

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 18th June 2013

Present:	Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman)	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mrs. Christine Dinnin	Mr. Denis Filer
	Mr. Ian Knight	Mrs. Helen McCash
	Mr. David Stock	Ms. Emma Waltham
	The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)	
Members of public:	District Councillor Rik Sharma	
Police:	PCSO Sally Brooks (until	

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. Iain Harris.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Smith had one additional item for this meeting.

- Planning application for Early Years Centre - refer to item 8 a iii) Planning applications

4 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Filer declared a personal interest in item 8 a ii, Planning application – 17 Lammas Road (Mr. Filer's son-in-law, Peter Phillips lives at 18 Lammas Road).

Mrs. McCash declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 a ii, Planning application – 17 Lammas Road (Audrey Calveley, who lives at 16 Lammas Road, is a client of Mrs. McCash).

Mrs. McCash declared a pecuniary interest in item 10 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Audit of the Community Hall accounts (for the year ended 31st March 2013) by McCash and Hay (Mrs. McCash is a partner's husband, Murray, carried out the audit)

5 Welcome from the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council to Rik Sharma, District Councillor

Mr. Smith welcomed Rik Sharma to the meeting and asked him if he wished to say anything. He said he was happy to listen in on the Parish Council's meeting.

The Clerk said that Mr. Sharma had showed an interest in finding out who owns the old Mill site because a Watton-at-Stone resident has shown an interest in running their business from the site.

The Clerk to find out who applied for planning permission at the Mill Lane site and forward this information to Mr. Sharma.

Action: J. Allsop

6 Policing report and discussions with PCSO Sally Brooks

Mr. Smith welcomed PCSO Sally Brooks to the meeting.

PCSO Sally Brook said that she had only obtained information for crimes relating to Watton-at-Stone for the period May 2013 to this date.

- A burned out motorbike stolen locally was dumped in a play area – nobody has been prosecuted.
- Damage has occurred in the porch area of Watton Place Clinic – this is believed to have been done by youngster.
- A drunk driver caused an assault on the A602
- There was an attempted break in at property in Hazeldell, however it is uncertain if this actually was an attempted break in.
- Damage was caused to a sign in School Lane
- Theft of an alarm box on the wall of a property in Great Innings South. This was probably stolen by the travelling community for scrap metal.
- An empty High Street property has incurred damage – the police have a suspect for this crime
- There was a common assault in Great Innings North
- Two attempted burglary occurred in Rectory Lane - both houses were semi detached and entry was attempted at the rear of the properties

Mr. Meischke said that there has been a lot of broken glass on the sportsfield. Ted Brown has been instructed to pick up the glass, which is mainly bottles, and to log the dates that this happens. Youths are drinking alcohol and then smashing the glass bottles. This is happening mainly on the play area and the bike ramp

area. They offenders have been putting pieces of broken glass on the cradle swing seats as well as on the top of the bike ramps. Ms. Waltham's son cut his hand on one of the bike ramps.

Mr. Meischke said that he hoped that the youth drinking problem would reduce when Summan Stores closed and the new village shop opened. The culprits seem to be one tight group of local youths.

PCSO Sally Brooks said that she is having to patrol a larger area than before and is now based in Buntingford. She has often arrived for work, hoping to go out on patrol only to find there is no vehicle for her to use. There are only four vehicles available for use by the PCSOs.

Some youngsters have been banned from the local village shop in Watton-at-Stone and PCSO Sally Brooks has visited their parents to inform them of the reasons. Mr. Sharma said that he has been making sure that he brings each incident that occurs at the shop to the attention of the police.

A resident of School Lane suffered a heart attack, due to the stress the youths are causing him, as he lives near Community Hall car park.

PCSO Sally Brooks agreed to relay a message to her superiors stating that the Parish Council are very dissatisfied with the level of policing in the village.

Parish Councillors agreed to write to the Police Commissioner concerning their dissatisfaction over the police coverage in Watton-at-Stone.

