

**Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2003 following the Annual Meeting**

Present:	Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. V. Dunhill	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. H. McCash
	Mr. J. Meischke	Mr. N. Poulton (after 9.47 pm)
Public:	Mr. E. Riddle	Mrs. S. Davies
	Mr. P. Davies	

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

**1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Poulton and Mr. Clark.

**2 Declaration of Interests**

Mr. Filer declared an interest in item 7 a, Planning applications – 18 Lammas Road. (Mr. Filer’s daughter owns and lives in the property involved).

Mr. Filer will therefore leave the meeting when the item is discussed.

Mr. Stock declared an interest in item 7 a, Planning applications - Windrush, Whempstead, erection of conservatory. (Mr. Stock reminded Parish Councillors that his connection is somewhat remote but he would leave the meeting because he had done so on the previous occasion.)

Mr. Stock will therefore leave the meeting when the item is discussed.

**3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report**

Mr. Stock said that there were two errors on the agenda.

Item 7 b xi, Planning decision for 2 Motts Close - should read 7 b iii.

Item 8 e, EHDC – renaming of The Thatched Cottage, Walkern Road to “Mooders”, Walkern Road. This property is not in our Parish and therefore does not need to be discussed.

Mr. Stock said that planning decisions had been received for the following properties after the agenda was published.

- i) 124 High Street - This item to be discussed under 7 b iv), Planning Decisions (on page 12 of these minutes).
- ii) 2 Perrywood Lane - This item to be discussed under 7 b v), Planning Decisions (on page 12 of these minutes).
- iii) 1 Hazeldell - This item to be discussed under 7 b vi), Planning Decisions (on page 12 of these minutes).
- iv) Blue Bury Farm, Walkern Road - This item to be discussed under 7 b vii), Planning Decisions (on page 12 of these minutes).

**4 Minutes of the last meeting**

**a) Acceptance**

• **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2003**

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2003.

- Page 3, Item 5 a, Specific Items – ‘Traffic-claiming in Whempstead’ should read ‘Traffic-calming in Whempstead’
- Page 3, Item 5 c, Specific Items – Ownership of footpath adjacent to Bull Public House
- The third paragraph of the letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2003 from James Bryant (Estate Manger, Punch Pub Company),  
‘There may be a Public Right of Way across the pub car park form’  
should read,  
‘There may be a Public Right of Way across the pub car park from’
- The final sentence of the letter,  
‘Would you please not our new office address for all correspondence.’  
‘should read,  
Would you please note our new office address for all correspondence.’

- The final paragraph of this item, 'Mr. Ian Bromley' should read ' Mr. Ian Blomley'.
- Page 9, Item 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee – Sportsfield Maintenance  
After: 'Mr. Filer questioned Mr. Knight as to why firm quotations for the materials had not been sort at the onset of the project.'  
Add: 'Mr. Knight said that because of the tight time-schedule, it had not been possible to obtain firm estimates.'

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

## b) Review of actions

- **Discuss Mill Lane/A602 junction during meeting with Ms Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways)**

Mr. Stock said that he had a copy of an 8-point e-mail from Mr. Poulton to Valerie Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) concerning various issues. He then read the following extract related to traffic issues.

'You have agreed that three traffic-counts and movements of vehicles would be undertaken at:

- a. Whempstead cross road
- b. the junction where Mill Lane joins the Watton-at-Stone bypass from Whempstead
- c. at the junction of Ware Road and the Whempstead Road just up from Heathmount School.

This will hopefully give Hertfordshire Highways an indication of the traffic flow through Whempstead and at the bypass junction to see what action needs to be taken.

The request you have received from the Parish Council s no left-turn onto the bypass from Whempstead.'

Parish Councillors noted that in his e-mail, Mr. Poulton referred to 'no left-turn onto the bypass' when it should have read 'no right-turn onto the bypass'.

Mr. Poulton to be informed accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Stock said that the 8-point e-mail is to be put on circulation.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Invite PC Ivens to the Parish Council meeting to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2003**

This action point has been completed.

PC Ivens has not yet confirmed that he is able to accept our invitation.

- **Attend the PREP (Parishes for Rural Environmental Protection) meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April in Braughing**

Mr. Clark was not present at the meeting to report on this item.

**Action: C. Clark**

- **Meet with Watton-at-Stone Millennium Mayfayre Committee re proposed ornate village sign**

Because Mrs. McCash was unable to attend the meeting, Mr. Stock and Mrs. Dinnin met with the Watton-at-Stone Millennium Mayfayre Committee.

