

## Minutes of the meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007

Present: Mr. N. Poulton (Chariman) Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)  
 Mrs. C. Dinnin Mr. D. Filer  
 Mr. I. Harris Mr. I. Knight  
 Mrs. H. McCash Mr. D. Stock  
 The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)

### 1 Apologies for absence

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

### 2 Public Participation

None.

### 3 Declaration of Interests

None.

### 4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

### 5 Minutes of the last meeting

#### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007**  
 Mrs. McCash proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.  
 Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

#### b) Review of actions

- **Write to planning department re 117-119 High Street:** completed.
- **Install new notice-board near Summans Stores:** completed.
- **Write to planning department re 6 Lammas Road:** completed.
- **Write to planning department re 66 Hazeldell:** completed.
- **E-mail Standards Board Committee re adopting the Code of Conduct:** completed.
- **Amend Standing Orders**  
 Mr. Poulton said he would leave it to all Parish Councillors to amend their Standing Orders. Refer to minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007, item 7 a, Specific items - Adopting the Code of Conduct.
- **Advertise changes to Parish Council meeting dates in Parish News:** completed.
- **Give the Clerk the changes to the Football entry in the Village Directory:** completed.
- **Give the Clerk any further changes to the Village Directory before mid-August:** completed.
- **Print Village Directory for distribution in September issue of the Parish News:** completed.
- **Obtain bank-signatory forms from the Alliance and Leicester and COIF**  
 Refer to item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Bank account signatories.
- **Accept T. C. Sports & Leisure Limited quotation to repair safety-surface:** completed.  
 The work has now been done.
- **Arrange site meeting with acoustics contact to discuss acoustics in the Main Hall:** outstanding.
- **Write to Mr. & Mrs. Milman re donation of seat for sportsfield:** completed.
- **Submit planning-application forms for a new Tennis Court to the planning department:** completed.
- **Write to the St. Albans Diocesan Board requesting additional Glebe Land for sporting facilities:** completed. Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Playing field addition.
- **Instruct Doe Sport to do pressure wash and moss kill on MPPA**  
 Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA – Pressure wash and moss kill.
- **Write to Wotton Primary School asking them to cut back their hedge:** completed.

Refer to item 9c, Correspondence received - Dominic Long - Watton-at-Stone Primary & Nursery School.

- **Ask Blue Bury Contractors to re-quote for tree work on the Lammas:** completed.

- **Accept one of the quotations for work to trees on the Lammas**

Blue Bury Contractors revised quotation of £920 plus VAT was accepted.

Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Poplar trees on the Lammas.

- **Write to East Herts Council re missing dog-waste bin lids:** completed.

Trevor Waldoock (East Herts Council) verbally informed the Clerk that it was not East Herts Council policy to replace dog-waste bins with broken lids when they are still serviceable. Also, that the four bins in question belong to the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and we only pay East Herts Council to empty one of these bins (this has now increased to two with the purchase and installation of a new dog-waste bin at Watton Green). The cost of emptying the remaining three bins is born by East Herts Council.

After discussion, it was agreed that for health and safety reasons the Parish Council shall replace the four dog-waste bins that have broken lids. These are located at:

- Church Walk
- Walkern Road
- Station Road
- High Street (by the War Memorial).

It was agreed to write to Trevor Waldoock informing him that the Parish Council wants to purchase four dog-waste bins, to replace those with broken lids, and asking if he would arrange to install them free of charge.

**Action: J. Allsop/**

**Action: N. Poulton**

Mr. Poulton to hand-deliver the letter.

- **Write to East Herts Council re Parish representative on the Standards Committee:** completed.

Refer to item 9 f, Correspondence received – East Herts Council – Standards Committee - Parish Council’s representative.

- **Visit the Land Registry to look at the registration of the Parish Council land at Rivershill**

Refer to item 10, Reports from other Organisations - Parish Council land at Rivershill.

