

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 8th September 2004

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. C. Clark
	Mrs. C. Dinnin	Mr. V. Dunhill
	Mr. D. Filer (until 2030 hours)	Mr. I. Knight
	Mr. M. Smith	Mr. D. Stock

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Meischke and Mrs. H. McCash.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Knight declared a personal interest in item 6 a vi, Planning Application – Land adjacent to 14 Beane Road, Proposed house & garage and replacement garage for No.14 (on page 4 of these minutes).

Mrs. Dinnin declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 6 a vi, Planning Application – Land adjacent to 14 Beane Road, Proposed house & garage and replacement garage for No.14 (on page 4 of these minutes).

Although she is not covered by the code of conduct, the Clerk declared an interest in item 6 a vi, Planning Application – Land adjacent to 14 Beane Road, Proposed house & garage and replacement garage for No.14 (on page 4 of these minutes).

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that at the request of Mr. Filer, who has to leave the meeting early, he will not be taking the agenda items in their correct order. The following items will be discussed after item 6 b, Planning Decisions.

- 7 f, Specific Items -Allotments - various
- 8 a, Reports - Budget & Finance Sub-Committee – all items
- 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Grass cutting on Lammas and Watton Green

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

- EHDC – Annual Playground Inspections. This item to be discussed under 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee (on page 8 of these minutes).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th July 2004**

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th July 2004.

Page 8, Environment Sub-Committee - Tree damage to Black Poplars, second paragraph.

‘Two quotations have been sort to pollard the trees to 40 feet’

should read

‘Two quotations have been received to pollard the trees to 40 feet’.

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

Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **Contact Mr. Clark and Val Weaver re meeting on 8th September 2004**

This action point has been completed.

- **Arrange for the bike-ramp adjacent to the Lammas footpath to be moved as soon as possible**

Mr. Poulton thanked Mr. Smith for removing the bike ramps.

- **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 the Co-operative Bank to provide us with weekly bank-statements for our current accounts**

The Clerk spoke to the Co-operative Bank and asked them to provide weekly bank-statements. She was informed that they do not issue weekly bank-statements, however, she could phone and request a statement on a weekly basis.

It was agreed to write to the Co-operative Bank requesting weekly bank statements. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Write to Planning Department re 25 Walkern Road**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Mr. and Mrs. Smith re Skateboarding facilities in the village**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Hertfordshire Highways re resurfacing problems in Hazeldell**
This action point is outstanding. Action: H. McCash
- **Meet with Jo Rodwell (Play Officer at EHDC) prior to the start of the 2004 Summer play scheme**
This action point has been completed.
- **Discuss traffic-calming with Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways)**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 7 e, Meeting with Val Weaver (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for the roller to be moved to the Cricket Club shed**
Mr. Poulton thanked Mr. Smith for moving the roller.
- **Arrange for a contractor to finish the repairs required to the brick walls at the Community Hall**
This action point has been completed.
- **Obtain quotations for pressure washing and moss killing the MPPA**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA – general (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Write to Diocese of St Albans re additional piece of Glebe Land**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Additional tennis court (on pages 7 and 8 of these minutes).
- **Write to the Diocesan Board re horses grazing in the field**
Mr. Knight said that it was not his understanding that he was to write to the Diocesan Board, he had however spoken to them re horses grazing in the field.
- **Obtain quotations for the installation of the additional tennis court**
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Additional tennis court (on pages 7 and 8 of these minutes).
- **Remove vandalised seat overlooking MPPA**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Wilf Emsley (Cricket Club) re provision of lockable cupboards to store cricket equipment**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Cled Fursland re Cricket Club pictures**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Request from Cricket Club to put pictures up in the Pavilion (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Chase Michael Stanley re grass cutting on Lammas and Watton Green**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Grass cutting on Lammas and Watton Green (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Ensure that all regular contractors provide us with a copy of their public liability insurance cover note**
Mr. Poulton said that we now have copies of the cover notes from Ted Brown and Adam Welch.
- **Cut back the elderberry at the base of the Oak tree on sportsfield**
Mr. Poulton said that this action point is outstanding. Action: N. Poulton
- **Chase Stevenage Glass re replacing the broken window in the pavilion fire-exit door**
This action point has been completed.
- **Send the River Beane Restoration Association a donation of £25**
This action point has been completed.
- **Send Mr. Pressland a licence to ferret the wooded area of Watton Green**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Filer said that no ferreting had taken place on Watton Green.
It was agreed to write to Mr. Pressland to ask him to start ferreting the area as soon as possible and requesting that he contact Mr. Filer before he starts to do so. Action: J. Allsop
- **Contact Allotment and Garden Association re provision of new allotments and car-park spaces**

