

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 14th January 2004

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. V. Dunhill	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. McCash (until 2005)
	Mr. J. Meischke	Mr. M. Smith

Public: Mr. E. Riddle

Mr. Poulton said that because Mrs. McCash did not feel well she had requested that the following items be brought forward for discussion after item 5 c, Action points outstanding for more than two months (on pages 4 and 5 of these minutes).

- Item 7 a, Specific Items - Ornate village sign
- Item 7 f, Specific Items - Youth Club funds
- Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - National Insurance contributions
- Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Regulations on self-employment status
- Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Clerk's salary
- Item 8, Environment Sub-Committee - Quotation for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas

1 Apologies for absence

None.

2 Public Participation

Mr. Riddle said that at the last meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association there had been comments about the Parish Council issuing the Allotment Tenancy Agreement to all allotment holders without further consultation with the Association.

Mr. Poulton explained to Mr. Riddle that the Allotment Tenancy Agreement is between the Parish Council and allotment holders and not with the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association.

Mr. Poulton commented on the Diocesan Board allotment lease with the Parish Council which states the following.

- 'iii) To repair maintain and keep all boundary walls and fences of the said land and all fixtures and additions thereto in a good and substantial state of repair and condition and all boundary hedges and trees on the said land properly cut topped trimmed and preserved and maintained throughout the term and replace any trees which might die
- iv) Not to erect or permit to be erected any building or other construction or any recreational equipment or apparatus upon the said land without the prior written consent of the Lessor
- v) Save for such part of the said land as is used for allotment gardens to sow and maintain grass seed lay turf or otherwise and cut the grass from time to time and keep the same clear of nettles thistles and other noxious weeds in a clear and tidy state and available for use at all reasonable times as a playing field or public open space.'

Mr. Poulton said that the Parish Council maintains the allotments area in a good order, but to keep the area in a 'mint condition' we would have to increase the allotment rent substantially to cover the cost. Currently, there are 26 allotment holders. The Parish Council pays the Diocesan Board approximately twice the amount that it receives in rent.

The main reason the Parish Council suggested the formation of the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association was to enable them to apply for grants (which the Parish Council could not apply for) to further improve the allotment area, and to arrange discounts for the purchase of items such as seeds etc for its members.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that the following items had been received after the agenda was published.

- i) The Waggon and Horses – Transfer of license application. This item to be discussed under 9 d, Correspondence received (on page 10 of these minutes).
- ii) Clerk's salary – Mr. Filer has requested this item to be discussed under 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee (on page 7 of these minutes).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th December 2003**

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 10th December 2003.

- Page 11, Item 10, Correspondence received - Hertfordshire Police Authority – Policing and Community Safety – The Way Forward
1st line of the 7th paragraph,

‘A further presentation was given on the use of Police Support Officers (PCSOs),’
should read,

A further presentation was given on the use of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs),

Mr. Filer proposed that the minutes as amended be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Mr. Clark seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **Forward e-mail sent to EHDC’s planning department re 64 Rivershill to Paul Rossington**

This action point has been completed.

- **Chase PC Scott to ask him when Watton and Whempstead will be able to use the speed-warning equipment**

The Clerk has left a message on PC Scott’s answer-machine, but has not had a response.

The Clerk to chase again.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Return signed precept forms EHDC**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to all allotment holders enclosing allotment agreement**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to items 2, Public Participation (on page 1 of these minutes) and 10, Reports from other Organisations - Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association (on page 10 of these minutes).

- **Reduce size of TPO map so it can be copied to all Parish Councillors**

This action point has been completed.

Parish Councillors were given a copy of the TPO map at the end of the meeting.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application for 64 Rivershill**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application for Ponderosa, 2 Perrywood Lane**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Planning Inspectorate re 1 Hazeldell**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact Mr. Mould to find out when we can expect delivery of the ornate village sign, and confirm outcome in writing**

The Clerk contacted Mr. Mould but did not confirm the outcome in writing.

This item was discussed under item 7 a, Specific Items - Ornate village sign (on page 5 of these minutes).

- **Contact Hertfordshire Highways p re Alchemy Metals - Goods vehicle license application**

This action point has been completed.

This item was discussed under item 7 b, Specific Items - Alchemy Metals - Goods vehicle license application (on pages 5 and 6 of these minutes).

