

## Minutes of the meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Present:	Mr. J. Meischke (Chairman)	Mr. M. Smith (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. N. Poulton (Vice-Chairman)	
	Mrs. C. Dinnin	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Harris	Mr. I. Knight
	Mrs. McCash	Mr. D. Stock
	The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)	
Public:	None	
Police:	PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston (left 1931)	

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. C. Clark.

### 2 Public Participation

None.

### 3 Declaration of Interests

None.

### 4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Meischke had two additional items for this meeting.

- **Report from P.C. Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston on Policing matters relating to the village**

Mr. Meischke welcomed PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston to the meeting and apologised that this item had been omitted from the agenda.

PC Andy Woodward said that unfortunately he had not got his notes on crime figures in the Wotton-at-Stone area with him because he had been called out on an emergency prior to coming to the Community Hall tonight.

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the reported crime-figures for Wotton-at-Stone were forty, which is a drop of four over the same period last year. Burglary in this period has been low in Wotton-at-Stone.

Aston has seen a slight increase in reported crimes in this period. However, other villages in the area have seen their crime levels remain steady.

Mr. Filer asked if Wotton-at-Stone are to have any horse mounted Special Constables.

PC Andy Woodward said that no volunteers have come forward yet. Special Constables are not paid and volunteers would need to provide their own horse. Special Constables have full police powers and receive a bit less training than full time police officers receive. He asked Parish Councillors to contact them if they know of anyone who would be interested in this post.

PC Andy Woodward said that the southern end of the village recently had a radar check and Hertfordshire Highways will be carrying-out some improvements in the area. Mr. Poulton said that all Parish Councillors were aware of this and had been given a copy of Hertfordshire Highway's report.

PC Andy Woodward said that the cost of a speed gun is £1,500. If several villages pulled together to purchase one it might be more affordable. He agreed to liaise with Mr. Poulton to arrange another speed gunning session in the village.

Mrs. McCash said that many parishioners are fed up that we do not see enough police presence in the village. Mr. Poulton said it was a 'catch 22' situation. The Police go where there is a problem and because Wotton-at-Stone problems are currently minimal, the police do not come to visit the village.

Replacing PCSO Paul Weston's position when he takes a career break in January 2010 is still being debated. It is not planned to allocate another PCSO to this area, however someone in the existing team might be moved over to do the work.

It was agreed to write to Chief Inspector Jon Speed (Hertfordshire Constabulary) requesting that a replacement PCSO be allocated to Wotton-at-Stone when PCSO Paul Weston leaves his position in January 2010. A copy of the letter to be sent to Chief Constable Frank Whiteley (Hertfordshire Constabulary).

**Action: J. Allsop/H. McCash**

The next Police Locality meeting is on 17<sup>th</sup> November 19.30 hours at the Hertford Police Station.

Mrs. McCash said that as Ward Coordinator for the Wotton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch she could see no point in Jill Dockley sending out invitations to various meetings, via e-mail, with less than one days notice. Mrs. McCash is also not getting responses from her emails to Jill Dockley (Watch Liaison Officer, Neighbourhood Watch).

It was agreed to write to Chief Inspector Jon Speed informing him that the Parish Council is disappointed that Mrs. McCash is not receiving responses to her emails from Jill Dockley and attaching the unanswered emails.

**Action H. McCash /J. Meischke**

PCSO Weston said that this would be his last attendance at a Parish Council meeting before he starts his five-year career break in January 2010. Parish Councillors wished him well and expressed their grateful appreciation of all the work he has done for Watton-at-Stone since he has been a PCSO.

PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston left the meeting.

Mr. Stock and Mrs. McCash left the meeting.

- **Planning decision**

This item to be discussed under 6 a i, Planning decisions - 2 Whempstead Cottages, Whempstead Road.

- **Item 7 c - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee**

Mr. Meischke said he had prepared ballot slips should the Parish Council wish to take a secret ballot to decide this matter.

Mr. Harris said that a secret ballot was not legal.

Mr. Poulton said that at East Herts Council they regularly hold a secret ballot.

Parish Councillors agreed that it was not necessary on this occasion to hold a secret ballot

Mr. Stock and Mrs. McCash returned to the meeting.

