

A meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council was held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 15th March 2000 at 7.00 p.m.

Present:	Mr. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark	Mr. V. Dunhill
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. H. McCash
	Mr. J. Meischke	
Members of public	Alan Neville of WAGN	Two members of the Transport Police
	P C John Ivens	
	5 members of public	

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. C. Dinnin, Mr. D. Filer and Mr. R. Singleton.

2 Presentations re station matters at Watton-at-Stone station and policing within the village

PC John Ivens introduced himself as our new Rural Community Liaison Officer. He explained that, in his new post, he is responsible for forming and maintaining links with the community as a whole. He then went through a list of recorded crime in the Watton-at-Stone Parish. These figures do not take into account the telephone calls received reporting public nuisance or quality-of-life incidents. A question and answer session then took place.

PC Ivens suggested the possibility of holding Police surgeries within the village. It was agreed that this was a good idea and he could use the Parish Council meeting room for the purpose. Mr. Stock asked PC Ivens to contact him so that the idea could be discussed further.

PC Ivens left the meeting.

Mr. Neville of WAGN was invited to speak.

Mr. Neville informed members of the public that he had already attended the Parish Council meeting held in January 2000. For the benefit of members of the public he then outlined his position and the working relationship between WAGN and Railtrack, and the current problems at Watton-at-Stone station. Mr. Neville said that he is developing good relations with the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and hoped to attend future meetings as and when necessary.

The two members of the Transport Police reported that they had not yet had an opportunity to visit Watton-at-Stone station and look into the problems there, but hoped to do so in the near future. They answered questions relating to the station security.

Mr. Neville and the two members of the Transport Police left the meeting at 7.45 p.m.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th February 2000**

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 16th February 2000.

- Page 1, Item 2 a, Minutes of the last meeting - Acceptance

Minutes of the 19th January 2000 (not the 15th December 1999).

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

b) Review of actions

- **Contact Railtrack re fly-tipping at Broom Hall Farm**

Another letter has been sent to Railtrack asking for a response to the Parish Council's letter of the 25th January.

To date, no response has been received from Railtrack. The Clerk to continue to chase. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Liaise over remaining LEAF grant**

This action point has been completed.

- **Meet with Mrs. Freeman and the installation-contractor re positioning of memorial seat**

Mr. Stock said that this will happen in due course and need not remain an action point.

- **Contact Mr. Monk re depositing of leaves in his garden, adjacent to Village Pump**
 Mr. Stock reported that Mr. Filer had spoken to Mrs. R. Monk regarding the leaves spilling down onto the village pump site. She claimed that although they kept the patch of ground tidy, it was not theirs (Abel Smith's) but was County land. Moreover, she claimed that the leaves were from the trees outside the property.
 Subsequently Mr. Filer and Mr. Poulton agreed to ask Jeff Skidmore to clear this area. The work was then done at a cost of £65. This money will come from the LEAF grant for the Village Pump and War Memorial.
- **Monitor progress re changing the barrier at Church Walk to allow wheelchair access**
 Mr. Poulton reported that some work to the Church Walk barrier had been carried-out. However, they had not screwed-down the top bar and this is having to be replaced daily because youngsters keep on removing it. Mr. Poulton said that the current position of the barriers would still not allow access to motorised wheelchair users.
 Mr. Dunhill to investigate the matter. **Action: V. Dunhill**
- **Inform Aston Parish Council that Mr. Clark & Mrs. McCash will be attending the Inter Parish Conference**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Send £50 donation to Watton JMI School for Millennium Courtyard project**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Report progress on the Parish Map**
 This item to be discussed under item 4 a, Parish Map (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Respond to draft prospectus for Hertfordshire's Rail Network**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Inform Clerk if able to attend CDA - Village Design Seminar on 1st April 2000**
 Mr. Meischke reported that he is unable to attend the Village Design Seminar. No other Parish Councillors were able to attend the meeting.
- **Advise EHDC that one of the Great Innings dog-waste bins has been relocated to footpath 17**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Try to obtain a sponsor to purchase one dog-waste bin for Mill Lane**
 Mr. Poulton asked for this item to remain an action point because he is in the process of negotiation with Wimpy Homes re the purchase of three dog-waste bins for the village. **Action: N. Poulton**
- **Write to the Rev. Brian Gwinn re Community Service on Sunday 2nd of July 2000**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to the Football & Cricket Club re Community Service on Sunday 2nd of July 2000**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Contact the Chairman of Three Valleys Water re trench-work problem within Watton-at-Stone**
 Mr. Stock reported that Mr. Filer had spoken to Mr. Jim McGown, Chairman of Three Valleys Water, regarding the remedial work in the village and he has promised to follow up on the actions.
- **Send signed copy of accounts for the year 1998/99 to auditors**
 This action point has been completed.
 Refer to item 5 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Apply for additional funding for MPPA**
 This item to be discussed under 5 a, Community Hall Trustees - MPPA(on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Find out when the autumn school term begins**
 Mrs. McCash reported that the autumn school-term begins on Tuesday 5th September 2000.
- **Contact Doe Sport to ask them if they can arrange to start work on the MPPA at the beginning of September**
 This item to be discussed under 5 a, Community Hall Trustees - MPPA (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Ask Don Chandler to keep external toilets closed from Monday 21st - Friday 25th February**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Check Health & Safety manuals re access to the mains supply facilities**
 This item to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee,