This item to be discussed under 5 c, Ornate village sign (on page 4 of these minutes).

- **Write to Mr. Mould re alterations to the design of ornate village sign**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 5 c, Ornate village sign (on page 4 of these minutes).

- **Write to Rights of Way Officer at HCC re footpath adjacent to Bull public house**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 5 d, Footpath adjacent to Bull public house (on page 4 of these minutes).

- **Write to EHDC asking them to install a more suitable drainage-grill on the Walkern Road**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 5 e, Specific Items - Walkern Road – flooding (on pages 4 and 5 of these minutes).

- **Apply to the Community Against Drugs Fund for grant towards a portable goalmouth**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 5 f, Portable football goalmouth on sportsfield (on page 5 of these minutes).

- **Issue ferreting licence to Mr. Wally Pressland (Head of Pest Control at EHDC)**

This action point has been completed.

- **Give all Parish Councillors an amended copy of the Community Hall accounts**

This action point has been completed.

- **Renew CPRE membership**

This action point has been completed.

- **Purchase a copy of the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability in Local Councils**  
 The Clerk said that she had ordered the new version of the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability in Local Councils, which has been just published. The price of the new guide (which comes with loose-leaf pages and a binder) is £16.99. This is an increase of £7.04 on the price of the old version. The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) expected delivery of the new guides on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2003.  
 The Clerk to give Mr. Filer the guide as soon as it is received. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Ask McCash and Hay to audit the Community Hall accounts**  
 This action point has been completed.  
 The Clerk said that the Community Hall accounts will be sent to McCash and Hay for auditing within the next two week. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Speak to Christine Bewley to ask if she requires overalls**  
 Mr. Stock said that Mrs Bewley did not want the Parish Council to provide her with overalls to wear whilst performing her task in the Community Hall. This was confirmed by Mr. Meischke.
- **Include Pavilion on six-month check list**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Wicksteed Leisure re quote for safety surface**  
 This item to be discussed under 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - RoSPA – Playarea safety inspection (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Remove Parish-Council-owned mower and leaf blower from insurance policy**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Obtain quotations from Herts Tree Care and Michael Stanley for the tree work on the Lammas**  
 This item to be discussed under 6 a Environment Sub-Committee - Lammas trees and tree debris (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Write to the Environment Agency re work on the Lammas**  
 This action point has been completed.  
 Refer to item 6 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Lammas trees and tree debris (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Ask Mr. Brown to cut-back brambles opposite War Memorial**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for Blue Bury Farm**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for 124 High Street**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for 76 Hazeldell**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for Dairy Cottage, Home Farm, Woodhall Park**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to EHDC re plans for Watton Nursery**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Rodney Ranzetta re Community Service**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Sports and Social Club re Community Service**  
 This action point has been completed.
- **Visit Lammas bike-ramp site to speak to the children about the noise**  
 This action point has been completed.  
 Mr. Stock said the youngsters had done a litterpick of the area and taken a large bad of rubbish to Mr. Poulton's home.
- **Accept the Conservation Society's offer to sponsor a bin for the bike area on the Lammas**  
 This action point has been completed.  
 Mr. Stock to inform the Conservation Society that it will be asked to make a donation to the Parish Council to cover the price of the bin. **Action: D. Stock**
- **Write articles for Parish News**  
 This action point has been completed.

Mr. Stock thanked Mrs. Dinnin for doing this in the absence of Mr. Filer.

**c) Action points outstanding for more than two months**

None.

**5 Specific Items**

**a) Co-option of Parish Councillor**

Because only nine nominations were received by the Returning Officer at EHDC for election to the Parish Council, we have been asked to co-opt a tenth member within 35 days of the election (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003).

The vacancy was advertised on our Parish Council notice boards and applicants were invited to respond in writing by the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2003. Although we were not able to place an item in the Parish News in time, Parish Councillors were happy with the advertising that had been done.

Mr. Stock said that two written applications had been received (i.e. from Mr. M. Smith and Mr. T. W. Cobb) which he then read out.

After explaining the procedure, Mr. Stock handed out voting slips and a secret ballot then took place. He subsequently announced that Mr. Smith had received five votes and Mr. Cobb had received two votes. Mr. Smith was duly elected as a Parish Councillor.

Mr. Stock to write to both candidates accordingly.

**Action: D. Stock**

**b) Traffic-calming in Whempstead**

Mr. Clark was not present at the meeting to report on this item.

