

## Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014

<b>Present:</b>	Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman)	Mrs. Christine Dinnin.
	Mr. Denis Filer	Mr. Ian Knight
	Mrs. Helen McCash (until 2026)	Mr. David Stock
	Ms. Emma Waltham	The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)
<b>Member of public</b>	Mr. John Love and Mr. Bob Thurlow (until 21.30)	

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. John Meischke, Mr. Iain Harris and Mrs. Margaret Stanley.

### 2 Public Participation

None.

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

At Mr. Filer's request, items under 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee and the New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee will be brought forward for discussion directly after item 4 d, Items outstanding for more than two months.

Mr. Smith said that he had acquired the new chairs Parish Councillors were sitting on from the Daisy Corporation (via his son-in-law) who were revamping their boardroom and were disposing of the chairs. He proposed that a letter of thanks be sent to the Daisy Corporation stating that a donation of £50 has been sent to the Salvation Army. This was agreed by all Parish Councillors present.

The donation to come out of the Parish Council account.

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

### 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> November 2014**

Mrs. Dinnin said that there is an error on page 8 – Allotments, third paragraph.

“Adam Welch has quoted £200” should read, “Adam Welch has quoted £270”.

The Clerk to issue all Parish Councillors the amended minutes.

**Action: J. Allsop**

#### b) Review of actions

##### 1. Forward emergency traffic incident action plan for the village to all Parish Councillors

Mrs. McCash said she had a brief meeting with Sergeant Duncan Wallace who had reviewed the situation with one of his colleagues from the traffic section. They are modifying their plans in the event that the bypass is closed due to an emergency traffic incident. This will ensure that where possible only cars and small vans will be allowed to come through the village. If the road remains closed for an extended period the larger vehicles will be allowed through, under strict traffic controls.

She said that the police had told her that the cones were supplied by Hertfordshire Highways, who subsequently had refused to supply the Parish Council with traffic cones for use in the event of an emergency and insist that it is the police's responsibility to put these down.

##### 2. Obtain regular updates on from Fred Burnell re vermin problem

Mrs. McCash said that Fred Burnell has been giving her regular updates on the vermin problem near the play area. He will continue to monitor the area every fortnight.

##### 3. Chase Glasdon UK Limited re deliver date for two seats

The two seats ordered from Glasdon UK Limited have been delivered to Mr. Smith's Farm.

Refer to item 7 d, Specific items – Nigel Poulton.

##### 4. Summarise the problems and problem areas along the High Street: outstanding.

**Action: I. Harris/M. Stanley**

**c) Action points resolved**

1. Give Mr. Filer items to be included in 2015/16 budget
2. Remove Berberis shrub at War Memorial garden and purchase and plant a replacement shrub
3. Purchase Acer Platanoides Drummondii tree and metal tree guard
4. Install compost bin beside cricket shed
5. **Inspect brackets on Church Walk bench** - Mrs. Dinnin said that this seat needs to be looked at again as it does tip backwards. Mrs. McCash said that this seat is well used and in her opinion is dangerous in its current state. Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to inspect. **Action: C. Dinnin/M/Smith**
6. **Inspect roadside trees on the Cottage Site** - This item is outstanding and will be completed in the New Year. **Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock**
7. Meet with Oliver Heald MP re Highways issues in Station Road
8. Give Mike Freeman amendments to his drive safe report
9. Give Oliver Heald a copy of Mike Freeman’s report on the results of the drive-safe programme
10. Speak to Mr Abel Smith about bus shelter ideas
11. Seek advice on official mailing address for the Parish Council from Longmores
12. Contact Longmores for clarification on land registration of Watton Green
13. Arrange for Mark Blacktin to install Community Hall sign in the High Street
14. Contact an air source heating company to obtain details and costings
15. Accept D. P. Electrics lighting quotation
16. Pay Kompan’s final invoice on completion of work to new play equipment
17. Arrange for Mark Blacktin to fit recycled plastic sheeting for the rainbow multi-play and slide
18. **Write to Mr. Brett re hedge** - Mr. Smith said that the Parish Council is now in receipt of a cheque for £65 from Mr. Brett.
19. Accept Adam Welch’s quotation to remove rubbish from the allotments
20. Include grass cutting work in the annual grass cutting schedules
21. Investigate insurance cover for notching the wear at Mill Lane
22. Ask Mark Blacktin to quote for moving the dog-waste bin at the end of the Glebe Close
23. Arrange for the 2 litterbins between Rectory Lane and Glebe Close to be changed for larger size ones
24. Find out how often East Herts Council empty the litterbins in the village
25. Contact the Allotment and Garden Association re their application for a grant
26. Check the requirements for the MPPA notice
27. Arrange for rubbish to be removed from changing rooms
28. Contact the Sports and Social Club to ask them to keep the changing rooms clear of rubbish

