

A meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council was held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 25th July 2001 at 7.15 p.m.

Present: Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman) Mrs. C. Dinnin
Mr. V. Dunhill Mr. D. Filer
Mr. I. Knight Mrs. H. McCash
Mr. J. Meischke

Public: Mr. E. Riddle

In the absence of Mr. Poulton, Mr. Stock took the chair.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Poulton, Mrs. Davies and Mr. Clark.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 30th May 2001**

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

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27th June 2001**

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

b) Review of actions

- **Write to Railtrack again re broken fence at railway bridge in Church Lane**

This action point has been completed and a reply was received from Railtrack Main Headquarters, York on the 3rd July.

Railtrack claim that following receipt of our letter dated 3rd March, which they received at their York office on 23rd March (due to it being sent to the wrong office), their maintenance contractor visited the site and repaired the fencing the next day. They are concerned about our latest correspondence and have asked their maintenance contractor to carry out an urgent site visit to undertake further repairs as required.

Mr. Filer said that the fence had now been repaired, however, it is still possible for people to get over the fence and onto the railway line.

- **Contact Ron Jack re culverts in Mill Lane**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Stock read out the following letter (dated 11th July) from Ron Jack to Mr. Poulton.

'Culverts in Mill Lane, Wotton-at-Stone

With reference to the Parish Council query and our site meeting to discuss the above.

I have spoken to Steve Minton of HCC Bridge Section and he advises that the culvert under the old mill will be the responsibility of the owners. The section under the carriageway is the responsibility of the County Council (Bridge No. HCC 419).

I have requested from Adrian Stevenson a land search for the owners of either side of the watercourse. This is necessary so that contact can be made before HCC attempt to clear their section of the culvert.

I will let you know the details as soon as I received them.'

- **Put copy of the results of the Results of the Housing Needs Survey on all the notice boards within the village**

This action point has been completed.

- **Ask Jeff Skidmore to cut the verge between the Waggon and Horses and the bridge over the River Beane**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Ron Jack (EH Highways Department) re replacing the trees removed from Hazeldell**

Mr. Stock said that Ron Jack had verbally confirmed that the trees removed from Hazeldell would be replaced in the autumn. It was agreed to write to Mr. Jack asking him for written confirmation.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

- **Contact Mr. Poulton re jobs for Heath Mount School students within the village**
Mr. Stock said that Mr. Poulton had not received any responses from Parish Councillors.
- **Submit grant application to EHDC for additional play equipment**
Mr. Stock said that Mrs. Davies had submitted the grant application.
- **Contact Mrs. Freeman re location of seat on sportsfield**
Mr. Stock said that he had spoken to Mrs. Freeman who would like the seat that she has purchased in memory of her grandparents to be sited between the hedge and the footpath to the MPPA, and not adjacent to the new play area. All agreed to Mrs. Freeman's request.
- **Write letters of thanks to PC Ivens, EHDC and Chrysalis for attending meeting on 25th June**
This action point has been completed.
- **Send signed copy of the audited accounts for the Community Hall to McCash and Hay**
This action point has been completed.
- **Instruct the Co-operative Bank to set up a telephone banking service for all the Parish Council accounts**
This action point has been completed.
- **Instruct Mrs. Bewley to clean pavilion floor before Community Service and Official Opening of MPPA**
This action point has been completed.
- **Contact Michael Stanley re the cutting of the grass at Watton Green**
This action point has been completed.
- **Erect new footpath and bridleway signs**
Mr. Dunhill said that this action point is still outstanding. **Action: V. Dunhill**
- **Remove graffiti from the see-saw**
This action point has been completed.
- **Purchase a 'dogs on lead' sign and erect it at the entrance to the allotments**
This action point has been completed. Mr. Meischke will speak with allotment holders to find the best location for the sign.
- **Remove salt bins from the report book**
Mr. Stock said that he had suspended this action point and suggested that the salt bins should remain on the monthly report. This would enable the Parish Council to check that HCC are maintaining the salt bins in good condition and that they are kept filled with salt. After discussion, this was agreed by all present.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for 15 High Street**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for 24 Rivershill**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Mrs. West re telephone box at Station Road/ Glebe Close**
This action point has been completed.
Mrs. McCash said that the glass in the telephone box had been smashed again.
- **Write to EHDC re annual playground inspection**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Mrs. Jeanette Williams re Youth Club funds**
This action point has been completed.
No response has been received from Mrs. Williams.
- **Send a copy of Mr. Lamb's letter concerning dens opposite his bungalow to Stort Valley Housing Association**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Stock read out the following letter (dated 19th July) from the Stort Valley Housing Association.
"Thank you for your letter of 18th July and subsequent fax.

