

## Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013

<b>Present:</b>	Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman)	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mrs. Christine Dinnin	Mr. Iain Harris
	Mr. Ian Knight	Mrs. Margaret Stanley
	Mr. David Stock	
	The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)	
<b>Members of public:</b>	Ian and Lesley Munsey (until 1920)	

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. Denis Filer, Ms. Emma Waltham, Mrs. Helen McCash.

### 2 Public Participation

Two members of the public were in attendance, namely Ian and Lesley Munsey. Mr. Smith asked them whether or not they were present for a specific reason. They said that they were the owners of 37 Station Road, which has an application for a new dwelling on the site.

Mr. Harris asked Parish Councillors if they were happy to bring forward item 6 a iv for discussion. This was agreed.

#### 37 Station Road (3/13/1503)

Erection of one dwelling

Mr. Harris said that the application form was not properly completed, the certificate at paragraph 25 of the application form did not state if the application is being made by the owner or on behalf of the owner by a developer. East Herts Council planners were asked to confirm the situation but had not yet done so. However, as above Mr. and Mrs. Munsey confirmed they were the owners.

The erection of a new dwelling attached to 37 Station Road would change 37 Station Road into a mid-terraced property and the new dwelling would be the end-of-terrace property. Mr. Harris said that there is sufficient space to build a new dwelling on the site and this appears to be an ideal infill application. Ian and Lesley Munsey confirmed that off road access to both dwellings would be from Station Road as is the case with all the other properties in the terrace.

Mr. Harris proposed a no comment response to East Herts Council. All Parish Councillors present at the meeting were in agreement.

The Clerk to write to East Herts Council accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

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

Mr. Smith welcomed Mrs. Margaret Stanley to the meeting.

Mrs. Stanley said no introductions were required because she knows everyone present at the meeting. The only Parish Councillor she has not met before is Ms. Waltham, who was not present at the meeting.

### 4 Declaration of Interests

None.

### 5 Minutes of the last meeting

#### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013**  
Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

#### b) Review of actions

##### 1. Draft a letter to the Police Commissioner for Parish Council approval

Mrs. McCash was not present at the meeting to report on this item.

**Action: H. McCash**

##### 2. Investigate regulations on Gift Aid

Mrs. McCash was not present at the meeting to report on this item.

**Action: H. McCash**

##### 3. Investigate COIF accounts

Refer to item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

##### 4. Remove bike ramps from the sportsfield

Mr. Smith said that he had not removed the bike ramps yet as they are being well used by small children to climb on. The main reason Parish Councillors agreed to remove the bike ramps was because of unsocial behaviour, which included breaking glass in around the bike ramps.

Parish Councillors present at the meeting agreed to debate this item again at the October Parish Council meeting.

