

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 14th February 2007

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. D. Filer	Mr. I. Knight
	Mr. M. Smith	The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs. McCash, Mr. Dunhill and Mr. Stock.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

• **Derek Monk**

Mr. Poulton was sad to report that Derek Monk died on 7th February and his funeral is to be held on 23rd February at Stevenage Crematorium. All Parish Councillors present signed a condolence card.

The Clerk to give the card to Mr. Stock who will arrange for Mr. Dunhill and Mrs. McCash to sign the card.

Action: J. Allsop

In addition, he was also sad to report that Violet Ansell, wife of the late Bob Ansell (a former Chairman of the Parish Council) had died. No date has been set for her funeral.

• **Police presence**

Mr. Poulton said that the police had seized a motorbike and another motorbike-owner had been given a warning for driving without tax and insurance.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

• **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th January 2007**

Mr. Filer proposed that the minutes 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

• **Invite Inspector, Diane Wilson to attend the Parish Council meeting on 14th March 2007**

The Clerk reported that PCSO Paul Weston had verbally confirmed the invitation.

• **Ask Ted Brown to sand-down and apply Danish Oil to interpretation boards on the Lammas:**

Completed.

One of the tins of Danish Oil remains unused and will be put into storage.

• **Reinstate the Whempstead notice board and put up re-cycling posters:** Completed.

Mr. Clark said that the notice board is not weather-tight. He agreed to purchase and fit draft-extrusion to prevent water getting in.

Action: C. Clark

The Clerk said that the Parish Council notice board adjacent to Summan Stores is leaking. Mr. Poulton to inspect to see how it can be made weather proof.

Action: N. Poulton

• **E-mail Hertfordshire Highways re replacing the damaged seat by the bus stop at the northern end of the village with the seat removed from the Hockerill slope:** Completed.

• **Put together Parish Council starter kit:** This item is on-going and will be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting in May.

Agenda: 05.07

• **Contact the Clerk if proposed meeting dates for the civic year 2007/08 are unsuitable:** Completed.

• **Write to all contractors who submitted quotations for work in 2007/08:** Completed.

• **Establish Allotment rents charged by Hertford and Ware Town Council:** Completed.

• **Speak with the Allotment and Garden Association re rent review:** Refer to item 8a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Allotment rent (on page 5 of these minutes).

• **Accept Care Group's quotation for floor cleaning in the Community Hall:** Completed.

- **Investigate better rates of bank interest**

Mr Filer reported on his investigations into alternative bank-accounts that would give a higher rate of interest than the present accounts. With the help of Mr. Meischke he had looked at ICESAVE; a bank based in Iceland. After seeking advice from the University of Hertfordshire and from a firm of Accountants in Stevenage, he had come to the conclusion that we should not be investing public money in such overseas banks who were not necessarily protected by the rules of the Financial Services Authority.

He had therefore investigated a number of other UK-based alternatives and highlighted four which gave reasonably high rates of interest.

These are:

- Alliance & Leicester Commercial Bank (4.0%)
- Anglo Irish Bank (4.8%)
- COIF Charity Funds (4.91%)
- Central Board of Finance Church of England (4.91%).

It was agreed that Mr. Filer investigate the COIF Fund and the Church of England Fund and report on this during the Parish Council in April.