I understand the nature of Mr. Lamb's concerns and express sympathy with him. The trees are situated on East Hertfordshire Council owned land and as managing agents for the Council, the Association is concerned at damaged being cause to property.

If Mr. Lamb or his neighbours can positively identify any of the children involved as those belonging to tenants of the Council and advise me, I will approach those tenants to remind them of their obligations and responsibilities under the terms of their Tenancy Agreement. A tenant's responsibility extends to children and visitors of the tenant.

Mr. Lamb should not hesitate in reporting any acts of criminal damage to the police.'

It was agreed to send a copy of this letter to Mr. Lamb.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Write to Mr. Lamb re his letter concerning dens opposite his bungalow**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Don Chandler re use of the Pavilion facilities**

This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

3 Specific Items

a) Grass verges – monthly inspection

It was agreed that the grass verges in the village were in a good condition.

Mr. Skidmore has cut part of the grass verge between the Waggon and Horses and the bridge over the River Beane to improve visibility for drivers as they exit the village.

This item to remain on the agenda until the end of the 2001 grass-cutting season.

Agenda: 9/01

b) Playground equipment

Mrs. Davies was not present at the meeting to update the Parish Council on the progress of this item.

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 09/01

c) Re-cycling site

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Poulton had informed him that the recycling facility at Watton JMI School was due to be removed during the week starting the 16th July. An appropriate notice will be placed on the school gates. The gates are to be kept locked during the school holidays.

Watton Nursery no longer wants to accommodate the recycling facility. No other sites have been identified in the village. Therefore, Watton-at-Stone has lost its local recycling facility.

Some Parish Councillors confirmed that the recycling site at the school had now been removed.

d) Neighbourhood Watch meeting

Mr. Stock reported that Mr. Poulton has arranged a meeting for the 11th September in the Community Hall to look at restarting the neighbourhood watch scheme in the village. PC John Ivens and Jill Dockley (Community Safety Co-ordinator) will be present at the meeting. Mr. Poulton has placed an advert in the Parish News and posters will be displayed around the village in early September.

e) Request for letter of support re toilet improvements at Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall Management Committee is applying to the EHDC's Capital Grants Scheme for a grant towards the refurbishing the toilets in the Memorial Hall. Mrs. Filer has informed us that the application requires the support of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council.

It was agreed to write to EHDC stating that the Parish Council were given details about the plans for refurbishing the toilets of the village's Memorial Hall at this meeting and that they give their strong support for the work to be done.

Action: J. Allsop

f) Summer Playscheme 2001

Mr. Stock said that during the Summer Play Scheme (to be held between the 30th July to 24th August 2001) the organisers would be required to remove their equipment from the Pavilion each weekend to accommodate the Cricket Club. Last year their equipment was stored in the Parish Council room. The previous year they had been given a key to the Main Hall so that they could store their equipment in the internal cupboard. However problems occurred because the floor was left in a dirty state for users of the Main Hall and numerous complaints were received

After discussion, it was agreed that the Summer Play Scheme leaders be allowed to store their equipment in the Parish Council room from Friday evening to Monday morning and told to leave the Pavilion clean and tidy for use by the Cricket Club.

Mr. Meischke agreed to meet the Play Scheme leaders to hand over the keys on Monday 30th July and carry-out weekly inspections of the building. The leaders also to be given a key to the Parish Council room, which they will be instructed to keep locked at all times. **Action: J. Meischke**

4 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mrs. McCash reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Review of Clerk's contract of employment**

Mrs. McCash proposed that the Clerk be informed in writing of the following changes to her contract of employment.

1. Sickness Allowance – The Clerk will receive 6 months full pay and six months at half pay in respect of periods of long-term illness.
2. Periods of Notice – The minimum period of notice that the Clerk is entitled to receive from the Parish Council is: two years or more, but less than twelve years of continuous service = 1 week for each year of employment.
3. The minimum period of notice that the Clerk is required to give the Parish Council to end her employment is two months.

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

A letter to be sent to the Clerk accordingly.

Action: H. McCash/ N. Poulton

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

Mrs. McCash said that because the Parish Council accounts were currently being audited the Clerk is unable to prepare the 3-monthly statements of accounts. These will now be presented to the Parish Council at its meeting in September.

