

## Minutes of the meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011

Present: Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman) Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs. Christine Dinnin Mr. Denis Filer  
Mr. Iain Harris Mr. Ian Knight  
Mrs. Helen McCash Mr. Nigel Poulton  
Mr. David Stock The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)

Members of the public: None.

On behalf of Parish Councillors, Mr. Filer thanked Mr. Meischke for Chairing the Parish Council for the past two years.

### 1 Apologies for absence and leave of absence

Apologies for absence:

### 2 Public Participation

None.

### 3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Smith had two additional items for this meeting.

- **River Beane Restoration Association (RBRA)**

A letter of thanks has been received from RBRA in response to receiving the Parish Council's grant of £25. A copy of this letter to be e-mailed to all Parish Councillors.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **East Herts Rural Parish Conference**

East Herts Council will be holding the Rural Parish Conference on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at Datchworth Village Hall, 52 The Green, Datchworth, Knebworth, Herts, SG3 6TL.

The conference will include the following topics:

- Eastern Plateau - Rural Business Development Programme
- The Local Development Framework
- Improving rural broadband access – BT
- A Village Hall Network?
- Support 4 Community Projects

Further details, including the programme for the day and arrangements for booking, will follow closer to the date of the conference.

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Dinnin and the Clerk expressed an interest in attending the conference.

Because Mr. Stock is unable to stay at the meeting beyond 2100, Parish Councillors agreed to bring forward the following item for discussion.

### 12 Co-option of a Parish Councillor

Four applications for co-option were received by the deadline date of Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May. However, Mr. Charles Clark this morning verbally withdrew his application to the Clerk. The remaining three applicants are Mrs. Debra Freeman, Mr. Harry Slater and Ms. Emma Waltham.

Mr. Harris said that in the Standing Order there is also no requirement to take this item under 'Exclusion of Press and Public'

In Part II of the Standing Orders, Rules 9 (page 13) – Voting, reads 'Members shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members request, by signed ballot.'

In Part I of the Standing Orders, Rule 19 (page 6) – Method of Voting reads 'The rules on the manner in which decisions are taken are peremptory and admit of no exceptions. Every decision must be reached by a majority of those voting. Appointments to employments must be decided in the same way as other questions. A quick method of eliminating numerous candidates is suggested in Standing Order 37.'

Part II, Standing Order Rule 37 – Voting on appointments reads 'Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall

be stuck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.'

Parish Councillors then discussed the individual merits of each applicant.

Mr. Smith asked for a show of hands in favour of Emma Waltham. As a majority show of hands was recorded, Emma Waltham was duly elected as a Parish Councillor.

Mr. Smith to write to all candidates accordingly.

**Action: M. Smith**

The Clerk to arrange for Ms. Waltham to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. **Action: J. Allsop**

(Note: Ms. Waltham signed this on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2011.)

#### 4 Declaration of Interests

Mrs. McCash declared a pecuniary interest in 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee – External audit of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

#### 5 Minutes of the last meeting

##### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

Page 3, 8 a, Community Hall Trustees, second word on the last line of the first paragraph.

'expect' should read 'except'.

Mr. Meischke proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

##### b) Review of actions

- **Speak to Allotment and Garden Association about bonfires during their AGM: outstanding.**

- **Contact Hertfordshire Highways re no 'children playing' warning signs up at the Great Innings play area**

Mr. Poulton said that 'Children Playing' warning signs are already in place up at the Great Innings Play area. He has spoken to Hertfordshire Highways about additional signage in this area and was informed that if sufficient funds are available this summer, 'slow' signs will be painted on the road surface at both approaches to the play area.

- **Contact Stanley Productions re improving the quality of the 'Peep in the Past' film**

Mrs. Dinnin said she had spoken to Stanley Productions (London) who are willing to quote for improving the quality of the 'Peep in the Past' reel-to-reel film onto DVD. However, they will need to see the film before they can submit a quotation.

Because this is not an urgent item, it was agreed not to risk posting the film to Stanley Productions.