**d) Items outstanding for more than two months**

1. **Chase Tony Bradford re inspection of Elm Trees on the Lammas**  
Mrs. Dinnin will chase Mr. Bradford in the New Year. **Action: C. Dinnin**
2. **Transfer new Homes Bonus funds to deposit account:** outstanding. **Action: J. Allsop**

At Mr. Filer’s request, items under 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee and the New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee were brought forward for discussion.

**Budget and Finance Sub-Committee**

- **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council		
Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments
Thomas Best – Allotment	26.50	None
	<u>26.50</u>	
<b>Cheques issued</b>		
Fred Burnell	Set and inspect vermin traps	72.00
Mike Smith	Kedel - Compost bin	133.00
Majestic Trees	Acer Platanoides	491.32
Watton-at-Stone PCC	2014 NEW Homes Bonus grant for church kitchen floor	1,220.00
Blue Bury Contractors	Watton Green & the Lammas - autumn top & tidy	468.00
Orc Printwear promotions	Kit for Watton Youth football club (New Home Bonus)	699.50
Adam Welch	Remove rubbish from allotments	270.00
Salary and wages	December 2014	1106.23
		<b><u>4,460.05</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>		
Mr Brett	Hedge cutting	65.00
2 Allotment holders	Allotment rent for 2014/15	<u>39.75</u>
		<b><u>104.75</u></b>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Carla Beach – Pavilion	126.00	G. Smith	60.00
Vince Geoff - Main Hall & meeting room	125.00		<u>60.00</u>
Vicki Roos – Meeting room	57.00		
Floodlighting to 5 <sup>th</sup> December	400.00		
Watton Youth Drop Inn – donation	£10.00		
Steve Mitchell – Mai Hall and Pavilion	104.00		
Vicky Banks - Main Hall and Pavilion	65.00		
Dawn Nightingale – Pavilion hire	21.00		
Zoe Ellis – Main hall and Pavilion	56.00		
Mike – Watton under 9s – Main Hall	20.00		
Margaret Doughton – Pavilion hire	31.50		
Becky Straker - Main Hall and Pavilion	48.00		
Lisa Herrick - Main Hall and Pavilion	<u>45.00</u>		
	<b><u>£1108.50</u></b>		
<b>Cheques issued</b>			
M. Smith	Kedel – Plastic sheeting		294.31
Total Contract Cleaners	cleaning on 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th October		100.00
Wages	December 2014		<u>157.00</u>
			<b><u>551.31</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>			
Watton School	Pavilion hire		91.00
Steve Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion		336.60
Mrs Iley	Pavilion hire		66.00
Paula Seal	Main Hall and Pavilion		<u>110.00</u>
			<b><u>603.60</u></b>

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **Approval of minutes of Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014**  
Parish Councillors who attended the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December approved minutes.

The following recommendations were approved.