Mrs. McCash to draft a letter for Parish Council approval.

Action: H. McCash

PCSO Sally Brooks suggested that the Parish Council should consider installing CCTV at the Community Hall. She said that the police have available a unit that can do stills or videos that costs around £97.

It was agreed to put this item on the agenda for the July meeting of the Community Hall Trustees.

Agenda: Trustees 07/13

PCSO Sally Brooks said that she did a speed check today near the mini roundabout opposite church field and gave out three verbal warnings.

PCSO Sally Brooks left the meeting.

Mrs. McCash left meeting

7 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st May 2013**
Parish Councillors approved the minutes.
- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st May 2013**
Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

b) Review of actions

1. Find out the owner of the hedge adjacent to the footpath leading to Rivershill

Mr. Meischke said that he may have found out who owns the hedge adjacent to the footpath leading to Rivershill and would be talking to them soon.

Action: J. Meischke

It was agreed to put a notice on the Parish Council notice boards to say that the Parish Council intend to cut this hedge within the next two weeks.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Smith said that he had spoken to Tom Goldsmith (Rights of Way, HCC) who had suggested that the Parish Council could apply for adverse possession and then ask HCC to adopt the footpath and include it on the rights of way map.

2. Ask Mark Lee to varnish the Ornate Village sign

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had spoken to Mark Lee, who is a carpenter, who informed her that the preparing and varnishing of the Ornate Village sign is a job for a painter not a carpenter.

Mrs. Dinnin to ask Bob Adams if he is interested in quoting to varnish the Ornate Village sign.

Action: C. Dinnin

3. Inspect the safety surface under the multi-play and slide at the play area on the sportsfield

Refer to item 10 b, routine reports – six month check.

4. Notify Caroline Haskins (Stevenage Community Trust) re jobs for Talk Talk volunteers

Mr. Smith said that the Clerk had e-mailed Caroline Haskins informing her that the Talk Talk volunteers could clear the public footpath at the back of the Bull Public car park through to its exit in Rivershill. However, on reflection it would not be a good idea for them to do this work, because it could be confrontational should the owner of the hedge object.

Mr. Smith said that to date Caroline Haskins has not replied to the Clerk's e-mail of 3rd June and we therefore suspect that Talk Talk is not interested in the proposed volunteer job.

c) Action points resolved

1. Chase Raj Goutam re our letter concerning potholes in Hazeldell and cc County Councillor Ken Crofton Amend the TOR agreement and e-mail it to all Parish Councillors for their approval
2. Give the Playground Working-Group accounts and banking details requested for grant application
3. Write to returning officer advising of Parish Council vacancy
4. Send annual return and all relevant documentation to BDO by Wednesday 29th May 2013
5. Renew CDA for Herts annual subscription
6. Ask Adam Welch to provide a quote for cutting down a tree on the allotments
7. Instruct Adam Welch to tend to the War Memorial garden
8. Ask Ted Brown to spray the weeds around the play area
9. Update website details as required
10. Ask East Herts Council to arrange for the annual play playground inspection
11. Ask Mrs. Dinnin if she has any jobs for volunteer workers within the village
12. Arrange for annual reports and accounts to be included in the Parish News

8 Planning

a) Applications

i) 47 Hockerill (3/13/0833/FP)

Single and two storey rear extensions and single storey front extension

Mr. Stock said that in-line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris had reviewed this application. The residents at 49 Hockerill had no objection to the application. However, attempts to contact the residents of number 45 failed and therefore following approval from Mr. Smith and Mr. Stock, the Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

ii) 17 Lammas Road (3/13/0876/FP)

Single-storey front and rear extensions, with decking to rear

Again Mr. Stock said that in-line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris had asked Mr. Knight to visit the neighbouring properties. Mr. Harris e-mailed Mr. Knight's findings to Mr. Smith and Mr. Stock and following their approval, the Clerk was instructed to write to East Herts Council as follows.