- **Speak to Mr. & Mrs. Taylor re land at Rivershill**

Refer to item 10, Reports from other Organisations - Parish Council land at Rivershill.

- **Give Dominic Long (Watton Primary School) the dates of the October or November Parish Council meetings:** completed.

Lif Bishop, Watton Primary and Nursery School’s new Children's Centre and Extended Schools Manager, will give a presentation to the Parish Council during its October meeting.

- **Inform Ladies Football Team that they can install a bracket on the wall of the external cupboard:** completed.

- **E-mail the NHS consultation questionnaire to all Parish Councillors:** completed.

- **Send any comments on NHS consultation questionnaire to Mrs. McCash:** completed.

- **Write Parish News report:** completed.

### c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

## 6 Planning

### a) Applications

- **22 High Street (3/07/1433/FP/HS)**

Raise roof to provide accommodation on 1<sup>st</sup> floor and insertion of front and rear dormer windows

Mr. Harris visited the neighbours on both sides and no objections were raised. He consulted with Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Knight had no problems with the application. The Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with this decision.

This application has since been granted by East Herts Council (Refer to item 6 b iv).

- ii) **Recreation Ground, School Lane (3/07/1503/FP/SD)**

Additional tennis court with floodlighting

Because we are the applicants, the Parish Council did not comment on this application.

- iii) **14 Hazeldell (3/07/1589/FP/JS)**

Single storey ground floor front and rear extension

A similar application at this site was refused by the planning department in 2006. Mrs. McCash visited the neighbouring residents and they objected to the application for the same reasons as before.

1. Front extension would be too far out and out of the building line with other front extensions
2. Rear extension is again too far out and too high.

She then discussed the application with Mr. Meischke, who agreed that it was highly contentious and following consultation with Parish Councillors the following letter was sent to the Planning Department.

‘The Parish Council objects to the above application for the following reasons.

1. The front extension would be further out than other front extensions in the area and would therefore be out of the building line and out of keeping with the area.
2. The loss of parking space caused by the garage conversion is likely to lead to increased parking either on-street or on the frontage of the site.
3. The reduced size driveway would not be suitable for an average family sized vehicle.
4. The rear extension is an over development.’

**iv) 15 Lammas Road (3/07/1705/FP/SD)**

Amendment to approved scheid 3/06/1475/FP to extend single storey extension 3.6m to the front with a reduced roof pitch from 28 degrees to 15 degrees

Mr. Knight said the plans are a simple extension of an already approved application and that the neighbours on either side had no problem with the proposal. Mr. Knight discussed the plans with Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Poulton, who also had no problem with this application. The Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with this decision.

**v) The Old Chapel, Whempstead (3/07/1462/FP/NB)**

Change of use from garage/study to separate dwelling unit (retrospective)

Mr. Poulton said that this is a retrospective application. The property was purchased by the current owner in 2001 and the dwelling unit was constructed in 2003.

Mr. Clark visited the neighbours who were concerned about the loss of the garage facility and the possibility that another garage could be built on the site in the future.

It is the Parish Council’s policy to object to the loss of garage facilities within the confines of the village of Watton-at-Stone. However, in the hamlet of Whempstead properties have ample parking on site and the loss of this garage would not bring additional vehicles onto the highway, especially in view of the fact that the conversion took place in 2003.

Some concern was expressed that this dwelling could be sold in the future as a separate property. Also that the building materials were out of keeping with the adjacent property.

Parish Councillors took a vote. Two Parish Councillors objected to the application and four had no objections.

