

## Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011

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

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from Mr. Iain Harris.

### 2 Public Participation

None.

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

Mr. Smith had five additional items.

- **New homes bonus** - This item to be discussed under 7 e, Specific items - Station Road development.
- **Hedges in Hockerill** - This item to be discussed under 9 i, Correspondence received.
- **Parking transport survey** - This item to be discussed under 9 j, Correspondence received.
- **East Herts Council - Town and Parish Councillors Briefing Session: East Herts Local Development Framework** - This item to be discussed under 9 k, Correspondence received.

The following item was brought forward for discussion.

#### Item 7 a - Minute recording and timescale for distribution

Mr. Smith said that he was keen to speed up the process of recording minutes so that they are distributed to Councillors as soon after a meeting as possible, without putting an actual timescale on the process.

He said that each agenda item should be discussed, a minute of this discussion taken and a minute decision recorded. All decisions will be presumed to be unanimous unless otherwise recorded.

Parish Councillors to write their own reports on meetings they have attended. These reports will be e-mailed to all Parish Councillors and the Councillor can then report at the Parish Council meeting from their report. If relevant, a copy of the report will be included or attached to the minutes.

Parish Councillors agreed with Mr. Smith's suggestions.

### 4 Declaration of Interests

None.

### 5 Minutes of the last meeting

#### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011**  
Mr. Meischke proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.  
Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

#### b) Review of actions

##### 1. Update Standing Orders document and e-mail to all Parish Councillors

Ms. Waltham said she still has this item and agreed to return it to Mr. Smith. **Action: E. Waltham**

##### 2. Arrange to meet Sergeant Palfreyman re policing issues concerning Watton-at-Stone

Mrs. McCash said she had spoken to Sergeant Palfreyman on the phone, however, he did not think it necessary to arrange a meeting. She explained to him the problems we have been having in Watton-at-Stone and the lack of PCSO visits to the village.

Mrs. McCash said she was very disappointed with her conversation with Sergeant Palfreyman and felt that Watton-at-Stone ranked very low on the policing priorities, unlike Hertford and Ware.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed to write to Chief Inspector John Speed concerning the lack of policing in Watton-at-Stone. Mrs. McCash agreed to draft a letter and e-mail it to Mr. Smith and Mr. Poulton for their comments. **Action: H. McCash**

In future, the Clerk to report all policing incidents via the 101 police non-emergency number, because all calls to this number are logged. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Parking at the entrance of Rivershill and outside 130 High Street (old post office)**

Mr. Filer said that he had e-mailed PC Andy Woodward several times concerning the new residents at 130 High Street parking on the pavement at the entrance of Rivershill and outside their property. This is causing a serious visibility problem to drivers in the area.

3. **Change of Santander signatories:** completed.
4. **Give budget items for the year 2012/13 to Mr. Filer**  
Mr. Filer said to date he has received budget items from Mr. Knight and the Community Hall Trustees. The Trustees are in the process of obtaining quotations for the items they want included in the budget. Mrs. Dinnin said that letters have been sent out to four contractors asking them to quote for the garden maintenance, leaf clearance, grass cutting and strimming works in the village.
5. **Find out if layering of the sportsfield hedge can be included in the annual grant**  
Mrs. Dinnin reported that the Countryside Management Service said that the sportsfield hedge was unsuitable for layering. She had also spoken to Tony Bradford about this issue and he had suggested infilling with hawthorn.  
This item to be reviewed by the Environment Sub-Committee in conjunction with tree planting.  
**Action: Environment Sub-Committee**
6. **Review/edit the River Beane text before passing it to the Clerk for upload to the website**  
Mr. Stock has reviewed, edited and restructured the text sent to him by Mr. Knight. The revised text has been uploaded to the website by Peter Allsop.
7. **Speak to Jono Meischke re website banner**  
Mr. Meischke said that he had spoken to his son. Although Jono Meischke does not deal with websites, he did suggest that images of the back and front of the 'village sign' could be taken and incorporated to form a new banner.  
Mr. Stock said that his original idea was to merge the usual well-known village-images to form a banner. The current banner being a temporary component he inserted in the early days when he was structuring and creating the website content.  
After some discussion, it was agreed to put a notice in the Parish News asking if anyone is interested in designing a banner for the Watton-at-Stone website. **Action: J. Allsop**

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

None.