**c) Ornate village sign**

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Stock met with the Watton-at-Stone Millennium Mayfayre Committee (namely: Mr. and Mrs. Bewley and Mr. and Mrs Beavan) to discuss the progress of the ornate village sign and the changes agreed at the Parish Council meeting held in April.

The Millennium Mayfayre Committee is happy with the current design and thanked the Parish Council for generously making up the short fall in the funding of the sign.

**d) Footpath adjacent to Bull public house**

Mr. Stock read out the following letter from Paula Cheesman (Countryside Access Officer at HCC) dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

‘Further to my letter of 15<sup>th</sup> April, I have now had time to investigate further. I have spoken with the Highways who have checked their information and it is not recorded on their system as adopted road either.

Hertfordshire County Council cannot designate a footpath where we do not know who the landowner is or if the land is unregistered. Unfortunately, there is no centralised and independent record of the ownership of unregistered land.

The Parish Council could put a claim in for the land, The Land Registry office should be able to give you more advise about this.

If you became the legal owners, then you could dedicate it and we could then proceed to create this a public right of way.

I am sorry that I cannot be of more help at this stage.’

Mr. Stock then outlined the advantages and disadvantages of the Parish Council becoming the owner of the footpath. After discussion, Mr. Meischke proposed that the Parish Council seeks further advice from HCC/ Land Registry Office with a view to claiming the land and then getting the footpath dedicated. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**e) Walkern Road – flooding**

Mr. Stock read out the following letter, dated 9<sup>th</sup> May, from Andrew Stevenson (Engineering Assistant at EHDC).

**Watton-at-Stone by-pass bridge, Walkern Road, flooding investigations**

‘Thank you for your recent letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> April relating to the situation at the above site.

I confirm that I have discussed the matter with Val Weaver in order to establish responsibilities for alleviating flooding in the area.

Responsibility for maintenance of Land Drainage Systems generally rests with the landowner. The District Council is required to ensure that such landowners are fulfilling those requirements. In situations where landowners are negligent, the District Council can serve a notice or carry out works in default and recharge.

The installation of an improved trash grille at this site would be feasible and I understand that funding for such works would come from Herts Highways. The District Council, if required, could arrange for the design and construction of the grille if Highways fund the project.

I hope to have confirmation within the next 2 weeks about whether Highways wish to install the new grille.

As far as I am aware the responsibility for adequate maintenance continues to rest with the landowner of the grille and I anticipate that this will continue whether a new grille is installed or not.

I trust this clarifies the matter but if you have any queries please contact me at the offices in Hertford.'

It was agreed that this item should remain on the agenda until the matter is resolved.

**Agenda: 06/03**

**f) Portable football goalmouth on sportsfield**

Mr. Stock said that the portable goalmouth has now been placed on the sportsfield. As they arrived for the meeting, Parish Councillors were pleased to note that the goalmouth was being used by some youngsters.

**g) Night hike - Scout and Guide Groups within Hertford District**

At the Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of a letter from Peter Knight (deputy District Commissioner, Hertford District Scouts) who is organising a night-hike in Watton-at-Stone on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> / Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2003. It was agreed to defer any discussion on the subject to our May 2003 meeting.

Mr. Knight has now hired the War Memorial Hall (instead of the Community Hall, which is not suitable due to the restrictions on its use) as the base for the night-hike and therefore the Parish Council has no involvement with the event.

**h) Purchase of two Trophies**

Mr. Stock reminded Parish Councillors that it had been agreed (at the Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2002) to defer this item to May 2003, i.e. when the new council had been elected.

Parish Councillors now agreed to purchase two trophies, and two keepsake trophies, to the value of £75. The trophies to be awarded as follows.

- Good Citizenship trophy: to be awarded **at** the Watton-at-Stone Primary School leavers' service to the Year 6 child (aged 11 years) who, in the opinion of the staff, has been the "best" citizen during their whole time at the School.
- Cup for Outstanding Effort: to be awarded to a member of the Watton-at-Stone Scout and Guide Beaver or Rainbow group (ages 5 – 8 years).

Mrs. Dinnin to liase with Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock re the type of trophies to be purchased.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

**i) 2003 Hertfordshire Village of the Year Competition**

Mrs. McCash has completed and submitted the application forms for entry to the 2003 Hertfordshire Village of the Year Competition.

**j) Request from three Pubs for the use of the sportsfield for a family fun-day on Sunday 20th July 2003**

Mr. Stock said that a verbal request has been received, from the three pubs in the village, to hold a family fun-day on the sportsfield. No cricket is scheduled on this day.

