

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 19th April 2016

Present:	Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman)	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman).
	Mrs. Christine Dinnin	Mr. Denis Filer
	Mrs. Catherine Hammon	Mr. Ian Knight
	Mrs. Helen McCash	Mrs. Margaret Stanley
	Mr. David Stock	Dr. Emma Waltham
	Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)	
Police:	Sergeant Duncan Wallace (arrived 1918 left 1935 left 1935)	
Members of public:	None	

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: None.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

4 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Filer declared a personal interest in item 7 h, Specific items - License across Cottage site (in so much as he is the licensee).

Mrs. McCash declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - External audit of Community Hall accounts for the year ended 2014/16 (Mrs. McCash is a partner at McCash and Hay).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th March 2016**

Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.

b) Review of actions

- 1. Arrange for Jim Morrissey to carry-out the 2015/16 internal audit of the Parish Council accounts**
The Parish Council accounts will be taken to Jim Morrissey, on Thursday 28th April, so he can perform the internal audit. **Action: J. Allsop**
- 2. Arrange for McCash and Hay to carry-out the 2015/16 audit of the Community Hall accounts**
The Community Hall accounts, for the year ending 31st March 2016, will be submitted to given to McCash and Hay for auditing before the end of April. **Action: J. Allsop**
- 3. Investigate requirement for the Community Hall to have a Music licence**
It would appear that there is no requirement for the Community Hall to have a music licence. Firstly because it is a Parish Council owned organisation and secondly because the Parish Council/Trustees do not run events themselves.

c) Action points resolved

1. Obtain results of the public consultation re Station Road and the High Street
2. Arrange meeting to discuss passing places in the High Street
3. Write a letter of thanks to Ian Vosper (Tennis Club) re clearance of footpath near MPPA
4. Look at the 'Go Daddy' website re updating the Watton-at-Stone website
5. Arrange for the Village directory to be published in the April edition of the Parish News
6. E-mail the current Financial Risk Assessment to all Parish Councillors and place item on April agenda
7. Accept AON's insurance quotation to cover the Community Hall for a period of 2 months
8. Renew CVS for Broxbourne and East Herts two year subscription
9. Purchase additional iron stakes to repair the rabbit fencing on the Allotments
- 10. Turn on the Allotment water supply**
Mrs. McCash said that the water pressure near her allotment is very low.
Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to investigate. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**
11. Take gas and electricity meter readings
12. Inspect damage to safety surface under Rainbow multi-play and slide and arrange for it to be repaired
13. Inspect damage to Parish Council notice board at the Community Hall
14. Forward the HCC temporary road closure notices e-mails to Parish Councillors
15. Write Parish News article

d) Action points outstanding**1. Chase Ray Parker re repair work required to Kompan identified in the annual playground inspection**

The Clerk said she had spoken to Ray Parker today, who had promised to get back to her so she could report on this item. However, he had failed to do so.

2. Continue to investigate further matting for the goal mouths

Mr. Knight said that he had been in contact with the Football Association and they do not endorse anything that would be sensible for the sportsfield goalmouths.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Knight to inspect the goalmouth areas and decide on what action is required.

Action: M. Smith/I. Knight

Police report from Sergeant Duncan Wallace

Sergeant Duncan Wallace said that there were sixteen recorded crimes showing for Watton-at-Stone since 15th March. However, nine out of the sixteen crimes relate to two incidents.

He was sorry to inform Parish Councillors that DC Kirsty Richardson has been reassigned to a child exploitation unit and would no longer be covering Watton-at-Stone. Parish Councillors agreed that she will be greatly missed. Sergeant Wallace said that he had managed to negotiate a replacement officer and PC Nick Musto now joins the team that will be covering Watton-at-Stone and is fully familiar with rural beats.

Mr. Meischke said that there have been more incidents of unsocial behaviour at the Community Hall. Toilet paper has been set alight in the outside toilets and there has been damage to one of the signs.

Mrs. McCash said that ringing the police on 101 was not always a positive experience.

Sergeant Wallace confirmed that the police are continuing to ticket parked vehicles on Station Road that are causing a visual obstruction. He agreed to look at the problem of parking on the bridge, which Mrs. McCash said was a serious visual obstruction when exiting Church Lane to enter the village.