It was agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application. **Action: J. Allsop**

**vi) Heathmount School, Woodhall Park (3/07/1873/FP/JS)**

Extension to existing pre-prep school

Parish Councillors viewed the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application. **Action: J. Allsop**

**vii) Heathmount School, Woodhall Park (3/07/1874/FP/JS)**

Reinstatement of previous car park

Parish Councillors viewed the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application. **Action: J. Allsop**

**b) Decisions**

**i) 6 Lammas Road (3/07/1181/FP/HS)**

Single storey front extension -East Herts Council permission granted

**ii) 66 Hazeldell (3/07/1251/FP/HS)**

Conservatory to rear -East Herts Council permission granted

**iii) 117-119 High Street (3/07/1230/FP/HS)**

Conversion/reconstruction of garage block into 2 residential units -East Herts Council permission refused

**iv) 22 High Street (3/07/1433/FP/HS)**

Raise roof to provide accommodation on 1<sup>st</sup> floor and insertion of front and rear dormer windows -East Herts Council permission granted

v) **Recreation Ground, School Lane (3/07/1503/FP/SD)**

Additional tennis court with floodlighting

-East Herts Council permission granted

**7 Specific items**

**a) Scout & guide night-hike**

Peter Knight has verbally informed the Parish Council that the Scout and Guides will be holding their annual night-hike on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

**b) Improvements to the A602**

Mr. Poulton was sorry to report that the improvements to the A602 in the vicinity of Heath Mount School have been cancelled for the foreseeable future due to technicalities. The three-million pounds given to Hertfordshire Highways by Central Government to complete the scheme will have to be returned.

Parish Councillors expressed their grave concern and disappointment over the cancellation of the road-improvement scheme. Not only are the four exits along this stretch of road dangerous but the tree-lined banked area is subsiding due to erosion, making it even more treacherous on this section of the A602.

The Parish Council agreed to write to HCC (with copies to Brian Hammond and Oliver Heald MP) expressing its grave concerns and asking for the scheme to be reinstated as soon as possible.

The Clerk to draft a letter for Mr. Harris to amend where appropriate.

**Action: J. Allsop/I. Harris**

A copy of this letter is attached to these minutes.

**See attached**

**c) Write to Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) re salt bin notice for Parish News**

At its meeting held in March 2007, the Parish Council agreed to defer until September writing to Hertfordshire Highways requesting an article for the local Parish News to inform residents about the use of the salt bins in the village. They can make use of the salt on the paths and roads in their area, but not for their own private use. It was agreed to write to Hertfordshire Highways accordingly. **Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop**

**d) Overhanging foliage along the wall of the Doctor's Surgery garden**

On Mrs. Dinnin instructions, the Clerk wrote to Dr. Shah concerning the overhanging foliage.

Mrs. McCash said that she had also spoken to Dr. Shah about the problem and was pleased to report that the foliage has now been cut back.

**8 Reports**

**a) Sub-Committees**

**Budget & Finance**

Mr. Filer reported on the following items concerning the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

• **Lubbock Fine – Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007**

Lubbock Fine had signed the Annual Return for the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 and copies have been e-mailed to all Parish Councillors.

Because no additional information was required, Lubbock Fine has submitted an invoice for £285 (plus VAT), which is the minimum fee chargeable for the size of our Parish Council. This invoice has been paid.

The cost of the annual audit was questioned and it was agreed to investigate having it carried-out locally. Mrs. McCash to look at the rules and regulations for the annual Parish Council audit to see if there is a cheaper alternative. **Action: H. McCash**

• **Bank account signatories**

It was agreed at the Parish Council meeting in July that all bank accounts should have six signatories on them. Namely: Mr. Poulton, Mr. Meischke, Mr. Filer, Mr. Knight Mrs. Dinnin and the Clerk (Mrs. Allsop).

Mr. Filer said that change-of-signature forms had been obtained for the COIF fund account and the three Alliance and Leicester accounts. However, the Alliance and Leicester forms only allow for a maximum of five signatures, whereas the COIF form is sufficient for the six signatures required.

It was agreed that the COIF fund account form be completed and signed at the end of this meeting.

**Action: N. Poulton, J. Meischke, D. Filer, I. Knight C. Dinnin, J. Allsop**

Return completed COIF fund account form.

**Action: J. Allsop**

The Clerk to contact Alliance and Leicester to obtain new forms.