which will be held following the re-election of the sub-committees at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2000.

Agenda: R & A

- **Write to Mrs. Maureen Monk asking her to arrange to repair the horses fence adjacent to the sportsfield**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton reported that, on Friday 10th of March, the barbed-wire fence had not been repaired and was now completely down. Concern was again shown that this could cause damage to the horses in the field. Mr. Poulton agreed to inspect the site again to see if the work has been carried-out or not.

Action: N. Poulton

- **Inspect the broken fencing on sportsfield**

Mr. Stock reported that Mr. Filer had checked the sportsfield fencing, measured up for what is required and, with Mr. Poulton's agreement, obtained the wood from Chas Lowe, together with creosote and nails. He has now cut the wood to the approximate sizes and creosoted the post ends.

Mr. Filer organise a work party to repair the fence.

Action: N. Poulton/D. Filer

- **Accept Land Technology's quotation for grass cutting and strimming work on the sportsfield**

This action point has been completed.

- **Discuss the artwork requirements for the information board for Watton Green**

This action point is in progress.

- **Agree planting at Village Pump site & submit invoices for the LEAF grant before 31st March 2000**

This item to be discussed under item 5 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Village Pump (on page 7 of these minutes).

- **Ask Mr. Standen (EH Highways Partnership) to prepare a draft plan for traffic-calming on Station Rd**

This action point has been completed and Mr. Stock has informed Mr. Standen that, from now on, Helen McCash will be handling this project on behalf of the Parish Council.

- **Inspect seats on 2-bay swings on sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton reported that he had inspected the seats on the 2-bay swings and had stood on them. In his opinion they are quite safe. He reminded Parish Councillors that a playground safety check will be carried-out by the Playground Management Services (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) during the May period.

- **Write to Sports & Social Club re their notice board adjacent to the Community Hall**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 8, Reports from other organisations - Sports & Social Club on page 13 of these minutes.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application Blue Bury Farm, Walkern Road**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application Watton-at-Stone Playgroup, School Lane**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Superintendent Picton re offences that have occurred in the Parish within the past twelve months**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 7 c, Hertfordshire Police - Summary of recorded crime in the Watton-at-Stone Parish area April/1999-January 2000, on page 11 of these minutes.

- **Complete CDA -Village Events Diary**

This action point has been completed.

- **Respond to HCC re proposed school admissions rules for 2001 - 2002**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to HCC re Regional planning guide in the South East & the threat from additional housing**

This action point has been completed.

- **Book a stall for the Mayfayre on Monday 1st May 2000**

This action point has been completed.

A letter has been received from the Watton Mayfayre 2000 Committee, who are looking for donations or a £10 cheque to confirm the stall booking.

Mr. Poulton proposed that the Parish Council donates £50 (from their Millennium fund). Mr. Stock seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Contact Mr. Poulton stating when you are able to help with the Mayfayre stall**

Mr. Poulton informed Parish Councillors that there is still plenty of time for them to respond.

- **Contact EHDC re bus permit issue for 2000/01**

This action point has been completed.

- **Ask the School Governors to place the subject of the temporary road on Church Lane on their next agenda**

Mrs. McCash reported that this item is on the agenda for the next meeting of Watton School Governor. However, she has already been informed that the temporary road will be closed before the end of April 2000.

- **Submit report & annual return for the year 1999/00 to PPP**

Mr. Dunhill reported that this action point has yet to be completed.