**Agenda: 10.13**

5. **Obtain quotation for new MPPA perimeter fencing & kicker boards made from high-density plastic**  
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee.
6. **Arrange for the outstanding items identified in 6-monthly check to be repaired**  
Mr. Meischke said that the only outstanding work was to the play equipment on the sportsfield. Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees.
7. **Speak to Bob Adams re varnishing the Ornate village sign**  
Mrs. Dinnin said that she had made contact with Bob Adams who agreed to contact her to arrange a site meeting within the next two weeks so they can discuss what work is required to the Ornate village sign.  
**Action: C. Dinnin**
8. **Look at specification for new laptop and contact Q-Tek for advice and a quotation**  
Refer to item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Parish Council laptop.
9. **Write to Ken Crofton asking him to spearhead an onsite re traffic along Station Road**  
Mr. Smith said that in response to his letter concerning traffic along Station Road, Ken Crofton e-mailed him as follows.  
‘I have had a very useful meeting with Raj Goutam this morning at which I raised your issues. He advises me the work at Hazeldell is now complete.  
The work at Moorymead Close continues to be a problem as the cones put out to prepare and finish the work are repeatedly removed. He assures me that the work will be completed but it may have to be under a road closure notice. We can do no more, it is in hand, your Councillors are able to track progress on this and any other repair like the damaged bus stop on the Herts Direct site.  
With regard to your letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> July re. Station Road I shall pass a copy to Rosemary Chatindo to consider upon her return from holiday in September.’  
Mr. Stock briefly explained to Mrs. Stanley that there is a lot of history of problems with heavy traffic movement in Station Road. The Parish Council has tried in the past in the to get traffic-calming in Station Road without success. Station Road has got even busier with the addition of the development Gatekeeper Meadow development and it is imperative that we secure some traffic calming.  
This item to be placed on the October agenda under Environment Sub-Committee. **Agenda: 10/13**
10. **Arrange for change of bank signatories**  
Refer to item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee – Change of bank signatories on the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts.
11. **Inform East Herts Council if burned-out moped is still at the back of the Great Innings play area**  
East Herts Council have removed the burned-out moped.
12. **Inspect the road and pavement surfaces in Moorymead Close**  
Mr. Smith read out an e-mail received today from Ms. Waltham  
‘Re: Moorymead, I did a check just after the last Parish Council meeting. There are areas where the road surface is poor, particularly where there are joins in the Tarmac. I noticed a couple of potholes, though mostly the Tarmac is just breaking up.  
The pavement isn't too bad from what I saw it.  
Since I had a look in early August the worst potholes have actually been filled, but the repair job is very patchy. There are still line marks around areas that haven't been repaired so I assume they are coming back. Hazeldell all over again!  
I suggest leaving it two weeks, then I'll have another look. If it's not all repaired by then we can then ask Highways for an update.’  
Ms. Waltham to inspect the area again and report back to the Parish Council at the October meeting. **Action: E. Waltham**  
This item to be placed on the October agenda under Environment Sub-Committee. **Agenda: 10/13**
13. **Ask PCSO Sally Brooks to contact Emma Waltham re parking in Great Innings**  
The Clerk said that she had emailed PCSO Sally Brooks directly after the July Parish Council meeting, but did not know if she had subsequently made contact with Ms. Waltham.  
Ms. Waltham to report on this item at the October Parish Council meeting. **Action: E. Waltham**
14. **Collect billiard table from Ann Poulton**  
Mr. Meischke said that he had inspected the billiard table, which is very heavy and has no legs. He did not think it was suitable for use at the Community Hall. It was agreed that Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith should collect the billiard table from Ann Poulton and dispose of it. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

**c) Action points resolved**

1. Write to Ken Crofton re yellow lines in Moorymead Close
2. Draft a hedging protocol for approval by the Parish Council
3. **Write to Hertfordshire County Council re pothole problems in Hazeldell**  
Mr. Stock said that this action point was cancelled and said that he would report further under item 7 a, Specific items - Pothole problems in Hazeldell.
4. Investigate COIF accounts
5. Ask John Phillips to keep toilets open until 6pm during the summer holidays
6. Send out response to the Affinity Water Management Plan
7. Write to the planning department re 51c High Street (3/13/1140/FP)
8. Write to the planning department re 82 High Street (3/13/1136 LB) (3/13/1137 LB)
9. Give Clerk details of Laptop recently purchased from Q-Tek Computer Centre
10. Include 3-month inspection in the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts
11. Put up BDO completion of audit notice
12. Ask Alex Porter of Bidwell re new Diocesan lease for sportsfield extension
13. Give Mrs. Dinnin the allotment income and expenditure figures for the past 3 years
14. Inspect the War Memorial garden during the Environment Sub-Committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July
15. Give Mr. Stock monthly-village report book prior to the September Parish Council
16. Write to David Gregory re commemorative plaque for Sir Nigel Gresley
17. Write to Margaret Stanley re co-option onto the Parish Council
18. Write to East Herts Council returning officer re Margaret Stanley's co-option onto the Parish Council

**6 Planning**

**a) Applications**

Mr. Harris reported on the following planning applications.