**Action: J. Allsop**

• **Monthly accounts**

Mr. Filer proposed that the monthly accounts should be taken under Budget and Finance Sub-Committee and not under Accounts/Correspondence. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour. **Action: J. Allsop**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council  
Petty Cash

<b>Receipts</b>		<b>Payments</b>	
None		None	
<b>Cheques required</b>			
Inland Revenue	Tax and NI		186.51
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpicking		224.00
HCC	Lighting Energy charges (1 <sup>st</sup> April – 30 <sup>th</sup> June)		148.79
HCC	Lighting Maintenance charges (1 <sup>st</sup> April – 30 <sup>th</sup> June)		198.35
Frank Cooper and Son	Grass cutting in July		173.90
Jane Allsop	August salary		579.63
Blue Bury Contractors	Grass cutting, work to trees on Lammas		1762.50
CDA for Herts	Annual Subscription		30.00
Lubbock Fine	Annual Audit fee		334.88
HCC	Laminating sheets and labels		14.97
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpicking		224.00
Grassroots	Flowerbed maintenance		293.75
J. Morrissey	Internal Audit fee		100.00
Frank Cooper and Son	Grass cutting in August		173.90
J. Allsop	August salary		579.63
N. Poulton	Work done by Ted Brown to tree on Lammas		<u>10.00</u>
			<u>5034.81</u>
<b>Cheques received</b>			
Sports & Social Club	Hire of sportsfield facilities		<u>287.50</u>
			<u>287.50</u>
<b>Watton-at-Stone Community Hall</b>			
<b>Petty Cash</b>			
<b>Receipts</b>		<b>Payments</b>	
Floodlighting to 9.05.07	76.00	HCC - Cleaning materials	30.46
Jim Keen – Main hall hire	60.00	VAT return 07/07	46.24
Watton Dots & Tots – Pavilion hire	206.00	Annual return postage	<u>0.48</u>
Richard Allison	35.00		<u>77.18</u>
Mrs. Nash	54.00		
Gill Gilbey	20.00		
Andrea Chesterman	<u>37.50</u>		
	<u>488.50</u>		
<b>Cheques required</b>			
Wicksteed Leisure Limited	Repair safety surface		1744.52
Rosemary Brown	24 hours cleaning		156.00
T. C. Sports and Leisure	Repair safety surface		881.25
Rosemary Brown	24 hours cleaning		156.00
John Phillips	Opening and closing external toilets		36.00
Robert Adams	External decoration		<u>240.00</u>
			<u>3213.77</u>
<b>Cheques received</b>			
Watton Primary School	Pavilion and meeting room hire		77.00
Mrs. Adams	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		39.00
Watton Youth Drop Inn	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		397.80
Watton Primary School	Pavilion and meeting room hire		56.00
East Herts Council	Grant for the repair of the safety surface		740.00
Sports & Social Club	Hire of sportsfield facilities		287.50
Jim Keen	Main Hall hire		80.00
Julia Donger	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		<u>39.00</u>
			<u>1716.30</u>

Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

### Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Guttering**  
The replacement guttering is scheduled to be installed on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September.
- **Ted and Rosemary Brown's holiday**  
Mr. Poulton e-mailed all Parish Councillors on 5<sup>th</sup> September notifying them that Ted and Rosemary Brown were going on holiday to the Isle of Wight from Saturday 15th September for one week. He suggested that it was not necessary to get anyone else in to clean the Community Hall or litterpick for such a short period. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

- **Annual playground inspection**

The Play Inspection Company did the annual inspection of the playground on 4<sup>th</sup> July. The results of which show we are in the very-low risk category with a life expectancy on all equipment of between 5 - 10 years. A copy of the annual playground inspection report is currently on circulation.

## Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Tennis court**

East Herts Council has granted permission for the new tennis court. The County Archaeologist has written again giving stringent conditions which need adhering to when the foundations for the new tennis court are dug.