Sergeant Duncan left the meeting at 1935

6 Planning

Mrs. McCash reported on the following items.

a) Applications**i) Gregorys Farm, Whempstead (3/16/0499/FUL)**

Change of use and internal alteration of two ancillary buildings to residential dwellings

Mrs. McCash said that these plans show some small changes to the original application

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that the Clerk be instructed to send a 'No comment' response to the planning department.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Appeals**i) Gregorys Farm, Whempstead - LPA Appeal Reference: AP/16/0012/REFUSE (re application number: 3/15/2046/FUL)**

Change of use and alteration of buildings from ancillary to residential accommodation

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that no further comment is required.

c) Decisions**i) Builders Yard, Perrywood Lane (3/16/0084/VAR)**

Variation of condition 3 (approved plans) of planning permission 3/15/0719/FUL for the demolition of existing asbestos-sheeted storage buildings and replacement with two detached house with integral garages and associated landscaping works to allow repositioning and enlargement of ground floor windows in the end elevations of each house and the addition of further ground and first floor windows to the side elevations of the rear projecting elements.

- East Herts Council – granted

7 Specific items**a) District Councillor Michael Freeman's Report**

Mr. Freeman said he would be submitting an application for the funding of new tables for the meeting room and chairs for the Pavilion.

Action: M. Freeman

Mr. Freeman said that if David Lloyd is re-elected on 5th May as the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner then his current policies and funding will remain in place. However, if one of the other candidates are elected, they may want to change what they spend their funds on and it might affect rural policing.

b) Traffic along Station Road

Mr. Stock said that, as he reported during the March Parish Council meeting, HCC and County Councillor Ken Crofton are in possession of the Parish Council's comments and views regarding the solutions to the traffic and pedestrian-safety issues in Station Road and the High Street. We now await HCC to come back to us with revised proposals for our review and approval.

c) Traffic along High Street

Mrs. Stanley said that she had tried, without success, to arrange a site meeting with representatives from the Parish Council and the business owners, Ken Crofton and members of the Hertfordshire Highways design team to establish a means of resolving the increasing problems of congestion and traffic conflicts in the High Street. She said that she had been in contact with Harrison Eales (Hertfordshire Highways) who informed her that the concerns raised by the Parish Council at the last meeting had been noted and would be taken into account. Hertfordshire Highways would then be in touch with the Parish Council once their proposals had been firmed up and assessed.

In addition, at Mrs. Stanley's request, Ken Crofton had also been in contact with Harrison Eales to confirm that the views of the Parish Council should be taken into account and that no decisions should be made without Parish Council consideration.

Mr. Smith said that he had recently seen Harrison Eales collecting data in the High Street on several occasions, at differing times of the day, over the past week.

Parish Councillors agreed to wait for Highways to come back to us regarding Harrison Eales' findings and a possible solution to the traffic congestion problems.

d) Neighbourhood plan – progress report

Dr. Waltham said that the Neighbourhood Plan is progressing. The District Council has approved the geographical scope of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan, which is the same area as the Parish. We also have a logo, designed by a child at the school, and a website, plus a social media presence.

The Strategy Committee and some members of the Scrutiny Committee met on 3rd April to do a village walkabout which led to interesting observations on the village.

The Neighbourhood Plan is about to enter its first consultation phase, which starts with an open house event on 23rd April at the Nigel Poulton Community Hall. The committee and volunteers will then begin directly contacting residents, business owners and landowners to gather their opinions on issues and ideas affecting the parish.

Following this 6-week consultation, the committee will consider the themes raised using a set of to-be-determined criteria and this will inform the first set of policies to be presented during the second round of consultation.

The aim is still to complete our work on the Neighbourhood Plan within 1 year, after which point it will be progressed by the District Council, in the hope the Neighbourhood Plan can be adopted as soon as possible.

e) Parish Council land

Nothing to report.

f) Sir Nigel Gresley day

Mr. Smith said that he had spoken to the ticket man at the Watton-at-Stone station, who informed him that there was no chance of the Flying Scotsman being allowed to stop at a minor station such as Watton-at-Stone.