**i) 48 Rivershill (3/13/1260/FP)**

Two storey side extension

In-line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris had asked Mr. Meischke to visit the residents at 46 Rivershill. They had no objections to the application.

After seeking the agreement of Mr. Harris and one other Parish Councillor, Mr. Meischke instructed the Clerk to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council had no comment to make on this application.

**ii) 99 High Street (3/13/1405/FP)**

Boundary fence and planting

Mr. Harris said that this is retrospective permission. The owners previously applied in January 2012 and the Parish Council's response to this application was 'No comment'.

Mr. Harris, Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke agreed that again we should send a 'No comment' response to the planning department, so the Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council accordingly.

**iii) 99 High Street (3/13/1406)**

Boundary fence and planting - Listed building consent

Refer to item 6 a, ii above.

**iv) 4 Rivershill (3/13/1398)**

two storey side and rear extension

In-line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris asked Mr. Meischke to visit the residents. Mr. Meischke said that one resident was slightly concerned that the proposed extension might cut out light to his property.

The application does not appear to be anything other than a typical large-extension and is not unusual in that respect. Mr. Harris, Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke agreed that we should send a 'No comment' response to the planning department, so the Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council accordingly.

**v) 8 Rectory Lane (3/13/1448)**

Single storey side extension and storm porch

Mr. Knight said that he had visited the neighbours directly affected by this application (i.e. at number 10 Rectory Lane) and they had no objections. The footprint for this single-storey side extension is almost as large as the existing property. Mr. Knight recommended a 'No comment' response. All Parish Councillors present were in agreement.

The Clerk to write to East Herts Council accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**vi) 37 Station Road (3/13/1503)**

Erection of one dwelling

Refer to item 2, Public participation.

**b) Decisions**

**i) Heath Mount School, Woodhall Park, Watton-at-Stone (3/13/0254/FP)**

Erection of an extension to the pre-prep building with associated play area, storage and car parking. Felling and works to TPO trees  
 -East Herts Council permission granted

**ii) 82 High Street (3/13/1136 LB)**

New signage for George and Dragon public house - Advertisement consent  
 -East Herts Council permission granted

**iii) 82 High Street (3/13/1137 LB)**

New signage for George and Dragon public house - Listed building consent  
 -East Herts Council permission granted

**iv) 48 Rivershill (3/13/1260/FP)**

Two storey side extension  
 -East Herts Council permission granted

**7 Specific items**

**a) Pothole problems in Hazeldell**

Mr. Stock was pleased to report that, after so many exchanges of correspondence, Hertfordshire Highways had finally completed the repair of the problem areas he had identified to them and it appeared that this time the work had been done to a good standard. He said that he would continue to monitor the condition of the road surfaces, in particular with regard to kerb-side erosion.

**b) Adoption of the protocol re hedges in the village**

Parish Councillors approved Edition 1 of the ‘Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Protocol for handling Problem-Hedges within the Parish’ written by Mr. Stock.

Mr. Meischke said that he was concerned that the Parish Council tended to overreact to problems when only one complaint has been received. Mr. Stock disagreed and said that problems with hedges had arisen on a number of occasions and had resulted in troublesome situations (e.g. including situations in which some councillors had experienced verbal abuse and unpleasantness, which Mr. Meischke admitted he had experienced too). He said that the protocol would be very useful to this and future Parish Councillors to ensure that any further problems are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner. He also reminded the meeting that we had a protocol for the way in which we handle planning applications and for the handling/control of the issue of keys to the Community Hall. Both of these protocols had proved to be very useful. These points were supported by Mr. Harris and it was agreed by all present that we should continue to produce protocols when it was felt that there was genuine need to do so.