- **Playing field addition**

The Reverend Robinson (Chairman of the Glebe Committee for the Diocese of St Albans) wrote on 14<sup>th</sup> August as follows.

‘Thank you for your letter of 17<sup>th</sup> July in which you asked whether the Glebe Committee would be willing to lease some additional land to the Parish Council in order to provide additional plying areas.

The Glebe Committee has considered this request carefully, and is naturally sympathetic to your council’s desire to provide additional facilities for the use of young people in the area. However, the development which you outline would have a significant impact upon the existing parsonage and church, which both adjoin the glebe field, and the Committee did not therefore, feel able to agree to your proposal.

Mr. Knight said that the Sports and Social Club had discussed the issue at length and requested that the Parish Council go back to the Glebe Committee to find out their reasons for refusing to lease us additional land. Mr. Knight said that the extension of the sportsfield was the only feasible way that we can obtain additional youth-football facilities in the village.

After discussion it was agreed that Mr. Knight should contact the Reverend Robinson to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

**Action: I. Knight**

- **MPPA – Pressure wash and moss kill**

Doe Sport did the moss kill on the MPPA yesterday and the pressure washing will be done within the next ten days.

- **External storage-room**

The Football Club will not be pursuing its plans to install a mezzanine floor on the rear half of the external store.

- **Tennis Club**

The Tennis Club would like an additional key to the external store and two keys to the Ladies external ladies-toilets. This was agreed.

The Clerk to get an additional key cut for the external store and invoice the Tennis Club accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Meischke to give Mr. Knight a copy of the keys to the Ladies toilet so that he can make two additional copies.

**Action: I. Knight**

- **Sportsfield hedge**

Nick Whitehead will be cutting the sportsfield hedge during October. He has agreed to charge the same price as last year, ie. £320 plus VAT.

## Environment

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

- **Grass cutting on Watton Green and the Lammas**

Both Watton Green and the Lammas need an additional flail cut before the winter.

Mr. Stock said he was concerned that much of the area that we cleared of encroachment was becoming overgrown again and suggested that we needed to do some urgent work on it.

It was agreed that Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Stock meet on-site to determine the extent of the problem and obtain quotations for any work necessary. The clearance work could be funded by the money donated by the Conservation Society together with match-funding obtained from the East Herts Council’s LEAF grant scheme.

**Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock**

- **Poplar trees on the Lammas**

Mike Smith (Blue Bury Contractors) has removed the three Poplar trees on the Lammas and stored the trunks behind the bench at the far end of the Lammas.

