe storage.

Mr. Poulton has been talking to EHC re an additional fixed goal-post for the Great Innings play area. The proposal is to remove the original goal post and enlarge the tarmac area. The old goal post and an (additional) new one would be installed so that the area of play is at an angle of 90⁰ to the existing one. The cost of the project would be approximately £15,000 and EHC is trying to obtain funding from the Police.

The sportsfield goal-post will remain in storage at Sodexho Land Technology until the work on the Great Innings play area has been done.

- **Playing Field maintenance**

Mr. Knight said that the sportsfield has been re-seeded and fertilized. The work was done by Mr. Smith.

Environment

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Lammas Land Management**

- **Ben Cannon: weed-wipe update**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Ben Cannon had not done the weed wipe. He had asked to do the work last Friday, but was told to leave it until this week. Mrs. Dinnin said that she and Mr. Poulton met with Sue Clarkson from the Countryside Management Service (CMS) on Friday to see if the weed-wipe work still needs doing. They agreed that the work should be done.

Mr. Smith pointed out that he was scheduled to cut the Lammas before the end of May and if weed killer is applied to the grass, the area should not be cut for another two to three weeks to allow it to work properly.

Mrs. Dinnin to speak to Sue Clarkson and Ben Cannon to see if the weed-wipe work can be postponed to a future date.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Adam Welch: clearing-work update**

Adam Welch has completed the work on the Lammas and returned the key to the gate to us.

It was agreed that when sending Adam Welch his payment, we thank him for a job well done.

Action: J. Allsop/C. Dinnin

- **Interpretation Board**

Mrs. Dinnin reported that Sue Clarkson (CMS) had taken photographs of the Lammas so that she can start work on the interpretation board.

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Meischke did the sportsfield report on the 9th May 2005, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Good.

- **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	OK.
Litter/Litterbin	OK.
Large swings	Unwind one.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK.
Teen shelter	Good.
General	Good.

- **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK.
Double Ramp	OK.

Fun Box	OK.	
• Community Hall:		
General Condition (Exterior)	Path wall being repaired.	
Litterbin	OK.	
Car Park	OK.	
General	Weed kill.	
• Multi-Purpose Play Area:		
Surface	Being cleared.	
Boundary Fencing	Weed kill.	
Tennis nets	OK.	
Litter	OK.	
General	Requires cut round edge-exterior. Cut back branch of Oak tree.	
• Great Innings Play Area:		
Equipment	OK.	
Surfaces	OK.	
Litter	OK.	
Dog fouling	OK.	
Comments	Cut grass.	
• Allotments Area:		
Access	OK.	
Condition of paths between Allotments	OK.	
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	OK.	
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	OK.	
Litter	OK.	
Comments	Very good.	
• Culverts on Mill Lane		
Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	-	
Dog-fouling	OK.	
Comments	Overgrown.	
• Salt bins		
Perrywood Lane	OK.	
Entrance to Great Innings	Poor.	
Great Innings South – outside number 93	OK.	
Station Road	OK.	
Moorymead Close (2)	1 poor (1 st in).	
Hazeldell	OK.	
Footpath 17	OK.	
• Dog-waste bins		
Footpath 17	OK.	
Sportsfield	OK.	
Church Walk	Lid.	
Walkern Road	OK.	
Station Road	OK.	
High Street (by Memorial)	Lid.	
Great Innings	OK.	
Mill Lane	OK.	
• War Memorial		
General Comments	Good.	
• Ornate Village Sign		
General Comments	OK.	
• Large Swing		
Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke to unwind the swing.		Action: N. Poulton/J. Meischke
• Weeds around Community Hall and MPPA		
There are weeds growing around both the Community Hall and MPPA.		
Mr. Smith to apply weed killer to both areas.		Action: M. Smith
• Salt bins		

Mr. Meischke said that the salt bin at the entrance to the Great Innings estate is in a very poor condition and is an eyesore. He said that one of the bins in Moorymead Close was in a similar state, however it is not so visually prominent.

ii) Weekly report and action

Mr. Poulton said there was nothing to report from Ted Brown’s weekly inspections.

iii) 6-monthly check of MPPA, Play Area on sportsfield and Community Hall equipment

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke did the six-monthly check on the 9th May 2005, the result of which is as follows.