Action: D. Filer

- **Return completed Precept Form to East Herts Council:** Completed.
- **Copy both insurance policies to all Community Hall Trustees:** Completed.
- **Write to Allianz Cornhill re fire-risk:** Outstanding. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Copy completed on-line business fire-risk check-list to all Parish Councillors:** Completed.
- **Test fire-alarm equipment monthly before Parish Council meeting:** Completed.
Fire-alarm test to be added to the monthly Parish Council agenda under 'Routine Reports'. **Agenda: 03/07**
- **Alter Community Hall hire agreement:**
This item to be discussed during the Trustees meeting to be held on 6th March. **Agenda: CHT 03/07**
- **Accept Adam Welch's quotation for tree work on Lammas:** Completed.
- **E-mail Mike Smith to ask if more grass seed is required around teen shelter:** Completed.
Mr. Smith said that it was not the right time of year to look at sowing grass seed.
This item to be deferred to the Parish Council meeting in March. **Agenda: 03/07**
- **Ask Ted Brown to weed spray around play area and Community Hall, clear mud from bottom of car park by drain and clear allotment entrance:** Completed.
- **Obtain adhesive Velcro fixings for the Great Innings notice board:** Outstanding.
- **Inspect damaged tennis net**
Mr. Knight said that he had inspected the nets and there was no new damage.
- **Chase Turners about small amount of water coming from overflow pipe in boiler room**
Turners will be repairing the boiler on 21st February.
- **Write to East Herts Council re fly-posting:** Completed.
- **Meet with officers from East Herts Council and complete the cultural strategy form:** Completed.
- **Write in support of Hertford Museum's application for lottery funding:** Completed.
- **Put Mr. M. Gordon's letter dated 29th December and Hertfordshire highways' response on circulation:** Completed.
- **Notify Clerk if you are able to attend Inter Parish conference or not:** Completed.
Mr. Poulton and Mr. Clark will represent the Parish Council. **Action: N. Poulton/C. Clark**
- **Write to Marietta Morrissey re clearing the mud from Perrywood Lane:** Completed.
- **Write Parish News report:** Completed.
- **Write to the Clerk re annual salary review:** Completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) 23 High Street (3/07/0032/FP/SP)

Loft conversion with front and rear dormer windows, front porch with pitched roof, garage conversion, dropped kerb

Mrs. Dinnin visited the neighbours on either side of 23 High Street. Although the residents at 21 High Street had no objections to the plans, those at 25 High Street were concerned about the development; especially regarding the dormer windows and lack of car parking space. Mr. Knight also viewed the plans.

Mr. Stock said that because he and Mr. Meischke felt that this application should be reviewed and discussed during the next meeting of the Parish Council, he had asked the Clerk to contact the planning department for an extension.

Parish Councillors reviewed the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council strongly objects to the above application for the following reasons.

1. It is an over-development of the site.
2. The aesthetics of the proposed development is not in keeping with the adjoining property.
3. The proposed development is not in keeping with the area or the properties within it.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

i) 25 Rivershill

Single storey front extension - East Herts Council - permission granted

ii) Wagon & horses, 1 High Street

Replacement letter & new swing sign (externally illuminated) - East Herts Council - permission granted

iii) Wagon and Horses 1 High Street (3/06/2273/FP/SD)

Proposed rear kitchen extension including new kitchen extract and intake fans plus internal refurbishment - East Herts Council - permission granted

b) Withdrawn

i) 11a/11b Broom Hall Farm

Erection of non-permanent internal partition

7 Specific items

a) Lights in Lammas Road

The new lighting in Lammas Road is now complete and working. Paul Patmore (Hertfordshire Highways) e-mailed us re the painting of the lighting columns. They are usually painted 'conservation grey' (virtually black) in conservation areas or dark green in all other areas. Lammas Road falls outside of the conservation area so Paul Patmore's suggestion is to paint them dark green. Parish Councillors agreed that they should be painted dark green. The Clerk to e-mail Paul Patmore accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Filer said that his daughter lives in Lammas Road and she is delighted with the new lighting scheme and did not think it to be overpowering.

Mr. Poulton read out a letter from Maurice Gordon to Hertfordshire Highways, and their response.

b) Youth Club "Watton-at-Stone Youth Drop Inn"

The Watton-at-Stone Youth Drop Inn has booked the Community Hall on Tuesday evenings for three months, commencing on 3rd April.

20 volunteers have come forward to help run the group and will work on a rota basis, with two women and one man being in attendance on each evening. The Club is available to young people aged 11 to 17 years and will open during the term time as well as the holidays. The entry is £1 per session. Those wishing to attend will need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian to register on their first visit.

The Club will be affiliated to the Hertfordshire Association for Young People.

One of the parents has kindly donated a laptop which will be used to record DVDs. The lockable cupboard belonging to the disbanded Youth Club will be moved to a convenient location within the Community Hall and be used to store the drinks and snacks that will be on sale.

Both the Hertfordshire Association for Young People and Circle Anglia have agreed grants of £500 each.

The following committee members have been elected.