Action: V. Dunhill

- **Submit an application for grant-aid for the year 2000/01 to PPP**

Mr. Dunhill reported that this action point has yet to be completed.

Action: V. Dunhill

- **Inform Mrs. Duckworth (Polar Bear Club) of suggested environmental project for the village**

This action point has been completed.

- **Complete forms for Village of the Year competition for 2000**

Mr. Poulton said that the Clerk will send off the completed forms in the next couple of weeks.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Attend Green County Hertfordshire Strategy meeting and respond to the review**

Mr. Poulton said that he had attended the meeting and responded accordingly. A copy of the response to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

4 Specific items

a) Parish Map

Mr. Meischke thanked all Parish Councillors who attended the informal meeting on Wednesday 8th March (prior to the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Trustees) to discuss the Parish Map. The project is now progressing well, and the draft layout of the map was discussed in detail. Mr. Meischke has given the input from this meeting to his son, Jonathan Meischke, who is in the process of making alterations to the map accordingly.

b) Time capsule

Mr. Poulton was happy to report that we are now in possession of the time capsule, made and donated to us by the University of Hertfordshire. Parish Councillors inspected the time capsule and agreed that a good job had been done. It would have cost the Parish Council approximately £500 to purchase a similar style of time capsule.

Mr. Poulton then read out his letter of thanks to Dr. John Beamish of the Faculty of Engineering & Information Sciences at University of Hertfordshire.

c) 2000 Inter-Parish Conference

Mr. Poulton, Mr. Clark, Mr. Stock all agreed that the conference was very successful and well attended by Parish Councils.

Mr. Clark then reported that the agenda had been an over-ambitious one and it would have been sufficient to discuss policing problems only without introducing highway ones as well. The conference was run as a workshop with members of Parish Councils working within their own Parish group. It was interesting that the surrounding Parishes suffer from the same type of problems as our own.

d) Dog-fouling - dog-waste bin for Mill Lane

This item was covered under item 3 b, Review of actions - Try to obtain a sponsor to purchase one dog-waste bin for Mill Lane (on page 2 of these minutes).

e) Three Valley Water trenches

Part of this item was covered under item 3 b, Review of actions - Contact the Chairman of Three Valleys Water re trench-work problem within Watton-at-Stone (on page 2 of these minutes).

Mr. Stock said that Three Valleys Water had agreed most of the problems on the list that he had prepared for Hazeldell.

f) Walkern Road bridge

Mr. Knight said that he had not yet arranged a site meeting with Dave Standen (EH Highways Partnership).

Action: I. Knight

g) Police response to rural crime

Mr. Poulton said that the Parish Council had now received a list of all criminal offences throughout the Parish for the period April 1999 to January 2000 from Hertfordshire Constabulary. The Parish Council now has the information it requires to respond to Oliver Heald's letter (dated 21st January) concerning police responses. Mr. Poulton proposed that the following letter be sent to Oliver Heald MP.

'Many thanks for your letter of 21st January and for your concern over Policing in the rural areas.

The Parish Council has a policy of reporting all known crime to the Police and encourages local residents to do the same.

We have obtained, from Hertfordshire Constabulary, a summary of recorded crime in our area. (A copy is enclosed for your use.)

What is missing from this report is vandalism which, although petty in the sense of crime, is a great concern to the Parish Council and residents. This includes: broken seats, graffiti, broken bottles on the play areas and general vandalism near residents homes, especially the sheltered accommodation and railway station.

The Parish Council does attend Police Liaison meetings. The Police do attend Parish Council meetings, but there always seems to be some excuse or other as to why there is little or no policing in the rural areas.

The Parish Council feel that the matter is getting worse. The closed circuit television in Stevenage and Hertford tends to drive the petty thieves to the rural areas such as Watton-at-Stone, where the response time by police is, to say the least, slow.

If there is anything you can do to convince the Government that crime in rural areas is increasing and that something has to be done we, for one, would be thankful.'

'P.S. You might have seen the article in the Daily Mail on Wednesday 8th March, which sums up our feelings (copy enclosed).'

Action: J. Allsop

h) HCC - Hertfordshire's local transport plan - consultation

Mr. Poulton said that this item had been on circulation. Because it is the Parish Council's policy to always reply to consultation documents, Mr. Poulton proposed that the following response be sent.

'Watton-at-Stone Parish Council thanks you for your letter of 9th February enclosing the consultation draft.