This item to be discussed under item 9 a Correspondence received - Letter from John Love (on page 10 and 11 of these minutes).

- **Discuss allotment lease with Allotment and Garden Association**

This item to be raised at the next meeting of the Allotment and Garden Association.

Action: C. Dinnin/N. Poulton

- **Obtain information relating to child protection policies for hirers**

Mr. Filer said that the Village Halls Advisory Service had provided an information sheet called ‘Village Hall – Child Protection Policy’ which outlines the guiding principles for child welfare. He had tried to contact them to obtain more detailed information but has been unable to speak to anyone.

Mr. Filer agreed to e-mail the Village Halls Advisory Service to ask for more detailed information on Child Protection Policies.

Action: D. Filer

- **Put notice in Parish Magazine**

This action point has been completed.

- **Hang the Aerial photograph in the Parish Council room**

Mr. Poulton said that he had hung the aerial photograph in the pavilion instead of the Parish Council room. It was agreed that this was more appropriate.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Contact Mr. Abel Smith re School Lane/Old School Orchard**

This action point is still outstanding.

Action: M. Smith

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) 5 Hazeldell

Single storey extension to front and rear of property

Mr. Stock said that because the application is identical to the adjacent property he had not visited the neighbours.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and, on Mr. Stock’s recommendation, agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

Action: J. Allsop

ii) 98 Great Innings South

Two-storey rear extension

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Stock and Mr. Meischke dealt with this application and, because the Clerk was away on holiday, sent an e-mail (on 3rd August) to Lisa Hughes at EHDC as follows.

‘The residents of 96 and 100 Great Innings South have made us aware that they are concerned that the proposed two-storey extension to the rear of no 98 is too large (therefore an over development of the plot) and not in keeping with the general appearance of the adjacent properties. The resident of number 100 also has serious concerns about the significant loss of light this would bring to his garden and rear windows.

We understand these concerns and ask that you take them into consideration when this planning application is being discussed.’

Note: This application was refused by EHDC on 19th August. Refer to item 6 b viii, Planning decisions (on page 4 of these minutes).

iii) 11 Hazeldell

Rear conservatory

Mr. Poulton said that Mrs. McCash visited the neighbours at 13 Hazeldell, whose property is attached to number 11. They had no problem with the application.

Mrs. McCash was unable to speak to the neighbours at 9 Hazeldell.

She therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

iv) 54 Great Innings north

Erection of a PVCU conservatory to rear of property

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Meischke visited the next-door neighbours, who had no objections. He therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

v) **Land at Lamp Post 37, Ware Road, Watton-at-Stone**

10 metre high street light replacement mast with three integral omni-directional antennas, two equipment cabinets and a small link cabinet.

The details of this application were e-mailed to all Parish Councillors. Because no objections were received, Mr. Poulton instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

vi) **Land adjacent to 14, Beane Road**

Proposed house & garage and replacement garage for No.14

The application is to build a four-bedroom two-storey house and garage, together with a replacement garage for number 14 Beane Road. The plans for the two garages have not been submitted with the application. A similar application to build a five-bedroom 1.5 storey house was refused by EHDC in March 2004. Mr. Knight clarified certain aspects of the application.

Mr. Poulton said that letters objecting to the application had been received from the residents of 11a, 12a and 15 Beane Road, and 23 Walkern Road. The main concerns expressed by the residents related to the dangerous access, the over-development of the site and that the proposed dwelling is not in keeping with other properties in the area.

Parish Councillors studied the plans for the application. After discussion, it was agreed to write to EHDC informing that the Parish Council strongly objects to the above application for the following reasons.