- Adrian Thomson – Chairman
- Heidi Simpson – Treasurer
- Nigel Poulton - Secretary

The Clerk to give Mr. Poulton a hire agreement for the Watton-at-Stone Drop Inn Committee to sign.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Request for a memorial seat

Mr. Poulton said that Hertfordshire Highways has given permission for a memorial seat to be installed to replace the damaged seat next to the Parish Council notice board adjacent to the Great Innings roundabout. The Ward family have selected a seat from the Glasdon UK Limited catalogue. However, Hertfordshire Highways has now informed Mr. Poulton that the seat has to be installed by a qualified Highways Engineer. This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 03/07

d) Amended Parish Council Protocol for Planning Applications

Parish Councillors agreed the revised protocol for Planning Applications prepared by Mr. Stock.

See attached

e) Agree meeting dates for the Civic Year

It was agreed that Parish Council meetings shall continue to be held on the second Wednesday in the month, namely:

- 9th May 2007
- 13th June 2007
- 11th July 2007
- 12th September 2007
- 10th October 2007
- 14th November 2007
- 12th December 2007
- 9th January 2008
- 13th February 2008
- 12th March 2008
- 9th April 2008

The Parish Council meeting on the 9th May 2007 will be preceded by the Annual Parish meeting (starting at 1900) and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

f) Extension of licensing hours – Waggon and Horses Public House

The Clerk found a notice in the Mercury re the Punch Taverns PLC who are applying to East Herts Council to vary their existing license conditions, under the new licensing act, for the following.

- Provision of regulated entertainment:
 - Sporting events [indoor, including but not exclusively Pool and Darts].
 - Live Music [Amplified and unamplified live music (Indoors)].
 - Recorded music [Recorded Music ancillary to the sale of alcohol (indoors)].
- Provision of Entertainment Facilities:
 - Provision of facilities for dancing [permission to allow patrons to dance within the premises (indoors)].
 - Anything similar: Karaoke.
- Provision of late night refreshment.
- Sale or supply of alcohol for consumption on & off the premises.
- Hours open to the public.

The police have hand-delivered notices of the changes to all residents in the area (i.e. part of the High Street, Long Meadow, Motts Close, the top of Lammas Road, left-hand side of Beane Road). Any objections to these changes need to be submitted to the licensing department at East Herts Council before 20th February.

The Parish Council will not be responding to East Herts Council.

g) Update on Gully Emptying

Mr. Poulton said that all 52 Gullies in Watton-at-Stone were inspected and 47 were cleared. 5 could not be emptied and 18 needed remedial works.

h) Road naming Perrywood Lane/Church Lane

Mr. Poulton said that there has been some confusion with regard to where Church Lane starts. East Herts Council has confirmed from their records that the sign posting for Church Lane is correct.

The confusion is that Lane Croft is in the electoral role as being in Perrywood Lane when it should have a Church Lane address. Similarly, White House Cottage's address is 160 High Street.

i) Salt bin for the Walkern Road

Mr. Knight reported that although Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) verbally agreed, during a site meeting in late February/early March 2006, to install a salt bin on the grass verge opposite the entrance to Beane Road it was not done.

It was agreed to write to Raj Goutam asking him to install a salt bin before next winter. **Action: I. Knight**

Mrs. Dinnin said that some Parishioners are unaware that the salt bins are available for public use and asked if the Parish Council could put a notice in the next issue of the Parish News to remedy this.

It was agreed that we write to Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) asking him to provide a notice to be submitted for inclusion in the Parish News. **Action: N. Poulton**

8 Reports**a) Sub-Committees****Budget & Finance**

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

- **Allotment rent**

Mr. Meischke said he discussed rent reviews during a recent meeting of the Allotment and Garden Association. With these discussions in mind, he proposed that the Parish Council increases the allotment rent from its current rate of £13 to £16 per hour with effect from 1st September 2007. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Floodlighting charges**

Mr. Filer proposed that the floodlighting charges be increased from £5 to £6 per hour from 1st April 2007. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to give Mr. Meischke the floodlighting machine instruction-booklet so that he can make the necessary adjustments. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **VAT inspection for the Community Hall**

H M Revenue and Customs have requested an inspection of the Community Hall books for VAT purposes. This will take place at the Clerk's home on Tuesday 20th February.

This item to remain on the agenda. **Agenda: 03/07**

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Minutes of meeting held on 9th January 2007**

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

Mr. Knight seconded the motion and Mr. Poulton was in favour.

- **Child protection policy from hirers**

All regular hirers have provided the name of their Child protection officer and either adopted the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Trustees Child protection policy or provided a copy of their own policy.