Mrs. Dinnin said she would arrange to take the film to Stanley Productions (London).

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Arrange for rubbish to be cleared from around Cricket Shed if the work is not done by the Easter holidays**

Mr. Knight said that the rubbish has not been moved from around the Cricket Shed. It was agreed to ask a contractor to remove the rubbish and invoice the Cricket Club for the cost involved. Mr. Poulton suggested either Adrian Thompson or Ted Brown could do the work.

Mr. Knight to act accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

- **Write to planning department re 99 High street (3/11/0350 and 3/11/0351): completed.**

- **Write to planning department re 6 Hazeldell (03/11/0426/FP): completed.**

- **Write to planning department re 22 Rivershill (03/11/0508/FP): completed.**

- **Write to planning department re 39 Hazeldell (03/11/0557/FP): completed.**

- **E-mail all Parish Councillors a copy of the planning decision for 1 The Beanside: completed.**

- **Upload a copy the results of the housing survey on the Watton-at-Stone website: completed.**

- **Place Co-option notice on Parish Council notice boards: completed.**

- **Add comment re income and expenditure difference to Community Hall 12-month statement of accounts: completed.**

- **Take the 2010/11 Parish Council accounts to Jim Morrissey for auditing on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April**

Refer to item 8a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Internal Audit of Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

- **Arrange for the Community Hall accounts to be submitted to McCash and Hay for auditing**

Refer to item 8a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - External audit of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 2010/11

- **Renew CPRE membership: completed.**

- **Add a paragraph about gritting in the Community Hall hire agreement**  
The Clerk e-mailed her draft paragraph about gritting to Mr. Stock, which he then modified as follows.  
‘The areas around the Community Hall and the car park are not gritted and may be found to be slippery during periods of very cold weather. Therefore, please take extra care during the winter months.’  
Mr. Meischke proposed that the above paragraph be included in both the Community Hall and Sports and Social Club hire agreements. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour  
**Action: J. Allsop**
- **Instruct Rebecca Evans to clean the changing rooms and adjoining corridor: completed.**  
Mr. Poulton said that Rebecca Evans has already started the cleaning of the changing rooms and adjoining corridor.
- **Write to Malcolm Amey (East Herts Council) re oak tree on sportsfield: completed.**
- **Instruct Ted Brown to weed-kill around the MPPA, play area and Community Hall areas: completed.**
- **Copy Asset registers to all Parish Councillors: completed.**
- **Give any alterations to Asset registers to Mr. Poulton**  
Mr. Poulton did not receive any alterations to the Asset registers.
- **Accept Frank Cooper and Son’s quotation for sportsfield maintenance work**  
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Sportsfield – maintenance programme.
- **Purchase two aluminium dog signs: completed.**  
Mr. Knight said he would be fitting the two aluminium dog signs in the next few days **Action: I. Knight**
- **Contact Fiona Underhill (CMS) re repair work to Lammas steps**  
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Countryside Management Services.
- **Chase Fiona Underhill (CMS) re P3 grant forms for 2011/12**  
Mrs. Dinnin said that she still had not received the P3 grant form, but would keep chasing Fiona Underhill until she obtained it. **Action: C. Dinnin**
- **Contact Glaxo Smith Kline and Tesco volunteer teams re projects in Watton-at-Stone**  
Mrs. Dinnin said she had contacted Catherine Cartwright of Glaxo re the voluntary projects in Watton-at-Stone and would wait to see what they can do before contacting the Tesco team.
- **Ask Gary Smith if he is willing to remove egg remains whilst on site cleaning the Community Hall windows: completed.**
- **Chase P. J. Fencing re replacing the top tensioning wire of the MPPA fencing**  
Mr. Knight said that this item remains outstanding. P. J. Fencing assured him yesterday that they will be doing the work within the next week.
- **Inspect and arrange for the repair of the hole in the MPPA fence**  
The repair of the hole in the MPPA fence will be done by P. J. Fencing while they are on site replacing the top tensioning wire.
- **Ask Adam Welch to refrain from putting further chippings down in the Mill Lane entrance to the Lammas**  
Mrs. Dinnin said she had spoken to Adam Welch who will refrain from putting down wood chippings until he instructed to do so again.
- **Contact stone mason re damage to War Memorial**  
The Clerk said she had contacted Hugh McAlpine, who said he would inspect the War Memorial and send a quotation for the repair work required. To date no quotation has been received.  
The Clerk to chase. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Contact Stuart Riley re request for website entry: completed.**
- **Include gritting notices on website diary: completed.**
- **Reply to East Herts Council consultation on planning applications: completed.**
- **Write to the Hertfordshire Wildlife Trusts re wildlife survey on Watton Green: completed.**
- **Write to the Hertfordshire Wildlife Trusts re Water Vole Survey on the Lammas: completed.**
- **Speak to Nick Fox (Abel Smith Estate) re permission for Water Vole Survey**  
This action point should have been for Mr. Meischke and not the clerk and therefore remains outstanding.  
**Action: J. Meischke**  
The Clerk to e-mail Mr. Meischke the relevant paperwork. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **E-mail letter from Tina Gigg (Hertfordshire County Council) re draft Bus and intalink strategy consultation: completed.**  
Refer to item 7 f, Specific items - Bus Strategy Questionnaire.