The Parish Council wishes the following to be considered for developing the main document.

- a) To encourage parents to use other forms of transport to take their children to school. Especially in the rural areas, where the local school is within walking distance.
- b) To encourage schools to adopt "the safer routes to school" policy in conjunction with the police.
- c) To promote and inform, changes in timetables for public transport in conjunction with the Parish and Town Councils.
- d) To hold meetings with rural Parish Councils as to how the passenger transport systems can be improved (i.e. local bus and train timetables as organised by Jacqui Grant for Watton-at-Stone, Benington and Aston).
- e) To develop a passenger transport system for East/West routes across the county.
- f) To set up traffic management schemes in conjunction with Parish Councils to decrease traffic speeds which will result in a reduction of accidents and improve road safety and the environment.
- g) To deter heavy goods vehicles from using narrow country lanes.
- h) To provide a regular rural transport system from the rural areas to the urban towns for shopping, health and work.
- i) To ensure that the statutory authorities consult with each other and Parish, Town, District and County Councils to ensure that roads are not being constantly 'dug up' and when they are, are properly reinstated with the least inconvenience to road users and local residents.'

Mrs. McCash Seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

i) Footpaths - re-vetment work on footpath 36 on the Lammas

Mr. Dunhill reported that the re-vetment work to footpath 36 is now complete. Mr. Poulton said that he was very impressed with the high standard of workmanship.

It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to the Countryside Management Service and to inform them that the Parish Council is very impressed with the work carried-out and the courteous manner in which the contractors dealt with members of the public.

Action: V. Dunhill

j) Reinstatement of bollards in School Lane

Mr. Poulton reported that Three Valleys Water had reinstated the bollards in School Lane in the wrong position. They are now 68” apart (which could allow access for a small car) and approximately 6 feet nearer to the Beaches driveway (originally they were positioned on the boundary of the Beaches).

Mr. Poulton said that the Parish Council had received numerous verbal complaints about the new bollards. Three Valleys Water are being asked by EH Highways Department to move the bollards again because the 68” width is a major cause for concern. However, the bollards being positioned nearer to the Beaches driveway is an improvement because it will stop cars parking at this point, which would block the footpath.

This item to remain under Specific Items until the matter has been resolved.

k) Bus permits

Mr. Poulton reported that he and the Clerk will issue bus permits on Monday 27th March 2000 from 10.00 to 12.00 a.m. at Glebe Court.

Posters advertising this will be placed throughout the village.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

l) Government threat to abolish Town and Parish Councils

All Parish Councillors were copied with Oliver Heald’s letter (dated 21st February) concerning the Government threat to abolish Town and Parish Councils. Mr. Stock said that because of the importance of this issue the Parish Council needs to respond as soon as possible. He then read out a letter which he had prepared and proposed should be sent to Mr. Heald, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. **See attached**

Mr. Stock said that he would give a copy of his letter to all Parish Councillors for their comments/approval and requested their responses by 20th March so that the letter can be sent on Tuesday. (Note, no changes were requested so the letter sent is as attached.)

Action: D. Stock

Comment [C1]:

5 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Knight reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Confirmation of Audit of the Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31st March 1999**

Pannell Kerr & Forster have issued an audit certificate for the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 1999. Their fee for carrying-out the audit is £325 plus VAT.

- **Insurance schedule**

The Insurance renewal for the Community Hall (due on the 1st April 2000) has been received from Cornhill Insurance. Mr. Knight to check the details on the schedule to make sure that it covers all items required.

Action: I. Knight

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Minutes of meeting held on 8th March**

All Parish Councillors had been copied with the minutes of the meeting, a copy of which will be bound in the minute book.

- **Acceptance of the minutes**

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

Mr. Stock seconded the motion and Mr. Poulton was in favour.

- **Damage to fire doors**

Mr. Poulton said that further to the report in the minutes of the Community Hall Trustees, Cornhill Insurance had written requesting an additional quotation for the repair to the framework of the fire door in the Pavilion. It was agreed that a second quotation be obtained from Hertford Glass.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Pavilion flooring**

Mr. Poulton & Mr. Meischke have tried to clean the black marks off the Pavilion floor. The floor will require a professional clean later in the year, following use by the Summer Play Scheme.