- **Hire charges**  
The Community Hall hire-charges to remain the same gross amount (i.e. gross including VAT regardless of the percentage rate).
- **The Sports and Social Club hire-charge**  
The Sports & Social Club hire-charge for 2015/16 remain the same as in 2014/15.  
The Clerk to write to the Sports and Social Club accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Floodlighting charges**  
The floodlighting charges remain at their current level of £1 for 10 minutes.
- **Allotment rents**  
The allotment rent to be increased from £20 to £25 per full allotment and from £10 to £12.50 for one-half of an allotment, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015.  
Allotment water charges to be reviewed at the September 2015 Parish Council meeting, prior to the annual invoices going out on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. **Agenda: 09/2015**

- **Budget 2015/16**

Mr. Filer highlighted the main items listed in the Budget notes for the benefit of Mrs. McCash, Mr. Stock and Ms. Waltham, who were not present at the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

Finally, Mr Filer confirmed that all the figures included VAT where appropriate and then the VAT was recovered and shown as an income, a system that he had inherited on taking over responsibility for Budget and Finance. He was conscious that some on the Parish Council were uneasy about this procedure and he had therefore consulted two financial experts one of whom was Helen McCash.

Mrs McCash commented that the procedure when dealing with Profit and Loss accounts was to exclude VAT but our accounts were not Profit/Loss accounts but were simple Cash Accounts and the recognised procedure was to include VAT. This was standard practice on Parish Council type of Cash Accounts.

Parish Councillors approved the budget figures.

- **Precept 2015/16**

It was agreed that the provisional precept requirement for 2015/16 is £30,895. Mr. Filer said that the Parish Council has up to the end of February to confirm this amount, however East Herts Council require the estimated requirements by 16<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The Clerk to notify East Herts Council accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **SLCC Annual membership**

The SLCC membership renewal is £149.00, a £2 increase from last year. Mr. Filer said that the membership provides the Parish Council with legal advice and useful information about changes in legislation, e.g. changes in accounting practices. Although this information is also available from the Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils, their annual membership fee would be in the region of a thousand pounds.

Parish Councillors agreed to renew the SLCC membership.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Various quotations**

Parish Councillors agreed that the following quotations be accepted.

- **Frank Cooper and Son Limited (dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November)**

To gang-mow sportsfield (per cut) £58 (plus VAT)

- **Nick Whitehead – Sportsfield hedge cutting (text message quotation)** £400 (plus VAT)

- **Lammas and Watton Green grass-cut**

- **Blue Bury Contractors**

Blue Bury Contractors' quotation remains unchanged for 2015/16 at £1,320 plus VAT for the following work.

- Cutting and removal of grass from both areas
- Secondary flail cut as necessary
- Trimming under trees
- Keeping boundary shrub incursion under control
- Trimming ditch and banks at Watton Green

- **High Street maintenance work, leaf clearance, mowing and strimming work in the village**

- **Greenwood Tree Care (Adam Welch) - quotation dated 29<sup>th</sup> November 2014.**

Three-year contract at £2800 per annum £8,400

- **Ted Brown – has verbally quoted for the following work in 2015.**

- Perimeter of sportsfield, around the MPPA, bike ramps and seats
  - and mow between MPPA and Church Walk hedge £80 per cut
- Cutting the grass where the gang mowers can't go from the gate, around the Community Hall to School Lane plus the weeding the Community Hall £40 per cut
- Pruning the Community Hall garden once a year £60

Write to all contractors who submitted quotations.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Employees and self-employed remuneration**

This item was discussed under 'exclusion of press and public', directly after item 9, Correspondence received.

- **British Gas – Gas contract**

The British Gas contract is up for renewal in April 2015. The Clerk said that she had been contacted by Make it Cheaper, who asked if they could provide quotations for the supply of gas. She declined as it was decided it would be better to hear from British Gas first before asking Make it Cheaper.

The Trustees to negotiate a new Gas contract.

**Action: Trustees**

## **New Homes Bonus**

- **Minutes and report of meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the minutes of the New-Homes Bonus Sub-committee meeting prior to this meeting. Parish Councillors present at that meeting approved the minutes, which were then signed by Mr. Filer.