- E-mail Mr. and Mrs. Aknai re walkway in Hazeldell: completed.
- Write Parish news inserts: completed.

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

None.

## 6 Planning

### a) Applications

**i) 31 Lammas Road (3/11/0642/FP)**

Two-storey rear extension

Mr. Harris said he visited the neighbours in the adjacent properties at 30 and 32 Lammas Road and they had no problem with the proposed extension. Mr. Harris recommended a 'no comment' response.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that they have no comment on the application. **Action: J. Allsop**

### b) Decisions

None.

## 7 Specific items

### a) Quality of the 'Peep in the Past' film

This item was discussed under 5 b, Review of actions - Contact Stanley Productions re improving the quality of the 'Peep in the Past' film.

### b) Local District Council elections

Mr. Smith was pleased to report that Mr. Poulton was re-elected as the District Councillor for the Watton-at-Stone ward.

### c) Police report

Mr. Filer attended the launch of the Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2011-14 held on 28<sup>th</sup> March. He did place the papers on circulation to Parish Councillors, but unfortunately, it seems to have been lost in Mr. Smith's system for five weeks.

Mr. Filer read out his report as follows.

The meeting was opened by Stuart Nagler (Chair, Policy Authority) who made a number of points:

- Hertfordshire was in the top three Police forces in the country.
- The Hertfordshire Police's government grant is being cut by 20% and savings of 36 million pounds have to be made in the next 4 years, with 12 million pounds being made in 2011/12.
- Neighbourhood Policing has increased three times since 2004 (currently 450 officers and PCSO's; and 400 specials and volunteers)
- Extension of co-operation with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.
- A strong promise not to cut Neighbourhood Policing in the next three years.

This presentation was followed by one from David Lloyds who described the three-year Policing Plans main priorities would be:

- Neighbourhood Policing.
- Watch schemes.
- Reduce ASB (Antisocial behaviour) and the perception of ASB.
- Victim and witness satisfaction.
- Public confidence.
- Call handling and emergency response.

There was then a presentation from the Chief Constable.

Priorities:

- Minimal reduction in front-line staffing.
- Support of the development of Neighbourhood Watch.
- Strong support of neighbourhood policing (subject to partner PCSO funding).

Mr. Filer queried this latter comment pointing out that even if Parishes combined they would find difficulty in funding a PCSO at £25,000 per annum.

Frank Whitely accepted this completely and suggested we might wish to consider a Parish Special Constable. He said that the cost of a mounted Special Constable is approximately £1,000 to set up and £250 per annum for follow up funding (this figure would be reduced for a foot Special Constable).

He also stated that the future funding of PCSO's was still under debate and that 50 out of the 250 PCSO's were funded by partners.