Comment [C2]:

- **MPPA**

Mr. Poulton was sorry to report that the Groundwork Trust application for grant aid had been unsuccessful. However, he had now submitted two further applications for the shortfall amount of £2,593 to SQ Environmental Trust Limited and EHDC.

Mr. Poulton proposed that if the Trustees are unable to get any additional funding, the shortfall amount will be paid from the Parish Council reserves and paid back via the budgets for 2001/02 and 2002/3. All Parish Councillors agreed this action.

Mr. Meischke to contact Doe Sport to ask them to commence the resurfacing work to the MPPA during the week commencing the 7th September 2000. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Community Hall roof**

Mr. Dunhill had reported to Mr. Poulton that there was damage to the guttering around the external door on the pavilion-side of the building. This has now been repaired.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Sportsfield fencing**

This item was reported on under 3 b, Review of actions - Inspect the broken fencing on sportsfield (on page 3 of these minutes).

- **Sports Hall flooring**

Mr. Meischke reported that he has spoken to Altro Flooring who will arrange J & M Flooring, who originally laid the floor, to come and inspect the damage.

- **Roller on sportsfield**

Mr. Meischke said that he had spoken to John Booker (Chairman of the Sports & Social Club) who has arranged for the roller to be chained and padlocked. The Parish Council's main concern is that if the roller remains unsecured, it could cause an accident.

Environment

Mr. Stock reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Watton Green**

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Stanley had removed the remains of the bonfire into the large hollow on Watton Green and then filled it with top-soil. The grass seeding will be done at a later date.

The framework for the information board has now been completed and the Countryside Management Service has delivered it to Mr. Filer, where it will be stored until we are ready to install it on-site. Mr. Stock said that the information board is a substantial structure which should resist vandals.

- **Village Pump**

Mr. Stock said that to date, £455.50 of the £500 LEAF grant had been spent as follows:

- J. Skidmore -contract ground work - Village Pump site £180
- J. Skidmore extra clearance work - Village Pump site £65
- Berberis bushes - Village Pump site £60.50
- Shingle and planting - War Memorial site £150.00

This leaves £44.50 of funds still available from the LEAF grant.

The ground work and planting has now been completed. Mr. Filer has written to Mr. Abel Smith informing him that the Parish Council would be grateful if he would now arrange for the woodwork to be treated as promised.

Mr. Filer is to purchase one or more large shrub or a tree to fill the gap in the hedge behind the pump.

Mr. Poulton said that the brick work around the pump needs to be built-up by one course. This would prevent earth from the surrounding area falling onto the paved area of the pump. Mr. Skidmore is able to get the bricks required from Highground. Mr. Poulton proposed that the Parish Council arrange for this work to be carried-out and an invoice obtained before the end of this month. Mr. Stock seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Poulton to act accordingly.

Action: N. Poulton

Mr. Stock and Mr. Filer to submit all invoices relating to the LEAF grant before the 31st March 2000.

Action: D. Stock/ D. Filer

Mr. Stock said that the site was now very much improved and was well worth the effort involved

• **Traffic-calming and safety of crossing in Station Road**

Mrs. McCash said that in spite of numerous telephone calls to EH Highways Partnership, the plans for the bridge on Station Road had not progressed. Mr. Poulton suggested that Mr. Ron Jack's (the new Parish Engineer for Watton-at-Stone) immediate supervisor, Alex Hayward, should be contacted.

Mrs. McCash to chase the matter.

Action: H. McCash

Mr. Stock said that he would also contact EH Highways Partnership to get a firm commitment from them. (i.e. To do what they have promised to do.)

Action: D. Stock

• **PPP**

This item was reported on under 3 b, Review of actions - Submit report & annual return for the year 1999/00 to PPP and Submit an application for grant-aid for the year 2000/01 to PPP (on page 4 of these minutes).

Mr. Dunhill reported, as agreed, that EMM Decor have removed the Sycamore tree adjacent to their property.

i) **Report**

Mr. Poulton carried-out the sportsfield report on the 10th March, the result of which is as follows.

• **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK - But roller on field needs chaining up.
Litter	None.
Dog-waste bin and fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Very good for time of year. Light along church walk on, no number. Barbed wire fence in horses field needs attention.

• **Children's Playground:**

Condition of surface	Corner of soft-area see-saw missing.
Litter/Litter bin	Empty.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Slide	OK.
Comments	A lot of graffiti, but I have cleaned it all off.

• **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)	-
Litter bin	Empty.
Car Park	OK
General	Good - notice boards still in position.