The Clerk will give a copy of the protocol to all Parish Councillors for inclusion in their ‘Parish Council Toolkit’ red folders. **Action J. Allsop**

Mr. Stock felt that we should have a Contents List for the ‘Parish Council Toolkit’ folders so that we all know what is in the folders. The Contents List should be re-issued every time that a document is added or the Edition of an existing document is raised. This was agreed together with a suggestion by Mr. Harris that all Parish Council documents should be numbered in some way to facilitate easy identification. **Action; J. Allsop**

Mr. Meischke said that the hedge overhanging the footpath at 48 Rivershill has been significantly cut back, although it is still overhanging the footpath by approximately two feet. However, it no longer causes an obstruction to pedestrians, pram/buggy users and wheelchair users.

**c) Litterbin by the War Memorial**

Mr. Smith said that the post-mounted litterbin by the War Memorial had disappeared. He said it was a well-used bin and we can either replace it with a larger ground-anchored bin or replace it with a post-mounted one. The ground-anchored bin would require the anchor post concreting into the ground. The Clerk showed Parish Councillors the different options and prices for litterbins on the Glasdon UK Limited website.

It was agreed to purchase a post-mounted bin in the same style as normally purchased (namely, a Super Trimline 50 litter bin). The Clerk to act accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

**d) Removal of weekly litterpick rubbish**

The Clerk said that she had contacted East Herts Council, who had arranged for Ted Brown’s litterpicking rubbish to be collected every Thursday. There were some initial hick-ups when the contractors failed to collect the rubbish, but this problem appears to have been resolved and the rubbish has been collected for the last three weeks.

**e) Salt bins in the village**

Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke agreed to inspect the salt bins in the village to establish if any are in need of repair. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

It was agreed to ask the Highways Department to ensure that all the salt bins in the village are filled before the expectation of bad weather. **Action: J. Allsop**

**f) Waggon & Horses plaque**

At the June 2013 meeting, Mr. Smith reported that he had spoken to Tilehouse Properties Limited, the developer of the Waggon and Horses site, and the plaque has been given to the new owners.

As the new owners had only recently moved into the former Waggon and Horses, it was agreed to wait until the September 2013 Parish Council meeting to see if the owners would erect the plaque. As the plaque has not been installed, it was agreed that Mr. Meischke should now make direct contact with the owners.

**Action: J. Meischke**

**g) Contact residents of Glebe House re sportsfield hedge**

Mr. Knight said that he had spoken to the owners of Glebe House, who are happy for the hedge to be cut at the same time as the sportsfield hedge is cut.

Mr. Smith said that the sportsfield hedge is due to be cut tomorrow. He agreed to contact Nick Whitehead, the hedge contractor, to instruct him to carry out the cutting of the sportsfield side of Glebe House's hedge.

**Action: M. Smith**

It was agreed that it was the Parish Council's responsibility to pay for the cutting of the sportsfield side of the Glebe House hedge.

**h) Investigate further the possibility of retro fitting an air source heat pump**

It was agreed to defer this item for the foreseeable future.

**8 Sub-Committees**

**Budget & Finance**

In the absence of Mr. Filer, Mr. Smith reported on the following items.

• **Monthly accounts**

<b>Watton-at-Stone Parish Council</b>			
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty cash - Payments</b>	
From Com Hall for HCC		Ted Brown	20.00
cleaning materials paid in error	59.64	Ted Brown	<u>30.00</u>
			<u><b>50.00</b></u>
<b>Cheques issued</b>			
Wages and salaries	August and September 2013		2172.18
Adam Welch	cut down two trees on Allotments		615.00
BSWW Parish News	printing and distribution of annual reports and accounts		40.00
Frank Cooper	May grass cutting - 7th, 14th, 20th & 28th June		129.60
East Herts Council	Annual Playground inspection		55.86
HCC	paid in error-cleaning materials for CH (see CH accounts)		59.64
Community Hall	1/2 of annual grant		2,610.00
Aon UK Ltd	addition al insurance cover for new laptop computer		2.12
Frank Copper & Son Limited	grass cutting on 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th August		<u>259.20</u>
			<u><b>5,943.60</b></u>
<b>Cheques received</b>			
None			