It was agreed to write to Stuart Nagler asking him for details on how Watton-at-Stone could proceed with obtaining a Special Constable and the costs involved.

**Action: J. Allsop**

The police detection rates for East Hertfordshire are lower than the nation average. It was agreed to write to Inspector John Speed asking him why East Hertfordshire's detection rate is so low.

**Action: H. McCash**

#### **d) Whempstead Notice board**

Mr. Poulton said that while visiting Whempstead he inspected the Parish Council notice board, which was in good condition. He recommended that notice board should not be removed. The Clerk said that Mr. Clark had informed her that the notice board is not weather proof. Parish Council agreed that the Whempstead notice board should remain on site.

Mr. Meischke to obtain the notice board key from Mr. Clark and remove all the notices.

**Action: J. Meischke**

#### **e) Strimming work on Parish Council land at Rivershill**

It was agreed to ask Mr. Clark if his son Tim is available to do the strimming work again this year.

Mr. Meischke to speak to Mr. Clark accordingly.

**Action: J. Meischke**

#### **f) Bus Strategy Questionnaire**

Mr. Smith e-mailed all Parish Councillors on 28<sup>th</sup> April forwarding a link to the Hertfordshire County Council website link to the Local Transport Plan and Bus Strategy Consultation draft.

The strategy highlights all services they would like to provide but also states that they do not have the money to provide them all.

It was agreed that Mr. Smith should complete the on-line consultation questionnaire highlighting the Parish Council's request that bus services to the rural areas be maintained or improved.

**Action: M. Smith**

#### **g) Footpath between the Bull Public house and Rivershill**

Mr. Poulton said that he received a request from a member of the public that the footpath between the Bull Public House and Rivershill be cleared.

This section of footpath is not registered to anyone on the Land Registry but the Parish Council has periodically cleared it.

It was agreed to ask Ted Brown to trim and clear the car park end of this footpath.

**Action: N. Poulton**

Mr. Poulton said he hoped that the new owners of the Bull Public house would keep the footpath clear.

- **Footpath between the High Street and Lammas Road**

Mr. Filer said that he had received verbal complaints about the surface of the footpath between the High Street and Lammas Road, which has numerous potholes that represent trip hazards.

The Clerk to report the fault via the Hertfordshire County Council on-line Highway fault reporting service.

**Action: J. Allsop**

#### **h) Ferreting licences**

Mr. Smith read out letter from Peter Phillips, requesting a ferreting licence for the year 2011/12.

It was agreed that the following licences be issued.

- **Bob Adams (of 4 Glebe Close)** to ferret the Lammas, the paddock at the far end of the Lammas, and the Allotments.
- **Peter Phillips (of 18 Lammas Road)** to ferret Watton Green and the Lammas.

Mr. Poulton to arrange for the licences to be signed by Mr. Adams and Mr. Phillips.

**Action: N. Poulton**

As Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. Smith to countersign the licences.

**Action: M. Smith**

Copies of the signed licences to be sent to Mr. Adams and Mr. Phillips.

**Action: J. Allsop**

#### **i) License across Cottage site**

The license for Temporary Access across the Land known as the "Old Cottage Site", at Watton Green, issued to Mr. Denis E. Filer (of Brambles, Watton Green) has been renewed.

## 8 Reports

### a) Sub-Committees

#### Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

<b>Watton-at-Stone Parish Council</b>		
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty cash – Payments</b>
None		None
<b>Cheques issued</b>		
Hertfordshire County Council	lighting energy and maintenance charges 01/01/2011 - 31/03/2011	363.50
CPRE	Annual Subscription	29.00
Wages, Salaries, Allowances	May 2011 salary	1244.44
Frank Cooper and son	Grass cutting 1st, 8th, 15th, 21st & 28th May	288.00
		<b><u>1924.94</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>		
East Herts Council	Precept	14998.00
Mr. Morris	Allotment rent	10.00
		<b><u>15008.00</u></b>