- **Bench on the Lammas**  
Unfortunately, whilst moving the Poplar tree trunks on the Lammas, the bench at the far end of the Lammas was demolished. Mike Smith, whose insurance covers this loss, has a replacement bench on order. This item to remain on the agenda until the bench has been installed. **Agenda: 09/07**
- **Fallen tree on Lammas bank**  
Mr. Poulton and Ted Brown removed a tree on the Lammas bank which had fallen across the footpath. Mr. Poulton paid Ted Brown £10 for the work.
- **Wasps nest on Lammas bank**  
Mrs. McCash reported to Mr. Poulton, via an e-mail, that there was a Wasps nest on the Lammas. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to contact Fred Burnell asking him to remove it as soon as possible. **Action: C. Dinnin**  
Mrs. Dinnin reminded Parish Councillors that they should, where applicable, report problems to the Chairman of the appropriate sub-committee. The whole point of having sub-committees is to distribute the workload to specific members of the Parish Council and not always to its Chairman.
- **Tree planting on the Cottage Site**  
Tony Bradford was expected to attend our September meeting to report on the Cottage Site. Mrs. Dinnin said that he had visited the Cottage Site several times during the summer months and feels that not enough regeneration had occurred since the clearance was done. He therefore recommends that we buy trees (which will cost approximately £200) and get the Countryside Management Service to plant them. He agreed to give Mrs. Dinnin a list of the trees required, including the cost. Tree posts and guards will also need to be purchased. Mr. Poulton suggested that we apply for an East Herts Council's LEAF grant, which will match funds already raised up to the value of £500. The other part of the funding could be obtained from the money donated to us by the Conservation Society.  
Mrs. Dinnin to ask Mr. Bradford for the tree costings. **Action: C. Dinnin**
- **Countryside Management Service – Parish Paths Partnership (P3)**  
Mrs. Dinnin said that we need to submit our P3 funding application form for 2007/08. She has arranged to meet with the Countryside Management Service in October to discuss completing the forms. She has asked Mr. Dunhill for assistance because he used to be responsible for completing the P3 annual grant-forms when he was a Parish Councillor.  
Mrs. Dinnin asked Parish Councillors to e-mail her any items that needed including in the P3 application. For example, new or replacement stiles, gates or signs. **Action: Parish Councillors**  
It was agreed to contact Mr. and Mrs. Aknai, who regularly walk the village paths, asking them to identify any problem areas that they are aware of. **Action: C. Dinnin**  
Mrs. Dinnin said that when Mr. Dunhill was a Parish Councillor he used to strim the footpath by the church. This explains why the footpath has been so overgrown this year.  
Mr. Dunhill also informed Mrs. Dinnin that a local man clears the footpath at the back of Watton Nursery. It was agreed to ask the man if he wants to continue to do this. **Action: C. Dinnin**
- **Organisation of groundwork in the Village**  
Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke have been discussing some adjustments to the specification for grass cutting and flowerbed maintenance for 2008, so that we can go out to tender.

**b) Routine reports**

**i) Fire-alarm test**

The fire-alarm was tested before the start of the meeting.

**ii) Monthly village-report**

Mr. Stock completed this report on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007, the result of which is as follows.

• **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
General	Looked good overall.

• **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	OK (see*).
Litter/Litterbin	OK.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK – but minor damage to surface.*

Teen shelter	OK.
General	OK – but some dog-fouling.
• <b>Bike ramps area:</b>	
Junior Jump	OK – but no signs of use.
Double Ramp	OK – but no signs of use.
Fun Box	OK – but no signs of use.
• <b>Community Hall:</b>	
General Condition (Exterior)	OK. Pavilion just ‘painted’.
Litterbin	OK.
Car Park	OK.
General	Missing gutter, some debris on roof.
• <b>Multi-Purpose Play Area:</b>	
Surface	OK.
Boundary Fencing	OK.
Tennis nets	OK.
Litter	OK.
General	OK.
• <b>Great Innings Play Area:</b>	
Equipment	Tiles disconnected at top of slide, a significant trip-hazard.
Surfaces	OK.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	None.
Trees	Some damaged, some removed.
Comments	Good, apart from loss of trees.
• <b>Allotments Area:</b>	
Access	Conifers soon to be a problem again.
Condition of paths between Allotments	Fair/variable.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	OK for this time of the year.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	Poor and overgrown.
Litter	OK.
Comments	Problem re leaking tap.
• <b>Culverts on Mill Lane</b>	
Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	Some. Area completely overgrown.
Dog-fouling	None.
Comments	-
• <b>Salt bins</b>	
Perrywood Lane	Full.
Entrance to Great Innings	Full (damaged lid).
Great Innings South – outside number 93	Full.
Station Road	Nearly full.
Moorymead Close (2)	Both full, one lid damaged.
Hazeldell	Full.
Footpath 17	Full.
• <b>Dog-waste bins</b>	
Footpath 17	OK.
Sportsfield	OK.
Church Walk	OK but no lid.
Walkern Road	OK but no lid.
Station Road	OK but no lid.
High Street (by Memorial)	OK but no lid.
Great Innings	OK.
Mill Lane	OK but some fouling.
Opposite 5 School Lane	OK.
• <b>War Memorial</b>	
Comments	OK, but ‘plan’ to clean.
• <b>Ornate Village Sign</b>	
Comments	Very good.
Post	Very good.
• <b>General</b>	Evidence of increased dog-fouling throughout the village.