The Parish Council agreed that they would like to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Sir Nigel Gresley's death by putting up a commemorative plaque. The plaque to include the fact that he lived at Watton House until his death in 1941.

Dr. Waltham agreed to come up with some wording for the plaque, which she will e-mail to all Parish Councillors for their approval.

Action: E. Waltham

Mrs. McCash said that she had read that some of the Flying Scotsman trips have been cancelled due to safety reasons because spectators are getting onto the track to obtain photographs of the locomotive.

Mr. Meischke agreed to contact the Steam Dreams, the event organisers, to find out if the Flying Scotsman will still be passing through Watton-at-Stone station.

Action: J. Meischke

g) Ferreting Licenses

It was agreed to write to all existing ferreting license holders to ask them if they wish to have their ferreting licenses renewed.

Action: J. Allsop

h) License across Cottage site

The licence for Temporary Access across the Land known as the "Old Cottage Site", at Watton Green, issued to Mr. Denis E. Filer (of Brambles, Watton Green) is up for renewal on 30th April. Parish Councillors agreed that this license should be renewed.

Action: M. Smith/J. Allsop

8 Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items concerning the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

- Monthly accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash – Payments	
None		None	
Cheques issued			
Community Hall	Loan from New Homes bonus towards cost of new roof		3,000.00
Community Hall	NHB grant towards the purchase of toys for use by Dots and		850.00
Community Hall	NHB grant for purchase of 22 child seats		369.60
J. Allsop	March/April 2016		1246.21
Jane Allsop	phone calls		80.63
Post Office Limited	Tax and NI		155.61
Affinity Water	Allotment water charges		21.72
W-a-S JMI School	NHB 2015 – GRANT		1,983.00
AON Limited	Insurance cover for Community Hall for 2 months		191.19
Fred Burnell	Mole control on the sportsfield		66.00
Duncan Cox	Neighbourhood Plan - domain name and hosting for website		95.98
HCC	Velcro dots for notices boards		17.70
Mark Blacktin	Safety surface repair under rainbow multi-play and slide		70.00
F D O'Dell	fence posts for allotments		172.80
J. Allsop for Print 24	Printing of 1500 postcards for Neighbourhood Plan		48.78
Bidwells LLP	Rent for Diocesan land at MPPA		125.00
			<u>8,494.22</u>
Cheques received			
Sports and social club		Sportsfield facilities	<u>362.50</u>
			<u>362.50</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Floodlighting donations 16/02-30.03.16	220.00	Foil Play – stickers for Dots and Tots	2.60
Carla Beach - Pavilion	157.50	Tesco – 3 child drinking beaker	3.00
Phillip Little - Main Hall	48.00	Waitrose – 7 child drinking beaker	<u>7.00</u>
Vince Geoff – Main Hall	6.00		<u>12.60</u>
Tony Silvestri - Pavilion	38.00		
Tony Silverstri – donation	2.00		
Sammy Shadbolt – Main Hall and Pavilion	39.00		
Delia Lucas - Hall and Pavilion	54.00		
Alex Waller - Hall and Pavilion	72.00		
Shelby Bunyan - Main Hall and Pavilion	<u>64.00</u>		
	<u>700.50</u>		
Cheques issued			
P. J. Andrews	Final payment for Community Hall roof (£5700 plus VAT)		3,277.50
J. Allsop credit card	Baker Ross re Dots and Tots NHB grant		36.03
J. Allsop credit card	Amazon purchases re Dots and Tots NHB grant		145.23
Wages	March/April 2016		170.93
E-ON	Gas		312.30
E-ON	Electricity		118.82
Total Contract Cleaners	Hall cleaning in March 2016		120.00
HCC	Cleaning materials		43.20
			<u>4,224.01</u>

Cheques received		
Sports and social club	Hire of Community Hall facilities	362.50
Peter Khera	Main Hall	138.60
Dots and Tots	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	239.40
Parish Council	Loan from New Homes bonus towards cost of new roof	3000.00
Parish Council	NHB grant for toys to be used by Dots and Tots	850.00
Parish Council	NHB grant for 22 children's chairs	369.60
		<u>4960.10</u>

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **12-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall for year ended 31st March 2016**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the Parish Council and Community Hall statement of accounts for the year ending the 31st March 2016.