During its meeting in November the Parish Council authorised the New-Homes Bonus sub-committee to review the grant-applications received for 2014 and award funds to the successful applicants accordingly.

Mr. Filer said that at the New-Homes Bonus sub-committee had reviewed and discussed the applications in detail on 25<sup>th</sup> November and then awards were made to the following organisations.

- War Memorial Hall
- Parish Church
- Youth Football (under 7s)
- Dots and Tots
- Beane Valley
- Cricket Club

These awards totalled £10,276-40. However, Youth Football (under 7s) subsequently discovered that their application for kit and training jackets did not include logos, so an additional grant of £199.50 was approved by Parish Councillors via e-mail.

Therefore the total grant award for 2014/15 is £10475.90 (£10,276.40 + £199.50).

It had been agreed that Mr. Stock should revise our application form for funding ready for the next round of New-Homes Bonus grants in 2015. This he has done and Edition 2 (December 2014) of the 'Application for funding from the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Parish Council', see attached, was formally adopted by the Parish Councillor this evening. **See attached**

It was agreed that new Parish Council should ratify the funding process (including advertising) for 2015 after the elections in May.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting in May 2015.

**Agenda: 05/15**

The new Parish Council can also look at other items that could be funded from the New-Homes Bonus funds, such as the provision of the new tennis court, provided other sources of funding are in place. It has already been agreed to put £10,000 towards bus shelters for the village.

## **6 Planning**

### **a) Applications**

#### **i) 9 Rivershill (3/14/2051/FP)**

Mr. Knight said that he had been asked to look at this application by Iain Harris. The application is for retrospective planning permission to retain a 6 foot-high fence all around the rear garden, with an additional 53cm of trellising attached. This application was submitted following complaints about the height of the fence from the residents at 7 Rivershill.

After discussion it was agreed to write to send a 'No comment' response to the planning department at East Herts Council.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### **b) Decisions**

None.

## c) Appeals

### i) 37 Station Road (3/14/1133/FP)

Erection of one dwelling

Mr. Stock reminded Parish Councillors that this appeal is against refusal for permission for a third dwelling on this site. Planning permission has already been granted for an end of terrace property to be built adjoining 37 Station Road. The appeal relates to a detached dwelling at the bottom of the plot and would be accessed from Rectory Lane. The Parish Council has already objected to the application on the grounds that it is considered that the “addition of yet another (third) property can only be seen as an over-development and one which is not sympathetic to the style and layout of the established properties around the site”.

Parish Councillors agreed that their original response to the planning department stands and this will automatically be submitted to the planning inspectorate with the other appeal papers and no further action is required.

### j) 99 High Street (Enforcement Number E/11/0263/A)

Without permission the erection of a boundary fence and gates

Parish Councillors made ‘no comment’ on the original application for retrospective planning permission for this boundary fence.

Parish Councillors agreed that their original response to the planning department stands and this will automatically be submitted to the planning inspectorate with the other appeal papers and no further action is required.

## 7 Specific items

### a) Traffic along Station Road and the High Street

Mr. Stock and Ms. Waltham had an action to meet with Sir Oliver Heald MP to discuss the problems in Station Road. Ms. Waltham reported on the meeting, which Mr. Stock was unable to attend due to the last-minute need for urgent dental treatment.

Ms. Waltham outlined to Sir Oliver Heald the problems in Station Road and the increasing hazard of cars parking adjacent to the new Gatekeeper Meadow development and at the entrance to the yard opposite. She said that although HCC had agreed to prepare a suitable scheme for all of Station Road, the timescales are unacceptable because of the pedestrian safety issues. Sir Oliver agreed to write to Hertfordshire Highways to try progress this issue and has subsequently confirmed that a letter has been sent.