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Stock reported on the following item concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Annual safety inspections**

All safety inspections have now been carried-out (i.e. electrical, gas and fire equipment) without any problems.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Allotments – strimming of allotments not in use**

The allotments not in use are in need of strimming. It was agreed to contact Jeff Skidmore to ask him to carry-out the work and confirm that the price will be similar to that charged last year. **Action: J. Allsop**

Environment

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

- **Watton Green**

- Mr. Stock said that the grass had now been cut and the ditch strimmed.
- He then showed Parish Councillors Don Chandler's painting of a perspective view of Watton Green and Jono Meischke's updated version of his perspective view.

Parish Councillors agreed that Don Chandler's painting was the preferred option, however they highlighted some changes that would be required.

Mr. Stock to inform Jono Meischke of the changes required to the artwork.

Action: D. Stock

Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke to establish a method of mounting the artwork on the information board.

Action: D. Stock/J. Meischke

Don Chandler to be informed that we are to use his artwork.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

- **Lammas**

Mr. Dunhill said that Mr. Stanley hopes to cut the Lammas grass either this week or next.

The Clerk to give Mr. Stanley the key to the Lammas gate before she goes on holiday.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Stock asked if any progress had been made on the removal of the concrete fixture/cables on the Lammas. Mr. Dunhill said that the concrete fixture had not been removed.

Comment [C1]:

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting in September 2001. **Agenda 09/01**

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mrs. Dinnin carried-out the sportsfield report on the 25th July, the result of which is as follows.

• **Sportsfield:**

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Condition of grass | Good. |
| Litter | Bins un-emptied – no sign of plastic bags. |
| Dog-waste bin and fouling | Good. |
| Netball posts | Stored OK. |
| General | Looks good – fence to horse’s field – ½ done. |

• **Children’s Playground:**

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Condition of surface | OK. |
| Litter/Litter bin | Couldn’t find it – but litter OK. |
| Large swings | OK. |
| Small swings | OK. |
| See-Saw | Squeaky. |
| S lide -- | OK. |
| Comments | Generally good. |

• **Community Hall:**

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| General Condition | Good. |
| Litter bin | OK. |
| Car Park | OK. |
| General | OK. |

• **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Surface | Excellent. |
| Boundary Fencing | Good. |
| Tennis nets | Good, both up. |
| Litter | On courts good, but litter bin over-spilling. |
| General | New boot scraper bristles look as if they have been deliberately squashed. |

• **Great Innings Play Area:**

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Equipment | Fine, new slide type of equipment has graffiti on green paint. |
| Surfaces | Good, except slide, some of safety tiles need fixing. |
| Litter | None. |
| Dog-waste bin and fouling | None. |
| Comments | All looks good; there are a few branches of the fir trees hanging down. |

• **Allotments Area:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Access | Gate to Church Walk poor. |
| Condition of paths between Allotments | Fair. |
| Condition of Allotments | Good. |
| Cultivation | |
| Condition of Allotments not under cultivation | Overgrown. |
| Litter | Good. |
| Comments | Can anything be done to the overgrown allotments in the middle? Also, need two large compost bins. |

• **Culverts on Mill Lane**

| | |
|---|--|
| Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts | |
| Dog-fouling | None. |
| Comments | Trees in Willowdene pruned but ones marked with paint are still there. Stinging nettles on 2 nd bridge near units. |

• **Salt bins**

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Perrywood Lane | - |
| Great Innings | - |
| Station Road | - |
| Moorymead Close | - |
| Hazeldell | - |
| Garages between Glebe | - |
| Closer & Rectory Lane | - |

- **Dog-waste bins**

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Footpath 17 | Full. |
| Sportsfield | Full. |
| Church Walk | OK. |
| Walkern Road | OK. |
| Station Road | OK. |
| High Street (by Memorial) | OK. |
| Great Innings | OK. |
| Mill Lane | OK. |

General Comments: The majority of the litterbins in the village seem to have not been emptied for some time, especially in the High Street.

- **Litter collection**

Mr. Meischke reported that the bins in the High Street were all emptied yesterday.

- **Boot scrapers**

Mr. Meischke agreed to remove the metal protrusions on the side of the two boot scrapers because they could cause injury. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Great Innings Play Area**

The Clerk to write to EHDC informing them that some of the safety surface tiles are lifting and there is graffiti on one of the new pieces of equipment. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Compost bins for allotments**

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 5th September, under Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee. **Agenda: R & A**

5 Planning

a) Applications

i) 64 Rivershill

Single storey rear extension and conservatory

Mr. Stock asked Mr. Meischke to sign the member's interest book because he was the applicant. Mr. Meischke did so and then left the meeting.