- **Summarise Hertfordshire Highways results of the traffic survey and put full report on circulation**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 7c, Specific Items - Traffic-calming in Whempstead

- **Accept Sodexo quotation for the cutting of the sportsfield grass in 2004**

This action point has been completed.

- **Renew Society of Local Council Clerks membership for 2004**

This action point has been completed.

- **Purchase shelving unit for internal storage room in Main Hall**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock to install the shelving on Friday 16th January.

- **Ask Mimram Electrical to supply us with an estimate to install a trip board on each floodlighting column**
 Mr. Meischke said that he had done this, but had not yet received the estimate.
 He agreed to chase this. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Ask Mr. Bunyan to rod the changing-room drains**
 This action point has been completed.
 Mr. Bunyan has now completed the work and fitted new drain baskets.
- **Accept P. J. Roofing's quotation**
 This action point has been completed.
 Mr. Poulton said that P. J. Roofing (the original installers of the Community Hall roof) made an excellent job of repairing the roof. It was agreed that we contact them in future for any work required to the roof.
- **Contact A.D.L. re work to Community Hall roof**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Submit invoice for installing gate post on sportsfield**
 Mr. Smith said that he would submit his invoice before the end of this financial year.
- **Ask Sodexho to quote for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas**
 Sodexho have been contacted but have not submitted a quotation to-date.
 Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Quotation for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Write to Mr. Welch, Mr. Brown and Mr. Monk re work required on the Lammas**
 This action point has been completed.
 Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Lammas land-management (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for missing bolts on Rainbow multi-play and slide piece of equipment to be replaced**
 Mr. Meischke said that he was unable to obtain suitable bolts. Wicksteed Leisure has been asked to supply them and to tighten the loose bolt on the ramp and the loose timber to bridge.
- **Write to EHDC re 2004 Summer play scheme**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Contact the Clerk re Hertfordshire Police Authority meeting on 27th January 2004**
 Mr. Clark confirmed that he would be attending the meeting.
- **Read documentation on HCC – Consultation on 2005-2006 school admissions and respond if necessary**
 Mr. Clark said that this consultation document was interesting reading. Recent changes in the 2003 Education Act mean that all schools have to publicise their admission rules to all other schools in their "Relevant Area". In Hertfordshire's case, this is the whole County.
 To minimise the bureaucratic mountain of paper, Hertfordshire has now been broken down into 21 "Relevant Areas". Watton-at-Stone has been put into the same "Relevant Area" as Hertford secondary schools, rather than Stevenage ones, which appears to formally acknowledge that Watton remains in the Hertford catchment area. The Parish Council is therefore in support of this proposed change to the definition of "Relevant Areas" in Hertfordshire.
 Responses to the consultation were required by 31st December 2003. However, Watton-at-Stone Primary school has still not received a copy of this document.
- **Place EHDC's Christmas Tree recycling scheme posters on the Parish Council notice boards**
 This action point has been completed.
 Mr. Poulton said that this scheme was very successful and two large skips had been filled with trees.
- **Investigate situation on school's request for a community project for the children to be involved in**
 Mr. Clark said that he had spoken to Lisa Mannall (Head Teacher at Watton Primary School), who could not remember anything about a community project. However, she was happy for the school to take it forward.
 It was agreed that once the school is ready to proceed with the project the Deputy Head Teacher, Mr. Dominic Long, will discuss the way forward with Mr. Poulton. **Action: N. Poulton**
 This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held in June 2004. **Agenda 06/04**
- **Let Mr. Love see a copy of the allotment lease**
 This action point has been completed.
 Refer to item 2, Public participation (on page 1 of these minutes) and item 10, Reports from other organisations – Allotment and Garden Association (on page 10 of these minutes).

- **Write to the Diocesan Board asking them to cut back hedge at top of Church Walk**

This action point has been completed.

The Diocesan Board verbally confirmed that the responsibility for the hedge lies with the Watton-at-Stone PCC committee. The Clerk has verbally informed Mr. Knight (a member of the PCC committee) who said that the cutting of this hedge is in hand.

- **Write article for Parish News**

This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Chase Hertfordshire Highways re damage to tree in Hazeldell**

Mr. Poulton said that the Clerk had tried to contact Mr. Bishop but he had been away on a course for the past week.