'The Parish Council has no comment, save that it trusts the planning authority will take into account the neighbours concern, if the garage to 17 is to be demolished, it will impose planning conditions, if appropriate, to ensure the attached garage building belonging to number 16 will be structurally safe and watertight if left as a stand-alone unit.'

iii) Early Years Centre, Clappers Lane, Watton at Stone, Herts, SG14 3QA (3/13/0923/RP)

Erection of an Early Years Centre, including the details of the associated car parking and landscaping following outline permission 3/08/2054/OP

Hardcopies of the plans for this application were hand-delivered to the Clerk yesterday and then passed to Mr. Stock today.

Mr. Stock said that he had gone through the large amount of paperwork provided with this application as best he could in the time available, and then presented the most relevant plans in detail to the meeting. He said that as far as he could see there were no surprises since the application for outline planning consent was considered by us. On the whole he was impressed by the application and the facilities (internally and externally) to be provided for the users of the Centre. He also noted that due consideration had been given to environmental issues, including the impact of the development on wildlife (e.g. the protection of slowworms and toads).

One Parish Councillor made a negative comment about the general style of the external appearance of the building. Mr. Stock said that although he understood and agreed with the comment, he felt that the design was in keeping with the appearance of the existing school buildings. Both comments were agreed by all present.

After discussion, the Parish Council agreed to write to East Herts Council in support this application.

Action: J. Allsop

Mrs. McCash returned to the meeting.

b) Decisions

None

9 Specific items

a) Logo copyright registration

Mr. Smith said that the village Logo has now been registered. He suggested that the copyright symbol ©, be included on the website version of the Logo and he had spoken to Peter Allsop, who agreed to do this.

Parish Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk to ask her son to act accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

b) Funding of playground equipment

Hannah Brownlow is hiring the Community Hall facilities on Saturday 13th July to fund raise for new sportsfield playground equipment. She also asked for the use of the sportsfield facilities.

Parish Councillors agreed not to charge Hannah Brownlow and her committee for the use of Community Hall facilities on 13th July. The Clerk to notify Hannah Brownlow accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mrs. McCash to look into the regulations on Gift Aid. **Action: H. McCash**

c) Parish Council holiday dates

Mr. Smith said that he thought it would be a good idea to have this item on every agenda so that Parish Councillors can notify each other of their holiday dates.

Mrs. Dinnin said she would be away from 30th June to 7th July inclusive.

Mr. Meischke said that he might not be present at the July Parish Council meeting due to another commitment.

Holiday dates will now appear on the monthly agenda under reports. **Action: J. Allsop**

d) Waggon & Horses plaque

Mr. Meischke said that when the Waggon Horses site development was started, the Parish Council showed concern about the safety of the pudding stone, and although they did not get a definitive answer, they were reassured that the pudding stone would remain on site.

Mr. Meischke said that the listed building consent on the Waggon & Horses required a sign referring to the historical use of the building. The consent reads as follows.

‘Prior to the first use of the building as a dwelling, details shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the local planning authority of an appropriately sized and designed sign to be placed on the north west High Street elevation referring to the site’s historic usage. Reason In the interests of increasing public understanding of the historical use and heritage asset of the listed building and in accordance with the provisions of Policy HE12 of national planning guidance in PPS5.’

Mr. Meischke said that when he was visiting 1st Call Signs, he saw that a sign had been ordered.

Mr. Smith said that he had spoken to Mark Shadbolt of Tilehouse Properties Limited, the developer of the Waggon and Horses site, and the plaque has been given to the new owners.

As the new owners have only recently moved into the former Waggon and Horses, it was agreed not to chase the erection of the plaque yet.

This item to be placed remain on the September Parish Council agenda. **Agenda: 09/2013**

David Gregory has spoken to a Parish Councillor to ask why there is no blue plaque at Watton House in memory of Sir Nigel Gresley, who lived there from 1937 to his death in 1941.