Mr. Dunhill said that he had visited the residents of the neighbouring property and no objections were raised.

Parish Councillors studied the plans for this application.

The Clerk to inform EHDC that the Parish Council has no comment on this application. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Meischke returned to the meeting.

b) Decisions

i) 20 Great Innings North

First Floor rear extension

-EHDC permission granted

ii) 73 Hazeldell

Single storey front extension to garage with pitched roof over to garage/study/entrance hall

-EHDC permission granted

c) Withdrawn

i) Whempstead Road

Agricultural Barn – Amended plans

ii) Whempstead Road

Dwelling house – Amended plans

6 Correspondence received

a) Groundwork Trust – Multi-purpose play area

We have received Groundwork Trust's cheque for £6,000 towards the resurfacing of the MPPA.

b) CDA – Rural Social Inclusion Project Survey

The CDA has asked the Parish Council to complete a rural social exclusion survey form. Mr. Poulton had completed most of the form. Mr. Stock felt that we were unable to answer the two questions outstanding and explained why. This was agreed by all present.

The form to be returned to the CDA.

Action: J. Allsop

c) EHDC – Best Value review of the EH Highways Partnership

EHDC has asked the Parish Council to complete a best value questionnaire. Because of the significance of the survey, Mr. Stock explained the purpose of the document and then read out each question in turn which was then discussed. The answers given thus reflected the view of the Parish Council (as requested) and not an individual.

The completed form to be returned to EHDC.

Action: J. Allsop

d) Railtrack - re broken fence at railway bridge in Church Lane

This item was discussed under 2 b, Review of Actions - Write to Railtrack again re broken fence at railway bridge in Church Lane (on page 1 of these minutes).

e) Hertfordshire Police Authority – Public meetings for local residents of East Herts

Hertfordshire Police are holding public meetings for local residents of East Herts on Monday 10th September in Aston and on Thursday 18th October in Ware.

Mr. Filer said that he would be attending the meeting in Aston and would notify the Hertfordshire Police Authority accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

f) Herts Police Authority – re Parish Council representative

Sue Jenkins of the Hertfordshire Constabulary has written to acknowledge receipt of our letter advising them that Denis Filer was elected as Parish Council representative for the Police Authority.

g) EH Highways Partnership – re signs on the Highways

Mr. Stock said that this item is currently on circulation.

h) Hertfordshire Association for Local History

Mr. Stock read out a letter (dated 10th July) from the Hertfordshire Association for Local History advising us that the recorder scheme (which has been operating since 1983) collects information on changes and events in over 60 areas for the benefit of future historians. During the year 2000 special effort was made to record community activities throughout Hertfordshire. This information will form an archive to be held at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies at County Hall and, funding permitting, will feature in a special millennium book entitled Community Life in Hertfordshire – 2000. Mrs. Muriel Allen (of 51c High Street, Watton-at-Stone) has been working hard to produce Watton-at-Stone's entry about the activities that took place in this village in the year 2000.

The Herts Association of Local History (which is a registered charity) is looking for sponsorship money towards the publication of the millennium book.

After discussion, Mr. Stock proposed that because of the local involvement the Parish Council donates £50 towards the publication of the millennium book 'Community Life in Hertfordshire – 2000'. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

i) B. T. Ross – Application for full transfer of licence at The George and Dragon Public House

B. T. Ross has written to us (letter dated 12th July) enclosing a full transfer application together with an S.34 (gaming machine permit) application in respect of the George and Dragon Public House.

Mr. Peter Lyndon Tatlow and Mrs Jessica Louise (Purse) Tatlow intend to apply to the licensing session to be held at Stevenage Court on 7th August 2001 for a transfer of licences. Kevin Dinnin and Christine Dinnin currently hold the licence.

j) EH Highways Partnership – Culvert in Mill Lane

This item was discussed under 2 b, Review of Actions - Contact Ron Jack re culverts in Mill Lane (on page 1 of these minutes).

k) Stort Valley Housing Association – Great Innings development

Mr. Stock read out a letter (dated 6th July) from the Stort Valley Housing Association confirming that they will be purchasing the dog-waste and litter bins for the new development on the Great Innings Estate.

l) Mrs. Green – Hedge overhanging allotments footpath

Mrs. Green, of 138 High Street, has written stating that the Glebe Court hedge at the entrance to the allotments is overgrown.