Because of the continued negative response (e.g. Hertfordshire Highways informed us, in a letter dated 1st September 2003, that they are unable to replant any trees removed due to this years financial constraints) it was agreed not to chase Hertfordshire Highways further at this stage. Mr. Stock said that he would discuss this situation again with the Conservation Society to see if they would be prepared to fund the replacement of the damaged trees, subject to the receipt of the appropriate approvals. **Action: D. Stock**

Mrs. McCash to contact Mr. Stock to inform him of the location of the trees involved in her area of Hazeldell.

Action: H. McCash

Items brought forward

- **Item 7 a, Specific Items - Ornate village sign**

The Clerk spoke to Mr. Mould, who told her that he had done nothing to the sign to date. Subsequently, he wrote enclosing photographs of the painted sign for the Parish Council to look at together with an invoice for £3,500 (i.e. for making and painting the sign). He stated in his letter that the cost of removing the paint from the sign will be approximately £500.

Parish Councillors studied the pictures and agreed that in its present state the sign was defiantly not what they wanted for the village. They agreed that the best course of action is for some members of the Parish Council to meet with Mr. Mould to agree a satisfactory conclusion to the current situation.

Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Stock, and Mr. Meischke to meet with Mr. Mould.

Action: C. Dinnin, D. Stock, and J. Meischke

It was agreed that we write to Mr. Mould accordingly and enclose a cheque for £1,750, which is 50% of his invoice dated 4th December 2003.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Item 7 f, Specific Items - Youth Club funds**

Mrs. McCash and the Clerk had discussed the transfer of Youth Club funds to the Parish Council accounts. They agreed that it would be best to transfer the funds to a new separate Parish Council account. This would enable the funds to accrue their own interest.

Parish Councillors agreed that a separate account be opened. Mrs. McCash to arrange the opening of the account.

Action: H. McCash

- **Item 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - National Insurance contributions**

Mrs. McCash said that the government changes in the national insurance contributions will not affect the Clerk's salary.

- **Item 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Regulations on self-employment status**

At the Parish Council meeting held on 12th November, Mrs. McCash raised concern about the self-employment status of Christine Bewley because of the nature of her work and the tightening up of the Inland Revenue regulations.

Mrs. McCash said that she has now investigated this issue and suggested that we contact to Christine Bewley to sign the following letter.

'I write to confirm that arrangements whereby you are to continue to offer your service to our company on the following basis:

1. You will be self-employed and therefore responsible for the payment of your own National Insurance Contributions and Income Tax.
2. You will be paid strictly for the hours (or weeks) for which you actually work, with no payment for sickness or holidays.
3. You will submit to us an account (weekly/monthly) for services you have rendered.
4. You will have none of the rights of an employee for purposes of the employment protection legislation.
5. You are free to determine the hours during which you will work, how you do the work, and to delegate to others at your discretion.

6. You may work for your own or other businesses, but if you wish to terminate the arrangement with our company notice of one month is required.

If you agree the above terms, please sign and return the attached copy of this letter.'

After discussion, it was agreed to contact both Christine Bewley and Ted Brown.

Action: J. Meischke/J. Allsop

Mrs. McCash said that we are not required to take any action re the self-employment status of contractors who submit quotations (e.g. Derek Monk and Adam Welch).

- **Item 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Clerk's salary**

The Clerk left the meeting while this item was discussed.

Mr. Filer presented two options for the increase in the Clerk's salary.

Option 1: use the 2003/04 National Association of Local Councils spinal point system CPC21, including outer fringe London Allowance and travelling expenses of £50

Option 2: Increase Clerk's current salary by 3.2%

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed to adopt option 2. As from 1st April 2004, the Clerk's new salary will be £6,626.

The Clerk returned to the meeting.

- **Item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Quotation for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas**

Mrs. McCash said that Herts Tree Care had submitted a quotation of £480 (plus VAT) to pollard the main trunk of the Poplar tree (removing all three of its main limbs), remove the debris from site, leaving the site clean and tidy. They state that:

'The tree, a large Poplar species, is badly deformed. It looks as if it lost its main leader some years ago and the side limbs have taken over to form three leaders. Unfortunately all three of these limbs are of a weak nature and this tree could become subject do damage in high winds. In view of it's proximity to the footpath and open space it may become a liability. I feel that this tree would be best removed or at very least pollarded back to main trunk and allowed to form a new crown that can be managed, re-pollarded on a regular bases.'