## 5 Minutes of the last meeting

### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

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

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

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009 - Exclusion of the public and press**

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

### b) Review of actions

- **Write letter of thanks to George Bateman: completed.**

- **Pass website entry for Watton School to Mr. Stock: outstanding.**

**Action: Clark**

- **Ask East Herts Council to install a replacement dog-waste bin on Walkern Road**

At the October Parish Council meeting, it was reported that East Herts Council would not be replacing the dog-waste bin on Walkern Road. Mr. Poulton said that East Herts Council had informed him that they would only replace the bin if it was being well used. They have replaced the dog-waste bin at no cost to the Parish Council.

- **Chase signed copies of the self-employment status letters**

Mr. Thompson has returned his signed copy of the self-employment status letter, however Ted and Rosemary Brown have not done this yet.

The Clerk to chase.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Give budget items for 2010/11 to Mr. Filer: completed.**

- **Ask Nick Whitehead to quote for hedging cutting in 2010/11: completed.**

- **Investigate the cost of numbered stakes for the Allotments**

Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Allotments.

- **Ask St. Albans Diocesan Board to refund us for repairing the kissing gate: outstanding.**

The Clerk to write to the St. Albans Diocesan Board on receipt of an invoice from Blue Bury Contractors.

**Action: J. Allsop.**

- **Repair loose wires on MPPA fence: completed.**

- **Review the changes made by the police to the Neighbourhood Watch section for the new website: outstanding.**

- **Contact Mr. Clark about the plans for 2 Whempstead Cottages, Whempstead Road: completed.**

The Parish Council have written to East Herts Council informing them that they have no comment on the application.

- **Write to planning department re Heath Mount School, Woodhall Park (3/09/0007/AD/JS): completed.**

- **Write to planning department re Watton Methodist Church (3/09/1537/FP/JS): completed.**

- **Arrange a Website Working-Group meeting**

Mr. Stock said that the Website Working-Group will meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> December in the Community Hall.

- **Obtain from the internet, information on Wind Farm appeals: completed.**  
Refer to item 7 c, Specific items - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.
  - **Write to Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee re financial risk of funders: completed.**  
Refer to item 7 c, Specific items - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.
  - **Check the Parish Council insurance policy to find out if we are covered for risk to funders**  
The Clerk said that she had read though our insurance policy booklet and it does not cover us for this risk.
  - **Speak to Adam Welch re invoice for work already: completed**  
Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch had submitted his invoice.
  - **Add lighting energy charges to the Google calendar: completed.**
  - **Look at the possibilities of entering East Herts Village Hall Challenge 2010**  
Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Meischke had looked at the requirements to enter the East Herts Village Hall Challenge and felt that there was too much work involved to justify submitting an entry.  
It was agreed not to pursue the matter further.
  - **Order padlock and four keys for allotment gate: completed.**  
Mrs. McCash said that six keys had been purchased. The key holders are: Mrs. Dinnin, Mrs. McCash, Mrs. Mary Phillips, Mrs. Dorothy Hall, Mr. Mick Inman and the Parish Council has one key in the key cupboard at the Community Hall
  - **Explain the new gate key-holder system to Mr. Phillips: completed.**
  - **Inform Bob Thurlow when the new gate key-holder system is in place: completed.**
  - **Submit an estimate for allotment hedge cutting works to be included in the 2010/11 budget**  
Mr. Smith gave a verbal estimate of £150 to cut the allotment hedges and agreed to submit his quotation in writing. **Action: M. Smith**
  - **Draft a response to the East of England plan for circulation to all Parish Councillors: completed.**  
The letter has been sent to the East of England Regional Assembly.
  - **Write to Mr. Abel Smith re overhanging branches on the footpath adjacent to the riverbank**  
Refer to item 9 e, Correspondence received - Letter from Mr. Abel Smith re overhanging branches and removal of Eucalyptus tree.
  - **Write a letter of thanks to Janet Goodacre for donation of Maple tree: completed.**
  - **Write to East Herts Council about loose rubber mats at the Great Innings play area: completed.**
  - **Write to East Herts Council about litter problem near the Great Innings play area: completed.**
  - **Tighten loose MPPA kicker boards: outstanding.** **Action: J. Meischke**
  - **Inspect floodlight nearest to the Rectory to see if the bulb has blown**  
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA floodlighting repair.
  - **Inspect and repair the wire on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> panel on right-hand of the MPPA: completed.**
  - **Inspect broken gravel board at MPPA: completed by Ted Brown.**
  - **Inspect armrest on the Walkern Road bench: outstanding.** **Action: J. Meischke**
  - **E-mail all Parish Councillors a copy of David and Julie Graham's letter of 19<sup>th</sup> September: completed.**
  - **E-mail all Parish Councillors the internet link to BBC Countryfile Magazine website: completed.**
  - **Write to Mrs Spinks: completed.**
  - **E-mail British Telecom's letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October to all Parish Councillors: completed.**  
Refer to item 7 d, Specific items - British Telecom payphones.
- c) Action points outstanding for more than two months**
- **Complete Whempstead section for the new website: outstanding.** **Action: C. Clark**