• **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface	OK.
Boundary Fencing	Good.
Tennis nets	OK.
Litter	None.
General	Leaves need collecting - instructed Don Chandler to clear. Notice board cracked.

• **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment	Good.
Surfaces	Good.
Litter	None.
Dog-waste bin and fouling	None.
Comments	Not in a bad condition considering building works.

• **Allotments Area:**

Access	OK.
Condition of paths between allotments	OK.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	OK.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	Untidy.
Litter	None.
Comments	None.

- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
Litter and rubbish in and around culverts None.
Dog-fouling Some - Dog bin required in this area, but in hand.
Comments None.
- **Salt bins**
Perrywood Lane OK.
Great Innings OK.
Station Road
Moorymead Close
Hazeldell
- **Dog-waste bins**
Footpath 17 OK.
Sportsfield OK.
Church Walk OK.
Walkern Road OK.
Station Road OK.
High Street (by Memorial) OK.
- **General Comments** None.

ii) MPPA & sports equipment in Main Hall - six-monthly check

MPPA & Community Hall equipment - six monthly check

Note that:

- **U** indicates that urgent (i.e. immediate) action is required
- **S** indicates that action is required soon
- **W** indicates that action can wait

MPPA

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Hard surface	Is it free of: • holes • cracks • litter/debris • weeds • moss etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Court marking	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Kicker boards	Are they: • secure	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	• graffiti-free • graffiti-free • in good condition. Check for: • protruding nails • protruding screws • splinters/cracks • missing nails/screws Are the gates free of graffiti, loose/missing nails/screws, cracks and splinters	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Do the gates open, close and lock	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Tennis posts	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Tennis nets	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Flood lights	Are the lamps in contact with the trees	<input type="checkbox"/>		

	Are the lamp posts in good order and free of graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wire fence	Is the wire mesh: • secured to posts • free of cuts/breaks • in good condition Is the metal-work (e.g. posts, etc.) secure and in good condition	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Are the gates in good condition Do the gates open, close and lock	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
Notice board	Is it: • legible • free of graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Cracked - needs repairing.
	• secure • free of damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Boundary	Is it: • free of litter • in need of a cut	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
	• free of problem	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Play Area				
Slide	Condition of: • hand rail	<input type="checkbox"/>		
General/additional comments (if any):				
Play equipment will need painting next year.				

Community Hall

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
2 Benches	Condition			
Badminton/ short tennis posts *	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Badminton posts *	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Badminton net	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Short-tennis net	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Netball posts	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Netball nets	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sports floor	Condition		<input type="checkbox"/>	Tear in floor.
Floor markings	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
External toilets	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Internal toilets	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Showers	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Kitchen	Condition	<input type="checkbox"/>		Battery for clock.
General/additional comments (if any):				
Scuff marks on pavilion floor needs attention. Skirting boards and doors in pavilion need painting. Money to be put in budget for 2001/02 for internal decorations.				

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) Moat House, Perrywood Lane

Courtyard infill & roof-space conversion. Triple garage

Mr. Poulton reported that Mr. Filer had visited the residents of the neighbouring properties with these plans. Because no objections were received, the Clerk wrote to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

ii) 25 High Street

Two storey side extensions to both sides and rear, new porch, alter roof, internal alterations

Parish Councillors studied the plans for this application.

After lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council objects to the above application on the following grounds.

1. It is an over-development of the site.
2. The new vehicular access is considered to be too close to the adjacent footpath (i.e. that runs from the High Street to Lammas) and an additional disturbance to the High Street footpath (i.e. there is already a good and safe service road to this property).

It was agreed that a letter be sent to the planning department accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

None.

7 Correspondence received**a) Circulation****i) Hertfordshire Association for Local History - Recorder Scheme - Special Project**

This item has been on circulation and Mr. Meischke had suggested that the recorder scheme could be advertised in the Parish Magazine. It was agreed to write to the Hertfordshire Association for Local History suggesting that they advertise in the Watton-at-Stone Parish Magazine.

Action: J. Allsop

b) EHDC - Leisure guide 2000

EHDC have asked for information on any leisure activities to be included in their next edition of the Leisure Guide for 1 May to 31 August 2000.

Mr. Meischke to pass the information sheets to the Sports & Social Club for their completion.