- It is an over-development of the site, with little or no amenity land.
- There is restricted access to the site.
- It is not in keeping with the area or the properties within it.
- It would be a blight to number 14 Beane Road.

Also, the Parish Council supports the four letters of objection that have been sent by the residents of 11a, 12a and 15 Beane Road, and 23 Walkern Road.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

i) **6 Rivershill**

Single-storey conservatory

EHDC – Permission granted

ii) **Land at Lamp Post 37, Ware Road**

10 metre high street light replacement mast with 3 no. integral omni-directional antennas,
2 no. equipment cabinets and 1 no. link cabinet

EHDC – Prior approval refused

iii) **22 Hockerill**

Change of use of amenity land to residential

EHDC – Permission granted

iv) **44 The High Street**

Replacement front door and window. New back door and alterations to kitchen and bathroom windows at rear. Replacement rear dormer window. Replacement of first floor weatherboarding

EHDC - Listed building consent granted

v) **7 Rectory Lane**

Two storey side extension

EHDC – Permission granted

vi) **The Stables, Woodall Park**

To enclose the floor area of the Loggia with a timber and glass screen fitted between the columns in the style of the composite order

-EHDC – Permission granted

vii) **25 Walkern Road**

Two storey front and side extension

-EHDC – Permission granted

viii) **98 Great Innings South**

Two-storey rear extension

-EHDC – Permission refused

7 Specific Items

f) Allotments - various

Mr. Poulton read out the following letters concerning public liability insurance cover for allotment holders.

- Letter from the Clerk (dated 27th June) to Cornhill Insurance Plc.
- Letter from Juliet Twining (dated 26th July), Senior Commercial Underwriter at Cornhill Insurance Plc.
- Letter from the Clerk (dated 27th August) to Juliet Twining at Cornhill Insurance Plc.
- Letter from Juliet Twining (dated 2nd September), Cornhill Insurance Plc.

Copies of the letters are attached to these minutes.

See attached

It was agreed that before we reply further to Cornhill Insurance Plc we contact Rosemary Harris (Clerk to Hertford Town Council) to ask what her Council does about Public Liability Insurance cover for their allotment holders.

Action: J. Allsop

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

- **Co-operative bank Accounts**

On 28th July, the Clerk banked three cheques (for £35, £128 and £252) at Watton-at-Stone Post Office. However, our Co-operative bank statement shows that these cheques were not credited to our account until 16th August 2004. This is a period of over two and a half weeks (13 working days).

It was agreed to write to the Co-Operative Bank asking for their comments on this unsatisfactory situation.

Action: D. Filer

- **EHDC – precept**

Mr. Filer read out the following letter (dated 21st July) from Alison Batey (Accountancy, EHDC).

‘Watton-at-Stone Parish Precept

Further to your letter of the 29th June 2004 addressed to Dave Tweedie, please find enclosed a cheque for £44.63 this being a refund on your overdraft and interest charges. In the future, your half-yearly instalments will be sent to your Bank via the CHAPS system.

All the precept cheques were posted on the same day, so I can only assume that unfortunately, yours was held up in the postal system.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused and if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.’

- **Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2004**

Mr. Filer was pleased to report that Lubbock Fine had signed the Annual Return for the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2004. Because no additional information was required, Lubbock Fine have submitted an invoice for £250 (plus VAT), which is the minimum fee chargeable for the size of our Parish Council (and the same figure that was charged last year).

Mr. Filer proposed that Lubbock Fine’s invoice be paid. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Letter from Ted Brown**

Mr. Filer read out the following letter (dated 27th July) from Ted Brown.

‘As I haven’t had a pay rise for sometime now, I wish to apply for it. I think £6.50 per hour for litterpicking and any other jobs I do for the Council £8 per hour.’

After lengthy discussion and taking into account that the budget has already been set for 2004/05, it was agreed that Ted Brown’s hourly rate of pay should be increased from £5.50 to £6.50 per hour. This rate to cover all work he does for the Parish Council.

Ted Brown to be notified accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

- **EHDC – Litter picking payments 2004/5**

Emma Tuesday (Waste Services Assistant at EHDC) wrote to us on 31st August as follows.