## 6 Planning

Mr. Stock reported on the following items.

### a) Applications

#### i) 31 Station Road, Watton-at-Stone (3/09/1485/FP/SD)

Convert garage into habitable room

Mr. Stock said that although the Parish Council has an agreed policy of objecting to such applications, it could not be applied in this case. The reason being that in 2005 planning permission was granted for a rear extension to the property and a garage to the side. No objections were voiced by the neighbours at the time and we did not have any problem with that application either.

However, although the rear extension was built, the garage was not; so this was simply a change to the original planning application. Because of this Mr. Stock did not feel that we could object to the

conversion of a garage that was never built and therefore proposed that we had no real option but to respond with a 'no comment'. After viewing the plans this was agreed by all present. **Action: J. Allsop**

**b) Decision**

**2 Whempstead Cottages, Whempstead Road (3/09/1484/FP/JS)**

Single storey rear elevation

- East Herts Council - Permission granted

**7 Specific items**

**a) Website**

Mr. Stock was disappointed to report that there was still no progress to report. In the main, this is due the long on-going delays in him receiving the three promised website-items outstanding.

**b) Website diary**

No items were identified to be added onto the website diary.

**c) Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors have been sent emails of the following.

1. Internet information on Wind Farm appeals
2. Letter from Stop the Benington Wind Farm Committee re financial risk of funders **Copy attached**
3. E-mail from Ian Knight re Benington Wind Farm appeal **Copy attached**
4. Note from Iain Harris on the legal position in relation to the request from Stop Benington Wind Farm for a contribution to its legal costs **Copy attached**
5. Minutes Benington Parish Council Meeting dated 8<sup>th</sup> July

Parish Councillors debated the issue of the legality of donating funds to Stop the Benington Wind Farm Committee at some length.

Mr. Filer said that it would appear that all Parish Councillors would like in principle to donate £2000 to the Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee to help towards fighting funds. However, there are several problems in giving such a donation. Following the resolution at the meeting of 14 July the clerk had written to Simon Drinkwater (Solicitor and Director of Corporate Governance at East Herts Council) for unequivocal legal advice that we are empowered to give a donation. Mr. Drinkwater has not been able to give us a direct answer to this request.

Mr. Harris said that following extensive research he has been unable to find unequivocal authority that the Parish Council would be acting lawfully if they gave funds to Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee. If Mr. Bott is successful in his appeal, the Parish Council may be at risk at being liable for costs. In addition, if the auditors find the donation is an unlawful expenditure, then the Parish Councillors who voted in support of the donation may be liable to pay back the money and could in addition be liable for any costs awarded from the appeal.

It was noted that a number of other local Parish Councils have already donated funds to Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.

Mr. Filer said that based on the information given to us he was of the same opinion as Mr. Harris, in that he was not convinced that the Parish Council would be acting lawfully.

Mr. Stock said that it disturbs him that there is nothing to suggest that a donation would be legal. No clear advice has been given on this issue.

Mr. Harris highlighted a section from his notes (which are attached to these minutes) in that the only provision he considered could authorise the proposed expenditure was S 137. This empowers the council to incur expenditure, which in their opinion is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to the village. It could be argued that any benefit, should the appeal be unsuccessful, is one-step away from a direct benefit to the village, where as the purchase of a bus shelter or seat is a direct benefit.

Mr. Filer had already spoken to BDO Stoy Hayward who told him that a payment under section 137 has to be of a benefit to the village. However, if we were to give such a donation they would probably only note the payment and not do anything about it.