After discussion, Mr. Stock proposed that the Parish Council allows the use of the sportsfield provided that no alcohol is sold on-site, because this contravenes the sportsfield covenant. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

A letter to be sent to Mr. Bond, of the Waggon and Horses, informing him of the Parish Council's decision.

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

**k) Ownership of the access to the Parish Council land situated between 48 and 50 Rivershill**

Mr. Stock said that this item was on the agenda as a formality.

In October 2002, Tim Clark (of Windrush, Whempstead) was contracted to clear an access path from the entrance gate to one point on each boundary fence on the Parish-Council-owned land at Rivershill. This will be repeated during October this year.

It was agreed that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

**Agenda: 10.03**

## 6 Reports

### a) Sub-Committees

#### Budget & Finance

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

- **Internal audit of Parish Council**

Mr. Filer formally proposed that Mr. Jim Morrissey be instructed to do the internal audit of the Parish Council accounts. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Filer said that he would read the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability in Local Councils when it is delivered, and then inform Mr. Morrissey of the requirements for an internal audit.

**Action: D. Filer**

- **CDA – Membership**

Mr. Filer said that the Parish Council is currently not a member of the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire (CDA), although we had received publications from them in the past.

If the Parish Council became a member, it would receive:

- 4 copies of the quarterly CDA publication (formerly 'Hedgehog')
- on request, a complimentary copy of three CDA publications: namely, the Village and Town Newsletter in Hertfordshire 2003, the Village Hall Handbook 2001/2002, Countrywide Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation Direct (when available)
- be informed about events ahead of non-members
- have the opportunity to nominate someone for CDA board membership
- vote at the CDA Annual General Meeting.

It was agreed that the information contained in the CDA publications was useful.

Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council becomes a member of the CDA. The annual subscription for 2003/04 is £25. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Co-operative Bank accounts**

Mr. Filer said that because Mrs. Sarah Davies had stood down as a Parish Councillor and Mr. Michael Smith has subsequently been co-opted, the signatures on all the Parish Council accounts need to be updated.

It was agreed that the Clerk contacts the Co-operative Bank accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

This item to be placed on the agenda for our meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> June so that a resolution enabling the update of signatures on all the Parish Council and Community Hall Trust accounts with the Co-operative Bank, can be made.

**Agenda: 06/03**

- **SLCC - Working with your Council**

Mr. Filer said that last year the Parish Council paid for the course work-books (Working with your Council) for the Clerk. The Clerk has purchased the updated version at a cost of £40. Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council reimburse the Clerk. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Filer said that the SLCC also considers that Charles Arnold Baker's book on Local Council Administration is an important aid to the course. He therefore proposed that the Parish Council purchase the book at a cost £38.50. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Gas and electricity supply**

It was agreed that the Clerk contact Business Gas and TXU Energi, the Parish Council's current suppliers, to find out how much they would charge for supplying both gas and electricity to the Community Hall.

**Action: J. Allsop**

#### Community Hall Trustees

- **Acceptance of minutes of meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003**

Mr. Meischke said that although the Parish Council went through the items contained in the minutes during its meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2003, the minutes were not formally accepted as a true record of the Trustees meeting.

Mr. Stock proposed that the minutes now be accepted and signed as a true record. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and Mr. Knight was in favour.

## Recreation & Amenities

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

- **RoSPA – Playarea safety inspection**

Mr. Meischke read out the following letter, dated 12<sup>th</sup> May, from Kevin Kingsnorth (Installation Manager, Wicksteed Leisure).

**‘RoSPA Failure of Surface**

Further to our conversation, I confirm that we regrettably installed an insufficient amount of wet pour in once area around the lime unit, this shortage of 40 mm and the location is shown on the enclosed drawing. I also confirm that we are prepared to rectify the situation by extending the base to the exact requirements of BS EN 1176.

Before we action this work, I should like to draw your attention to the enclosed letter from RoSPA.

We shall therefore await your decision on which course of action your require.’

Mr. Meischke then read out the letter from John Yearley of RoSPA (dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April), to Kevin Kingsnorth (Installation Manager, Wicksteed Leisure).

**‘Wotton-at-Stone**

Further to our Post Installation Inspection at the above site, I confirm that in our opinion the 40 mm failure on the surfacing dimension is low risk and that any remedial action undertaken, other than total replacement of surfacing (which we do not feel necessary) is likely to present a hazard as small strips do not tend to adhere well to larger areas. Consequently we recommend acceptance of the surface as it is.

I hope that the above is helpful.’

After discussion, it was agreed to write to Wicksteed Leisure accepting the safety surface with the 40 mm failure, as per RoSPA’s suggestion. **Action: J. Meischke**

Copies of both these letters to be retained on file.