‘Following your response to our litter picking questionnaire earlier this year, I am pleased to inform you that the annual payment for your parish litter picking grant is currently being processed.

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council will shortly received £1023.36. This is based on 4 hours per week at £4.92 per hour.

Thank you for your patience. Should you have any questions, please don not hesitate to contact us.’

Mr. Filer said that this grant goes towards the litterpicking work that Ted Brown does for us.

Environment Sub-Committee

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

The grass on the Lammas and Watton Green was cut by Michael Stanley’s contractor at the end of August and not as scheduled for the first week in July.

Mrs. Dinnin said that Mr. Stanley had still not returned to trim, rake and remove the grass cutting debris (although he had said that he would do so). Because this situation is totally unsatisfactory, a meeting of the Environment Sub-Committee is to be held on Tuesday 21st September (at 1930) to discuss the matter further.

It was agreed to write to Mr. Stanley asking him to remove the grass cutting debris from Watton Green and to clear it from the Lammas. Also, asking him to do the second cut on the Lammas and Watton Green before the end of September.

Action: J. Allsop

7 Specific items

a) Ornate village sign – erection and staining of the post

The ornate sign has now been installed and compliments have been received from members of the public about how good it looks.

Mr. Poulton reminded Parish Councillors that this sign was made possible because of the fund-raising efforts of the Millennium Truck Pull Committee (namely, Keith & Christine Bewley and Tony & Jenny Beavan). In 2000, the Truck Pull event raised £2,500 which was donated to the Parish Council towards the cost of the ornate village sign.

The members of the Millennium Truck Pull Committee asked that a plaque be fitted to the sign to commemorate their fund raising efforts. It was agreed to look through the old minutes to find out if any wording has been specified to go on the plaque. The plaque will also acknowledge the involvement of the Parish Council.

Action: J. Allsop

When it was erected, the post on which the sign sits did not match the colouring of the sign itself. However, the colour of the stain is now mellowing. Mr. Mould treated the post with preservative and informed the Clerk that, because it is made of oak, it should not need any further treatment for several years.

Mr. Mould said that the wood always shrinks around concrete and leaves a gap that can cause a problem. He therefore said it would be a good idea to put some silicon sealant and lead flashing around the bottom of the post where it is cemented into the ground.

It was agreed put this item on the agenda for March 2005 to see how much the colour of the post has mellowed.

Agenda 03/05

b) Resurfacing of the Hazeldell footpaths

Refer to item 8 of the minutes of the meeting with Val Weaver held on 8th September 2004, which are attached to these minutes.

See attached

c) EHDC – 2004 Summer Play-Scheme

Mr. Poulton said that the 2004 Summer Play-Scheme was a reasonable success. However, on the last day youngsters damaged some of the vertical blinds. Sunstopper Blinds have been instructed to repair the blinds and EHDC have agreed to pay for the cost of the work.

Mrs. Dinnin said that some of the mothers were upset because they now had to pay for their children to attend the Summer Play-Scheme. Mr. Poulton said that EHDC advertised the charges in the Mercury newspaper.

It was agreed to write to Ms. Jo Rodwell (Play Officer at EHDC) informing her that the Parish Council recommends that prior to the 2005 Summer Play-Scheme the charging structure is advertised in the Mercury Newspaper and in our Parish News. Also, that they provide posters (to go on the Parish Council notice boards) advertising the scheme and charges.

Action: J. Allsop

d) Traffic-calming in Station Road

Refer to the minutes of the meeting with Val Weaver held on 8th September 2004, which are attached to these minutes.

See attached

e) Meeting with Val Weaver

Refer to the minutes of the meeting with Val Weaver held on 8th September 2004, which are attached to these minutes.

See attached

Mr. Poulton said that he had e-mailed Bryan Hammond (as Chairman of Hertfordshire Highways) today to say that he was happy with the work being done in our area, although the timescales for the work is totally unacceptable.

Mr. Clark said that the new Hertfordshire Highways system is clearly not working and needs reviewing.

It was agreed to write to Bryan Hammond accordingly.

Action: C. Clark

f) Allotments – various

This item was discussed directly after item 6 b viii) Planning Decisions - 98 Great Innings South (on page 4 of these minutes).