Mr. Poulton said he had received hundreds of letters from objectors to the Benington Wind Farm application and concern for the disruption it would cause to the village whilst being built. Mr. Abel Smith has also expressed his concern. During construction, there will be an endless stream of lorries coming through the village and most of the street furniture along the route the wind turbine blades will come along will have to be removed. Life in the village will become very miserable if the wind turbines are built.

Parish Councillors noted that traffic movement is not a planning condition.

A survey to find out if residents of Watton-at-Stone and Whempstead would wish their Parish Council to donate public funds towards the Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee's legal cost has not been conducted. However, even if residents were in favour of a donation, it would not change the legality of such a payment.

Mr. Harris said that there was a well known case where a London councillor allowed the sale of flats to influence votes. This action was challenged and found to be illegal. The councillor was ordered to pay back funds to the council.

Mr. Poulton encouraged Parish Councillors not to abstain from voting on this issue.

Mr. Knight proposed that the Parish Council donate £2000 towards Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee's legal costs. Mr. Poulton seconded the motion and Mr. Meischke, Mr. Smith also voted in support of Mr. Knight's proposal.

Mr. Filer, Mr. Harris, Mr. Stock, Mrs. Dinnin and Mrs. McCash voted against Mr. Knight's proposal to donate £2000 towards Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee's legal costs.

The motion was not carried and the Parish Council will therefore not be donating funds towards Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee's legal costs, but would be prepared to consider the matter again if unequivocal legal advice is given to the effect that they may donate funds.

Mr. Meischke thanked Mr. Harris for the time he had taken in trying to find some way forward for the Parish Council to legally donate funds towards this cause.

It was agreed that Mr. Harris draft a letter to Stop Benington Wind Farm committee advising them of how the Parish Council came to their decision and copy it to all Parish Councillors for their comments.

**Action: I. Harris**

#### **d) British Telecom payphones**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of British Telecoms letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> October. The Parish Council can choose to adopt our local K6 red telephone kiosk located outside 105 High Street, for £1. British Telecom would remove the telephony and the ownership of the kiosk structure would be transferred to the Parish Council to use as they feel fit. Application needs to be submitted before 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2010.

After discussion, it was agreed to ask East Herts Council to confirm that the K6 kiosk is grade II listed.

**Action: J. Allsop**

If the kiosk is listed and cannot be removed, it would be advantageous to the Parish Council for it to stay in British Telecoms ownership as maintenance cost would be their responsibility.

This item to be placed on the December Parish Council agenda.

**Agenda: 12/09**

#### **e) Ornate village sign**

Brian Bunyan has not varnished the Ornate village sign. He will do the work when the weather conditions are suitable. This item to remain on the agenda until the work has been done.

**Agenda: 12/09**

#### **f) Letter in memory of Frank Salmon**

It was agreed that all Parish Councillor would sign a condolence card, which will be sent to the Salmon family.

**Action: Parish Councillors/J. Allsop**

### **8 Reports**

#### **a) Sub-Committees**

##### **Budget & Finance**

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

All Parish Councillors present were given a copy of the monthly accounts.

Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council approves the payments. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly inspection of accounts**

This will be done by Mrs. McCash before the December Parish Council meeting. **Action: H. McCash**

- **Reminder about request for Budget items for 2010/11**

Mr. Filer said that he is not able to attend the December Parish Council meeting. He will therefore present the 2010/11 budget to the Parish Council for discussion at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2010. This would have the advantage that the 9-monthly statement of accounts for both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts will be available. The Parish Council would then be able to submit their precept request well in advance of the February deadline.

It was agreed that the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee will meet on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December, at 1500, in the Community Hall to discuss the 2010/11 budget. Mrs. McCash gave her apologies for the meeting.

Mr. Filer will be meeting with the Clerk on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November to draw up a draft budget for discussion at the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

- **Computer keyboard**

Mr. Filer said that the Clerk has asked if she can have a new computer keyboard to use with her laptop. The cost is £26 plus VAT. The keyboard belonging to the desktop does not work correctly when it is plugged into the laptop via an adapter.

Mr. Filer proposed that we purchase a new computer keyboard. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

**Action: J. Allsop**

### Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following items.

- **Request for picnic table for sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton said he had received several requests from local Mothers for a picnic bench on the sportsfield. He investigated prices of picnic benches on the internet and found a very robust one for £332 made out of recycled plastic.