Mr. Meischke agreed to contact the Watton House Residents Association to find out if they have any objections to a plaque being installed. **Action: J. Meischke**

10Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

• **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council			
Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments	
Playground fund donations	<u>35.00</u>	Postage – annual return to BDO	5.32
	<u>35.00</u>	HCC – 10 reams of copy paper	<u>23.76</u>
			<u>29.08</u>
Cheques issued			
Salaries and wages	June 2013		1241.09
Frank Cooper	May grass cutting - 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st May		324.00
			<u>1565.09</u>

Cheques received

Mrs. Cawley	Donation towards play equipment funds	20.00
Mrs. L. Scott	Donation towards play equipment funds	90.00
Mrs. L. Scott	Donation towards play equipment funds	25.48
Mrs. H. Brownlow	Donation towards play equipment funds	<u>30.00</u>
		<u>165.48</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts

Floodlighting donations to 21 st May 2013	120.00
Sharon Ling – Pavilion	36.00
Paul Reid- Meeting room	18.00
Felicitas Dixon	<u>14.00</u>
	<u>188.00</u>

Petty Cash -Payments

Viking signs – CCTV sign	68.39
HCC – cleaning materials	<u>17.10</u>
	<u>85.49</u>

Cheques issued

Wages	June 2013	356.50
McCash and Hay	Annual audit fee	126.00
		<u>482.50</u>

Cheques received

East Herts Council	Pavilion hire	<u>128.00</u>
		<u>128.00</u>

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

- **Annual Return of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013**

The Clerk sent the annual return and all relevant documentation to BDO by Wednesday 29th May 2013.

- **Audit of the Community Hall accounts (for the year ended 31st March 2013) by McCash and Hay**

McCash and Hay have completed the audit of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013.

Parish Councillors approved the audited Community Hall accounts and Mr. Smith signed one copy of the accounts, which was then given to Mrs. McCash to pass onto the auditor at McCash and Hay.

Action: H. McCash

- **COIF bank account**

Mr. Filer said that the Community Hall has a COIF deposit account. He recently discovered that COIF has two types of investment accounts. One of the accounts has a higher interest, but funds have to be locked away for five years and there are risks involved. He agreed to investigate the benefits of both accounts and report back to the Parish Council.

Action: D. Filer

- **New Homes Bonus**

Mr. Filer said that this item was due to be put on this months agenda, however he would be deferring discussion to the July Parish Council meeting.

He read out the current list of items identified for funding from the New Homes Bonus. He asked Parish Councillors to contact him with any suggestions for additional items. It was agreed to add the regeneration of the Lammas riverbank area and the maintenance of Watton Green.

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- **Storage at the Community Hall**

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Smith has been looking closely at the interior of the Community Hall to find ways of improving the storage available to regular hirers without the need for an expensive extension.

Firstly, the unused leaflet racks in the main corridor could be removed and the notice boards behind the sofa bench in the Pavilion relocated to the main corridor. This would free up the space where the sofa bench is to either stack chairs or accommodate the table storage.

The next proposal is to alter the sizes of the external and internal cupboards, which back onto each other. Mr. Smith said that the external cupboard is full of rubbish and could easily be reduced in size. The Football Club would then be the sole user of the reduced area. The Tennis Club would then be moved to the decommissioned toilet and the Cricket Club already has its own shed.

The extended internal cupboard could then store the Watton Youth Drop Inn's pool table as well as surplus tables and chairs from the pavilion.

Mr. Knight agreed to talk to the Sports and Social Club about these plans.

Action: I. Knight

As previously suggested, the Main Hall could be made more accessible to different hirers by installing multifunctional flooring. In addition, the door between the Main Hall and the Pavilion could be enlarged to double doors making the facilities more attractive to those hiring both the Main Hall and Pavilion facilities for social events.

Storage facilities, the resurfacing of the Main Hall and the enlarging of the door from the Main Hall to the Pavilion to be placed on the agenda for the Community Hall trustees meeting in July.