<b>Watton-at-Stone Community Hall</b>			
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty Cash -Payments</b>	
Lorraine Alred	80.00	To Parish Council for HCC	
Julia Gibbons – Pavilion hire	140.40	cleaning materials	<u>59.64</u>
Mrs. Childs – Main Hall and Pavilion	52.00		<u><b>59.64</b></u>
Lisa Hall – Main Hall and Pavilion	52.00		
Jane Allsop for Paul Reid	18.00		
Paul Reid – Meeting room	18.00		
G. Smith – Meeting room	20.00		
Carla Beach – Pavilion	21.00		
Carla Beach Pavilion and Meeting room	<u>40.00</u>		
	<u><b>441.40</b></u>		
<b>Cheques issued</b>			
Rosemary Brown	23 hours cleaning x 7.75p		178.25
H. B. Thompson	24 hours cleaning x 7.75p		186.00
Watton Service Station	6 x liquid soap cartridges		45.44
Rosemary Brown	22 hours cleaning x 7.75p		170.50
Sports Court UK Ltd	MPPA surface bonding		3,600.00
H. B. Thompson	24 hours cleaning x 7.75p		186.00
Mark Blacktin	various jobs		55.00
Mark Blacktin	installation of kitchen top cupboards		<u>85.00</u>
			<u><b>4,506.19</b></u>

**Cheques received**

Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	135.00
Mrs. Taylor	Pavilion and meeting room	60.00
Mrs. Bainton	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	58.00
Peter Khera	Main Hall hire	117.00
Felisitas Dixon	Pavilion	21.00
Dave Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	214.20
Parish Council	½ year grant	<u>2610.00</u>
		<b><u>3215.20</u></b>

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

• **Change of bank signatories on the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts**

At the August Community Hall Trustees meeting, Mr. Harris suggested he considered best practice was for the mandate to require two signatures of which one was a trustee and the other the Clerk. It was agreed to seek guidance from Mrs. McCash as to whether it was appropriate for a non-trustee (other than the Clerk) to be an authorised signatory on the charity’s bank account. Mrs. McCash emailed the Clerk to say that the Parish Council decided, when the Community Hall bank accounts were first set up, that any Parish Councillor could be authorised to be signatories on the Community Hall accounts.

Mr. Smith said that Mr. Filer had also commented that he was happy with the current signature arrangements.

Mr. Harris said he felt strongly that as the Community Hall is a separately registered charity, the proper process is that the mandate should be that only the four Trustees and the Clerk should be allowed to sign cheques.

Mr. Harris asked for a show of hands in favour of changing the Community Hall banking arrangements so that only the four Trustees and the Clerk are authorised signatories. All seven Parish Councillors present at the meeting were in favour.

A motion was past for the Clerk to arrange for Mr. Smith, Mr. Filer and Mrs. Dinnin to be removed as signatories on the Community Hall bank accounts and Mr. Harris to be added to both Community Hall accounts.

**Action: J. Allsop**

• **New Homes bonus**

All Parish Councillors have been emailed the wish list of items identified for funding from the New Homes bonus. Parish Councillors agreed that when more funds become available, the list should be prioritised and costings obtained. Suppliers and contractors are often unwilling to supply quotations for items that are not required for several years.

• **Parish Council laptop**

The Parish Council has purchased a new Samsung laptop with i5 processor, windows 7 operating system and 8 GB of memory at a cost of £602.50 plus VAT. In this cost was an expenditure of £83.33 (plus VAT) to upgrade the computer guarantee from 3 years to 5 years.

Microsoft Office 2013 has been purchased by the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall. As a Charitable Trust they are able to obtain the software at a cheaper rate than the Parish Council could. The licence for this software will be in the name of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall. The total cost of the software is £129 plus VAT.

• **COIF bank accounts**

The Clerk said that Mr. Filer had investigated the COIF investment accounts and did not recommend a change from the present account as the alternatives were too risky.

• **Clerk’s salary**

The National Association of Local Councils have agreed a salary rise for Clerks from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. The Clerk is currently on Spine Point SCP 27 and the increase in pay would be 12p per hour.