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

A summarised version of the 12-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall for the year ended 2015/16, will be presented at the Annual Parish meeting on 17th May. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Financial Risk Assessment and Financial Management**

All Parish Councillors had been e-mailed a copy of the current document titled 'Risk Assessment and Financial Management', dated November 2015.

Mr. Filer asked Parish Councillors if they had any comments on this document.

Mr. Meischke suggested that the following items be included on the Risk Assessment and Financial Management document

- Shower inspection with reference to Legionnaire's disease.
Currently Rosemary Brown runs the showers every time she comes into the building and the showerheads are removed and cleaned every three months.
- Fire extinguisher check
Rosemary Brown does a monthly inspection of the fire extinguishers and logs her findings in a diary.

It was agreed that both the above items should be included in the 'Risk Assessment and Financial Management' document.

Action: D. Filer/J. Allsop

- **PRS for Music licences**

Refer to item 5 b 3, Review of actions - Investigate requirement for the Community Hall to have a Music licence.

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- **Survey**

Mr. Stock said that the closing date for submitting the Community Hall Survey-forms has passed and he is currently working on a review of the 44 responses received (now 47). He will then present the results of his review to the Trustees with a view to moving things forward without undue delay. **Action: D. Stock**

A meeting with the Friends of the Nigel Poulton Community Hall to be arranged so the Trustees can update them on the current activities and progress concerning the Survey results. **Action: J. Meischke**

A meeting to be arranged between the Trustees and Nigel Farren, (Project Co-Ordinator, Forever Active) to discuss the results of the survey, the funding opportunities available and the way forward.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Showers and boiler**

Mr. Meischke said he will be meeting with James Turner Limited, at the end of May, to discuss the shower and boiler systems.

To comply with current legislation on Legionnaires disease, the plastic showerheads need to be removed and cleaned at least once every three months. Some of the showerheads are now damaged and need replacing and the existing fittings are now obsolete. Mr. Meischke said that when asking James Turner to quote to replace the current boiler system, he will ask them to include the supply and fitting of new showerheads.

Mr. Filer asked Mr. Meischke to obtain three quotations for replacing the showerheads and the boiler system. Mr. Meischke said that this might not be possible as it is very difficult to find anyone interested in quoting to do the work.

- **Replacement lighting quotation from D. P. Electrics**

Mr. Filer suggested that this item and the item below should remain on hold until the Community Hall's financial situation improves. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

- **Decoration quotation from Mick Taylor**

Refer to the above item.

- **Library**

Mr. Meischke said that some DVD racks were donated to the library and these have now been fitted above the existing shelving.

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Freeman would like to open the library on Tuesday afternoons between 1500 and 1700 to attract school children to visit. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

Parish Councillors also agreed that the Community Hall would not charge the library for the use of the Community Hall facilities.

Mr. Freeman is submitting a grant for new tables for the meeting room and new chairs for the pavilion. Unfortunately, the library shelving cannot be included in the grant because it has already been purchased.

- **Purchase of Exhibition carpeting for the Main Hall**

The exhibition carpeting has arrived and is being stored in one of the cupboards off the Main Hall.

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith to arrange to unroll the carpeting and cut it as required.

Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith

- **Hall hiring costs**

Mr. Meischke said that the Main Hall hire charges for Friday to Sunday have been £2 per hour cheaper than the rates for Monday to Thursday. He therefore suggested that the rates for Friday to Sunday be increased in-line with the Monday to Thursday rates.

Also, that block bookings will receive a 5% discount instead of the current 10% discount for paying three months in advance.

All Parish Councillors agreed these changes.

Casual hirers who have already booked the Community Hall facilities for a Friday to Sunday booking will be charged at the lower rate. However, all new bookings will be charged at the new rate.

All block booking hirers to be notified of the increase in hiring costs and reduced discount rate, which will take affect from 1st September 2016.

Action: J. Allsop

Hiring charges to be put on the agenda for the October 2016 Parish Council meeting.