Because we had not received a meaningful response from HCC re his last letter to them about their minutes of our site meeting in Station Road, Mr. Stock said that bearing in mind some staff changes the Parish Council should write to David Burt (HCC) repeating, with some force the concerns stated in our letter to Ian Batcock (who is no longer involved). Also stating that we had now raised our concerns with our MP and that the Police are aware of the parking problems and share the concerns about pedestrian-safety and the traffic movements in this section of Station Road.

It was agreed that Mr. Stock writes an appropriate letter accordingly. Copies to be sent to John Wood (Chief Executive, HCC), David Lloyd (Police Commissioner), Sir Oliver Heald MP, Rik Sharma (District Councillor), Ken Crofton (County Councillor) via e-mail and a hardcopy by post. **Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop**

### b) Traffic along the High Street

Mr. Harris and Mrs Stanley were not present at the meeting to report on this item.

### c) Bus shelters

Mr. Smith said he would arrange to meet with Mr. Abel Smith in the New Year, to discuss with him the possibility of the semi-circular section of brick walling by the Arms houses, at the junction with High Street and School Lane, being modified to make a bespoke bus shelter. **Action: M. Smith**

### d) Nigel Poulton

Mr. Smith said that the Nigel Poulton Memorial bench and the Freeman Memorial bench had been delivered to Blue Bury Farm. He said that the Nigel Poulton bench is a very handsome seat. Mark Blacktin estimates that the cost of putting down a decent concrete base will be in the region of £180 plus fitting.

Parish Councillors agreed that Mark Blacktin should be instructed to do the work and Parish Councillors will meet on site to agree the positioning of the seat and the location of the specimen Acer tree. **Action: M. Smith**

The Clerk to contact Mr. and Mrs. Freeman to tell them that their replacement memorial bench has arrived and ask them if they want the Parish Council to arrange for its installation. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mrs. McCash left the meeting.

**e) Street Lighting**

The Clerk has chased HCC regarding street lighting ownership in Watton-at-Stone, but to-date has not received any response, although her e-mails have been acknowledged. This item to remain on the agenda until the matter is resolved. **Agenda: 01/2015**

**f) Registration of land in Parish Council ownership**

As reported at the October Parish Council meeting, the Parish Council land at Watton Green and the sportsfield are not registered with the Land Registry.

An estimate of £700 plus VAT was obtained from Longmores to have Watton Green registered and the Parish Council agreed to proceed.

Mr. Smith said that on the Common Land registry it shows the Parish Council as the undisputed owners of both Watton Green and the Lammas. The ownership of Rivershill Green is shown as 'not disputed'.

Mr. Smith said that for £10 per plot, Hertfordshire County Council will give the full details of Common Land ownership. Mr. Smith said that if the areas highlighted on a map are conclusive, there may be no necessity for the Parish Council to register their Common Land. It was agreed that Mr. Smith should ask Hertfordshire County Council for information on the three plots of Common Land in Parish Council ownership (namely: Watton Green, the Lammas and Rivershill Green). **Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Smith said that a member of the Monk family contacted the Clerk stating that they were in the process of registering their land adjacent to Watton Green, but could not find the paperwork for the land they exchanged with the Parish Council. The Clerk suggested they contact Longmores, and Longmores in turn contacted Mr. Smith to ask if the Parish Council would give permission for this information to be given to the Monk family. Parish Councillors agreed to this, provided that any costs incurred are paid for by the Monk family. **Action: M. Smith**

**g) Installation of Community Hall/Sportsfield sign in the High Street**

The new sign was installed on the bus stop signpost on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**h) Report on East Herts Village Halls and Community Buildings Conference held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

Mr. Smith and the Clerk attended the East Herts conference on 5<sup>th</sup> December at Cotted Village Hall.

Mr. Smith said that Cotted Village Hall is a very impressive building; it is run by an independent trust and pays its only way without any external grants. It is the only hall in the village and was built to accommodate the village's needs, which it does admirably. The setup of the hall is very different to the Nigel Poulton Community Hall as the Main Hall can be used as a multifunctional room, with wooden flooring and three floor to ceiling windows at each end of the room, giving it a welcoming appearance. Before embarking on building their hall, villagers were consulted about the needs for the new building.