Agenda: Trustees 07/13

Mr. Meischke said that there have been lots of complaints about the internal lights being left on at the Community Hall, especially the toilet lights. He said that he is meeting with the electrician, D. P.

Electrics, tomorrow to see if we can have PIR sensors fitted in the five toilets.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Annual fire equipment inspection**

The annual fire equipment inspection is due in June. The Clerk has contacted the Fire Protection Services Limited asking them to contact Mr. Meischke.

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Tennis Court maintenance**

Mr. Knight said that Floodlighting Limited have now replaced the two floodlighting bulbs (the failed bulb and the working bulb) on the same lighting column. The Parish Council approved this work at their April Parish Council meeting. However, the failed bulb fixing was found to have a faulty ballast, which has now been replaced at an additional cost of £119 plus VAT. The total cost of the work including VAT is £550.80.

The pressure washing work has been completed. This is to prepare the MPPA surface for the bonding and repainting that will take place during an appropriate period of dry weather.

- **Sports field maintenance**

Mr. Smith said that due to very wet weather during the football season the ground got very compacted. This meant that the re-seeding work did not take. Mr. Smith said that he had today turned over the soil in the goalmouth areas and this should allow grass seed to take.

- **Broken glass on sportsfield**

Refer to item 6, Policing report and discussions with PCSO Sally Brooks.

- **Bike ramps**

Mr. Meischke said that the bike ramps have almost no use and are not fit for purpose because they have been installed on grass and not on a hard surface. Currently their main use seems to be as seating for youths drinking alcohol who then proceed to break the used glass bottles on and around the bike ramp area. Ms Waltham's son is a casualty of the broken glass, when he cut his hand whilst playing on one of the bike ramps. Mrs. Dinnin said that small children do use the bike ramps to walk up and down on. It was agreed that because of the unsocial behaviour of youths in this area it was probably better to remove the bike ramps from this site.

The police 'Communities Against Drugs' fund, which is run by East Herts Council, funded the bike ramp and teen shelter installation in 2002. It was agreed to contact East Herts Council in the first instance to find out if they know of someone else who might be interested in having the bike ramps. If not the Parish Council could sell them and put the proceeds towards new equipment for the play area. **Action: J. Allsop**

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Allotments**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the allotment holders are having a huge problem with rabbits this year.

Mike Freeman feels that the best option would be for each allotment holder to put chicken-wire fencing around their plots.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that if the allotment holders want to install wire fencing they can do so, but the Parish Council will not fund doing this work.

Linda Aldridge, who keeps an excellent allotment, has written in to complain about the trees overhanging her plot. She also complained about the problems with weed seeds from the adjoining overgrown plots.

Mrs. Dinnin said that there are currently three plots that cannot be let due to the overshadowing problems with two trees

Adam Welch has provided the following quotation dated 9th June.

Remove smaller tree to ground level and stack waste	£240
Remove larger tree to ground level and stack waste	£375

Parish Council agreed that the problem would only get worse with time when the trees grow even bigger.

Mrs. Dinnin was instructed to accept Adam Welch's quotation.

Action: C. Dinnin

Adam Welch to be asked to trim the overgrown allotments.

Action: C. Dinnin

It was agreed in principal that when any disused plots are re-let, the Parish Council will arrange for the plot to be rotavated and the new tenant would then have to pay a £50 deposit, which would be non-returnable if the plot was not cultivated. This item to be discussed and researched by the Environment Sub-Committee.

Agenda: Env

- **River Beane Lammas Project**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had spoken to Charlie Bell (River Rivers Officer) re the proposed improvements works to the Lammas stretch of the River Beane. No further progress has been made since the public meeting on 3rd May.

Mr. Knight said that whilst having carried out the month-village report he observed that the Lammas needs a long-term maintenance plan. He said that he had spoken with Mrs. Dinnin and suggested that we need a 5-year plan for the Lammas. Mrs. Dinnin said that Charlie Bell had suggested that some trees along the riverside would be cut back in September when the River Beane work is carried-out.