- **Safety- surface under small swings and see-saw**

Mr. Meischke said that he had now received a quotation of £4406, plus VAT, from Wicksteed Leisure. The quotation is for the removal of all safety-surface under the small swings and see-saw, and the installation of a new safety-surface, with concrete edging, which will be flush with the ground (i.e. the same style as that installed under the Rainbow multi-play and slide).

Mr. Meischke said we could apply to EHDC for a grant of 50%. He then reported that the safety-surface under the small swings has been vandalised. The incident has been reported to the police and a crime reference number had been issued.

It was agreed to submit an insurance claim to Cornhill Insurance for the damage done. If our claim is successful, Cornhill Insurance to be asked if they would be willing to help towards the new resurfacing project instead of resurfacing the area as it currently is (raised area).

Mr. Meischke to act accordingly. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Main Hall – wall brackets**

Mr. Meischke said that two of the regular hirers, David Boddy (karate) and Jim Keen (kick-boxing), had purchased brackets to enable punch-bags to be hung on one of the end-walls of the Main Hall. The brackets fold back against the wall and will not be a danger to other users of the Main Hall. The style and positioning of the brackets had already been approved by the Community Hall Trustees.

Mr. Meischke said that the wall brackets had not yet been installed.

- **Showers**

Mr. Meischke said that the water pressure in the showers is very bad. He will be contacting Turners, who de-scaled the pipe-work to the shower system earlier this year, to ask them to rectify the problem. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Pavilion**

Mr. Meischke said that the Cricket Club would like to install stays on the French doors of the Pavilion so that they can remain open while the room is in use.

When the building was erected, these doors were fitted with hooks to allow them to be kept open. However, these hooks were vandalised and not replaced.

It was agreed to check the causal-hire agreement to see if there is a restriction on keeping the doors in a fixed-open position. **Action: J. Meischke**

If there is no restriction, Mr. Meischke can inform the Cricket Club that they can fit stays of a type approved by the Community Hall Trustees. **Action: J. Meischke**

• **Sportsfield maintenance**

Mr. Knight said that the scheduled sportsfield maintenance-work is almost complete. The top dressing and fertilising still needs to be done. This is dependent on Mick Roberts (Football Club) and Martin Tipper (Cricket Club) getting together with Mr. Meischke to do the work. All items (where VAT is payable), except the topsoil (which has yet to be invoiced), have been paid for by the Parish Council and a donation has been received for the net amount from the Sports and Social Club. The Parish Council will then claim back the VAT element.

**Environment**

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

• **Byelaw notices for Watton Green and the Lammas**

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Meischke had returned the unsuitable signs to N. E. Signs. They have now been modified to make them more robust (at an extra cost of £70.50). The total cost of the signs is now £159.80.

This item to remain on the agenda under Environment Sub-Committee.

**Agenda: Env.**

Mr. Stanley has submitted a quotation of £110 to erect the two byelaw signs. Mr. Stock proposed that Mr. Stanley's quotation be accepted. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to write to Mr. Stanley accordingly, asking him to contact either Mr. Stock or Mr. Meischke re the siting of the signs.

**Action: J. Allsop**

• **Allotments**

Mr. Stock said that a meeting to discuss the possibility of forming an Allotment Holders Association took place on Thursday 17th April. A group of allotment holders have shown an interest in being involved, and a formal meeting to set-up the Watton-at-Stone Allotment Holders Association and elect committee members has been arranged for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May.

Mr. Stock said that the meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Horticultural Society (with a view to merging the society with the Watton-at-Stone Allotments Holders Association).

This item to remain on the agenda.

**Agenda: 06/03**

• **Lammas trees and tree debris**

Mr. Stock said that the following three quotations been received for the tree work on the Lammas (to include the removal of marked trees along riverbank and the two large limbs off trees near riverbank).

- Eco Tree Care and Conservation (Adam Welch) £2,300
  - Herts Tree Care £2,200 plus VAT
  - Michael Stanley £1,100
- (plus an additional £120 if all wood chippings are removed from site)

Mr. Stock proposed that Mr. Stanley's quotation (with wood chippings being left on site to improve the footpath at the entrance to the Lammas) be accepted. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Filer expressed his concern that the wood chippings, if used on the footpath, could turn to mulch.

Mr. Dunhill informed him that they had been used in this way in the past and there had been no problems.

Mr. Stock said that the Environment Agency had yet not responded to our request for assistance in having the tree work carried-out.