Mr. Smith said that Cotted Village Hall overcame their acoustic problem in their main hall, which is more than 1.5 times the size of the Community Hall's sports hall, with a product that was sprayed onto the walls and there is no evidence of an echo in that room.

The Clerk said that the one of the talks that took place at the conference mentioned that fire equipment should be checked weekly to make sure that everything is in place and a fire logbook kept showing when all checks have taken place. This item to be referred to the Community Hall Trustees. **Action: Trustees**

**i) Great Innings play area**

Ms. Waltham read out her report on the Great Innings play area as follows.

At the October Parish Council, PCSO Sally Brookes expressed her concern that recent changes made by East Herts District Council (EHDC) had made the antisocial behaviour at the play area worse. Following this, I drafted a letter to EHDC expressing the Parish Council's concerns.

At the November Parish Council, Sergeant Duncan Wallace briefed us on his meeting with EHDC regarding the play area. The site is now one of three priority areas for patrol. Sergeant Duncan Wallace had expressed his concerns to the council, regarding antisocial behaviour. The police, Youth Connexions and EHDC are now working together to improve the situation.

Following the November meeting, the Parish Clerk sent the letter I'd drafted. I circulated a copy to the houses that back on to the basketball court.

I also met with Sir Oliver Heald, MP, in late November. Sir Oliver Heald was interested in the situation and sympathetic. He wrote to Sergeant Duncan Wallace for an update.

At the end of November, local residents received letters asking them to keep an antisocial behaviour diary for the police to use as evidence.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December, Ian Sharratt responded to my letter. In summary, Ian Sharratt:

- is sympathetic to our concerns and agrees that antisocial behaviour is a problem at the play area
- also updated us on his meeting with Sergeant Duncan Wallace and the decision to collect evidence on antisocial behaviour
- said the litter situation is improving
- believes the noise from the play area is a misuse issue, not a design issue
- misunderstood my point on the need for trees behind the cul-de-sac to provide a barrier to noise (trees were cut down there during the works)
- says the seating is more prominent for police to patrol and has to be covered due to feedback from young people. It was designed as detailed in the consultation
- would not make changes to the site at this 'early stage'

On 27<sup>th</sup> November, Sir Oliver Heald forwarded his response from Sergeant Duncan Wallace. He:

- reiterates that some residents are disapproving of changes made to the park, in particular the seating
- said that on 24 October, EHDC indicated were continuing to receive negative reports relating to the new design
- reports 11 call outs to the Play area between 7 October and 14 November but no evidence of drug or alcohol consumption was found.

In addition to this e-mail, Sergeant Duncan Wallace said in his report to this December Parish Council meeting that an arrest has been made this week at the Play area. A car was searched and cannabis found.

In summary:

- The police are being very proactive and the arrest is encouraging
- Residents tell me that Ian Sharratt is very sympathetic and approachable

Suggested next steps.

We should continue to support efforts and apply pressure where necessary, ie

- Respond to EHDC and copy Sir Oliver Heald. Thank Ian Sharratt for continuing support. Request clarification on how long the period of evaluation is before EDHC would consider changing the seating. Reiterate that although this is 'early days' for the redesign, local residents have had a very difficult year and they need respite. I will also send photos of the area behind the cul-de-sac to illustrate where I believe additional planting of trees would be beneficial to screen the houses and provide a sound barrier.
- Update local residents and encourage them to report incidents and use the antisocial behaviour diary.

## 8 Sub-Committees

### a) Budget & Finance

This item was discussed directly after item 4 d, Items outstanding for more than two months.

### Community Hall Trustees

In the absence of Mr. Harris, Mr. Smith reported on the following items concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Development of the Community Hall (including quotations for installing new Pavilion window frame and boiler system)**

Mr. Smith said that following the meeting he and the Clerk had with Louise Beaton, to discuss the development of the Community Hall, she has now produced a comprehensive report, which has been e-mailed to all Parish Councillors.