<b>Watton-at-Stone Community Hall</b>		
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty Cash –Payments</b>
Floodlighting – 12.04.11	40.00	Viking signs – 2 metal ‘no dog’ signs 31.40
Barbara Smart – Pavilion	36.00	Dustpan and Brush <u>3.00</u>
Sharon Ling – Main Hall	15.00	<b><u>34.40</u></b>
Sharon Ling – Pavilion	52.00	
Oasis	15.00	
Knitter natter	<u>10.00</u>	
	<b><u>168.00</u></b>	
<b>Cheques issued</b>		
Gary Smith	Window cleaning plus removing egg from frames	70.00
Wages	Cleaning	306.00
H. M. Revenue & Customs	VAT return	160.76
Hertfordshire County Council	cleaning materials	116.70
McCash and Hay	Annual audit	123.60
		<b><u>777.06</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>		
Dave Boddy		<u>336.60</u>
		<b><u>336.60</u></b>

Mrs. McCash proposed that the Parish Council approves the payments. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Internal Audit of Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

Mr. Filer read out Jim Morrissey’s internal audit report of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

‘As requested, I have carried out my review of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2011 and can advise that all transactions have been correctly and accurately recorded. All necessary receipts and authorisations have also been produced.

Actual Income & Expenditure for the year was very much in line with budgets. The budget for the year assumed a break-even position, whereas actual income exceeded expenditure for the year by £653.

The Parish Council's reserves as at 31/3/2011 were £8354 compared with £7701 as at 31/3/2010.

In addition VAT of £1024 is reclaimable by the Parish Council as at 31/3/2011 (31/3/2010 £833).

Regarding the Asset valuation of £96850 as at 31/3/2011 I would comment as follows. I realise that this is a valuation for insurance but note that, in a year where no new assets were purchased, the valuation as at 31/3/2010 of £88303 has increased by £8547 in the year.

I trust the above is sufficient for your purposes but should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.’

- **Annual Return of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

Jim Morrissey completed and signed sections 1 and 4 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 (all Parish Councillors have been e-mailed a copy of the completed Annual Return).

Mr. Filer took the Parish Council through the annual governance statement and the standard questions were answered as follows.

<b>Section 2 – Annual governance statement</b>	
We acknowledge as members of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010 that,	
1. We have approved the accounting statements, which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	Yes
2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	Yes
3. We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice which could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	Yes
4. We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' right in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	Yes
6. We have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems and carried out a review of its effectiveness.	Yes
7. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	Yes
8. We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	Yes
9. Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets	N/A

Mr. Filer proposed that the accounts, detailed in section one, and the Annual governance statement detailed in section two (listed above) of the Annual Return, be approved by the Parish Council and that the Chairman and the Clerk sign the Annual Return. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Smith and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Return and the Statement of Assurance.

The Clerk to return all relevant documentation to BDO by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **External audit of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

McCash and Hay have completed the audit of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

Mr. Filer read out an extract from McCash and Hay's letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> May as follows.

'The books were found to be in good order, however there are queries in respect of VAT repayments and as discussed I shall be pleased to have sight of the requested print out from H. M. Revenue and Customs once this is available.'

A copy of these accounts is attached to these minutes.

**See attached**

Mr. Poulton proposed that Mr. Meischke sign the audited accounts for the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall. Mr. Harris 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**

- **Parish Council insurance renewal**

Mr. Filer said that because of the savings that were made on the Community Hall insurance last year, the Clerk obtained three quotations for the Parish Council insurance, which is due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> June, as follows.

1. Aviva (Came & Company)	1-year agreement	£1343.67
	3-Year LTA	£1276.49
2. Zurich (Suffolk Acre)	1-year agreement	£1221.30
	3-Year LTA	£1209.61
	5-years LTA	1145.94
3 Aon Limited	1-year agreement	£774.62
	3-years LTA	£736.83
	5-years LTA	£699.03

Mr. Filer recommended that AON Limited's quotation for a 3-year undertaking be accepted.