Mr. Filer has undergone Basic Awareness Training in Child Protection which allows him to be a Child Protection Officer for the Watton-at-Stone Parish Church. He said that the course was well run by HCC and very informative.

- **Replacement see-saw**

The replacement see-saw has now been installed and Herts Community Foundation has sent us a cheque for £3043 (i.e. its grant). The VAT element on the invoice will be reclaimed and therefore there will be no cost to the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Repairs to MPPA and Community Hall**

James Hale has completed the repair work. Because he was very embarrassed that it took him so long to complete, he has not charged us for the work.

- **Temporary cleaner for Community Hall**

Mr. Meischke said that while Rosemary Brown is away on holiday, Brian Thompson will do the cleaning duties at the Community Hall. He will be paid £40 for 6 hours work.

- **Update on hirers**

There has been an increase in the hiring of the Community Hall since our advertising campaign at the end of last year.

'TOAST' (The Obesity Awareness & Solutions Trust) have a 12-week booking of the Meeting Room on Tuesday mornings.

Also, Watton Dots and Tots want to start hiring the Pavilion and Kitchen from 20th February. They will book the facility for two hours during term time on Tuesday mornings on the proviso that they are given somewhere to store their play equipment.

- **Storage facilities**

Mr. Poulton said that, in consultation with Mr. Meischke, he had obtained a quotation of £200 from local carpenter David Giddens (41 Hazeldell) to split part of the internal cleaner's store-cupboard/meter room into two separate storage areas. The two doors to this cupboard will become two separate entrances and internal partitions installed to a height of approximately 1.8 meters. The left-hand door will lead into a hirer's storage area, which can be used by the Watton Dots and Tots and will extend to the back of the alcove, which is approximately 1.5 meters in depth. The right-hand door will allow access to the cleaner's store-cupboard/meter room. There is an additional cost of £20 to install a lock on the cupboard which contains paints and cleaning materials.

Mr. Filer proposed that we accept David Giddens' quotations. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Poulton to instruct David Giddens to do the work on Saturday 24th February. **Action: N. Poulton**

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Additional tennis court**

The Archaeological survey/dig has been completed and we are awaiting Essex County Council's report. The Tennis Club will give us a donation for the net amount of the invoice. When this is received the tennis court planning-application can be resubmitted to East Herts Council.

- **MPPA**

One of the tennis-net posts is damaged due to over-winding and replacement parts need fitting.

Mr. Knight said that although the post is old and has corroded, the damage could not have occurred by casual over-winding.

Mr. Knight to purchase the replacement parts required.

Action: I. Knight

Environment

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

- **Cottage Site**

Tony Bradford has done a second lot of work to the Cottage Site. He has now cleared the majority of the area and will be returning to do some final work and remove some of the logs still on site. One large log will be left on site to 'naturalize'. Mrs. Dinnin said that the area looks excellent.

It was agreed that when Tony Bradford has completed the work we write a letter of thanks.

Action: C. Dinnin

The tree at the front of the Cottage Site which is leaning badly needs attention. Mrs. Dinnin to contact Tony Bradford to ask him to inspect the tree and make it safe.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Trees on the Lammas**

- **Two Willow Trees**

Due to the recent high winds, Adam Welch has had to postpone work to the two Willow trees on the Lammas because he has been busy doing emergency tree work. The work is now scheduled for 20th February.

The Clerk to give Mrs. Dinnin the key to the Lammas gate.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Willow on riverbank**

Mrs. Dinnin said that at the end of September 2006 a Willow tree on the Lammas riverbank fell onto the bank/garden of number 4 The Beaneside. Mr. Poulton was informed by the Environment Agency that they were responsible for the removal of the tree. However, because it was not blocking the river it would not be done immediately.

Mrs. Dinnin said that Christopher Mellish (of 4 The Beaneside) e-mailed the Parish Council to say that 'six months later, the tree has completely collapsed into the river, with debris and silt building up at an alarming rate [including a dustbin lid] and other non-biodegradable products.' He also asks when the tree will be removed.

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had spoken to the Environment Agency and they cannot look at the tree until March at the very earliest, but will carry out the work to remove this tree. She said that if the Environment Agency were unable/unwilling to remove the tree then the Parish Council should do so. Firstly, because the tree is blocking the waterway and secondly, it is unreasonable that the tree should be left in the Mellish family's garden.