Parish Council approved the increase in the Clerk’s salary. The Clerk to ask Mrs. McCash to work out the Tax and NI accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**Community Hall Trustees**

• **Minutes and report of meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Mr. Harris said that the Trustees meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> August, he was appointed as Chairman of the Community Hall Trustees.

He reminded Parish Councillors that at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013) Mr. Knight, Mr. Meischke and Mr. Stock were reappointed as Trustees and he was appointed as a new Trustee.

Parish Councillors approved the following recommendation made by the Community Hall Trustees.

- Floodlighting charges remain at the current meter setting of 8 minutes for £1.

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- **Outside lighting**

The outside light over the Main Hall fire exit door, that opens out onto the footpath running parallel with School Lane, has been smashed and needs replacing. Mr. Meischke said that he had managed to find another fitting that accepts the same type of light bulbs. He will instruct D P Electrics to fit the light.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Gas and boiler annual inspection**

James Turner Limited is scheduled to do the annual boiler inspection on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September. They will also be looking at the sink taps because some of them let water out at too strong a force. Mr. Meischke to meet the James Turner engineer on site.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Kitchen cupboards**

New kitchen top cupboards, donated by Mr. Smith's daughter, have been fitted above the sink run of worktops. Mark Blacktin fitted the cupboards for £85.

- **Hiring of the Community Hall**

Mr. Meischke said that the Clerk has had an enquiry for the regular hire of the Community Hall on a Tuesday evening.

Jim Keen has been hiring the Community Hall for many years on an add-hoc basis. When insufficient people have turned up for his kickboxing classes, he has not paid for the use of the Community Hall facilities. Mr. Meischke said that he had spoken to Jim Keen informing him that we need a firm commitment to bookings and he could not continue with his ad-hoc usage. Jim Keen was quite upset and felt that he had not been given enough support by the Parish Council when complaints about the car park and others hirers had been affecting his hiring. However, he later contacted Mr. Meischke to say that he would not be continuing with the use of the Community Hall on Tuesdays. He intends to talk to Peter Khera, who does karate at the Community Hall on Friday nights, to see if they could join forces.

The Clerk to offer the Yoga class, who currently use the Pavilion, first refusal on the Main Hall on Tuesday evenings. If they do not take up the offer, the facilities to be offered to Georgie Pay. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Bike ramps**

Refer to item 5 a, Review of actions - Remove bike ramps from the sportsfield.

- **Annual playground inspection and quotation from Wicksteed Leisure**

Mr. Meischke said that we are in receipt of a quotation from Wicksteed Leisure Limited for repair work required to the Rainbow multi play and slide and the damaged safety surface.

To supply and fit a replacement 'Log ramp board' and 'Rainbow Log Ramp' £606.56 plus VAT.

To repair damaged sections of wet pout under the Rainbow multi play and slide £764.00 plus VAT.

Parish Councillors agreed that these prices are very high. After discussion, it was decided to ask Mark Blacktin to quote for replacing the 'Log Ramp Board' and the 'Rainbow Log Ramp' using marine quality ply.

**Action: J. Meischke**

The Clerk to dig out the details of a safety-surface repair company she has on file.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Grants for storage area and pram shelter**

As reported at the August Trustees meeting, Mr. Meischke reported that he and Mr. Smith had met with a builder who gave them a rough ballpark figure of £1,900 for moving the back wall that separates the internal and external cupboards

Mr. Meischke agreed to obtain a written quotation for the work.

**Action: J. Meischke**

Mr. Smith said that he had investigated the price of pram shelters and the cheapest option is approximately £1,000 to have a shelter hung against the Community Hall wall. Additional costs would be incurred to move the existing footpath to go around the pram shelter.

It was agreed not to pursue the purchase of a pram shelter for the time being but allow Dots and Tots, and Beane Valley to use the Meeting room for the storage of buggies and prams on a trial basis, when it is not in use by another hirer. The Clerk to notify Dots and Tots, and Beane Valley accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Youth Club hire charges**

Mr. Meischke said that the Watton Youth Drop Inn is very well attended and has lots of new members.