A letter has been sent to Anglia Housing Group asking them to arrange for the hedge to be cut back (refer to next item, 6 m, Anglia Housing Group – Hedges at Glebe Court.)

m) Anglia Housing Group – Hedges at Glebe Court

The Anglia Housing Group has written stating that the Stort Valley Housing Association is currently seeking quotations from a contractor to undertake a limited ground maintenance service whilst Glebe Court is being refurbished. They have asked the person responsible for this work to ensure that the hedgerow to which we refer is trimmed.

A copy of Anglia Housing Group’s letter to be sent to Mrs. Green.

Action: J. Allsop

n) Rural Community Development - Vital Village Grants package

CDA Rural Community Development is holding three Vital-Village seminars in East Hertfordshire. No Parish Councillors present were able to attend any of these meetings (to be held on 2nd August in Letchworth, 16th August in Hertford and 6th September in Berkhamsted.

It was agreed to write to Gary Sage (Rural Development Officer at CDA Herts) advising him that we are unable to send a representative to any of the meetings. However, we would like to receive any relevant information on the Vital-Village grants packages available.

Action: J. Allsop

o) The Church of England – draft Deed of Waiver re the sportsfield Watton-at-Stone

All Parish Councillors were given a copy of the draft Deed of Waiver prior to the meeting.

The Parish Council noticed that the boundary lines drawn on the enclosed map are incorrect. The “former Rectory” edged in blue is actually the current Rectory and not the “former Rectory”.

It was agreed to write to The Church of England Legal Office advising them of the error and asking them to amend the map. Also informing them that the Parish Council will comment on/approve the draft Deed of Waiver when it receives the corrected version.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

p) EHDC – Street numbering and naming – Beane House, 51a High Street

EHDC has written to advise us that 51a High Street will be known as Beane House. The property is situated on the stretch of the High Street between Beaneside and Mill Lane and backs onto the River Beane.

No objections were made by Parish Councillors.

q) EHDC – New Political Structures

All Parish Councillors were given a copy of EHDC’s letter of the 2nd July enclosing maps showing the choice of a three or four Area-Forum. There was concern that EHDC had incorrectly stated the proposed sizes for the Area Forums. This was very misleading and Councillors were very concerned and disappointed that such important errors had not been corrected before the letter was sent out.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council favoured the three Area-Forum option.

It was agreed to write to EHDC informing them of our preferred option and that we strongly request that every Parish Council should be allocated a place on the Area Forum. In addition, showing our concern about the incorrectly stated sizes for the Area Forums.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

7 Reports from other Organisations

• **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club**

Mr. Knight said that the next meeting is to be held on the 1st August.

He said that he had been in contact with Doe Sport about the slippery condition of the MPPA surface since it had been painted.

The Clerk said that she had not yet posted the final payment cheque. It was agreed that the cheque be given to Mr. Meischke who will not post it until the situation has been resolved.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Meischke to contact Doe Sport about progress on this matter.

Action: J. Meischke

• **Watton-at-Stone Youth Club**

Mrs. Dinnin reported that a very successful open meeting took place on 9th July in the Memorial Hall. There was a lot of interest shown by adults who put their names forward as helpers. The numbers are such that volunteers would only need to do supervision duty every three to four weeks.

The young man who lives in School Lane who is willing to run the Youth Club is currently undergoing police checks. It is anticipated that the Youth Club will be reopened in September.

8 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Parish maps | 19.50 |
| | <u>19.50</u> |

Payments

None

Cheques required

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------|
| N. Poulton | Soft drinks and nibbles for opening of MPPA | 5.75 |
| Boardmans Photocopying | Charges to three months ending 30.06.01 | 61.28 |
| Inland Revenue | Three months Tax and NI | 114.24 |
| J. Allsop | June salary | 473.20 |
| | Telephone calls – July | 26.91 |
| | | <u>500.11</u> |
| | | <u>681.38</u> |

Cheques received

None

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Floodlighting to 27.06.01 | 10.00 |
| S. Straker – Main Hall hire | <u>48.00</u> |
| | <u>58.00</u> |

Payments

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| VAT return 5/01 | 51.41 |
| Laminiate 2 x A4 sheets | 2.00 |
| Sunstopper blinds – repair work | <u>37.60</u> |
| | <u>91.01</u> |