A discussion took place about whose responsibility it is to remove trees on the riverbank, i.e. the land owner or the Environment Agency. Mr. Knight (who lives in Beane Road) said that in the deeds for his property he owns the riverbank up to the middle of the river. The Clerk (who also lives in Beane Road) said that her deeds were the same. Mr. Meischke said that the properties in Lammas Road whose gardens go down to the river do not own the riverbank to the middle of the river.

It was agreed that the Parish Council needs to establish who is responsible for the riverbank on the Lammas and the removal of any tree that could fall into or over the river. If the Parish Council is not responsible for the removal of the fallen tree, then there could be legal implications if the council instructs a contractor to do work and something goes wrong (e.g. a contractor injures himself or does damage to someone else's property).

Mrs. Dinnin to contact the Environment Agency to find out who is legally responsible for the removal of this trees and bushes on the banks of the River Beane. **Action: C. Dinnin**

b) Routine reports

i) Monthly village-report

Mr. Knight completed this report on the 14th February 2007, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**
 - Condition of grass OK – poor at goal mouth.
 - Litter OK.
 - Dog fouling OK.
 - General Hole in hedge in School Lane.
- **Children's Play Area:**
 - Condition of surface OK.
 - Litter/Litterbin OK.
 - Large swings OK.
 - Small swings OK.
 - See-Saw OK.
 - Rainbow multi-play and slide OK.
 - Two spring sit-on OK.
 - Teen shelter OK.
 - General Grass seed in March on new ground.
- **Bike ramps area:**
 - Junior Jump OK.
 - Double Ramp OK.
 - Fun Box OK.
- **Community Hall:**
 - General Condition (Exterior) OK.
 - Litterbin OK.
 - Car Park OK.
 - General OK.
- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**
 - Surface OK.
 - Boundary Fencing OK.
 - Tennis nets Net post needs replacing.
 - Litter OK.
 - General Weeds around court.
Side gate – wood covering still not fixed.
- **Great Innings Play Area:**
 - Equipment OK.
 - Surfaces OK.
 - Litter OK.
 - Dog fouling OK.
 - Comments OK.
- **Allotments Area:**
 - Access OK for time of year.
 - Condition of paths between Allotments OK for time of year.
 - Condition of Allotments under cultivation OK for time of year.
 - Condition of Allotments not under cultivation OK for time of year.
 - Litter OK.
 - Comments OK for time of year.
- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
 - Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts OK.
 - Dog-fouling OK.
 - Comments Litter at bottom of Mill Lane and around seat on the Lammas.

- **Salt bins**
 - Perrywood Lane OK.
 - Entrance to Great Innings OK.
 - Great Innings South – outside number 93 OK. – Lid damaged.
 - Station Road OK.
 - Moorymead Close (2) OK.
 - Hazeldell OK.
 - Footpath 17 OK.
 - **Dog-waste bins**
 - 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.
 - Opposite 5 School Lane OK.
 - **War Memorial**
 - Comments Good.
 - **Ornate Village Sign**
 - Comments Good.
 - Post OK.
- **Litter around seat on the Lammas**
 Ted Brown to be asked to litterpick the area. **Action: N. Poulton**

ii) **Weekly sportsfield-report and action**

Because one of the seats by the play area was broken and dangerous, it was removed from site on Sunday 11th February.

The seat that was removed from the Hockerill slope could be used to replace the one removed from the play area. The Parish Council did offer the seat from the Hockerill slope to Hertfordshire Highways to replace their broken seat adjacent to the bus shelter, but a response has not been received.

9 Correspondence received

a) **East of England Plan**

Mr. Poulton to write on behalf of the Parish Council protesting against the proposed changes to the draft East of England in the same vein as our objections stated in March 2005. **Action: N. Poulton**

Note: The following letter was sent to Go-East on 23rd February 2007.

‘I am writing on behalf of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council to protest against the proposed changes to the draft East of England Plan.

The proposal to build at least 10,000 dwellings and possibly significantly more (up to 25,000) to the North of Harlow effectively means the creation of a new town in the green belt engulfing the rural settlements at Eastwick, Gilston, Pye Corner and High Wych and would effect country wildlife sites, ancient monuments and areas of archaeological significance.

Harlow north is the only area where the Secretary of State has failed to accept the recommendation of the EiP Panel, this area is now included in the new draft plan. Councillors find this unacceptable and wish this area to be withdrawn as per the recommendations of the Panel especially as the strategy show little regard to the environment and culture around Harlow.