Mr. Smith now asked the Trustees to come up with a strategy for the Community Hall, based on Louise Beaton's report. If required the Trustees could ask other Parish Councillors to help drive any projects forward.

**Action: Trustees**

Mr. Smith said that one of the items highlighted in the report was consulting with the current hirers of the Community Hall, and residents of Watton-at-Stone, about their needs. In addition, co-operation with other halls in Watton-at-Stone to find out the best ways to accommodate villagers' social and sporting needs.

The Parish Council disagreed with the comment that the Memorial Hall or other halls can claim support from the Parish Council.



- **Shower in the referees changing room**

It was agreed at the November Parish Council meeting that next time James Turner and Son Limited visit the Community Hall, they be asked to turn off the water supply to the shower in the referees changing room that no longer has a shower door. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Repair of emergency light in Pavilion**

The emergency lighting over the Pavilion fire doors to the sportsfield have been repaired.

- **Installation of two outside lights**

At the request of the Youth Club, two LED outside lights were fitted on the sportsfield side of at the Community Hall. However, they have been incorrectly fitted and are on 24 hours a day, with no way of turning them off. Mr. Knight said that the angle of the lights is too high and is affecting people using the MPPA at night. Local residents have also complained about their brightness.

D. P. Electrics have been asked to correct the problem with the outside lights as soon as possible. This item to remain on the agenda until it is resolved. **Agenda: 01/15**

- **Annual Return**

The Trustees have all agreed that the Clerk can submit the Annual Charity Return. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Painting of wooden panelling in four of the internal toilets**

Following agreement from the Trustees and Parish Councillors, via e-mail, Mark Blacktin was instructed to paint the woodwork, in four of the internal toilets with white gloss paint. This work has now been completed.

## Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **New play equipment update**

Mr. Smith said that the outstanding work to the new play equipment has now been completed and Kompan have received final payment.

During a site visit, Mr. Smith said that Kompan agreed to donate a bench for the sportsfield to compensate for all problems and delays that occurred during the installation of their play equipment. Mr. Smith to chase Kompan. **Action: M. Smith**

- **Repair of Rainbow multi-play and slide**

Mr. Smith said that Mark Blacktin has replaced the delaminating marine ply on the rainbow multi-play and slide with recycled plastic sheeting; however, he had not had a chance to inspect the work done. Mr. Smith to inspect the work. **Action: M. Smith**

- **MPPA – external lights on Pavilion**

This item was discussed under 8 a, Community Hall Trustees.

## Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Allotments**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she and Mr. Smith had a very successful meeting with members of the Allotment and Garden Association. All Parish Councillors were forwarded the following e-mail on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

‘To save time at the next Parish Council meeting I am sending you details of the meeting Mike and I had with the Allotment Association, below are our recommendations for approval by the full council.

Official name - Watton Allotment and Garden Association.

Members John and Joan Love - Bob and Linda Thurlow - Phil Moore - David Wilkinson - Mark Adkin - Andrew May.

1. Told them the Parish Council would need 10 allotment association members to propose any improvement schemes they may have in the future.
2. Agreed to get the Clerk to write to tenants with plots along Church Walk to cut their hedges and leave 1-metre gap between hedge and allotment and to keep clear of rubbish, so fence can be repaired and rats dealt with.
3. Parish Council to provide rat bait boxes and 20kgs of bait – Allotment and Garden Association to install and monitor.
4. Parish Council to provide new wooden fence posts, to replace rotten ones - Allotment and Garden Association to install and repair fence.
5. Dipping tanks – Mr. Smith to investigate costs. Standpipes to be retained for hosepipe usage.
6. Level dip in roadway with scalping to form hard surface.