Cheques required

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------|
| NG Signs | Sign for MPPA | 44.65 |
| Fire Protection Services | Fire equipment annual check | 169.31 |
| Three Valleys Water | Water supply | 62.84 |
| K S Burgess | Electrical Check | 75.00 |
| Doe Sport | Tennis court resurfacing – final invoice | 2350.00 |
| David Bunyan | Safety check of boiler and heating system | 217.38 |
| Mrs. C. Bewley | 32 hours work | <u>168.00</u> |
| | | <u>3087.18</u> |

Cheques received

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Mr. Sadler | Pavilion hire | 32.00 |
| Groundwork | Grant for MPPA | 6000.00 |
| EHDC | Pavilion hire for elections | 128.00 |
| Badminton Club | Main Hall hire | 99.00 |
| Buntingford District Mechanical | Parish Council room hire | |
| Restoration Society Ltd | | <u>91.00</u> |
| | | <u>6350.00</u> |

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

9 Chairman's / Clerk's Report

Mr. Stock reported on the following items.

- **EHDC – Planning advice – Duty Officer system**

EHDC has written to inform us that there are some temporary changes to their Duty Officer system. The Planning and Property Department have for many years offered general planning advice, either by telephone or to visitors to Wallfields, between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm, Mondays to Fridays. Due to the extreme volume of work and depleted staff numbers, this will now be reduced to 9 am to 1 pm, Mondays to Fridays.

The letter to be put on circulation and copies displayed on the Parish Council notice boards. A copy also to be sent to Roy Watson (editor) so that an item can be placed in the Parish magazine. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Environmental Survey**

We have received a request to complete an environmental health survey. Mr. Stock agreed to complete and return the survey as requested. **Action: D. Stock**

- **Letter from PC John Ivens re school holidays**

Mr. Stock read out a letter (dated 24th July) which was sent by PC John Ivens to all parents of the children who attend the Watton-at-Stone Primary and Nursery School. The letter asks parents to closely monitor the behaviour of their child/children during the school holidays, and to complete and return an informal agreement to do so.

- **Surface of Main Hall**

Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke reported that the playing surface in the Main Hall is very slippery. It was agreed to inspect the floor further and take any necessary action. **Action: D. Stock/J. Meischke**

- **Broken windows**

Two more windows have been broken. One is in the Parish Council room and the other in the roof of the Main Hall (adjacent to the window broken in early June). This has been reported to the Police.

Mr. Meischke said that he would investigate the possibility of replacing broken windows with polycarbonate, especially for the high-level windows. However, there is a problem with polycarbonate, because it can draw in moisture and after three or so years the double-glazed units could turn 'cloudy'.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Trees overhanging roads**

- A large branch is broken and hanging down over the road opposite to the entrance to Watton Nursery and has now become a hazard.

It was agreed to write to Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership) asking for the tree to be made safe as a matter of urgency.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

- **Trees Church Lane**

Mr. Filer said that it had been brought to his attention, by Mr. Paul Borlase of Perrywood Farm, that there are two trees in the Diocesan field adjacent to the Church graveyard that are in a hazardous condition. The trees in question are on the boundary with Perrywood Lane at the southern-end of the field (opposite the property known as Lane Croft). Mr. Borlase has said that one of the trees is only being held-up by the ivy that surrounds it. He fears that when he, or others, take their farm equipment up and down the lane the trees may come down into the road. Mr. Borlase is willing to remove both of these trees free of charge.

It was agreed to write to Rumball Sedgwick asking if they would agree, in writing, to the work being carried-out. A copy of the letter to be sent to Mr. Borlase and Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership).

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

- **Tarmac outside old garage site and Bull and roundabouts**

Damage has been caused to the recently surface-dressed roads in the village. The tarmac has been ripped-up outside the new houses in the High Street (former garage site) by a JCB digger. This is at one of the two accesses to the new properties. Also, a crane brought into the village tonight for a bungee-jumping event has damaged the tarmac outside the Bull public house.

Mr. Stock said that there is also some damage to the tarmac surface adjacent to the Railway Station.

It was agreed to write to Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership) asking him to arrange for the damaged areas to be repaired. It was also agreed to ask him when the roundabout areas are going to be surface-dressed.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

- **Seats for Parish Councillors**

Mrs. McCash reminded Parish Councillors that it had been suggested that we look for more comfortable seating for the Parish Council room. Mr. Poulton and the Clerk to investigate.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

- **Advance apologies for absence**

Mrs. McCash gave her apologies for absence from the Parish Council meeting to be held on 5th September 2001.

- **The meeting closed at 9.12 pm.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 5th September 2001.**