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Repair needed to play equipment on the sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton said that the Rainbow multi-play and slide piece of play equipment on the sportsfield was damaged/vandalised during the summer holidays. Mr. Meischke instructed Wicksteed Leisure to do the repair work as a matter of urgency. Mr. Meischke kept some of the parts, which he expected Wicksteed Leisure to refit. However, when they repaired the equipment, they insisted that new replacement parts be fitted. The cost for the work was £441.57 (including VAT).

- **Annual Fire-equipment inspection**

Kidde Fire Protection Services have done the annual check two months early and invoiced us for £316.62 (including VAT). This invoice has not yet been paid. The annual inspection usually costs around £100, however when new equipment is required this figure increases.

The Clerk contacted Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight, who were unable to attend the inspection, so she did so.

Mr. Meischke has spoken to Kidde Fire Protection Services regarding the work done and they have agreed to send us a credit note for £107.34 (including VAT). This is a rebate on the service and parts on one of the 2kg CO₂ extinguishers.

The Clerk to pay Kidde Fire Protection Services when the credit note has been received. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Knight to give the Clerk the contact details for T. J. Fire Services, so an alternative quotation for the annual fire-inspection can be obtained next year. **Action: I. Knight**

- **Safety Inspections**

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Burgess had done the annual electrical-check in the Community Hall. Two new security lights were needed. The total cost of the work was £220

James Turner, who installed the heating system in the Community Hall, has been instructed to do the annual heating-check.

The Clerk to chase James Turner to find out when they will be doing the inspection. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Water heater**

During the summer holidays the water heater for the kitchen overflowed causing damage to some of the floorboards in the loft above the kitchen.

Mr. Bunyan traced the fault to the thermostat (which was not switching off). Replacement parts have now been fitted at a total cost of £211.50.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **MPPA – general**

Mr. Knight said that the tree root thought to be pushing up a small section of the surface of the MPPA had turned out to be a thistle. Doe Sport have been instructed to repair the surface and will repaint this area at the same time as they repaint the previously repaired areas of the MPPA.

Mr. Meischke instructed the Clerk to write to Cornhill Insurance as follows.

‘I have been instructed to respond to your letter of 15th July 2004 as follows.

Within a week of the vandalism of the tennis courts and notices, a meeting took place between the Parish Council, Tennis Club officials and the local Police to obtain advice on security for the area.

The following points were agreed at the meeting.

1. The gate to the facility would be locked for a trial period of two months.
2. All equipment to be removed to a locked store cupboard in the Main Hall.
3. Police to patrol this area on an irregular basis for the trial period.
4. Representation made to local children and plea for the facility not to be damaged.
5. Report the vandalism in local papers and in local Parish magazine.
6. Extra vigilance by the Tennis Club, Parish Council and other local sports clubs.

We are pleased to be able to report that no further vandalism has taken place and the Tennis Club report a large increase in the number of younger new players.’

Mr. Knight said that he is obtaining quotations for the pressure washing and moss killing on the MPPA. A budget figure for pressure washing and moss killing can then be included in the 2005/06 budget.

Budget: 2005/06

One of the MPPA floodlights is not working. Mr. Knight to liaise with Mr. Meischke to arrange for its repair/replacement.

Action: I. Knight/J. Meischke

- **Additional tennis court**

Mr. Knight said that we wrote to the Diocese of St Albans as agreed and subsequently received a letter from Rumball Sedgwick (acting on behalf of the Diocese of St Albans) who suggested that it would be sensible for the new lease for the additional tennis court to expire at the same time as the MPPA 30-year lease, which expires in September 2011. Mr. Knight suggested that because this is only seven years away, the lease should be for a longer period and when the MPPA lease runs out, it should be brought in-line with the lease for the additional tennis court.

Mr. Poulton agreed to give Mr. Knight contact details for organisations that the Sports and Social Club can contact with regard to funding for the additional tennis court.

Action: N. Poulton

Mr. Knight to contact the planning officers at EHDC to discuss the provision of an additional tennis court.

Action: I. Knight

- **Insurance for Cricket Club shed**

Mr. Knight said he had not had a response to his letter to Rob Clayton (Chairman, Watton at Stone Cricket Club) requesting a copy of the insurance cover note for the Cricket Club shed.