He said all of the quotations are annual premiums on a like for like basis. The only exception is that Zurich's quotation has a £100 excess, whereas Aviva and AON Limited have a £250 excess.

After discussion, Mr. Poulton proposed that Mr. Filer's recommendation to accept AON Limited's quotation for a 3-year under taking be accepted. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Filer said that if premium tax goes up or down it would be reflected on the annual premium.

- **Employee Performance Review**

The Clerk's annual performance review is due. Mr. Smith to complete the review.

**Action: M. Smith**

### Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following items.

- **Blinds in the Community Hall**

Ashley Blinds have fitted a small privacy blind on the Main Hall door that leads to the changing room corridor. Mr. Poulton said that all the blinds fitted in the Pavilion and Meeting room are working satisfactorily.

- **Replace glass with wooden panels in Main entrance door**

Brian Bunyan has not done this work yet. Mr. Meischke to chase.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Outside storage cupboard**

The catch on the doors of the external cupboard are broken. It was agreed to ask Brian Bunyan to repair them.

**Action: J. Meischke**

### Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Sportsfield – maintenance program**

Mr. Knight said that the maintenance work to the sportsfield is in progress. The harrowing, fertilising and rolling of the sportsfield has been done and the turfing and seeding the goalmouth areas will be done as soon as the weather is less dry.

- **Goals**

Mr. Knight said that horizontal sections of the goal supports are up at MPPA and he agreed to check that these were chained and locked.

**Action: I. Knight**

The remaining parts of the goals (nets and vertical sections) are being stored in the external cupboard at the Community Hall.

- **Rubbish around Cricket shed**

Mr. Knight will be informing Bob Clayton that the Parish Council is arranging for the rubbish to be removed from around the Cricket Shed and will be invoicing the Cricket Club accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

### Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Countryside Management Services**

Mrs. Dinnin said that under the Parish Paths Partnership agreement (P3) the Parish Council can no longer claim for grass cutting works.

However, the Parish Council can claim for items such as the Lammas bank steps and the handrail on footpath 11.

Fiona Underhill has also agreed to make enquiries about installing a handrail on footpath 11. Although they do not normally like installing handrails, because of maintenance.

It was agreed not to ask the Glaxo or Tesco teams to do the Lammas bank steps because the work needs doing as soon as possible.

Mrs. Dinnin to meet on site at the Lammas bank steps with Mr. Filer, Mr. Poulton and Mr. Smith tomorrow at 1000, to discuss the work required.

**Action: C. Dinnin/D. Filer/N. Poulton/M. Smith**

- **Allotments - Chestnut tree**

Mrs. Dinnin read out a letter from allotment holder David Wilkinson concerning the trees on John Phillips allotment plot number 34a. John Phillips uses this plot to store his tractor and plough. Adam Welch has quoted £280 to remove the Chestnut and Sycamore trees on plot 34a down to ground level and remove all waste.

After discussion, Mr. Smith proposed that Adam Welch's quotation be accepted and Mr. Phillips to be notified accordingly. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mrs. Dinnin to ask Adam Welch to do the work as soon as possible.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

Mr. Meischke to inform John Phillips accordingly.

**Action: J. Meischke**

At the Allotment and Garden's AGM, it was suggested that if John Phillips gives up allotment plot 34a then it could be used as a car park.

Mrs. McCash said that at least four allotment plots are currently not being cultivated. Mrs. Dinnin said that she had already drawn up a list of names of allotment holders who are not cultivating their plots. It was agreed to send out the usual warning letters.

**Action: C. Dinnin/J. Allsop**

Mr. Stock left the meeting 2100.

## b) Routine reports

### i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests prior to this meeting.

### ii) Monthly village-report

Mr. Filer completed the report on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

Only the adverse items highlighted in the monthly village-report are minuted.