Agenda: 10.2016

Mr. Meischke said that the Community Hall was unique in this area and therefore an accurate hiring price comparison cannot be made.

The Clerk to alter the hiring charges on the Watton-at-Stone website, including the floodlighting charges, which are incorrectly stated.

Action: J. Allsop

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **MPPA**

Mr. Knight said that at the March Parish Council meeting it was minuted that he would look at replacing the broken floodlighting bulb in April/May. He suggested that no action is required at this time and he would continue to monitor the floodlighting on a month-by-month basis.

Action: I. Knight

- **Sportsfield**

Refer to item 5 d 2, Action points outstanding - Continue to investigate further matting for the goalmouths.

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Mill Pond**

The fence rail around the Millpond is damaged and there is a shopping trolley and plastic in the pond.

Mr. Smith to ask Bluebury Contractors to clear the debris and repair the fence rail. The price for this work will be less than £200.

Action: M. Smith

- **Lammas**

Adam Welch has been instructed to trim the original Lammas footpath along the river.

- **Allotment**

Mr. Smith said that the Allotment and Garden Association have requested a meeting to discuss the disused allotment land. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Dinnin agreed to meet with them.

Action: M. Smith/C. Dinnin

Mr. Smith said that John Love has been very helpful with the reinforcement of the rabbit fencing around the allotments.

New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee

All Parish Councillors had been issued with a statement of the New Homes Bonus accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016. Mrs. Stanley said that all the New Homes Bonus grants had been paid.

East Herts Council should make their next New Homes Bonus payment to the Parish Council in July.

b) Routine Reports**i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests**

Mr. Meischke to arrange for Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests to be carried out.

Action: J. Meischke

Note: Mr. Meischke and Mr. Stock completed the test on Wednesday 4th May.

ii) Gas and electricity meter readings

Mr. Meischke said that he had already taken the meter readings and e-mailed them to the Clerk.

iii) Fire Inspection

Nothing adverse to report.

iv) Monthly village-report

Mr. Filer completed the report on 18th April 2016.

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

- **Goalmouths** – poor.
- **Swings** – surface worn under three swings.
- **Harry's bench** - covered in bird droppings. Ted Brown to be asked to clean the bench.
Action: J. Meischke
- **Notice board** – Perspex damaged. Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required.
Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke
- **Outside toilets** – one blocked and very dirty.
Mr. Meischke said that there have been two incidents where burnt toilet paper has been found in the outside toilets. IT would appear that the toilets have sometimes been left open after the secondary children come back into the village. In the interest of the safety of the building and that of John Phillips, because of the antisocial behaviour risk, it was agreed that Mr. Meischke will close the toilets each evening and record any incidents and that Rosemary Brown would leave the toilets open after cleaning them each morning. It was also agreed that John Phillips be asked to return his keys to the outside toilets. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Mill lane** – old Mill Lane building is looking in poor condition.
- **War Memorial** – looks good and new plants coming through.
- **Ornate village sign** – lots of mole activity around the ornate village sign.

vi) 6-monthly check of MPPA, Play Area on sportsfield and Community Hall equipment

Mr. Knight and Mr. Meischke to complete the 6-monthly check.

Action: I. Knight/J. Meischke

vii) Weekly sportsfield

Nothing to report.

vii) Website.

The Clerk to update the Community Hall hire charges on the Watton-at-Stone website. **Action: J. Allsop**

viii) Facebook

The Clerk to put up a link for both the agenda and minutes on the Parish Council's Facebook page each month.

Action: J. Allsop

ix) Highway and Lighting faults

Mr. Freeman said that he would chase County Councillor Ken Crofton about the white-lining at the High Street junction with Walkern Road, if required.

Action: M. Freeman

9 Correspondence received**a) Community Service**

Mr. Knight said that the Annual Community Service will be held on Sunday 3rd July.

Parish Councillors agreed to the free use of the Community Hall facilities.

10 Village organisations

None.

11 Items for Parish News

No items were identified for inclusion in the May 2016 issues of the Parish News.

The meeting closed at 2150

The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 17th May 2016.