It was agreed to write to the Environment Agency again to ask them for an urgent response before we formally accept Mr. Stanley's quotation.

**Action: J. Allsop**

• **Grass cutting - Lammas and Watton Green**

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Stanley had submitted a quotation to:

- cut and remove grass cuttings from Watton Green and the Lammas (two cuts each) and cut-back growth on hedges at these areas to keep in shape. £860
- trim ditch at Watton Green £70

Mr. Stanley charged £800 for doing the work in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Mr. Stock therefore proposed that Mr. Stanley's quotation be accepted. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to write to Mr. Stanley accepting his quotation and asking him to carry-out the strimming of the Watton Green ditch as soon as possible and do the first grass cuts before the end of June.

**Action: J. Allsop**



• **Renewal of licences**

Mr. Stock proposed that the following licences be renewed.

- Mr. Denis E. Filer of the Brambles, Watton Green - for Temporary Access across the Land known as the "Old Cottage Site", at Watton Green
- Mr. R. Adams of 4 Glebe Close, Watton-at-Stone  
to ferret Watton Green, the allotments, the Lammas and the paddock at the far end of the Lammas
- Mr. Steve Alsford of 24 Redvers Close, Bishop's Stortford  
to ferret the Lammas and the paddock at the far end of the Lammas
- Mr. S.D. Winser of 16 Tanners Way, Hunsdon, Nr. Ware  
to ferret the wooded part of Watton Green adjacent to Brambles

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

Mr. Stock to act accordingly.

**Action: D. Stock**

**b) Sportsfield**

**i) Report**

Mrs. Dinnin carried-out the sportsfield report on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2003, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	In place.
General	Few mole holes. – Cricket shed in progress. New goal in place, are Cricket Club happy with position?
- **Children's Playground:**

Condition of surface	Good except under small swings.
Litter/Litterbin	OK.
Large swings	Two damaged seats.
Small swings	OK – needs painting.
See-Saw	Squeaks.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK.
Teen shelter	OK.
General	Good, except for surface under small swings, fresh damage.
- **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK.
Double Ramp	OK.
Fun Box	OK.
- **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)	-
Litterbin	OK.
Car Park	OK.
General	OK.
- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface	Good.
Boundary Fencing	Good.
Tennis nets	Both up.
Litter	OK.
General	-
- **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment	Good –some new?
Surfaces	OK – some wear on goal mouths.
Litter	OK – except some beer bottles.
Dog fouling	OK.
Comments	Grass needs cutting. Trees cut-back excellent.
- **Allotments Area:**

Access	OK.
--------	-----

Condition of paths between Allotments	Good.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	Good.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	As usual.
Litter	OK.
Comments	OK – good season for rubbish!
<b>• Culverts on Mill Lane</b>	
Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	OK – bike area desperately needs a litter bin.
Dog-fouling	OK.
Comments	Broken pallets on road bank opposite dog bin.
<b>• Salt bins</b>	
Perrywood Lane	OK.
Entrance to Great Innings	OK.
Great Innings South – outside number 93	OK.
Station Road	OK.
Moorymead Close	OK.
Hazeldell	OK.
<b>• Dog-waste bins</b>	
Footpath 17	OK.
Sportsfield	OK.
Church Walk	OK.
Walkern Road	OK.
Station Road	OK.
High Street (by Memorial)	OK.
Great Innings	OK.
Mill Lane	OK.
<b>• General Comments</b>	Generally, village looking good. Litterbins need emptying, Church Walk gate open.

- **Broken pallets on road bank opposite dog bin**  
 The Clerk to ask Mr. Poulton to speak to the children about the removal of the broken pallets.  
**Action: J. Allsop/N. Poulton**

**ii) Weekly report and action**

No new problems were identified during the weekly inspections.

**7 Planning**

**a) Applications**

**i) 59 Great Innings North**

Attached garage at side

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**ii) 18 Lammas Road**

Ground floor rear and first floor side extension

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**iii) 1 Motts Close**

Extension to first floor and minor extension of garage

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**iv) 121 High Street**

Illuminated shop sign

Mr. Stock reminded Parish Councillors of the history related to this application.

After discussion, it was agreed to write to EHDC informing them that we had no comments on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**v) Heath Mount School**

Proposed changing pavilion

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**vi) The Coach House**

2-storey and single storey rear extension

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council objects to the amended application for the same reasons as the original application.

It was agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council objects to the above planning application for the following reasons.