MPPA

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Hard surface	Is it free of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holes • Cracks • Litter/debris • Weeds • Moss etc. Court marking	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		Being cleared.
Kicker boards	Are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure • Graffiti-free • In good condition. Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protruding nails • Protruding screws • Splinters/cracks • Missing nails/screws Are the gates free of graffiti, loose/missing nails/screws, cracks and splinters Do the gates open, close and lock	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		
Tennis posts	Condition	✓		
Tennis nets	Condition	✓		
Flood lights	Are the lamps in contact with the trees Are the lamp posts in good order and free of graffiti	✓ ✓		
Wire fence	Is the wire mesh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured to posts • Free of cuts/breaks • In good condition Is the metal-work (e.g. posts, etc.) secure and in good condition	✓ ✓ ✗	✓ Weld required.	Needs ‘wiring in’ Mr. Meischke to deal with. Waiting repair.
Notice board	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legible • Free of graffiti • Secure • Free of damage 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		
Boundary	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of litter • In need of a cut • Free of problem growth 	✓ ✗ ✗	Yes Yes	Cut required. Tree overhang.

General/additional comments (if any): - No comments.

Play Area on sportsfield

Check the following points on all pieces of play equipment (i.e. Large swings, small swings, seesaw, multi play/slide 2 spring sit-on).		OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
1	All structures and frameworks should be checked to ensure there is not bending, warping, cracking, loosening or breaking.	✓		
2	Platforms should be free from trip hazards and protruding bolts.	✓		
3	Fixed items of equipment should be checked to ensure parts are not bent, broken, loosened, worn, or missing.	✓		
4	There should be no sharp points or protrusions.	✓		
5	Welds should not be damaged or corroded.	✓		
6	Access points should be checked to ensure there are no missing or broken runs and steps or treads are not loose.	✓		
7	Exposed mechanisms and moving components have no pinch or crush points.	✓		
8	Guards, handrails, or swing barriers are not missing, bent or broken and have no loose components.	✓		
9	All drain holes are clear.	✓		
10	All fastenings are secure.	✓		
11	Swing seats and seats in general are not damaged; do not have sharp corners, insecure fittings, chain wear and have no loose or missing components	✗	✓	Unwind swing.
12	Foundations are not cracked, loose in the ground or corroded at the base.	✓		
13	Mechanical devices and other moving parts have no worn bearings, are not seized or have excessive or unduly noisy motion, have incorrect clearances and/or missing covers.	✓		
14	There is no play in bearings and they are greased/lubricated. If, after adjustment, there is still play in the bearings, they should be replaced immediately. Note – special attention should be given to “sealed for life” parts.	✓		
15	For all types of protective surfacing there should be no trip points, areas where water will lay, holes or litter.	✓		
16	The surface finish of equipment should be free from rust and other corrosion, cracks, splinters, sharp edges and broken or open joints.	✓		
General/additional comments (if any): -		Need to spray area around safety-surface with weed kill.		

Community Hall

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Pavilion				
Tables	Condition	✓		
Chairs	Condition	✓		
Corner seat unit	Condition	✓		
Blinds	Condition	✓		
Clock	Condition	✓		
Main Hall				
2 Benches	Condition	✓		
Badminton posts *	Condition	✓		
Badminton net	Condition	✓		
Sports floor	Condition	✓		
Floor markings **	Condition	✓		
External toilets	Condition	✓		
Internal toilets	Condition	✓		
Showers	Condition	✓		
Kitchen	Condition	✓		
First Aid box	Contents: Are they out-of-date or damaged. Are there any items missing.	✗	Eye bath water	Replace out-of-date items.
Fire exit signs		✓		
Fire extinguishers		✓		
General/additional comments (if any): Need new Parish Council employer's liability certificate in Pavilion.				

• **Oak tree adjacent to the MPPA**

The branches of the Oak tree overhanging the MPPA makes the tree look visually out of balance, although it is not a hazard. However, it does drop a lot of leaves onto the MPPA in autumn.

It was agreed to write to Malcolm Amey (Tree Officer at EHC), to ask him if we could have this branch removed.

Action: J. Allsop

9 Correspondence received

a) HCC re Whempstead – Traffic and Environmental Candidate

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) dated 26th April.

‘Thank you for your letter dated 22nd March 2005 regarding the above.

In my letter dated 15th February 2005, I stated that the Whempstead village candidate has not scored high enough to be considered in the 2005/06 IWP and remains on the T & E Candidate list to be reviewed for next year’s IWP 2006/07.

This is a separate issue to the A602 Route Study, however any improvement which may arise from the study will consider the effect on the surrounding area and traffic trends.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.’

b) Watton Methodist Church re ownership of the Horse Chestnut tree

Mr. Poulton said that Sandra Robey wrote on 25th April (on behalf of Watton Methodist Church), concerning the ownership of the Horse Chestnut tree adjacent to the Methodist Church. They are in dispute with the Abel Smith Estate over the ownership of, and responsibility for, this tree.

Mr. Poulton said that he has spoken with Mr. Robey and informed them that the Parish Council does not wish, or think it appropriate, to get involved in this dispute.