Action: J. Meischke

c) HCC - Whempstead to Benington Road

Mr. Clark reported that he had now received a response from Dave Standen (EH Highways Partnership) about the condition of the roads in Whempstead, and proposed that the following letter be sent to Mr Ward (The Old Chapel, Whempstead).

'Further to our recent correspondence I have now received a reply from Highways Partnership which explains their priorities concerning the condition of the local lanes.

Please find below a summary of their comments.

• Potholes

They will apply a temporary patch, within 48 hours, to any pothole reported to them. This should be replaced with a permanent repair within 28 days. They would appreciate being informed of any problem which is not attended to within these time-scales as it is the responsibility of the sub-contractors to meet these service levels and they do not have sufficient resources to monitor all repairs.

• Damage to Verges

I am sorry to report less good news. They have no budget in the forthcoming year specifically to repair verges. However they are aware of the problem in our locality and will be undertaking some remedial work in the summer at which time they will also attend to some of the drainage problems.

• Volume of Heavy Traffic

No specific response was made in their letter to this issue but at a recent meeting of local Parish Councils (which we attended) this problem was raised with the Head of the Highways Partnership who was present at the meeting. We will continue to pursue the matter with him as a follow up to the meeting.

I hope this response goes some way to addressing your complaints. We will continue to monitor the situation but would appreciate being informed of any further specific problems which occur.'

Mr. Poulton seconded them motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

d) Hertfordshire Police - Summary of recorded crime in the Watton-at-Stone Parish area April/1999-January 2000

As requested, the Hertfordshire Police have sent a summary of all recorded crime. However, they were only able to supply a ten-month and not twelve-month record of crimes. A copy of the summary is attached to these minutes.

See attached

After discussion by Parish Councillors, it was agreed that we write to PC John Ivens asking for the total number of telephone calls received reporting incidents occurring within the parish for the period April 1999 to January 2000, and how many of those were for public nuisance or quality-of-life incidents.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

e) Hertfordshire Police - Launch of Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2000/01

Hertfordshire Police will be holding the launch of Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2000/01 on Monday 17th April 2000. Mr. Clark agreed to attend the meeting

f) HCC - drains in the High Street

Mr. Standen (EH Highways Partnership) has written (letter dated 7th March) to advise the Parish Council about two issues concerning drains in the High Street.

1 Surface Water - George & Dragon - Mini Roundabout

This section of drain is due to be jetted and the gullies cleaned on Wednesday 8 March 2000, which will hopefully solve the problem.

2. Surface Water Near War Memorial

This gully was cleaned on Thursday 2nd February 2000 and as far as I know there have been no further problems. However I will monitor this area over the next few weeks.'

g) Mr. Morris re surface water drainage in Watton-at-Stone

Mr. Morris of 12b High Street copied the Parish Council with his letter (dated 3rd March) to the Chief Executive of EHDC. His letter concerns the drainage problems at the Station Road roundabout and the War Memorial roundabout in the High Street. Both of these problems were addressed in the above item, 7 f.

h) Oliver Heald - re Regional Planning Guidance for the South East

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Oliver Heald (dated 15th February 2000).

'Further to my letter of 14th January, I have now received the enclosed response from Beverly Hughes MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

As you will see, the Minister has undertaken to ensure that the Parish Council's comments are sent to the Government Office for the South East for information. Mrs. Hughes has also confirmed that there will be an opportunity to comment on the draft of the new Regional Planning Guidance when it is published.'

i) Cornhill Insurance - claim for vandalised seat

Cornhill Insurance has agreed the Parish Council's claim for a new seat to replace the one vandalised on the Hockerill slope. The Parish Council will have to pay a £75 excess.

8 Reports from other Organisations

• Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society

Mr. Stock said that the Conversation Society will be holding its AGM on Thursday 23rd March at 8.00 p.m. in the Community Hall.

• Watton-at-Stone JMI School

Mrs. McCash reported that at a meeting of the School Governors she was informed that HCC has offered the Watton Playgroup a five-year lease on their existing site in School Lane. They will therefore not be needing the use of the mobile classrooms at the school.

• Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch

The following notice was placed in the March edition of the Parish Magazine.

'Neighbourhood Watch are looking to expand and are seeking new members.

If you are interested in becoming a co-ordinator, please contact Charles Clark on 01920 830423.'

Mr. Clark reported that he had had no response to the above advertisement.

• Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- The Sports & Social Club hire agreement for the year 2000/01 has now been signed by the respective Chairmen of the Parish Council and the Sports & Social Club. One copy of the signed agreement to be returned to the Sports & Social Club. **Action: J. Allsop**

- The Cricket Club is in contact with the Cricket Association re 21st century cricket.

- The Sports & Social Club has been informed of the possible shortfall of funds available for the re-surfacing the MPPA. They have verbally offered to loan the shortfall amount to the Community Hall Trustees if required.
- The Football Club has still not finished making the boot-bath.
- The Sports & Social Club intends to renovate its notice board adjacent to the Community Hall.

It was agreed that the Community Hall heating thermostats need turning down. Mr. Poulton agreed to carry-out this task.

Action: N. Poulton

It was noted that the Pavilion is retaining heat better since the installation of the blinds.

The external door at the car-park end of the Community Hall have been left open on a couple of occasions. It was agreed to ask Christine Bewley to note when she finds the doors unlocked and inform the Parish Council immediately.

Action: J. Meischke

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

Mr. Dunhill reported that the Scout & Guide Association will be holding its AGM on Monday 27th March at 8.00 p.m. in the Bull Public House.

All the Scout and Guide groups have high numbers attending.

• **Watton 2000**

Mr. Dunhill said that the next Watton 2000 meeting will be held on 5th April 2000.

The Watton Mayfayre are having problems re the high cost of advertising their 1st of May event in the local newspapers.

9 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Payments

Laminate 4 x A4 sheets

4.00

Receipts

None

4.00

Cheques required

Watton JMI School	Grant for Millennium project	50.00
M Stanley	To fill in & grass seed hollow at Watton Green	130.00
D. Honour	Re-vetment work to footpath 36 on the Lammas	1216.13
Ternex London	Timber for information board	48.71
D. Stock (Jewson Ltd)	Gravel for War Memorial	50.53
K. Jones	Litterpick	203.52
D. Filer (Chas Lowe)	Timber, creosote & nails for sportsfield fence	68.41
St. Albans Diocesan Board	Glebe rent for MPPA land	90.00
St. Albans Diocesan Board	Increase in Glebe rent Allotment land	50.00
Jeff Skidmore	Work to village pump	211.50
Jeff Skidmore	Work to the surrounding area of the Village Pump	76.37
Phil Berry	Video covers from Omega Print & Design	50.00
Watton Mayfayre 2000	Mayfayre Stall	50.00
D. Chandler	6 hours litterpick	25.44
J. Allsop	-March salary	420.80
	- Mercury paper - 13 weeks	7.41
	-Cable phone calls to 4/02/00	<u>23.82</u>
		<u>452.03</u>
		<u>2772.64</u>

Cheques received

EHDC	Leaf pick for 1999/2000	200.00
Sports & Social Club	Hire of sportsfield facilities for 1999/2000	<u>880.00</u>
		<u>1080.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Payments

Mrs. C. Bewley 32 hours cleaning

160.00

Receipts

Floodlighting to 2/99 110.00

Jim Keen - Main Hall hire 60.00

D. Chandler - Pavilion hire 8.00

178.00

Cheques required

D. Chandler	3 hours work	12.72
Cornhill Insurance	Annual premium for Community Hall	<u>620.27</u>
		<u>632.99</u>

Cheques received

Conservative Association	Pavilion hire	24.00
Sports & Social Club	For sportsfield line marking	56.00
C. Straker	Main Hall hire Jan. & Feb. 2000	68.00
Mrs. Gilbey	Main Hall hire	65.00
Mr. & Mrs. Beatty	Pavilion hire	<u>21.00</u>
		<u>234.00</u>

Mrs. McCash proposed that the accounts be paid, Mr. Dunhill seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

10 Chairman's / Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton reported on the following correspondence received.

- **Community Hall rates**

The Community Hall rates for the year 1st April 2000 to the 31st March 2001 is £823.83. This after the 80% relief on the charges because of the Community Hall's status as a Charitable Trust.

- **Parish Council Meetings for the Civic Year 2000/01**

The following dates were agreed.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| • 19th April 2000 | • 15th November 2000 |
| • 17th May 2000 | • 20th December 2000 |
| • 21st June 2000 | • 17th January 2001 |
| • 19th July 2000 | • 21st February 2001 |
| • None in August | • 21st March 2001 |
| • 20th September 2000 | • 18th April 2001 |
| • 18th October 2000 | |

- **The meeting closed at 9.27 p.m.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 19th April 2000.**