It was agreed to hold an Environment Sub-Committee site meeting on the Lammas to decide what should be done. Mrs. Dinnin to arrange the meeting with members of the Environment Sub-Committee.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mr. Knight said that it was important that the Parish Council are responsible riparian owners and should set an example to other riparian owners in the village.

Mrs. Dinnin said that we would need to allocate some money from the 2013/14 budget to spend on work on the Lammas.

Mr. Knight said that the Environment agency's plan for the work on the Lammas is to notch the wear during the summer months and tree work would be done during the Autumn/Winter months.

- **Land at Rivershill**

Mr. Smith said that the fence at the entrance of the Parish Council land at Rivershill has been reinstated and the rubbish removed.

However, it is now difficult to access the site because of plant growth and some major clearance work is required. Tim Clark has in the past cleared a path through the site but major work is now required.

It was agreed that the Environment Sub-Committee should discuss the future of this site. **Agenda: Env**

- **Overhanging hedges in the village**

Mrs. McCash said that she had received complaints from several members of the general public and as a result had identified several sites where hedges are overgrowing the footpaths or roadways.

After discussion, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to all the owners of the overgrown hedges asking them to cut them back and informing them that if they do not do so within 21 days, we will report them to the Highways department.

Action: M. Smith/J. Allsop

Mrs. McCash to give the Clerk the location of the overgrown hedges.

Action: H. McCash

- **Ferreting licenses**

The Clerk said that Bob Adams has not returned his signed Ferreting licenses. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to speak to Mr. Adams.

Action: C. Dinnin

b) Routine reports

i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests prior to the meeting.

ii) Monthly village-report

Mr. Knight completed the report on 16th June.

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

- **Conifers at top corner** - lots of elder growing in it.

Ted Brown has complained that there is 'half a shed' lying between the two trees at the top corner of the sportsfield and children have been trying to make a den.

It was agreed to obtain a quotation to clear the rubbish and cut the bottom branches by approximately three feet.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Six month check**

- **MPPA** – the following work is required at the MPPA

- The West gate requires mesh repair.
- The North fence support needs repairing.

- The boundary gutter around the outside of the MPPA needs raking as weeds etc are growing in the gravel.
 - MPPA Surface needs sweeping.
- Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith to arrange for the repair of the gate and the fence.

Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith

The Clerk to ask Ted Brown to clear the gravel gutter and sweep the MPPA surface **Action: J. Allsop**

• **Rainbow Multi Play and Slide**

The wooden shelf needs replacing and the woodwork repainting.

Mr. Meischke to obtain quotations for this work.

Action: J. Meischke

The safety surface needs repairing. Wicksteed Leisure to be asked to repair.

Action: J. Allsop

• **Community Hall**

- **Tables in table trolley** - need cleaning
- **Blinds** - Some need refitting
- **Clock** - requires a new battery
- **External toilet lights** - time-clock needs adjusting
- **Ladies toilet** - seat is loose and needs re-fixing.

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith to arrange for the above work to be done.

Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith

- **Kitchen urn** - does not heat the water properly. Mr. Meischke to purchase a large kettle.

Action: J. Meischke

- **First aid kit** - eye wash and eye wash bath missing.

The Clerk to purchase a replacement eye wash bath.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Roof** – broken roof slate and white tape has appeared on the roof.

The Clerk to contact City Roofing Contractors to ask them to inspect and replace any broken tiles.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Bench at the High Street/Great Innings bus stop** - damaged and needs replacing.

Parish Councillors asked the Clerk to investigate what happened to the recycled bench that they removed from the Hockerill/Pump slope.

Action: J. Allsop

iii) **Weekly sportsfield**

None

iv) **Website**

The website entry about the Watton-at-Stone Logo needs rewording (i.e. due to us registering the copyright).