They are now in a position to pay something towards the rental of the Community Hall and have suggested an initial payment of 50% of the rental cost for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013. They hope to be able to pay the remaining 50% before the end of the year if funds are available.

The Clerk to invoice the Watton Youth Drop Inn accordingly and pass the invoice to Mr. Meischke so he can pass it to Lyn Oakman.

**Action: J. Allsop/J. Meischke**

## Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **MPPA – fencing quotation**

Mr. Knight said that five fencing contractors have looked at the MPPA fencing but so far have not submitted a quotation. In their opinion, the work does not need doing for some time to come.

Mr. Knight said that replacing the kicker boards and repairing the fencing would probably be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000. Looking at a planned approach, the perimeter fencing of the MPPA will need repairing/replacing before the kicker boards need replacing.

Mr. Knight said that the planning application for a new tennis court runs out soon. Parish Councillors agreed that this should be renewed.

Mr. Knight to act accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

- **Outside store - planned changes**

Mr. Knight said he would now like to proceed with moving the Ladies Football Club and the Tennis Club storage facilities to the small external storage room (the decommissioned toilet). He has obtained one set of keys from Mr. Meischke and will arrange for additional keys to cut.

**Action: I. Knight**

## Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Report and minutes of Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the Environment Sub-Committee minutes dated 24<sup>th</sup> July. Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

Parish Councillors approved the following recommendations made by the Environment Sub-Committee.

The Parish Council:

- keeps the allotment rent for 2013/2014 the same as in 2012/13. In the autumn, the annual water bills will be assessed re the cost for water charges for next year. **Agenda: 10/13**
- charges a £50 deposit to new tenants,
- considers making some plots smaller and advertise in the Parish Magazine for new tenants,
- removes a small tree on plot 39a,
- continues with the plan to cut down the trees in the far corner as per Adam Welch's quotation, but then to leave this area until we have filled the other vacant plots.

Mrs. Dinnin said that there is the ongoing problem with rabbits on the allotments. The Parish Council has agreed that the allotment holders can put rabbit-proof netting around their plots to protect their crops. The Allotment and Garden Association have funds to do a bulk buy to provide netting for their members.

- **War Memorial Garden**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch has done some work to the War Memorial Garden. Mr. Stock said that the bindweed covering the Berberis on the left-hand side of the War Memorial garden appears to have killed or badly damaged some of the hedging.

Mrs. Dinnin agreed to inspect and take action as required.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **River Beane/Lammas Project**

Mrs. Dinnin said that last week work was meant to start on the notching of the weir adjacent to the Mill site. However to date the work has not been started.

Charlie Bell has made contact with the owner the Mill and obtained their permission to go across the site to access the weir for notching. The Mill site is currently being cleared of overgrown plants including cutting back and removing overgrown trees and shrubs.

Charlie Bell has been talking to residents who properties back onto the Lammas stretch of the River Beane and some of them do not want their Himalayan Balsam removed because they think it is pretty. This is a very invasive plant which the Environment Agency and the Living Rivers Authority are eager to get rid of. Charlie Bell has suggested that the Living Rivers Authority could plant a 10-meter strip of native flowering species on the Lammas riverbank to demonstrate to local residents that there are other attractive alternatives to the Himalayan Balsam.

Mrs. Dinnin said that Charlie Bell will be attending the October Parish Council meeting to give an update on progress to date on the River Beane/Lammas project.

## b) Routine reports

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

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests before the meeting.

ii) **Monthly village-report**

Mr. Stock said that he did the report on 13<sup>th</sup> September and then went on to mention the items which he felt needed attention.

- **Rainbow multi-play and slide**

The two existing holes in the safety surface are getting worse and will continue to do so until the issue is resolved. The area of safety surface adjacent to the base of the wooden-log steps is also showing signs of breaking up and this could be made worse when we start to get more rain and frosts. The wooden seats, steps and back-board also need attention.

(Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees - Annual playground inspection and quotation from Wicksteed Leisure.)

- **Community Hall**

The top windows will need painting before too long as will the external toilet and storeroom doors.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the October meeting of the Community Hall Trustees.

**Agenda: Trustees**

The top vents on the Community Hall wall nearest to the sportsfield goal-post are damaged. Mr. Stock asked if their purpose in life warranted their replacement. Mr. Meischke said that they vent the roof-space and probably provide enough ventilation even though they are damaged.

- **Paved footpath on entrance side of the Community Hall**

There is grass growing between the block-paving adjacent to the main-entrance side of the building and looks very untidy. It was decided to ask Ted Brown to apply weed killer to the areas affected.

**Action: J. Meischke**

It was also pointed out that the sportsfield grass is encroaching onto the footpath, almost covering half of some of the paving slabs. It was agreed that this grass needs to be cleared from the paving slabs. Because of the nature of this task, it was suggested that the work would be best suited to Adam Welch. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to speak to Ted Brown first and then to Adam Welch.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **MPPA**

The boundary fence looks tired (including the kicker boards).

Branches on the Oak tree adjacent to the MPPA need cutting away from around the top of one of the floodlights. Mr. Stock suggested that they are cut back the next time any work is done to the floodlights, assuming the problem does not get worse beforehand.

- **Allotments**

The condition of the allotments varies from extremely good to very poor. Some of the uncultivated/unassigned allotments are in a very poor state and thus in need of attention. (Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Report and minutes of Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July.)

- **Salt bins**

Those listed as such in the report need filling. (Refer to item 7 e, Specific items –Salt bins in the village.)

As a general comment, Mr. Stock said that the village looked very good overall.

iii) **Weekly sportsfield**

None.

iv) **Website**

The following item to be uploaded to the Parish Council website.

- Protocol re hedges in the village

**Action: J. Allsop**

v) **Website diary**

None.

vi) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

vii) **Holiday dates**

Parish Council holiday notes were noted.

- The Clerk to email the holiday dates to all Parish Councillors accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

## 9 Correspondence received

None.

## 10 Village organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone War Memorial Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton Youth Drop Inn:** Nothing to report.
- **River Beane Restoration Association:** 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 Pre-School Playgroup:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club.**

In in the absence of Ms. Waltham, Mr. Knight reported on the following Sports and Social Club items.

1. The Football Club would like the Parish Council to purchase a line marker on their behalf and they will reimburse the Parish Council via a donation for value, net of VAT.

This was agreed by Parish Councillors

2. The Ladies Football Club have requested a key to the Community Hall kitchen. The Clerk said that Ian Vosper had requested an additional set of keys to the changing room corridor entrance and the large changing rooms.

This was agreed by Parish Councillors. The Clerk to arrange for the keys to be cut accordingly and invoice Sports and Social club for the cost of the keys.

**Action: J. Allsop**

3. One of the goal posts has been vandalised. The metal part that holds the goal net in place has been broken off. Mr. Knight has reported this to the police and given the crime reference number to the Clerk.

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

- **Sub-Committees**

Mr. Smith explained to Mrs. Stanley that the Parish Council has several Sub-Committees and invited her to join one or more if she so wished. Mrs. Stanley said that as the Bursar of Presdales School, her interest lies with the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee. Mrs. Stanley was duly elected as a member of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

- **'Parish Council Toolkit'**

It was agreed that Mrs. Stanley and the Clerk should go through the 'Parish Council Toolkit' folder and update it where necessary, include a numbering system for all documents and draw up a Contents List.

**Action: M. Stanley/J. Allsop**

## 11 Items for Parish News

There were two items for inclusion in the October 2013 issue of the Parish News.

- Election of Margaret Stanley to the Parish Council.
- Allotment vacancies.

The Clerk to write the articles accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **The meeting closed at 2110.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013.**