**d) Action points resolved**

1. **Co-ordinate meeting to discuss the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations**  
Mr. Poulton gave his apologies for the Queen's Jubilee meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October. He is unable to attend the meeting because he is attending the East Herts Council meeting to decide the Benington Wind Turbine application.
2. **Upload Parish Council meeting dates onto the EHC Community and Public Engagement Calendar**
3. **Instruct Nick Whitehead to cut the sportsfield hedge**
4. **Send Malcolm Amey (East Herts Council) the report on the Sportsfield Oak tree**
5. **Write to East Herts Council requesting gated entrances to the Great Innings Play area**
6. **Send Parish Councillors the Parish Council e-mail disclaimer**
7. **Contact contractors requesting quotations for works to be carried out in 2011/12**
8. **Contact contractors requesting quotations for grass cutting, mowing and leaf clearance**
9. **Contact contractors requesting quotations re external woodwork at the Community Hall**
10. **Instruct Halycon Courts to pressure-wash and apply moss kill the MPPA**
11. **Write a letter of thanks to all the GSK teams and place a notice in the Parish News**
12. **E-mail Parish Councillors Groundwork Hertfordshire's e-mail re P3 grants 2012/13**
13. **Arrange site meeting of Environment Sub-Committee members**
14. **Replace two external lights at the Community Hall**
15. **E-mail Eralp Yucelt (Hertfordshire Highways) re filling salt bins**
16. **Draft text re River Beane entry for website and e-mail to Mr. Stock**
17. **Put up road closure notices and maps on the Parish Council notices boards**
18. **Draft letter to Hannah Brownlow re play equipment**
19. **Write to East Herts Council re four road names for Station Road development**
20. **Investigate who will be responsible for un-adopted roads and public land on Station Road development**
21. **Write article for October issue of Parish News**

**6 Planning**

**a) Applications**

None.

**b) Decisions**

**i) 34 Moorymead Close (3/11/1325/FP)**

Conversion of garage to form a study/gym

-East Herts Council permission granted

**ii) 55 Rivershill (3/11/171/FN)**

Single-storey rear extension and lateration to form new opening to existing bedroom

-East Herts Council permission granted

**iii) The Bull Hotel, 113, High Street (3/11/1331/AD)**

Erection of illuminated & non illuminated signs to the exterior of the building

-East Herts Council permission granted

**iv) The Bull Hotel, 113, High Street (3/11/1359/LB) – listed building consent**

Erection of illuminated & non illuminated signs to the exterior of the building

-East Herts Council permission granted

**7 Specific items**

**a) Minute recording and timescale for distribution**

This item was discussed under item 3, Chairman's/Clerk's Report.

**b) Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations - meeting to be held on 26th October**

Mr. Smith, Mr. Meischke, Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Knight will be attending the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations meeting on 26th October at 1930 at the Community Hall.

**c) Report on Oak tree on sportsfield**

As agreed at the September Parish Council meeting, a copy of C-Trees report was sent to Malcolm Amey (East Herts Council) asking for his comments. Mr. Amey replied on 11<sup>th</sup> October stating that he was not authorised or insured by East Herts Council to inspect and survey trees on privately owned land.

However, if the Parish Council decides to make an application to carry out the recommendations on the tree, then a formal application needs to be made to East Herts Council.

A quotation of £1350 (plus VAT) has been received from C-Trees as follows.

Crown reduction by 30%. Work to be carried out in accordance with BS3998:2010. Branches to be shortened by approximately 30% of length to nearest appropriate growth point. Material to be carefully lowered from tree using purpose-made lowering equipment. Cracks and hollows that could close as a result of weight reduction to be chocked open (in case bats present).

Any deadwood found will be removed.

Two damaged limbs to be removed as follows:

Branch to west side at about 3.5m above ground has been damaged and may be weakened by decay.

Branch to east side observed to have a sap-run possibly indicating the presence of a hollow.

Brash to be chipped on site for onwards use as biofuel; timber to be removed from site each day for onwards use as firewood.