- **Safety surface under two spring sit-on**  
It was agreed to monitor the minor damage on safety surface.
  - **Missing gutter**  
Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees – Guttering.
  - **Slide Great Innings**  
Mr. Stock said that the problem with the tiles at the top of the slide should be reported to East Herts Council as a matter of urgency because he felt that they had become a significant trip-hazard.  
The Clerk to notify East Herts Council accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**
  - **Allotment access**  
Mr. Meischke said that he and Mr. Poulton were aware that the conifers at the entrance of the allotments need cutting back and Ted Brown had been asked to do this.
  - **Salt bins**  
The Clerk to e-mail Raj Goutam requesting that the broken lids are replaced on the salt bins.  
**Action: J. Allsop**
  - **War Memorial**  
Mr. Stock, Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke to inspect the War Memorial to access its condition and when the stonework will need cleaning again. **Action: D. Stock/N. Poulton/J. Meischke**
- iii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action**  
There was nothing to report from Ted Brown's weekly inspections.  
Ted Brown has strimmed all the areas around the sportsfield and MPPA that are not included in the sportsfield grass cutting.

## 9 Correspondence received

### a) East Herts Council – Poplar trees on Lammas

Kenneth Coyne (Landscape Officer at East Herts Council) wrote on 31<sup>st</sup> August to confirm that the Poplar trees on the Lammas are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order nor are they growing within a Conservation Area.

Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Poplar trees on the Lammas.

### b) East Herts Council – Use of premises as polling stations

East Herts Council wrote on 19<sup>th</sup> July regarding the use of polling stations. Due to the recent changes and restructuring within National Government, speculation has increased that a snap Parliamentary General Election may be imminent, with the possibility of either autumn 2007 or spring 2008 strongly suggested as favoured times for the poll to take place. It is therefore likely that the Community Hall facilities will be needed as a polling station at very short notice.

### c) Dominic Long - Watton-at-Stone Primary & Nursery School

Dominic Long wrote to confirm that the overgrown hedge around the school was cut back on 4<sup>th</sup> July. East Herts Council advised the school in June that they were not able to cut the hedge earlier because the British Nesting Season prohibited them doing so between the 31<sup>st</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### d) Three Valleys Water – Invitation to a key stakeholders discussion forum

Three Valleys Water invited Parish Councillors to attend workshops during September and October to discuss customer issues and the environment. No Parish Councillors present expressed an interest in attending.

### e) Diocese of St. Albans – re Glebe Lane

This item was discussed under 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Playing field addition.

### f) East Herts Council – Standards Committee - Parish Council's representative

Mr. Poulton said two nominations were put forward for the Standards Board Committee, namely, Mr. Jones (Buckland and Chipping Parish Council) and Mr. B. Taylor (Thundridge Parish Council). Mr. Taylor was duly elected.

### g) Aston Parish Council re Benington Wind-Farm

Mr. Poulton read out a letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> August from Mr. Falder (Clerk to the Aston Parish Council). Aston Parish Council has been trying to collect opinions on the proposed Benington Wind-Farm and enclosed copies of letters received to date from:

- 1) East Herts Planners
- 2) Councillor Jackson
- 3) CPRE

4) Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trusts

Mr. Poulton then read out his reply dated 30<sup>th</sup> August.

The Clerk to place these letters on circulation.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**h) HCC – Archaeological implications re planning application for additional Tennis Court on sportsfield**

This item was discussed under 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Playing field addition.

**10 Reports from other Organisations**

• **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association**

Mr. Meischke said that the Allotment and Garden Association hopes to have the mapping of the allotments completed by the end of the year.

They have asked if they can extend the rabbit fencing to the back of the glebe hedge adjacent to the footpath. There are several allotments backing onto this area and permission to access these during the installation of the rabbit fencing will need to be obtained.