There is a growing concern amongst Councillors that there is little Government commitment to the resources required for the infrastructure such as Schools (both primary and secondary), transport, medical facilities and policing, but perhaps the greatest concern is water both in respect of clean supply of drinking water and the disposal and treatment of effluent water.

The Parish Council recognises the need for extra housing but objects to the proposals on the basis that too heavy a load has been put onto East Herts and on the basis that inadequate provision has been made for the vital infrastructure improvements that would be required.

The extension of Stevenage into the green belt both west and north on the scale proposed is contrary to green belt principals and will bring Stevenage much closer to Hitchin and Letchworth creating an urban sprawl again Watton-at-Stone Parish Council objects to this extension of Stevenage.

Any plans for additional housing in the area must maximize the use of Brownfield sites and show a sustainable level of infrastructure development to sensibly match the level of new homes.’

b) East Herts Council – East Herts Local Plan, 2nd review – Affordable Housing SPD

This item has been on circulation and Mr. Knight e-mailed all Parish Councillors as follows.

“The latest version of the East of England Plan has been circulated on CD. The Parish Council has been invited to comment – response to be received by 9th March. I have looked at the CD fairly thoroughly and have extracted bits that I think are of interest and attach them for your information.

The suggested response follows – we can agree it **or not** at the next Parish Council meeting.”

‘Comments on the latest version of the East of England Plan

Our concern is to do with water availability.

The issue is covered in pages 170 to 174 in the Consultation Document.

The Consultation Document suggests a “twin track” approach.

1 - Improved efficiency of water use – need to improve on 2006 consumption numbers by 25% on new development and by 8% on existing development This will be achieved by changes to Building Regulations, the Code for Sustainable Homes, fiscal measures, incentive schemes and other regional measures to reduce water consumption and wastage. Water efficient fittings and appliances should be fitted in all new development and in existing development replacement fittings should be upgraded to the same standards.

2 – Additional supplies to the East of England involving transfers from other regions which may also require infrastructure improvements and the construction of reservoirs

There is insufficient water in the region for the planned development outlined in the East of England Plan Consultation Document. The Environment Agency state clearly in their most recent publication – “The Upper Lee Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy” that the area is “over abstracted” and “over licensed”

There is no insistence in the Plan that there should be the improvements in supply before development takes place. There needs to be a link.

There is the underlying assumption that the Water Companies will supply the additional water because that is their responsibility and will also deal with sewage treatment.

The water supply for the region depends on water abstraction from chalk stream aquifers. These are very slow to recharge once depleted. The consequence is a major impact on the environment of the chalk streams – they all suffer from very low flows under summer conditions (River Beane and River Mimram)

The Plan has some mention of a surface reservoir. But this should be a more serious strategy and more of them considered. Agricultural land is increasingly surplus to need and has a reduced value. More of the flash rainfall could be held back in this way.’

Parish Councillors agreed that Mr. Knight’s response should be sent to Go-East with a completed East of England plan response form.

Action: I. Knight

c) East Herts Council – Dog Control Orders Implementation

This item to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

d) B&Q You Can Do It Awards 2007

Claire Pullen (East Herts Council) e-mailed on 7th February as follows.

‘B&Q You Can Do It Awards 2007

Is there an environmental group, sports club or community facility in your area that could be transformed with £5,000 of products from B&Q? From Monday, 29th January groups can download an application from www.diy.com/awards or contact the hotline number on 08453001001. Closing date is Friday, 30 March 2007.’

A copy of this e-mail was forwarded to Mr. Filer for the Memorial Hall.

It was agreed not to pursue this item.

e) EyeBee Information Bulletins

EyeBee e-mailed us on 8th February as follows.

‘Hello and welcome to our latest information bulletin, packed full of the latest news and events from your area. For those of you that are still to join the biggest local information network in the East of England we have also attached an application form, just complete and return it to us to get all the benefits that we offer.’

It was agreed not to join EyeBee.

f) E-mail from Len Jones to Hertfordshire Highways re School Lane

After discussing his concerns with Mr. Stock, Len Jones (School Governor) e-mailed Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) about the poor condition of the stretch of School Lane, from its junction with

Old School Orchard up to Rectory Lane and requesting that it is inspected and repaired. This footpath/road is used regularly by mothers and children as they go to and from school each day.