Schedule: Day 1: Crown reduction, remove timber from site, stack brash.

Day 2: Crown reduction, remove timber from site, stack brash.

Day 3: Chip brash and remove from site.

Mr. Meischke suggested that a second opinion is obtained. This was agreed by all Parish Councillors. It was agreed to obtain three quotations based on the above work and each contractor be asked for their opinion on the work that is required. If a 30% reduction of the Oak tree is recommended, the work to be carried-out over a three-year period. This is to minimise the visual impact of the reduction and to prevent the tree from being stressed. Any work undertaken will start in the financial year 2012/13 and a budget provision will be made.

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

**d) Bus shelter**

Mr. Smith suggested that the Parish Council should include a budget item for bus shelters in the village. He said it looks dismal to see people in the wet waiting for a bus to arrive and the Parish Council should encourage villagers to use public transport. He suggested that a simple curved glass structure would be the most robust. Shelters can cost from £2,000, rising to £7,000 for elaborate wooden ones.

In principal Parish Council agreed that it would be a good idea to install a minimum of two bus shelters outside and opposite the Bull pub and possibly an additional two at the north end of the village (i.e. outside the Grey House and 25 High Street near the Great Innings roundabout.

Obviously, permission would need to be sort from Hertfordshire Highways and the cost of maintaining and insuring the shelters would be the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Clerk to draw up a small questionnaire for Parish Councillors to complete on how many bus shelters should be installed, where they should be located and the style of shelter.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**e) Station Road development**

- **Responsibility of un-adopted roads and public open spaces**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed on 4<sup>th</sup> October with the following planning condition.

‘Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the arrangements to be implemented to ensure the management and maintenance of any non-adopted common areas of the site, including the estate roads, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once agreed, those arrangements, which may constitute the formation of a Management Company, shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted and thereafter remain implemented in perpetuity unless alternative arrangements are submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: to secure the long-term maintenance of the common areas and estate roads and in the interest of safe access, residential and visual amenity.’

Mr. Poulton has asked the County Council to retain, for the time being, the piece of land earmarked for a new doctors surgery, although currently Dr. Haslam and Dr Shah have no wish to build a new surgery. The new addition to the school looks likely to move forward as planned.

- **E-mail from Carrie Harwood (9 Hazeldell) re the Barratt’ Homes working times**

Following receipt of an e-mail from Carrie Harwood concerning building work starting unreasonably early on both Saturday and Sunday mornings, Mr. Poulton has been in contact with the Barratt Home builders, who have agreed not to start work at 0730 (the time agreed in the planning conditions) on Saturday mornings but at the later time of 0900. In addition, the Sunday building work is due to cease soon. The Sunday working has allowed additional groundwork required on the site to enable the main road into the estate to be completed so that the dangerous temporary access adjacent to the railway bridge can be closed. The start time on a Sunday would be 0930.

Mrs. McCash said that she had spoken to the builders on several occasions about the times they carry-out work following complaints from local residents.

It was agreed that only one Parish Councillor should speak to Barratt Homes and Mr. Poulton said he was happy to continue to do this. Members of the public and Parish Councillors to contact Mr. Poulton concerning any issues relating to the Station Road development.

- **New homes bonus**

Mr. Poulton informed us that a government scheme known as the New Homes Bonus would see funds being shared between the County Council, the District Council and the Parish Council. The total fund is based on the current national average Band 'D' rate (£1439) which equates, for Watton-at-Stone Parish, to a sum of £288 per new house built. This is payable annually for six years totalling £ 1728.00 for each new house. In addition to this, a further payment of £350 will be paid for certain categories of social housing. The exact method of how these funds are to be distributed, used and accounted for is yet to be decided.