Mrs. McCash said that Sodexho had promised to submit a quotation for the work. However, they have not yet done so.

It was agreed to accept Herts Tree Care's quotation.

Action: J. Allsop

6 Planning

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions

i) **Moat Farm, 83 Bramfield Road, Bulls Green**

Construction of 60 x 30 metre outdoor riding arena with surrounding timber fence

- EHDC –permission granted

ii) **124 High Street**

Single and two-storey rear extension

- EHDC –permission granted

iii) **64 Rivershill**

Proposed extension to garage and open porch

- EHDC –permission granted

iv) **Ponderosa, 2 Perrywood Lane, Watton-at-Stone**

Stable x 2

- EHDC –permission granted

v) **Crowbury, Church Lane**

Conservatory and terrace swimming pool, pool house garden terracing and ancillary works

- EHDC –permission granted

vi) **59 Great Innings North**

Attached garage/driveway

- EHDC –permission granted

7 Specific Items

a) Ornate village sign

This item was discussed under the heading 'Item 7 a, Specific Items - Ornate village sign (on page 4 of these minutes).

b) Alchemy Metals - Goods vehicle license application

Mr. Clark said that he contacted Hertfordshire Highways and was pleased to report that both they and EHDC made strong objections to the Traffic Commissioners about the alteration of Alchemy Metals' Goods Operators Licence to permit access by 4-axle vehicles (instead of 3-axle vehicles).

The Clerk to place copies of Hertfordshire Highways and EHDC's letters to the Traffic Commissioners on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Traffic-calming in Whempstead

Mr. Poulton thanked Mr. Clark for his summary of the raw results provided by Hertfordshire Highways on the traffic survey in July 2003.

He said that it was interesting to see proof that the Whempstead area is being used as a 'rat-run' (short cut) by drivers travelling between the A602 and the A10.

d) Footpath adjacent to Bull public house

Valerie Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) wrote on 11th December as follows.

'Re: Footpath linking Rivershill and HIGH Street, Watton-at-Stone

Thank you for your letter received on 9th December 2003 regarding the above.

I will now forward this information to the County Council's solicitor and look forward to progressing this matter now.

Thank you again for your help.'

This item to remain on the agenda under Specific Items until it is resolved.

Agenda: 02/04

e) Request for revised station car-park sign

Mr. Poulton said that he spoke to Norma Unwin on 2nd December and she has promised to get the sign revised as requested.

The Clerk to check to see if this has been done, and if not, chase Norma Unwin accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

f) Youth Club funds

This item was discussed under the heading 'Item 7 f, Specific Items - Youth Club funds (on page 4 of these minutes).

g) Rural Youth Homelessness

Mr. Poulton said that we had received an e-mail from Sarah O'Reilly (on 30th December 2003) concerning her research into youth homelessness in rural North and East Herts.

It was agreed by Parish Councillors that Mr. Poulton contacts Sarah O'Reilly to discuss her e-mail.

Action: N. Poulton

h) BT exchange in Watton at Stone

Mr. Poulton said that Nick Collingridge sent us the following e-mail on 6th January 2003.

I have recently become the co-ordinator for the campaign to get the BT exchange in Watton at Stone ADSL enabled. BT have set a very low level of pre-registrations for this – it's only 150, and there are 64 people already registered. I have set up a website at: www.watton-at-stone-adsl.net.

I am keen to investigate any ways of working with people in Watton at Stone to achieve the target of 150 registrations. Can the Parish Council offer any assistance in this, and who should I contact to start the ball rolling? A few things that would be helpful:

- What is the population of the village, and how many households are there?
- Is there a village notice board, and where is it?
- Do you have contact details for the editor of the Parish magazine?
- Would it be possible to quote someone from the Parish Council in any press releases that I issue?
- Can anyone offer any assistance with leaflet drops to all households? I can get the leaflets printed it's just the time to do all the distribution which I would need help with.
- Would it be useful to meet with the Parish Council at a forthcoming meeting, or can I meet with one of the members separately?