Parish Councillors agreed to write to Raj Goutam in support of Len Jones' request and asking that urgent action is taken to ensure that the resurfacing work required to resolve the current problems is undertaken without further delay.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

g) East Herts Council – Recycling

This item to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

10 Reports from other Organisations

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

Mr. Smith said that the Sports and Social Club would like to make a presentation to the Parish Council on plans for the Watton-at-Stone Football Development Centre.

Mr. Smith to inform the Sports and Social Club that it can make its presentation before the start of the Parish Council meeting in April.

Action: M. Smith

Agenda: 04/07

• **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight reported that the low-flow problem of the River Beane was discussed and an insert is being placed in the next issue of the Parish News. Contact with the MPs continues.

• **Whempstead**

Mr. Clark said that there had been two road-accidents in Whempstead Lane during the last week. He asked Mr. Poulton if there is now a fixed date for the start for the closure of the A602 for road improvements. Mr. Poulton to check with Hertfordshire Highways.

Action: N. Poulton

Also, there is a large amount of litter along Whempstead Road from its junction with the A602 to his property 'Windrush', (i.e. near the crossroads). It was agreed to write to Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) asking him who is responsible for clearing the litter along this stretch of road and if Hertfordshire Highways is responsibility, could they arrange to do the work as soon as possible.

Action: J. Allsop

• **Watton-at-Stone School Governors**

Mr. Clark said that the Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup has now relocated to the Watton-at-Stone Primary School and the Horsa Hut is empty ready for removal/demolition.

• **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association**

Mr. Meischke said that all the allotment plots had been checked against the allotment-site map, which now needs re-drawing.

Action: J. Meischke

Currently, there are two half allotment-plots vacant.

11 Items for Parish News

The following item to be sent to the Editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

- Parish Council meeting dates for the Civic Year 2007/08

The Clerk to write the entry accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Payments

None

Cheques required

C. Dinnin	Danish Oil and sandpaper	20.22
J. Allsop	100 first class stamps	32.00
Post Office Limited	Inland Revenue – Tax and NI	179.28
HCC	Light energy – 1/10/06 – 31/12/06	169.58
HCC	Light maintenance – 1/10/06 – 31/12/06	226.69
T. Brown	30 hours litterpick	195.00
J. Allsop	February salary	559.05
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 3.02.07	25.00
SLCC	Update pages for 'Working with your Council'	<u>19.50</u>
		<u>1426.32</u>

Cheques received

Sports and Social Club	Hire of sportsfield facilities	275.00
HAPTC	Grant for flat screen monitor	<u>130.56</u>
		<u>405.56</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Jim Keen – Main hall hire	95.00
Gill Gilbey – Main Hall hire	10.00
Fiona Pruden – Pavilion hire	20.00
Caroline Angus – Main Hall & Pavilion	32.00
Sam Stevenson – Pavilion hire	21.00
Richard Allison – Main Hall hire	<u>12.00</u>
	<u>190.00</u>

Payments

Rose Brown - 6 hours cleaning	36.00
Rose Brown - 6 hours cleaning	36.00
Rose Brown - 6 hours cleaning	36.00
John Phillips toilet opening 2/01-7/02/07	<u>37.00</u>
	<u>145.00</u>

Cheques required

Lock stock & Barrell		400.00
Rosemary Brown	23 hours cleaning	138.00
Playground Supplies Limited	Supply & install see-saw and make good safety surface	3575.53
East Herts Council	2006 playground inspection	52.88
HCC	Cleaning materials	<u>72.30</u>
		<u>4238.71</u>

Cheques received

Badminton Club	Main hall hire	216.00
Herts Community Foundation	Grant to supply & install see-saw and make good safety surface	3043.00
Dave Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	351.00
Watton Ramblers	Pavilion hire	7.00
Mr. Clarke	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	39.00
East Herts Council	Pavilion hire	48.00
Louisa Bailey	Main Hall hire	90.00
Oasis Tents	Main Hall	40.00
Allianz Cornhill	Insurance claim	2390.00
Sports and Social Club	Hire of Community Hall facilities	275.00
Toast	Hire of Meeting Room	240.00
Mrs. Neal	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	<u>34.00</u>
		<u>6773.00</u>

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

- **The meeting closed at 2102.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 14th March 2007.**