**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> |
| 3 Allotment holders – Rent and water charges 2010/11 | <u>65.50</u>   | None                         |
|  | <u>65.50</u>   |                              |
| <b>Cheques issued</b>                                |  |                              |
| Blue Bury Contractors                                | paint required by Glaxo Smith Klein to paint bench seats | 37.55                        |
| St. Albans Diocesan Board                            | sportsfield extension rent                               | 90.00                        |
| Wages and salaries                                   | October 2011   | 1299.15                      |
| C-Trees  | survey on sportsfield Oak tree                           | 408.00                       |
| Ted Brown  | strimming & mowing - sportsfield areas                   | 70.00                        |
| BSWW Parish News                                     | annual reports £25, Jubilee flier £30                    | 55.00                        |
| Frank Cooper and son                                 | Grass cutting 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 29th September       | 288.00                       |
| J. Allsop  | Siteground – 2 year website hosting                      | 125.34                       |
| BDO LLP  | Annual audit   | 372.00                       |
| Nick Whitehead                                       | Cutting of the sportsfield hedges                        | 408.00                       |
| Earl Haig Fund                                       | Poppy donation   | 70.00                        |
|  |  | <u><b>3223.04</b></u>        |
| <b>Cheques received</b>                              |  |                              |
| 22 Allotment holders                                 | Rent and water charges for 2010/11                       | <u>694.00</u>                |
|  |  | <u><b>694.00</b></u>         |

| <b>Watton-at-Stone Community Hall</b>    |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>             | <b>Petty Cash –Payments</b>            |
| Circle Anglia – Pavilion                 | 8.00                                   |
| Jim Keen – Main Hall                     | 80.00                                  |
| Barbara Smart – Pavilion                 | 24.00                                  |
| Oasis – Pavilion                         | 24.50                                  |
| Floodlighting to 04/10/11                | 340.00                                 |
| Caroline Percival - Main Hall & Pavilion | 39.00                                  |
| Craft club – Meeting room                | 15.00                                  |
| Jo Bearpark - Main Hall & Pavilion       | 56.00                                  |
| Donna Eversley - Main Hall & Pavilion    | 39.00                                  |
| Sharon Ling –Pavilion                    | <u>48.00</u>                           |
|  | <b><u>673.50</u></b>                   |
| <br>                                     |  |
| <b>Cheques issued</b>                    |  |
| Wages                                    | October 2011                           |
| Veolia Water                             | Water supply                           |
| Npower                                   | gas supply from 18/02/11 to 01/04/2011 |
| Npower                                   | gas supply from 01/04/11 to 07/04/11   |
| East Herts Council                       | Annual play equipment inspection       |
|  | <u>393.75</u>                          |
|  | <u>98.99</u>                           |
|  | <u>518.12</u>                          |
|  | <u>58.61</u>                           |
|  | <u>55.86</u>                           |
|  | <b><u>1125.33</u></b>                  |
| <br>                                     |  |
| <b>Cheques received</b>                  |  |
| Badminton Club                           | Main Hall hire                         |
| Mrs. Maybury                             | Main Hall and Pavilion hire            |
| Watton School                            | Pavilion hire for Dots and Tots        |
| Dave Boddy                               | Main Hall and Pavilion hire            |
| Mike Smith                               | Main Hall and Pavilion hire            |
|  | <u>148.50</u>                          |
|  | <u>56.00</u>                           |
|  | <u>189.00</u>                          |
|  | <u>306.00</u>                          |
|  | <u>39.00</u>                           |
|  | <b><u>738.50</u></b>                   |

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

• **6-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the 6-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income items for both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts and explained the variations in both statements.

**Parish Council**

- Mrs. Dinnin said that there would be no P3 grant income for 2011/12 although £1,000 was put in the budget.
- Mr. Filer said that although the Parish Council had a non-contested election, East Herts Council would be charging for the cost incurred in producing notices etc. The 2007 non-contested elections costs were £223.17, however East Herts Council did not invoice the Parish Council until December 2010.

**Community Hall**

- Mr. Filer said he expected income, which is currently below budget, to remain slightly low throughout the financial year.

The floodlighting income is seasonal low. However, Mr. Filer remained concerned it would not reach the budgeted figure.

• **Six-monthly inspection of accounts**

Mrs. McCash said that she carried-out the six-month inspection of the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts on the 17<sup>th</sup> October and the accounts were in good order.

A copy of Mrs. McCash’s report to be included in the Community Hall and Parish Council accounts for 2011/12.