Mr. Filer expressed concern that a picnic bench would get vandalised and reminded Parish Councillors that the bench around the tree at Watton Green had been burnt and subsequently repaired.

Mr. Smith proposed that we include a figure of £400 in the 2010/11 budget.

- **Replacement of External Door**

Mr. Poulton said that the Community Hall Trustees have been successful in receiving a grant application from Bryan Hammond, from his locality budget, to cover the cost of Brian Bunyan's quotation of £684 to supply and fit a hardwood door.

Bryan Hammond has also granted the Parish Council £345 (also from the locality budget) for a new notice board to be sited adjacent to the existing one, on the external wall of the Community Hall that faces School Lane.

### Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **MPPA - floodlighting repair**

The floodlight that Mr. Stock reported as discoloured was a faulty bulb. Floodlighting Limited had not experienced any problems with this type of bulb before. However, they have now replaced the faulty bulb.

### Environment

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Allotments**

To date four allotment holders have not paid their rent for 2009/10. Reminder letters have gone out and if payment is not received by Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November, their tenancy agreement will be terminated with immediate effect.

- **Cost of numbered stakes for some or all of the Allotments plots**

Mrs. Dinnin showed Parish Councillors a suitable wooden stake she purchased from Wicks. If the Parish Council is to number all the plots the cost of the stakes will be approximately £94 (excluding VAT), plus installation cost and number branding.

After discussion, Mr. Filer proposed that we purchase stakes for all the allotment plots. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to liaise over the purchasing of the stakes, branding and installation.

**Action: C. Dinnin/M. Smith**

- **Oak tree opposite 10 School Lane**

Dr Norden has asked if the Parish Council will arrange for the pollarding of the Oak tree in the sportsfield hedge opposite his property at 10 School Lane.

Dr. Norden is willing (as on the previous three occasions) to pay for the tree to be pollarded.

Adam Welch has submitted a quotation of £280 to do the work.

It was agreed to write to Malcolm Amey (Landscape Officer, East Herts Council) asking for permission for the Oak tree to be pollarded.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Dr. Norden to be sent a copy of Adam Welch's quotation and our letter to Malcolm Amey.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Sportsfield hedge**

Nick Whitehead to cut the sportsfield hedge on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November.

- **Funding for the tree in Hazeldell**

Mr. Poulton said that, further to the numerous communications between Mr. Stock, and the parties involved in this subject, he had been contacted by Bryan Hammond (our County Councillor) with regard to a proposal for funding for the tree. Subsequently Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock discussed this and agreed that is appeared to be the only way forward.

Assuming that the cost is in the region of £500, the proposal is that Mr. Hammond will pay £400 of this (from his Locality Budget) and the Parish Council pays £100.

Mr. Poulton proposed that the Parish Council accepts Bryan Hammond's proposal. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Stock to establish, from Hertfordshire Highways, the current cost to replace the tree. **Action: D. Stock**

Note: this action point was subsequently cancelled because Mr. Poulton had received confirmation from Hertfordshire Highways that the total cost is still £500.

Mr. Poulton to submit grant application form to Hertfordshire County Council under Bryan Hammond's locality budget.

**Action: N. Poulton**

- **Loss of trees within the village**

Mr. Stock had received a long letter from Raj Goutam which basically said that if we wanted the dead tree in Hazeldell replaced, then we need to fund Hertfordshire Highways to do it.

Because the subject of funding appears to have been resolved by the proposal from Brian Hammond (see above), Mr. Stock felt that this particular problem was close to being concluded. However, he repeated that the health and maintenance of trees within our village/parish must not be forgotten. Although it is our policy to replace trees ourselves, wherever possible (e.g. from budget, grants, planning gains), we need to keep an eye on trees that are lost on land owned by Hertfordshire Highways to ensure that we can attempt to have them replaced totally by Hertfordshire Highways or by part-funding by the Parish Council as discussed at previous meetings.

Mr. Stock also highlighted three other things from Mr. Goutam's letter. The first being that after all of the lengthy correspondence on the subject, Mr. Goutam said that he had visited the site and now knows which tree we have been talking about. The second being that he has advised his colleague in the NRSWA Team to contact National Grid Transco and arrange for the necessary measures to be carried out on the other dead tree close by. Finally, Mr. Eralp Yucelt is now responsible for looking after our parish area.