It was agreed to write to the allotment holders affected.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Meischke to give the Clerk the numbers of the allotments affected.

**Action: J. Meischke**

Mr. Meischke said that the Allotment and Garden Association is in need of a strimmer and the Parish Council owns one which is rarely used. It was agreed to offer the strimmer to the Allotment and Garden Association for £50.

**Action: J. Meischke**

• **Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Mrs. McCash said that the Memorial Hall Management Committee has received a very large electricity bill for £1,500, which represents 4 to 5 times the normal usage. Mr. Filer is currently recording the weekend and weekday meter-readings at the Memorial Hall to identify the source of this large consumption of electricity.

• **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch**

Mrs. McCash said that during August the crime-reporting system to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme appeared to have failed for some reason. She was embarrassed when a distressed High Street resident contacted her about three burglaries, none of which Mrs. McCash had been informed about. After discussion with PCSO Paul Weston, Jill Dockley (Hertfordshire Police) has now been sending regular reports again.

• **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup**

Mrs. Dinnin said that now we have altered the dates of our Parish Council meetings, they all clash with the Pre-School Playgroup meetings. The Pre-School Playgroup has already arranged all their meeting for the rest of the year. Mrs. Dinnin to discuss with Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup if a solution can be found in the future.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

• **Watton-at-Stone School Governors** - Nothing to report.

• **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group**

Mr. Stock said that he had received a telephone call from the Scout and Guide Group secretary inviting him to a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September (tomorrow night), which unfortunately he is unable to attend due to a prior engagement. He was informed that the Scout and Guide Group only hold four meetings a year and other ad-hoc meetings are arranged for specific items as necessary, which the Parish Council representatives may or may not be invited to.

Mr. Harris received a similar call and will be attending part of the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

• **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club**

Mr. Knight said that the Sports and Social Club is still in contact with Mr. Abel Smith with regard to potential sites for additional sporting facilities.

• **Watton Youth Drop Inn** - Nothing to report.

• **Police Authority** - Nothing to report.

• **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight reported that Oliver Heald MP is arranging a meeting with the Environment Agency to which the River Beane Restoration Association Secretary (Mr. Knight) and Chairman will be invited.

There is concern that in the pursuit of measures to ensure the supply of water, the issue of the environment of the River Beane may be lost.

The following items were raised at this point in the meeting.

• **Drain in Perrywood Lane is blocked again**

Mr. Filer said that the drain in Perrywood Lane is blocked again. Mr. Poulton to speak to Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways).

**Action: N. Poulton**

• **Parish Council land at Rivershill**

Mr. Meischke said he had studied the Land Registry for the Parish Council land at Rivershill and could see no restrictions on the land. He passed a copy of this Land Registry to Mr. Harris who agreed to confirm whether or not there are any restrictions.

**Action: I. Harris**

Mr. Meischke said that he had spoken to Sue and Martin Taylor to ask them if they would be willing to value the land as follows.

1. As a freehold non-building plot.
2. As a freehold building plot.
3. Level of rental in its current condition.

They did not agree to the request but said that if they purchase or rent the land they would reimburse the Parish Council for the cost of the valuation.

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Alan Thomas could value the land as follows for an approximate cost of £250.

It was agreed to instruct Mr. Thomas to do the work.

**Action J. Meischke**

## 11 Items for Parish News

Because our meetings are now later in the month, it is too late for us to submit an entry in the next issue of the Parish News.

The Clerk spoke to Diana Ranzetta, who agreed that the Parish Council can book a space in future issues of the Parish News to overcome this problem.

It was agreed that Mr. Poulton and the Clerk look through the agenda each month to highlight items to be included in the Parish News. The Parish Council article will then be forwarded to the Ranzetta's the day after the Parish Council meeting.

**Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop**

## 12Accounts

This item was discussed under item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee – Monthly accounts.

- **The meeting closed at 2050.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007.**