**Action: J. Allsop**

• **BDO – Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

Mr. Filer said that, as reported at the July Parish Council meeting, BDO had returned the Parish Council’s Annual Return in July because of an error in the asset value. Historically all assets have been included at cost or current value. The new regulations required each asset owned by the Parish Council to be recorded on the asset register at its original purchase cost. Community assets such as War Memorials or land such as a village green should be listed at a nominal value of £1.

Mr. Filer said that the total fixed assets value recorded under item 9 of the Annual return was originally £96,850. This was then reduced to £55,889 to take into account the new regulations.

Mr. Filer proposed that the accounts as signed off by BDO LLP be accepted by the Parish Council.

Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Arrange meeting for Budget and Finance Sub-Committee to discuss budget**  
The Budget and Finance Sub-Committee will meet on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 1900 in the Community Hall. Mr. Filer said that all Parish Councillors are welcome to attend the meeting, even if they are not members of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.  
Mr. Harris to be notified of the meeting date. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Budget items for 2012/13**  
Mr. Filer asked Parish Councillors to give him their budget items as soon as possible as he will need to meet up with the Clerk in the two weeks leading up to the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee to draw up his draft budgets. **Action: Parish Councillors**

### Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following item.

- **Report and minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October**  
Mr. Meischke proposed that the minutes, be accepted and signed by Mr. Poulton, Chairman of the Community Hall Board of Trustees, as a true record. Mr. Stock seconded the motion and Mr. Poulton and Mr. Knight were in favour.
- **Gritting around the Community Hall**  
At the April 2011 meeting, it was agreed that this autumn laminated notices should be put up, advising that the areas around the Community Hall and car park are not gritted.  
Mr. Knight to laminate four notices. **Action: I. Knight**
- **Fire in the ladies toilets**  
On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October, Brian Thompson reported a fire in the Ladies external toilets. No damage was done, however, for safety reasons Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke decided to lock both toilets, as potentially this fire could have burnt the Community Hall down.
- **Future of outside toilets**  
Parish Councillors discussed the future of the outside toilets and the problem that additional key holders sometimes fail to lock the facilities after use. Mr. Poulton suggest that the men's toilets could be permanently closed and used for additional storage space while the ladies toilets could remain open as a unisex toilet and have a Yale lock fitted. Various other options for keeping the external toilets open were discussed.  
Ms. Waltham agreed to work out a strategy for the future of the external toilets and present her strategy at the November Parish Council meeting. **Action: E. Waltham**  
In the meantime, the toilets will be re-opened during the day. Mr. Phillips to be notified accordingly. **Action: N. Poulton**

### Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following item.

- **MPPA – Pressure-washing and moss kill**  
Mr. Knight reported that after the pressure-washing of the MPPA had been completed, it was evident that both tennis courts needed to be moss killed. The contractors, Halycon Courts, were therefore instructed to moss kill both courts instead of the agreed one court equivalent. The Tennis Club will be sending the Community Hall Trustees a donation to cover the additional cost incurred.
- **MPPA - Line painting**  
Mr. Knight said that he sought advice from Halycon Court about re-painting the tennis court line-markings. The use of line-marking machines does not work well because the paint spreads into the porous surface of the courts making the edges of the lines spread and look uneven.  
The best method is to apply masking tape to either side of the area to be marked and then apply the paint.  
Mr. Knight said that he had purchased £60 of line-marking paint and the Tennis Club will arrange to hand paint the court markings as outlined above. Mr. Filer proposed that the Community Hall account pay for the line-marking paint. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

### Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Report on Environment Sub-Committee walkabout meeting held on Monday 3rd October**  
Members of the Environment Sub-Committee visited the Lammas, Watton Green and the sportsfield on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

• **The Lammas**

The recently damaged Willow tree was inspected and it was agreed that Adam Welch should cut back the side and lower branches to improve the shape of the tree.

The bike ramp area, it was suggested was to be levelled, tidied, probably grassed and planted. This area could be part of a Golden Jubilee project. Mr. Smith suggested that a roundel of good-sized native specimen trees should be planted at far end of Lammas, near the steps with the trees protected by wrought iron work

Mrs. Dinnin said that she knows someone who does metal work and could make the wrought iron fencing and she agreed to give the contact details to Mr. Smith. **Action: C. Dinnin**

Mr. Smith agreed to obtain quotations for specimen trees, and the fencing. **Action: M. Smith**

It was agreed not to do any additional planting or other work on the Lammas bank.