It was agreed to write to Wilf Emsley asking him to obtain a copy of the insurance cover note for the Cricket Club shed.

Action: I. Knight

- **Request from Cricket Club to put pictures up in the Pavilion**

It was agreed not to pursue this item further until the Cricket Club had given us a copy of the insurance cover note for the Cricket Club shed.

- **Moveable goalpost**

Mr. Knight said that sections of the moveable goalpost had now been welded together.

Mr. Knight to liaise with Mr. Meischke re transporting the goalpost from his home to the sportsfield and permanently sighting it on the far side of the sportsfield (i.e. near the bike ramps and away from the Cricket and Football pitches).

Action: I. Knight/J. Meischke

- **Annual Playground Inspections**

EHDC has written to inform us that RoSPA will do its annual inspection of play areas during early October 2004. The cost of the inspection will be £54 (plus VAT) for the first five items of equipment. Each additional item of equipment will be charged at £2.50 (plus VAT).

It was agreed to write to EHDC asking them to arrange a RoSPA inspection on the following items of equipment on the Sportsfield.

- Large Swings
- Small Swings
- See-Saw
- Rainbow Multi-play with slide
- Two spring sit-on
- Three bike ramps: (Junior Jump bike ramp, Double Ramp, Fun Box).

The Clerk to write accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Sportsfield Maintenance**

Mr. Knight said that each year the Football Club ask the Parish Council to arrange for the pitch to have permanent line-marking installed prior to the start of play in September. The work is done by Sodexo and the Sports and Social Club give the Parish Council a donation for the total invoice (net of VAT).

This year Sodexo are charging £131.56 plus VAT, which is a 175% increase on the £75 they charged last year. Because it needs doing before 11th September, Sodexo had been instructed to do the work as soon as possible.

Mr. Knight said that in the 2004/05 Parish Council budget there is a sportsfield provision of £500 for pitch maintenance. Because none of this provision has been spent to date, he suggested that the Parish Council either pay for all of the line-marking or ask the Sports and Social Club for a donation of £75 (which is the same amount they donated for this work last year).

After discussion, it was agreed to write to the Sports and Social Club asking for a donation of £75 towards the permanent line marking.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Smith said that the goalposts sockets near the Community Hall are proud of the ground.

- **Sportsfield hedge**

Mr. Poulton said that Nick Whitehead has verbally quoted £300 (plus VAT) for cutting the sportsfield hedge this year. Mr. Whitehead has been charging this rate since the year 2000.

It was agreed to write to Mr. Whitehead to accept his verbal quotation.

Action: J. Allsop

The work will be done before the end of September.

During the Parish Council meeting held on 14th April 2004, it was agreed that Hawthorn should be planted in the gaps in the sportsfield hedge during the autumn.

It was agreed that Mr. Smith gives us a quotation for the supply of the appropriate number of Hawthorn plants and a separate quote for planting them.

Action: M. Smith

A letter to be sent to Dr. Norden, who raised this issue in April 2004, informing him of the action the Parish Council is taking and that we expect the planting to take place during the period November 2004-January 2005.

Action: J. Allsop

Environment

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

• **Tree work on Lammas - Black Poplars**

Adam Welch has done the work to the black poplars on the Lammas. As agreed, Mrs. Marshall (of 19 Lammas Road), whose garden backs onto this section of the Lammas, has been using some of the logs from the poplar trees to rebuild her section of the riverbank.

It was agreed to ask Mrs. Marshall how many more of the logs she required to finish the job. Any remaining logs to be stored at the Mill Lane end of the Lammas and a notice placed in the Parish News advertising that they are available to anyone who is able to move them.

Action: C. Dinnin/N. Poulton

• **Letter from the Countryside Management Service**

Prior to this meeting, all Parish Councillors had been given a copy of a letter (dated 28th July) from Sue Clarkson of the Countryside Management Service. The contents of the letter will be discussed in detail during the Environment Sub-Committee meeting to be held on 21st September 2004.

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

This item was discussed immediately before item 7 a, Specific items - Ornate village sign – erection and staining of the post (on page 5 of these minutes).