1. The proposed extensions would be an over development of the site and would have a detrimental effect on this rural lane and on the neighbouring properties.
2. The site is within the conservation area and as such would require permission for the removal of any trees, it would appear, although not shown on the plans, that a Yew tree in the rear garden would need to be removed to accommodate the proposed conservatory.
3. It also states that foul sewage would be disposed of via a septic tank. As far as the Parish Council is aware, this property is connected to the main sewer.
4. The Parish Council has been informed that all development on this site requires the permission of the Church Commissioners, has this been sought?
5. The existing building is currently connected to the Old Rectory and the proposed development requires separation and in so doing, would require the removal on an ancient roofline.  
The Parish Council has been informed that the owners of the Old Rectory have not been consulted on the removal of the roof which connects their property to the Old Coach House.
6. The Parish Council would like to see the existing single storey, which forms part of the old coach house, be listed.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**vii) Windrush**

Erection of conservatory

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**viii) Blue Hill Farm, land and buildings at High Elms Lane**

This item was discussed together with item ix below.

**ix) Land at Blue Hill Farm, High Elms Lane**

Erection of a replacement dwelling following demolition of existing farmhouse

Change of use and conversion of farm buildings into 4 no residential units and office and demolition of farmhouse

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Poulton had again met with neighbours in High Elms Lane and Walkern Road. Residents continue to object to the applications because they consider it to be an over-development of the site and a highway issue.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council objects to the amended application for the same reasons as the original applications.

It was agreed to write to EHDC as follows.

**Blue Hill Farm Land and buildings at High Elms Lane**

The Parish Council objects to the above application for the following reasons.

1. Highways issue: the proposed development would increase traffic at a dangerous junction (i.e. Blue High Elms Lane/Walkern Road), especially with regard to the office accommodation.
2. The development is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
3. This is an over development of the site, again, especially with regard to the office accommodation.

**Land at Blue Hill Farm, High Elms Lane**

The Parish Council objects to the above application for the following reasons.

1. The proposed dwelling would extend the curtilage of the development.
2. The development is within the Metropolitan Green Belt

The Clerk to act accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**x) Blue Bury Farm**

Agricultural building

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**b) Decisions**

- i) **6 Rivershill**  
Use of residential property for childminding/residential use - EHDC – permission refused
- ii) **9 Beane Road**  
First-floor extension - EHDC – permission granted
- iii) **2 Motts Close**  
Extension to lounge and provision of porch - EHDC – permission granted
- iv) **124 High Street**  
Single and two-storey rear extension - EHDC – permission refused
- v) **2 Perrywood Lane**  
1<sup>st</sup> floor extension and rear projection and internal alterations - EHDC – permission granted
- vi) **1 Hazeldell**  
Two-storey side extension - EHDC – permission refused
- vii) **Blue Bury Farm**  
Agricultural dwelling - EHDC – permission granted

**8 Correspondence received**

**a) HCC – Footpath adjacent to the Bull public house**

This item was discussed under 5 d, Specific Items - Footpath adjacent to Bull public house (on page 4 of these minutes).

**b) HCC – re Airport expansion public hearing on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2003**

Mr. Stock said that in a letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> April, re the government’s proposal for airports expansion, HCC states that ‘a fresh consultation is now taking place and the scrutiny committee intends to hold a public hearing at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2003.’

This letter to be placed on circulation.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**c) Conservation Society – ‘Keep Clear’ road-markings at the entrance to Hazeldell**

Mr. Stock read out the following letter (dated 1<sup>st</sup> May) from the Conservation Society.

‘The Conservation Society would be pleased if you could bring the following matter to the attention of the Parish Council at its next meeting:

Road Marking at the entrance to Hazeldell – KEEP CLEAR –

We are concerned that no notice appears to be taken of the sign, and sometimes parking in this area causes problems. We have been informed by the police that the keep clear sign has no legal authority, but they would take action if an obstruction occurs. It is difficult for a lay person to define ‘obstruction’ and perhaps it would be helpful if the people parking could be dissuaded from doing so.

If the Parish Council can help in this matter we would be most grateful.’

Some Parish Councillors expressed their concerns that parking was occurring on both sides of the entrance to Hazeldell and thus causing additional obstruction problems. In the main, the parking problem is being caused by residents, although some cars belong to users of Watton Station. Mrs. McCash reported that on one occasion residents had to be asked to move their vehicles to allow the dustcart to enter Hazeldell.

It was agreed to write to PC Ivens copying him with the Conservation Society’s letter and asking him to provide us with a definition of the word ‘obstruction’. He will also be asked to attend a site meeting with Mr. Stock and Mrs McCash to discuss the problems further.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Stock suggested that we also write to WAGN to ask that they revise the sign that points to the WAGN parking area. The current sign suggests that the parking area is for WAGN personnel and not for its customers. This was agreed by all present.