• **Watton Green**

Members of the Environment Sub-Committee suggested that a group of trees could be planted on Watton Green, at the side near to the property 'Brambles', also the post located at the rear of the site should be replaced with a pedestrian gate.

It was noted that the seat around the central oak needed some attention and some low boughs needed to be removed. Mr. Smith advised that he had done this.

Mr. Smith said that the Woodland Trust have a woodland scheme where they provide trees free of charge, however these trees are only saplings of approximately 20cm to 40cm height.

Applications for this year needed to be in by September. Mr. Smith said that applications for 2012 will probably start in March next year.

Mrs. Dinnin has spoken to Tony Bradford, who said he would be doing some more clearance work on the Cottage Site over the autumn/winter months. He agreed to inspect various trees on the Lammas and the Oak tree on the sportsfield and report back to Mrs. Dinnin, however to date he has not been in contact.

**b) Routine reports**

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

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm this afternoon.

**ii) Monthly village-report**

Mr. Meischke completed the report on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

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

- **Sportsfield grass** - the grass in the goalmouth nearest to the Community Hall is not as good as it should be for this time of year.

- **See-saw spring sit-on** - the wooden plank that has a seat attached on each end, has rotted and someone could get hurt by the splintering wood.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

- **MPPA** - the Oak tree branches are touching one of the floodlighting posts and could cause a bulb to blow in windy conditions. Adam Welch to be asked to inspect the tree and cut back any growth if required. **Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Allotments** - some of the allotment plots need cultivating.

- **Request for bees on Allotments** – Mr. Meischke said that Roger Green (Allotment holder) has asked if he can keep bees on the allotments. After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed not to grant this request.

Mr. Meischke to notify Roger Green accordingly.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Salt bins** – Eralp Yucelt (Hertfordshire Highways, has confirmed that the salt bins are scheduled to be filled.

- **War Memorial garden** – Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch would attend to the War Memorial garden before Remembrance Sunday (13<sup>th</sup> November).

**iii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action**

None.

**iv) Website**

None.

**v) Website diary**

None.

## 9 Correspondence received

### a) East Herts Council - The Future of Standards

Simon Drinkwater (Director of Neighbourhood Services, East Herts Council) wrote on 3<sup>rd</sup> October concerning the possible responsibilities for Standards under the proposals in the Localism Bill. These new arrangements mean that Town and Parish Councils will need to adopt a new Code of Conduct.

The Clerk to send Parish Councillors a copy of Simon Drinkwater's letter via email.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### b) Letter from Mike Inman re water usage on the Allotments

Mike Inman wrote to Mr. Meischke concerning water usage on the allotments and in particular water used for cleaning the MPPA surface. Mr. Smith has written in response to this letter, assuring him that the Parish Council will not be using the water from the allotments for any other purpose than serving the allotments.

### c) Hertfordshire County Council - Temporary Closing and waiting restrictions in A602 Ware Road

All Parish Councillors have been e-mailed with the temporary closure notice sent out by Hertfordshire Highways for the following areas.

- **A602 Ware Road**, Watton at Stone from its junction with the A602 Watton at Stone Bypass/A119 Hertford Road roundabout north eastwards to its junction with A602 Tonwell Bypass, a distance of approximately 1168 metres - sometime during the period 1<sup>st</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> November.

### d) East Herts Village Hall Challenge 2012

The Parish Council are not interested in taking part in the Village Hall Challenge.

### e) Methodist Church reopening invitation on Sunday 23rd October – Service of Dedication

All Parish Councillors have been e-mailed an invitation to the reopening of the Methodist Church.

### f) Letter from Hannah Brownlow re fundraising for additional playground equipment

Mrs. Brownlow wrote on 11<sup>th</sup> October in response to the Parish Council's letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> September.

Mr. Smith read out his draft response, which Parish Councillors unanimously agreed should be sent to Mrs. Brownlow.