• **P3**

Our P3 grant of £1300 for 2004/05 has now been paid. Although an initial grant of £1500 was requested, this was reduced to £1300 because only one kissing gates was required on Footpath 27 instead of two.

The gate still required is at the Datchworth end of FP27. Mr. Dunhill to obtain quotations.**Action: V. Dunhill**

Mr. Dunhill said that we need to submit our grant application for 2005/06 by October 2004.

The P3 grant application form to be placed on the agenda for the Environment Sub-Committee meeting to be held on 21st September 2004.

Agenda: Env-09.04

d) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Filer apologised that he had not done the report and agreed to do it as soon as possible.

Subsequently, Mr. Filer did the sportsfield report on the 9th September 2004, the result of which is as follows.

• **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Same bare patches but generally in good condition.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Good condition. From near to bike ramps is a little overgrown with nettles.

• **Children’s Play Area:**

Condition of surface	OK.
Litter/Litterbin	Empty.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK. – Repairs to floor have taken well.
Teen shelter	OK.
General	Good.

• **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK.
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Double Ramp	OK.
Fun Box	OK.
• Community Hall:	
General Condition (Exterior)	Some mastic in wall expansion joint is missing – not a problem.
Litterbin	Empty.
Car Park	Clean and tidy.
General	A little litter in Gents toilet.
• Multi-Purpose Play Area:	
Surface	OK.
Boundary Fencing	OK.
Tennis nets	OK.
Litter	None.
General	Good condition.
• Great Innings Play Area:	
Equipment	Good condition.
Surfaces	OK.
Litter	A lot of litter but cleared this morning.
Dog fouling	None.
Comments	Rubbish in roundabout centre.
• Allotments Area:	
Access	Good.
Condition of paths between Allotments	Good.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	Good, but some have lots of weeds.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	Covered in weeds.
Litter	OK.
Comments	Church walk hedge needs cutting? Most allotments in very good condition. A few have weeds.
• Culverts on Mill Lane	
Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	OK, needs a new litter bin.
Dog-fouling	OK.
Comments	-
• Salt bins	
Perrywood Lane	OK.
Entrance to Great Innings	OK.
Great Innings South – outside number 93	OK.
Station Road	OK.
Moorymead Close	OK.
Hazeldell	OK.
• Dog-waste bins	
Footpath 17	OK, but rubbish all around it.
Sportsfield	OK.
Church Walk	OK.
Walkern Road	OK.
Station Road	OK.
High Street (by Memorial)	OK.
Great Innings	OK.
Mill Lane	OK.
General	OK, but some lids are missing.
• Cutting of the sportsfield hedge	
As discussed under item 8 a Reports, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Sportsfield hedge (on page 8 of these minutes), Mr. Whitehead to be instructed to cut the sportsfield hedge as soon as possible.	

ii) Weekly report and action

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

9 Correspondence received

a) Letter from John Love

Mr. Poulton read a letter from John Love (dated 28th July) concerning:

1. New Allotment requests
2. Discontinued Tenancies
3. Uncultivated plots
4. Provision of new plots.

After discussion, the following was agreed:

- The Parish Council seeks confirmation from Mr. Barnett that he no longer wishes to retain allotment numbers 37 and 38a.
- The Parish Council seeks confirmation from Mr. Cobb that he wishes to retain only half of allotment number 9 (i.e. plot 9b). The Parish Council agrees that, if available, plot 9a can remain unallocated until 1st January 2005.
- The Parish Council to contact Melinda Baines and Mark Stewart regarding the use of their allotments.
- The Allotment and Garden Association make three additional half allotments (within the next three months for occupancy by 1st January 2005) from the discussed area of the allotments.
- The Allotment and Garden Association provide a car-parking area adjacent to the stile and use plot 39a for the storage of manure.

Mr. Love to be notified accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Mrs. Dinnin to speak to Melinda Baines.

Action: C. Dinnin

The Clerk to contact Mark Stewart, Mr. Barnett and Mr Cobb.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Letter of thanks from River Beane Association

Mr. Knight has written (as a member of the River Beane Restoration Association) to thank the Parish Council for their donation of £25.

c) Rumball Sedgwick – Additional Tennis Court

This item was discussed under item 8 a Reports, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Additional tennis court (on pages 7 and 8 of these minutes).

d) Letter from Ian Knight re Rectory Lane

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 4th September) from Mr. Knight.