I'm sure you won't have answers to all of the above straight away, but an acknowledgment that you have received this email would be much appreciated so that I know that I don't have to spend more time tracking someone down!

It was agreed to give him the information he requires and inform him that the Parish Council will donate £10 to the Parish News for the distribution of leaflets around the village.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

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

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the 9-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 31st December 2003.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income. Some of the items which already exceed this year's budget are:

- Office equipment – purchase of an antiglare screen (for the computer) and a printer/fax/copier/scanner.
- Grant to Sports and Social Club for maintenance of the sportsfield. There is a provision for this item in next year's budget
Ted Brown's hours have been increased and will exceed the budget. There is provision for this item in next year's budget.

- **Public-lighting maintenance charges**

Mr. Filer said that the Hertfordshire County Council lighting-maintenance charges are approximately £630 for this year (£80 over budget). However next year (2004/05), they will be even more over budget because the provision has been reduced to £450.

- **National Insurance contributions**

This item was discussed under the heading 'Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - National Insurance contributions (on page 4 of these minutes).

- **Regulations on self-employment status**

This item was discussed under the heading 'Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Regulations on self-employment status (on pages 4 and 5 of these minutes).

- **Clerk's salary**

This item was discussed under the heading 'Item 8, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Clerk's salary (on page 5 of these minutes).

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following items concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Report on meeting held on 13th January 2004**

Mr. Poulton reported on the main items discussed at the Community Hall Trustees meeting on 13th January 2004.

- **Burglary**

Mr. Poulton said that the Community Hall was broken into on the evening of Tuesday 6th January.

The external door on the car-park side of the building was smashed, allowing the burglars to enter the building by depressing the fire-exit bar. Members of the Football Club were practising on the multi-purpose play area at the time, and had their personal belongings (e.g. clothing, wallets, keys etc.) taken from the changing rooms.

Mr. Bunyan completed emergency work to make the building safe on the night of the burglary and the following day he fitted a replacement door (to which he has applied several coats of stain).

A fire extinguisher was also taken from the building.

A replacement 2 kg dry-power fire extinguisher is on order from County Supplies.

The Trustees agreed that if the repair work is not much more than our policy excess, we will not put in a claim for the damage that occurred.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Filer had confirmed that the Parish Council insurance does not cover the Football Club members' loss.

Clauses 4, 10 and 11 of the annual agreement between the Parish Council and the Sports and Social Club for the use of the Community Hall building (excluding Main Hall and Parish Room) also demonstrate that we are not liable for such losses.

The Trustees agreed that a letter be sent to the Sports and Social Club and all regular hirers informing them about the burglary and the situation regarding the loss of belongings.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Poulton said that Graham Mully (Personal Property Department at EHDC) had sent him the following e-mail regarding personal property.

'Further to our conversation, my guidance for employees follows:

Personal property and vehicles are brought onto Council sites at the owner's risk. The Council does not arrange insurance covering loss, theft, or damage, and will only consider payment if legally liable (negligent).

Basically we cannot cover personal property as we have no insurable interest (on top of the premium that would be required!)

Mr. Stock suggested that a metal plate should be fitted to the inside of the new external door to make forced access more difficult.

It was agreed that Mr. Meischke arrange for the work to be done.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Outside toilets**

Mr. Poulton said that the day after the burglary (Wednesday 7th January) an excess amount of water was found in the outside toilets. Because Mr. Bunyan was on site repairing the external door, Mr. Poulton asked him to investigate the leak. A mains-water fitting had worked loose and when Mr. Bunyan touched it, it “popped like a cork” with water flooding everywhere. He turned off the mains and immediately rectified the problem.

Mr. Poulton said that this was a very lucky sequence of events because if the fitting had come off during a weekend when nobody was using the facility, the water would have caused a lot of damage to the building.

Recreation & Amenities

None.

Environment

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Lammas land-management**

Peter Garrett of the Countryside Management Service (CMS) has not yet produced his first draft for the 5-to-10 year management-plan for the Lammas. Mrs. Dinnin to contact Peter Garrett to check progress.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mrs. Dinnin met with Mr. Welch, Mr. Brown and Mr. Monk met on-site to discuss the strimming work and the cutting back of branches behind the Mill Lane factory site

Burning of debris on the Lammas was discussed. Mr. Stock said that it would not be advisable (for a number of reasons) to burn debris on the main part of the Lammas. This was agreed. However, it may be suitable to do so in the ditch adjacent to the concrete bridge at the Mill Lane end of the Lammas.