7. Provide more car parking at set aside land, this land to be fenced by Parish Council.

Points 4, 5, 6 and 7 to be put together as part of 106 scheme, which Mr. Smith will put together and advise council shortly.

It was suggested that we put Geotex covering on vacant plots to keep weeds and grass down, this could also be included in 106 scheme.

When new tenants are shown round, Christine Dinnin to ask representatives of the Allotment Association to join them, so they can meet them and offer any assistance they may need.

Mr. Smith said that he had investigated the cost of dipping tanks and suggest the purchase of three tanks of 350 litres each. Mr. Love expressed his opinion that the dipping tanks should have lids on them to avoid persons or animals falling into them.

Parish Councillors agreed that Mr. Smith should proceed with a S106 application to include items 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the above list.

**Action: M. Smith**

The Clerk to write to allotment holders with plots along Church Walk.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Watton Green**

The bench around the tree on Watton Green needs replacing as it is badly deteriorated. Mr. Smith estimated that the replacement cost is approximately £2,000.

This item to be included in the S106 application (see above item).

**Action: M. Smith**

- **Lammas**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she, Mr. Smith and Mr. Knight met with Charlie Bell (Herts and Essex Wildlife Trust) met to discuss progress on the Lammas.

It was agreed to submit a S106 application for improvements along the Lammas stretch of the River Beane.

**Action: M. Smith**

- **Memorial oak tree**

Mrs. Dinnin reported that Maurice Gordon asked if the Oak tree in memory of one of the Watton-at-Stone Ramblers could be installed on the Lammas rather than Watton Green. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to agree a suitable location.

**Action: C. Dinnin/ M. Smith**

Mr. John Love and Mr. Bob Thurlow left the meeting.

## **New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee**

This item was discussed following after Budget and Finance Sub-Committee and directly after item 4 d, Items outstanding for more than two months.

### **b) Routine Reports**

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

The emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm to be done directly after this meeting.

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

- ii) **Monthly village-report**

Mrs. Dinnin completed the report on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

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

- **Outside toilet doors** – squeaks and needs oiling. Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required.

**Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

- **New play equipment** – needs including in the monthly-village report.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- iii) **Weekly sportsfield**

Nothing to report.

iv) **Website**

Mr Stock said that current ‘application for funding’ material must be removed from the ‘News’ section of the Watton-at-Stone website. This will be replaced by new information (including Edition 2 of the application form) at the appropriate time.

**Action: J. Allsop**

vi) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

## 9 Correspondence received

None.

### ‘Exclusion of the Public and Press’

- **Employees and self-employed remuneration**

This item was discussed under ‘Exclusion of the Public and Press’ and the meeting was closed to the public.

The Clerk left the meeting while her salary was discussed and returned when these discussions had been completed.

## 10 Village organisations

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

Mr. Stock said that the War Memorial Management Committee’s AGM was held on 19<sup>th</sup> November, which he summarised as follows.

- Booking and finances remain in a healthy state.
- Helen McCash was re-elected as Chairman, as was Pam Filer as Treasurer and Ian Tyler as Secretary. Christine Grant was elected to the post of Bookings Secretary.
- Mr. Stock agreed to continue as their Parish Council representative.
- Mrs. Abel Smith has resigned from the board of Trustees and is replaced by Mr. Charles Clark.
- The Trustees are happy with the efforts of the management committee and thanked everyone involved.

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

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

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight said that the Parish Council will be presented with a copy of the DVD of the film titled ‘On the Banks of the Beane’ in recognition of their donation of £100 towards its production.

- **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**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the following intervention from Sir Oliver Heald, an OFSTED report was carried out at the new Pre-School Playgroup site and it opened for the first time yesterday.

The group has ultimately suffered in the short term from this delay because some parents who work have moved their children to nursery schools in the area, including Watton-at-Stone nursery.

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

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

## 11 Items for Parish News

The following items were identified for inclusion in the February 2015 issue of the Parish News.

- New Homes bonus funding awards.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **The meeting closed at 2158.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015.**