- **Sportsfield** - good considering lack of rain.
- **Cricket shed** - graffiti.
- **Play area Safety surface** - wear under swing number three.
- **Outside Men's toilets** - urinal smelly.  
The Community Hall Trustees have suggested a provision for a new porcelain urinal be included in the 2012/13 budget. **Budget: 2012/13**
- **Boot cleaners** - brushes need replacing  
Mr. Knight to arrange for new brushes to be fitted to the boot cleaners. **Action: I. Knight**
- **Allotments** – plot 8 in a very poor condition.
- **MPPA** – broken wire mesh.  
Refer to item 5 b, Review of actions - Inspect and arrange for the repair of the hole in the MPPA fence.
- **Salt bins** – some of the bins need filling before the winter season.  
This item to be placed on the September Parish Council agenda. **Agenda: 09/2011**
- **Dog bins** –one bin has a missing lid and is being used for general rubbish.  
A provision for a replacement dog bin on the sportsfield to be included in the 2012/13 budget. **Budget: 2012/13**  
The Clerk to contact East Herts Council about the cost of a dog bin. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **War memorial** - tiny chip off stonework.  
Mr. Filer said he did not feel that such a small chip warranted repairing. Mr. Poulton said he felt the chip should be repaired. After discussion, it was agreed that we proceed with having the repair work done.  
**Note:** The stonemason, Hugh McAlpine, found the missing chip and glued it back for £30.

### iii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action

Mr. Brown has done all the weeding and weed-killing he was instructed to do around the sportsfield and Community Hall areas.

### v) Website

Entry request from Christopher Billet of ZoomPC (Stevenage) who provides IT services .

After discussion, it was agreed not to include an entry about ZoomPC on the Watton-at-Stone website.

Christopher Billet to be notified accordingly and forwarded the contact details of the Parish News.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### v) Website diary

None.

## 9 Correspondence received

### a) East Herts Council - Conservation Area Assessment

Mr. Smith read out the following e-mail dated 28<sup>th</sup> April from Kevin Steptoe (Head of Planning and Building Control).

'This message is to make you aware of some Conservation Area Assessment work that will be commencing shortly.

A consultant has been engaged to undertake the work for us but please note, at this time of financial restraint, this is a modest financial commitment and an area of work that the Council considers is important for local communities. Budget from previous years has been retained for this purpose.

The assessment work is commencing for Watton at Stone and will be undertaken by Mr. John Bosworth. It is likely that Mr. Bosworth will be in contact with you soon or you may see him in the village.

Mr. Bosworth has been provided with an East Herts Council identity badge.

In due course, there will be a formal public consultation period, when comments on a draft report will be invited.

However, at this stage, if you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of the conservation team.'

Mr. Poulton said that we are only one of two villages to receive a conservation area assessment, the other being Hunsdon.

## 10 Village organisations

- **Watton Youth Drop Inn**

Mr. Poulton said that attendance of the Watton Youth Drop Inn continues to be very good with weekly attendance rate of between 20 and 30 each Wednesday.

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

- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch:** Nothing to report.

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

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items discussed at the recent Allotment and Garden Association's AGM.

- Mike Freeman was re-elected as Chairmen.
- The setting up of the Horticultural Show is progressing well.
- Mrs. Dinnin was asked if the Parish Council would install paving slabs under the kissing-gate to prevent rabbits coming through. Mrs. Dinnin said that on inspection she did not feel this was needed.

Mrs. Dinnin said she forgot to raise the issue of bonfires and parking considerably and agreed to do so at the next Allotment and Garden meeting. **Action: C. Dinnin.**

- **Watton-at-Stone War Memorial Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club:** Nothing to report.

- **Police Authority**

Refer to item 7 c, Specific items - Police report

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

The River Beane Restoration Association will be holding its AGM on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May in the War Memorial Hall.

## 11 Items for Parish News

No items were identified for inclusion in the June 2011 issue of the Parish News.

Mr. Harris proposed that the Chairman writes a letter of thanks to Charles Clark for his years of service on the Parish Council. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour. **Action: M. Smith**

## 12 Co-option of a Parish Councillor

Refer to item 3 - Chairman's/Clerk's Report.

- **The meeting closed at 2113.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011.**