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 02/04

- **Quotation for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas**

This item was discussed under the heading ‘item 8, Environment Sub-Committee - Quotation for work to a poplar tree on the Lammas’ (on page 5 of these minutes)

- **Ferretting**

The Allotment and Garden Association has asked the Parish Council to write again to Mr. and Mrs. Papa requesting permission to ferret on their land.

Also, that we ask the Watton-at-Stone Parochial Church Council if we can have permission to ferret the churchyard.

It was agreed to write Mr. and Mrs. Papa and the Watton-at-Stone Parochial Church Council accordingly

Action: J. Allsop

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

It was agreed to ask Michael Stanley to submit a quotation for the cutting of the grass on the Lammas and Watton Green and to trim Watton Green ditch.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mrs. McCash carried-out the sportsfield report on the 11th and 12th January 2004, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Terrible and still being played on!!
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Thick mud on path around pavilion.

- **Children’s Play Area:**

Condition of surface	Good.
Litter/Litterbin	Good.
Large swings	Good.
Small swings	Rubber cover perished and through to rusty metal.
See-Saw	Good.

Rainbow multi-play and slide	Good.
Two spring sit-on	Good.
Teen shelter	Good.
General	Good/some mud.
• Bike ramps area:	
Junior Jump	Good. }
Double Ramp	Good. } – No sign of use
Fun Box	Good. }
• Community Hall:	
General Condition (Exterior)	Good, some mud.
Litterbin	Good.
Car Park	Good/muddy.
General	Muddy.
• Multi-Purpose Play Area:	
Surface	Good.
Boundary Fencing	Good.
Tennis nets	Good.
Litter	Good/none.
General	Good.
• Great Innings Play Area:	
Equipment	Good.
Surfaces	Good.
Litter	Good.
Dog fouling	None.
Comments	Good.
• Allotments Area:	
Access	Good.
Condition of paths between Allotments	Muddy but good.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	Tidy.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	Cut back.
Litter	Some.
Comments	Good.
• Culverts on Mill Lane	
Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	Some litter and tree debris.
Dog-fouling	Some.
Comments	-
• Salt bins	
Perrywood Lane	OK.
Entrance to Great Innings	OK.
Great Innings South – outside number 93	OK.
Station Road	Good.
Moorymead Close	Good.
Hazeldell	Good.
• Dog-waste bins	
Footpath 17	Full/overflowing.
Sportsfield	Good.
Church Walk	Good.
Walkern Road	OK.
Station Road	Good, still no lid.
High Street (by Memorial)	OK.
Great Innings	Good.
Mill Lane	OK.
• General Comment	
	-
• Small-swing seat	
Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke to inspect the small-swing seat and take any necessary action.	
	Action: N. Poulton/J. Meischke

ii) **Weekly report and action**

Mr. Poulton said there was nothing to report from Ted Brown's weekly inspections.

9 Correspondence received

a) Hertfordshire Police Authority

Mr. Poulton said that the Policing Plan 2004 – 2005 – Priorities and Objectives had completed circulation. He said that, based on comments made by Parish Council, the following letter was sent to Ian Laidlaw-Dickson (Chairman, Hertfordshire Police Authority) on 9th January 2004.

‘The Watton-at-Stone Parish Council thanks you for your letter of 1st December setting out the Police Authorities Priorities and Objectives for 2004-2005. We welcome the report and feel it is an excellent document. Our only concern comes under Citizen Focus, item 15, which talked about increasing police visibility within the community.

The Parish Council is very concerned about police visibility in the rural areas especially where villages share a community policeman. We feel more should and could be done to police out villages better.

I hope our observation will be considered carefully before implementing the priorities and objectives.’

b) Bengeo Rural Parish Council – Inter Parish Conference invite – 18th February 2004

Bengeo Rural Parish Council is hosting the 2004 Inter Parish Conference on 18th February.