**b) Routine reports**

**i) Fire-alarm test**

The fire-alarm was tested on 10<sup>th</sup> November by Mr. Poulton.

**ii) Monthly village-report**

Mr. Poulton completed the report on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Only the adverse items highlighted in the monthly village-report are minuted.

- Car park

The drain in the car park needs clearing. It was agreed to ask Ted Brown to do the work.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- Graffiti on windows and notice board

Mr. Poulton said he successfully removed graffiti from the notice board and some of the Community Hall windows.

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

None.

## 9 Correspondence received

**a) Letter from Stop the Benington Wind Farm Committee**

This item was discussed under 7 c, Specific items - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.

**b) Letter from Ian Knight re Benington Wind Farm appeal**

This item was discussed under 7 c, Specific items - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.

**c) Letter from Iain Harris re Benington Wind Farm appeal**

This item was discussed under 7 c, Specific items - Financial support for Stop Benington Wind Farm Committee.

**d) Hertfordshire County Council - Waste Core Strategy & Development Policies DPD and the Waste Site Allocations DPD**

All Parish Councillors were forwarded a copy of Hertfordshire County Council's e-mail dated 28<sup>th</sup> October.

**e) Letter from Mr. Abel Smith re overhanging branches and removal of Eucalyptus tree**

Mr. Meischke read out a letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> November from Mr. Abel Smith as follows.

'Thank you for your letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> October. I note what you say about branches allegedly overhanging the footpath that runs between the Lammas and the Walkern Road. I will have a look at it and assess it for myself.

This is to let you know that we will soon be embarking upon the removal of the eucalyptus tree that is in the rear garden of 108 High Street (the almshouses). This has been consented by the Tree Preservation Officer of the East Herts District Council and all other consents have been obtained. Contractor will be well briefed on safety and will do all they can to minimize inconvenience.

The same contractors are those that I have in mind for the trees on the river bank referred to above.'

**f) Proposal for Industrial Waste Incinerator at Westmill, Ware**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were copied with an e-mail from the Burning Issue Group condemning plans for the build of an industrial waste incinerator at Westmill.

Mr. Filer commented that the e-mail was very emotive. The Burning Issue Group urge support for their objection campaign to stop BIFFA building of “a giant toxic bonfire in Ware” and encourages the public to attend a meeting they are holding at Wodson Park on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November.

Mr. Filer said that if incineration takes place at around 1200<sup>o</sup>C it gets rid of all harmful dioxins. The Burning Issue Group has also produced a very deceptive map which gives the impression that the incinerator is being built in the centre of Ware.

Mr. Poulton asked if any Councillors had visited the incinerator in Edmonton. He said that Hertfordshire County Council, and not the East Herts Council planners, will be making a decision on this issue in the New Year.

**g) East Herts Council - Strategy and Sports outdoor audit**

Mr. Knight to complete the audit form.

**Action: I. Knight**

**10 Village organisations**

• **Watton Youth Drop Inn**

Mr. Poulton said that the organised play leader sessions are due to end in two weeks time. The group is still in need of additional volunteer help.

Mr. Filer said that the Watton Youth Drop Inn has been a great success.

- **Watton-at-Stone School Governors:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Mr. Stock reported that the Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee will be holding its AGM on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November.

- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group:** Nothing to report.

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

The tennis court is suffering from the usual seasonal accumulation of fallen leaves.

It was agreed to ask Ted Brown to clear the leaves periodically over the next few weeks. **Action: J. Meischke**

Mr. Smith said that the Football Club are very appreciative of the Parish Council for allowing them to install permanent goal posts.

- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.
- **River Beane Restoration Association:**

Mr. Knight said that a meeting between the River Beane Restoration Association, Oliver Heald MP and the Environment Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies MP, to discuss the plight of the Rivers Beane and Mimram will take place on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November in the Community Hall.

**11 Items for Parish News**

The following items were identified for inclusion in the December 2009 issue of the Parish News.

- Salient points from of NHS leaflet - Mr. Knight to write the article. **Action: I. Knight**
- Death of Frank Salmon - The Clerk to write the article. **Action: J. Allsop**
- Parish Council monthly meeting minutes - The Clerk to write the article. **Action: J. Allsop**

• **The meeting closed at 2108 hours.**

• **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009.**