‘Paul Sharkey has recently moved back into the village to 5 Rectory Lane.

He has formally asked me to bring two matters to the attention of the Parish Council.

1. The street lighting in Rectory Lane is inadequate. He has young children and considers it a hazardous situation.
2. The Bollard in Rectory Lane and barrier at the top of Rectory Lane prevent access by an emergency vehicle (Fire Engine or Ambulance) to this house. His neighbour (7 Rectory Lane) does not have the same problem as the rear of the house has access to Rectory Lane below the bollards.

He suggests the Barrier at the top of Rectory Lane be converted to a lockable barrier to which he has the key or the Barrier moved closer to the bollards.

I think Paul Sharkey has two valid comments to be considered.’

Parish Councillors discussed the issue of improving lighting in Rectory Lane.

It was agreed to find out who owns the tree adjacent to the streetlight outside the school (at the top of Rectory Lane) and then ask them to cut back all overhanging foliage to improve the lighting problem in this area.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mr. Poulton said that item 2 of Mr. Knight’s letter was discussed during our meeting with Val Weaver held on 8th September 2004.

Refer to item 8 of the minutes of the meeting with Val Weaver, which are attached to these minutes.

See attached

It was agreed to write to Paul Sharkey informing him of our action.

Action: I. Knight

10 Reports from other Organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone Social Club**

Mr. Knight said that the Sports and Social Club's Fun Day netted just over £5,000. The money is being put towards the Mill Lane sports project.

11 Items for Parish News

No items were identified for inclusion in the next issue of the Parish News.

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Payments

Receipt book - floodlighting 2.49
2.49

Cheques required

Adam Welch	Grass cutting on 17.06.04 & 07.07.04	300.00
River Beane Restoration Assoc.	Donation towards running costs	25.00
Cornhill Insurance	Additional premium – cover for Ornate village sign	39.64
HCC	Lighting energy charges 01/04/04 – 30/06/04	90.53
HCC	Lighting maintenance charges 01/04/04 – 30/06/04	189.74
Ted Brown	Clearance work on Watton Green	150.00
Ted Brown	33 hours litterpicking	181.50
J. Allsop	August salary	519.27
Sodexo	Grass cutting 2004 – 1 st payment	382.46
Adam Welch	Work on Watton Green	1100.00
M. Stanley	Work to storm damaged trees and erection of sign	420.00
Ted Brown	35 hours litterpicking	192.50
Lubbock Fine	Audit fee	293.75
J. Allsop	Phone calls to 3 rd August and 3 rd September	51.00
J. Allsop	September salary	<u>519.27</u>
		<u>4454.66</u>

Cheques received

EHDC	Reimbursement of overdraft costs	44.63
EHDC	LEAF grant for work on Lammas	500.00
EHDC	Litterpick grant for 2004/05	<u>1023.36</u>
		<u>1567.99</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	150.00
N. Stichbury – Main Hall	40.00
Barry Moor	<u>64.00</u>
	<u>254.00</u>

Payments

Cleaning materials	46.05
VAT return – 07/04	105.86
2 x VAT books	8.98
Wicksteed Leisure – repair to multi-play equipment	<u>168.54</u>
	<u>329.43</u>

Cheques required

Stevenage Glass	Repair broken window glass	171.08
Rose Brown	25 Hours cleaning	137.50
Rose Brown	24 Hours cleaning	132.00
David Bunyan	To repair heating system	211.50
Wicksteed Leisure	Repair to multi-play equipment	<u>441.57</u>
		<u>1093.65</u>

Cheques received

D. Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	378.00
Watton House	Pavilion hire	14.00
EHDC	Hire of Pavilion for elections	128.00
Emma Fowler	Parish Council room	244.50
Mr. Griffin	Pavilion hire	21.00
Mrs. Deards	Pavilion and Main Hall	<u>45.50</u>
		<u>831.00</u>

Mr. Clark proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments, Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- The meeting closed at 2114.
- The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 13th October 2004.