There are two items for discussion

1. The liquor licensing Act 2003
2. Anti-social behaviour

Representatives from EHDC and the Police will be present.

Mr. Poulton, Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke to attend.

Action: N. Poulton/D. Stock/J. Meischke

c) HCC – Petition to County Council 25th November 2003 – Home to School Transport Policy

Mr. Poulton said that we had a disappointingly negative response from HCC following the presentation of the petition on 25th November. This letter is currently on circulation.

He said that he had been copied with Brian Hammond’s e-mail to John Harris of HCC, asking why he had not been consulted before a response was sent, because it is normal practise for local members to be involved before responses to petitions are issued. He also expresses his strong support for the petition.

Mr. Poulton said that he will be arranging another meeting between himself, Brian Hammond, Sarah Davies and Roy Oakley to discuss this matter further.

d) The Waggon and Horses – Transfer of license application

B. T. Ross and Company have written (letter dated 12th January 2004) to inform us that Martin Douglas Flynn and Sarah Ann (Potter) Flynn have applied for a full transfer application (together with a gaming machine permit) in respect of the Waggon and Horses public house. The application will be heard at Hertford Court on 10th February 2004. The licence is currently held by Sally Jane Bond.

10 Reports from other Organisations

• Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association

Refer also to item 2, Public Participation (on page 1 of these minutes).

Mr. Poulton said that to-date eight out of the 26 allotment holders had returned their signed Tenancy Agreements.

To achieve our joint objectives the Parish Councillors hope that all members of the allotment and garden association would sign the agreement even though they have not been consulted about the changes made to the draft allotment tenancy agreement before the final version was sent out.

It was agreed by all Parish Councillors that the Allotment Tenancy Agreement is between the Parish Council and each individual allotment holder not the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association.

The Allotment and Garden Association has asked the Parish Council to:

- write again to Mr. and Mrs. Papa requesting that we can ferret their land (refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Ferreting (on page 8 of these minutes).
- write to the Watton-at-Stone Parochial Church Council if we can have permission to ferret the churchyard (refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Ferreting (on page 8 of these minutes).
- Assist towards the cost of clearing the disused part of the allotments.

The next meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association is on 1st March at 10 Beane Road.

11 Items for Parish News

An article 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.

- BT-broadband for Watton-at-Stone
- Break-in at Community Hall
- Bengeo Rural Parish Council – Inter-Parish Conference
- Date of next Parish Council meeting

Mr. Filer to write the article accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

12 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Community Hall for C. Bewley's

Xmas bonus

60.00

60.00

Payments

None

Cheques required

SLCC	Annual subscription	72.00
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpick	176.00
Glasdon UK	Two litterbins	95.69
EHDC	2003 Parish Council election charges	167.91
Diocesan Board	Allotment rent	300.00
HCC	Lighting maintenance charge - 01.10.02 –to 31.03.03	339.89
HCC	Lighting maintenance charge - 01.04.03 to 30.09.03	339.89
HCC	Lighting energy charge - 01.04.03 to 30.09.03	179.2
J. Allsop	January salary	505.25
WAS PCC	Donation towards delivery of village directory	10.00
Boardmans Photocopying	Charges to 31.12.03	14.45
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpick	176.00
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 3.01.04	<u>25.50</u>
		<u>2401.78</u>

Cheques received

Ms. Haig-Smith	Allotment rent 2003/2004	5.00
		<u>5.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall

85.00

Floodlighting - 6.01.03

120.00

Watton Ramblers

7.00

John Murphy

6.00

218.00

Payments

2004 Diary 4.49

P. J. Roofing 146.88

To PC for Community Hall for C.

Bewley's Xmas bonus 60.00

211.37

Cheques required

D. Bunyan	Refit down-pipe to front of building	119.26
Three valleys water	Water supply	152.76
C. Bewley	56.5 hours	310.75
HCC	Cleaning materials	110.54
D. Bunyan	Clean out changing-room drains and supply new traps	151.14
Sunstopper blinds	Recover two blinds in Pavilion	<u>183.30</u>
		<u>1027.75</u>

Cheques received

Mrs. Gilbey	Main Hall hire	55.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	15.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	<u>234.00</u>
		<u>304.00</u>

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

- **The meeting closed at 2130.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 11th February 2004.**