The Clerk to write accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**d) Watton Methodist Church – Service on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June to celebrate the Tercentenary of the birth of John Wesley**

Mr. Stock read out a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> April from John Ellis (of the Watton-at-Stone Methodist Church) inviting all Parish Councillors to attend a special service, on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June at 10.45 am, to celebrate the Tercentenary of the birth of John Wesley.

The Clerk said that Mr. Poulton is unable to attend the meeting because he will be on holiday.

**e) EHDC – renaming of The Thatched Cottage, Walkern Road to “Mooders”, Walkern Road**

This property is not in our Parish and therefore does not need to be discussed.

**f) Jacobs – River Beane Flood Study**

Mr. Stock said that Jacobs is an engineering consultancy undertaking a flood study of the River Beane on behalf of the Environment Agency. They have written to the Parish Council (letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> May) asking for any information concerning past flooding of the River Beane or its tributaries.

Mr. Knight agreed to respond to Jacobs accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

**g) EHDC – re 2003 concessionary bus permit bulk issue**

EHDC has written (letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> May) to thank the Parish Council for issuing the bus permits last month.

**Note:** Mr. and Mrs Poulton issued the concessionary bus permits on 29<sup>th</sup> March at Glebe Court.

**h) EHDC – re Walkern Road flood investigations**

This item was discussed under 5 e, Specific Items - Walkern Road – flooding (on pages 4 and 5 of these minutes).

**i) HCC – the temporary closure of various roads**

This item to be placed on circulation.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**9 Reports from other Organisations**

None.

Mr. Poulton arrived at the meeting.

**10 Items for Parish News**

Articles on the following items discussed by the Parish Council to be sent to the editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

- The erection of byelaw notices at Watton Green and the Lammas.
- The Conservation Society’s donation towards the purchase of a litter bin for the bike-ramp area off Mill Lane.
- Recently installed litter bin on Watton Green.
- Entry to the village of the year competition.

Mr. Filer agreed write the articles accordingly.

**Action: D. Filer**

**11 Accounts/Correspondence**

**Watton-at-Stone Parish Council**

**Petty Cash**

**Receipts**

None

**Payments**

SLCC – publication	9.95
SLCC - publication	7.04
	<u>16.99</u>

**Cheques required**

Adam Welch	Grass cutting and strimming work – April 2003	129.17
CPRE	Annual Membership	25.00
Inland Revenue	Tax and NI	127.20
Data Sound	Anti-glare screen for Computer	128.08
N. E. Signs	Byelaws notice for Watton Green and the Lammas	70.50
Sports and Social Club	Grant towards improvements to sportsfield	550.00
Ted Brown	17.5 hours litterpick	96.25
Cornhill Insurance	Annual premium	979.37
J. Allsop	May salary	505.25
Boardmans Photocopying	Charges to 31.03.03	7.23
HCC	Lighting charges	20.97
Collier Turf Care	Work to sportsfield	317.25
J. Allsop	NTL phone charges to 03.04.03 and 03.05.03	51.00
EHDC	Provision and organisation of RoSPA safety report	<u>89.30</u>
		<u>3096.57</u>

**Cheques received**

EHDC	Precept – half year payment	11082.00
Sports & Social Club	Donation towards sportsfield maintenance	<u>270.00</u>
		<u>11352.00</u>

**Watton-at-Stone Community Hall**

**Petty Cash**

**Receipts**

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	100.00
Mrs. Porch – Pavilion hire	32.00
Floodlighting to 24.04.03	<u>40.00</u>
	<u>172.00</u>

**Payments**

John Philips -	20.00
C. Bewley – 11 hrs @ 5.25	57.75
David Bunyan	52.87
VAT return 03.03	<u>25.16</u>
	<u>155.78</u>

**Cheques required**

Wicksteed Leisure	Strop for cradle swing seat	34.66
Christine Bewley	56 hours	<u>308.00</u>
		<u>342.66</u>

**Cheques received**

S. Taylor	Pavilion hire	21.00
Georgie Pay	Main Hall and Pavilion	9.00
Georgie Pay	Main Hall and Pavilion	<u>96.60</u>
		<u>126.60</u>

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

The Clerk expressed her thanks to Mr. Dunhill for the time he had spent rectifying problems with the Parish Council computer during the last month.

- **The meeting closed at 9.53 pm.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2003.**