**Action: M. Smith**

A copy of this letter and Mrs. Brownlow's letter to be e-mailed to all Parish Councillors.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### i) Hedges in Hockerill

Eralp Yucelt e-mailed on 13<sup>th</sup> October advising that the footpaths in Hockerill, as outlined in an attached plan, are all currently clear. However, all the areas outlined on the map were adjacent to the Hockerill roads and not on the footpaths. The Clerk has sent Mr. Yucelt a map outlining the footpath areas that need inspecting.

### j) Parking transport survey

The Parish Council have been asked to complete a parking and transport strategy survey. Prior to the meeting Parish Councillors listed their top five priorities and Mr. Smith analysed the results. East Herts Council to be informed that the Parish Council's top priorities are: sufficient short term parking for shoppers, improved access to services for those in rural areas, improved public transport accessibility, economic wellbeing of our towns and villages, pay on exit parking

**Action: J. Allsop**

### k) East Herts Council - Town and Parish Councillors Briefing Session:

#### East Herts Local Development Framework

Mr. Smith and Mr. Poulton agreed to attend one of the briefing sessions, either on 30<sup>th</sup> November or 5<sup>th</sup> December. The Clerk to notify East Herts Council accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### l) Development site

Mr. Smith said that East Herts Council wrote earlier this year concerning establishing management groups to assess land availability for development. However, Town and Parish Councillors were not invited to form this part of the partnership, however Town and Parish Clerks were. At the Rural Parish conference in September, some Parish Councillors expressed concern that they had not been involved in these discussions.

## 10 Village organisations

- **Watton Youth Drop Inn:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone School Governors:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone War Memorial Hall Management Committee**  
Mrs. McCash reported on the following.
  - The War Memorial Management Committee's AGM will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> November at 1000.
  - The flooring in the War Memorial has been resurfaced and is looking very good.
- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup**  
Mrs. Dinnin said she attended the Pre-School Playgroup's AGM on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September and reported on the following items.
  - A new committee was elected with the same chairperson but with several new committee members.
  - The playgroup has had a good year and is financially quite strong. Pupil numbers are currently low and fees will probably have to increase to due low numbers and increased overheads, but the committee hope that these will improve when the new Station Road development is completed and more young families move into the village.
- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group**  
Mr. Poulton reported that the Scout and Guide Group are still without a Chairman and Secretary. Both these positions have been advertised in the October issue of the Parish News.
- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club**  
Ms. Waltham said that at a recent meeting of the Sports and Social Club concern was expressed about the quality of the grass work carried-out on the sportsfield by Frank Cooper & Son earlier this year. Now that the football season has started, the newly grassed areas are not wearing well.  
Mr. Knight commented that the weather has been very dry and growth has been slow.  
Mr. Poulton said there have been several wasps nest and one hornets nest in the grass cuttings at the base of the sportsfield hedge.  
Mr. Knight agreed to ask the Cricket Club if they would please spread their grass cuttings evenly rather than piling them up under the hedge because the wasps and hornets are attracted to nest in the warm grass cuttings. **Action: I. Knight**
- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.
- **River Beane Restoration Association**  
Mr. Knight said that the River Beane Restoration Association are setting up river wardens, which will be a group of people who will look after designated stretches of the River Beane for wildlife and flora from the upper reaches through to Hertford. A similar scheme is already operating for the River Ver.  
He said that the only thing that would really improve the River Beane flow conditions was ceasing the extraction of water from the Whitehall pumping station.
- **Remembrance Sunday**  
Mr. Smith gave his apologies that he would be unable to attend the Remembrance Sunday service at the Parish Church and the wreath laying at the War Memorial.  
Mr. Meischke agreed to lay the poppy wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.  
Mr. Poulton agreed to do a reading at the service.
- **Apologies for absence**  
Mr. Smith and Mr. Stock gave their apologies for absence for the November meeting.  
Mr. Meischke will chair the November Parish Council meeting.

## 11 Items for Parish News

There was one item identified for inclusion in the November 2011 issue of the Parish News.

- Website banner **Action: J. Allsop**
- **The meeting closed at 2125.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011.**