Action: D. Stock

v) **Website diary**

None.

vi) **Highway and Lighting faults**

Mr. Stock said that the potholes in Hazeldell continue to be an issue of great concern. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that we now write to Ken Crofton and the Chief Executive at Hertfordshire County Council and enclose a copy of the recent e-mail and photographs prepared by Mr. Stock and sent to Raj Goutam.

Action: D. Stock/M. Smith

Note: Since this meeting, some work has started on repairing the potholes in Hazeldell and the above action point has been postponed.

11 Correspondence received

a) **Letter from Bidwells re renewal of lease for sportsfield extension**

Mr. Alex Porter (Bidwells) wrote on 31st May as follows.

‘When we spoke previously, you requested information as to the state of the renewal of your lease for the recreation ground, which expired on 28th September 2011. I have since spoken to the Diocese and they are content to offer you a new lease.

As such, the terms proposed are for a 30-year lease at an annual rent of £250 which represents and increase broadly in line with the retail price index. The land to the south of the recreation round, which you propose to use as tennis courts, will be included in this agreement although it would be necessary to obtain formal, written consent from the Diocese for the construction of the tennis courts. It would also be expected that the Parish Council would cover the costs of preparing the lease as is usually the case.

If you are content to proceed on this basis, please let me know. If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything, please do not hesitate to contact me.’

Mr. Meischke to get the old lease out of the Parish Council safe and give it to Mr. Harris.

Action: J. Meischke

On Mr. Harris instructions, the Clerk has requested that Bidwells inform us of the costs involved.

b) E-mail from Linda Aldridge – allotment holder

Refer to item 10 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Allotments.

c) E-mail for Raj Goutam re highway issues in Hazeldell

Mr. Smith read out an e-mail from Raj Goutam dated 7th June, which states that an order for patching in Hazeldell has been issued.

d) E-mail from Jeff Hughes re Casual Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

Jeff Hughes (Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services at East Herts Council) e-mailed on 30th May acknowledging the casual vacancy that has arisen on the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council. He attached a ‘Notice of Vacancy’ poster to his e-mail, which is currently being displayed on all three Parish Council notice boards in the village. An election to fill the vacancy will be held, if requested in writing by ten local government electors (from the electoral area) no later than 21st June.

If no election is requested, the vacancy will be filled by the Parish Council as soon as practicable after 21st June 2013.

It was agreed that if EHDC advise the Parish Council to fill the vacancy, then appropriate notices will be placed on the Parish Council notice boards asking for written applications before Monday 15th July, so that a new member can be co-opted onto the Parish Council during its meeting on the 16th July. **Action: J. Allsop**

e) Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel: meeting to consider the Panel’s working arrangements in 2013/14

The Parish Council are unable to send a representative to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel meeting on Thursday 20 June 2013.

12 Village organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone War Memorial Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report.

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

- **Watton Youth Drop Inn**

Mr. Meischke reported that Ann Poulton has found the missing Watton Youth Drop Inn folder, which Lyn Oakman is now going through. Rik Sharma has agreed to try to help the group with some funding.

Mr. Meischke said that he would be speaking to the volunteers about clearing up the grass cuttings that come into the Community Hall on members’ shoes. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight said that he had asked for the Affinity Water consultation to be placed on the June agenda. The Clerk apologised for this omission.

Mr. Knight said that he had circulated the Affinity Water Management Plan to all Parish Councillors via e-mail and said that he would put a response together for the Parish Council with the recommendation that the White Hall pumping station is closed. Parish Councillors agreed with this course of action. **Action: I. Knight**

Mr. Knight urged Parish Councillors also to reply personally to the consultation to ask for the closure of the White Hall pumping station. If not enough requests for its closure are received, the pumping station could remain open.

- **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 Pre-School Playgroup:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club:** Nothing to report.
- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.

13 Items for Parish News

There were no items for inclusion in the July 2013 issue of the Parish News.

- **The meeting closed at 2137.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 16th July 2013.**