This was agreed by Parish Councillors and because Mr. Poulton had already spoken to Mr. Robey a written response will not be sent.

c) HCC re Hertfordshire Minerals local plan review 2002 – 2016

Mr. Poulton read out a letter dated 25th April, from Julie Reeve (Team Leader Minerals and Waste at HCC). In her letter she informs us that objections to the Hertfordshire Minerals Local plan review will be published on the council’s webiste after they have be checked for accuracy.

d) Hedge at Old School Orchard – letters from HCC and Mr. and Mrs. Brett

The meeting was closed under ‘Exclusion of press and public’ at 2045.

The meeting opened again at 2110.

Letters received from Mr. and Mrs. Brett concerning the hedge have been sent to the Parish Council as ‘Private and Confidential’ correspondence. On advice from the Solicitor of the Council at EHC, this item was discussed under ‘Exclusion of press and public’ and no minutes were taken.

After discussion, letters from the Parish Council regarding the hedge to be sent to the following.

- Mr. and Mrs. Brett (Parkside, Old School Orchard, Watton-at-Stone)
- Mr. Keith Williams (Highway Services Manager, Hertfordshire Highways)
- Cornhill Insurance Plc
- Mr. Simon Drinkwater (Solicitor to the Council, EHC)

Mr. Stock to review the contents of the letters before they are typed. **Action: D. Stock**

The Clerk to type and pass all letters and attachments to Mr. Poulton. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Poulton to ask Mr. Stock to check that the contents and attachments of all letters are correct before they are posted. **Action: N. Poulton**

- **Verbal complaints received by the Parish Council**

Mr. Meischke said that verbal complaints should not be followed through with any action until a written request if received.

This was debated and it was agreed that the Parish Council should respond to verbal complaints, although members of the public should be encouraged to write to us.

Mr. Stock said that if members of the public give a verbal complaint only, then we need to be more rigorous about how we record the actions taken. Parish Councillors were reminded not to react unilaterally.

10 Reports from other Organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society**

Mr. Stock said that the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society’s WAGN meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th May 2005. He said that it is important that as many people as possible attend this meeting.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout and Guide Group**

Mr. Dunhill said all of the Scout and Guide groups are fully subscribed. Some minor refurbishment has been done to the Scout Hut.

11 Items for Parish News

The following item to be sent to the Editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

- Re-election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Clerk to write the article accordingly. **Action: Jane Allsop**

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Emma Fowler – photocopying donation
Ann Moray - Allotment hire 2004/05

6.00
5.00
11.00

Payments

Nuts & bolts for notice board

6.35
6.35

Cheques required

Ted Brown	35 hours work	227.50
Adam Welch	Work to Oak tree on sportsfield	175.00
Collier Turf	Grass seed and fertiliser for sportsfield	607.31
CPRE	Annual membership	25.00
Jane Allsop	100 x 30p stamps = £30, telephone charges = £25	55.00
John Meischke	Metal posts for notice board	30.00
Jane Allsop	April salary	545.01
Frank Cooper	3 sportsfield grass cuts	123.37
Jane Allsop	52 x 28p stamps	14.56
Jane Allsop	May salary	545.01
Ted Brown	Strimming around perimeter of sportsfield	40.00
Ted Brown	32 hours work	208.00
Allianz Cornhill	Annual insurance premium	<u>1224.88</u>
		<u>3820.64</u>

Cheques received

Mr. Hawkins	Allotment rent 2004/05	5.00
Mr. Kitchen	Allotment rent 2004/05	5.00
HCC	P3 grant	1000.00
Sports and Social Club	Donation re grass seed and fertiliser for sportsfield	<u>572.01</u>
		<u>1582.01</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall hire	80.00
Barry Moor – Main Hall hire	16.00
Ruth Hamilton – Main Hall + Pavilion	<u>40.00</u>
	<u>136.00</u>

Payments

4 Fluorescent tubes	2.50
I R Locking – key for external storeroom	14.46
VAT return 03/05	31.74
HCC – Cleaning materials	<u>41.78</u>
	<u>90.48</u>

Cheques required

Allianz Cornhill	Annual insurance premium	2094.23
Rosemary Brown	27 hours cleaning	153.00
McCash and Hay	Annual audit	103.40
Rosemary Brown	28 hours cleaning	<u>168.00</u>
		<u>2518.63</u>

Cheques received

Cornhill insurance	Re claim for damage on MPPA	183.00
Conservation	Pavilion hire	14.00
Mrs. Moore	Main Hall hire	12.00
Mrs. Gould	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	39.00
Allotment and Garden Assoc.	Pavilion hire	7.00
Emma Fowler	Parish Council meeting room	252.00
Louisa Bailey	Main Hall hire	90.00
Dave Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	324.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	198.00
Ann Shapcott	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	52.00
CDA	Pavilion hire	<u>90.00</u>
		<u>1261.00</u>

Mr. Smith proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments, Mr. Meischke seconded the motion, and all present were in favour.

- **The meeting closed at 2114.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 8th June 2005.**