

**Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014**

**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 )  
 PCSO Sally Brooks DC Kirsty Richardson (from 1917 until 1935)  
 Ken Crofton (from 1922 until 19.55)

**1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence: Mr. Iain Harris and Mrs. Margaret Stanley.

**2 Public Participation**

None.

**3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report**

None.

**4 Declaration of Interests**

None.

**5 Minutes of the last meeting**

**a) Acceptance.**

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2014**  
 Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

**b) Review of actions**

1. **Arrange for the War Memorial Land registry to have contact details changed:** Outstanding  
**Action: J. Allsop**

2. **Contact Malcolm Amey (East Herts Council) re Elm trees on the Lammas**  
 Mrs. Dinnin said that Malcolm Amey, in his capacity of Arboricultural Officer at East Herts Council, is not able to offer his opinion on the condition of trees and this needs to be done by a specialist.  
 Mrs. Dinnin said she had spoken to Tony Bradford about the condition of the six Elm trees on the Lammas and he has agreed to inspect them. Mrs. Dinnin to chase Tony Bradford for a response. **Action: C. Dinnin**

3. **Meet to discuss ownership of plots of land identified by Chris Wilkinson (HCC)**  
 Mr. Meischke said that he and Mr. Smith identified the ownership of the land in the maps Chris Wilkinson emailed to the Parish Council on 4<sup>th</sup> September. The Clerk has now emailed Chris Wilkinson informing him who owned the parcels of land.

4. **Find out exact procedure for applying for the installation of bus shelters for the village**  
 Refer to item 7 i, Specific items – Bus shelters.
5. **Obtain up-to-date quotations for the building of the new tennis court including floodlighting costs**  
 Mr. Knight said that he is in the process of obtaining up-to-date quotations.

6. **Contact BIFFA re grants for new Tennis Court**  
 Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – BIFFA grants.

- **Report from PCSO Sally Brooks and DC Kirsty Richardson**  
 Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were forwarded Sergeant Duncan Wallace's email, dated 21<sup>st</sup> October, concerning policing incidents that arose during the period 16<sup>th</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014.  
 Mr. Smith welcomed PCSO Sally Brooks and DC Kirsty Richardson Sally and discussions took place on various police issues in the village.  
 Mrs. McCash expressed her concern about the recent traffic diversion through the village due to a multiple accident on the village by-pass. She said that the police failed to get to the village to help direct traffic and she had to do the job herself.

She has asked the Highways Authority to provide Watton-at-Stone with some traffic cones for the village to help in future incidents. However, they require the Police's approval before they will issue any cones. The Clerk suggested that a flooding sign would also be useful for the village.

Mrs. McCash said that the village needs an emergency incident action plan and she agreed to draft a plan for Parish Councillors comments. **Action: H. McCash**

Ms. Waltham said that the new basketball court at the Great Innings play area, with seating, has encouraged further anti-social behaviour in this area and it is evident that cannabis is being used on site. Ms. Waltham and Mr. Smith met with East Herts Council prior to plans being drawn up for the new play area and had suggested that the youth seating should be located nearer to the roadside to dissuade anti-social behaviour. East Herts Council appeared to take on board the problems but instead their newly implemented play area has made the situation worse by installing seating pods in an enclosed area. There is also a problem of litter in this area with broken glass and cans, which are a particular danger to small children, who cannot be allowed to wonder freely. The trees at the back of the play area have been removed so that contractors could get on site to install the new equipment and no replacement planting has been installed. Ms. Waltham said that after the efforts they had made to help East Herts Council improve the area, the final scheme implemented is a backward step and very disappointing.

Mr. Meischke asked PCSO Sally Brooks if she could arrange for the police to visit the village during the Friday evening Youth Club sessions. It is evident that drug dealing is happening on the sportsfield and the youth club members are therefore vulnerable.

PCSO Sally Brooks DC Kirsty Richardson left the meeting.

### c) Action points resolved

1. Forward Sergeant Duncan Wallace's e-mail report to all Parish Councillors
2. Chase ferreting license from Roger Bridges
3. Write to the planning department re Glebe House
4. Add planning decisions notices to the planning-application pages of the Watton-at-Stone website
5. Send out annual allotment invoices
6. Contact Kath Sexton (CDA for Hertfordshire) re further development of the Community Hall
7. Give Ms. Waltham contact details for the Travel Plan Coordinator
8. Prepare a written response to the HCC minutes of the site meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August
9. E-mail Parish Councillors the link to the Glasdon UK Limited website page on recycled material seating
10. E-mail Parish Councillors the publication titled 'Parish Councillor Recruitment Project 2015'
11. Speak to both the self-employed cleaners
12. Ask Michael Lewis (A P Access) to change small changing room lock
13. Give Mr. Meischke the date for the annual boiler inspection
14. Contact Kompan re the safety of two pieces of their recently installed play equipment
15. Contact HCC re overgrown footpath from Old School Orchard to the back 78/80 High Street
16. Carry-out emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests
17. Ask Mr. Smith to inspect the fence and arrange for its repair
18. Ask Ted Brown to cut the elder down around the Oak tree on the sportsfield
19. Report streetlight out on Church Walk
20. Inspect grass seeding work around play areas
21. Report bollard knocked down on Walkern Road bridge over the River Beane
22. HCC – 2<sup>nd</sup> Hertfordshire Town and Parish Councils Conference on 16<sup>th</sup> October
23. Write to all allotment holders re bonfires on allotments
24. Reply to Vivien Kemp re her concerns about bonfires on the allotments
25. E-mail Terry Sharpe re setting up a Model Aircraft Club
26. Ask Fred Burnell to put down child-safe vermin traps at sportsfield play area
27. E-mail Serena Gray re action taken re rats on sportsfield play area
28. Forward e-mail from Tony Bradford re Cottage site to all Parish Councillors
29. E-mail Mr. Northcott RE High Street traffic concerns
30. Write article for Parish News

## 6 Planning

### a) Applications

#### i) 27 Bramfield Road, Datchworth (3/14/1661/PR

Change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse

In accordance with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris liaised with Mr. Stock and Mr. Knight on this matter and it was agreed that the Clerk be instructed to write to the planning department in support of Datchworth Parish Council's objection to this application.

**b) Decisions**

**i) 1a High Street (3/14/1151/FP)**

Levelling of rear garden with steps and 2 retaining walls

- East Herts Council – permission granted

**ii) Crowbury, Church Lane (3/14/1214/FP)**

Single storey rear extension to form pool room and single storey lean to passage to the rear yard

- East Herts Council – permission granted

**7 Specific items**

**a) Traffic along Station Road and the High Street**

Ms. Waltham said that the village is lucky to have a new 'lollypop lady' in Station Road. However, she was disappointed that no further progress has been made in Station Road re pedestrian safety.

Although Mr. Stock also welcomed the appointment of the 'lolly-pop person', he repeated his view that this was not a sustainable solution to our concerns about that particular crossing point (bearing in mind that, as in this case, it may not always be easy to find people to do the job or for the necessary funding to be available) and that it would only be controlled for brief periods in the morning and afternoon during school-term-times. This was agreed by all present and that the target solution remains to have a Zebra Crossing at this busy crossing point.

Mr. Stock continued by saying that, disappointingly, the Parish Council still awaits a response to his letter in response to the HCC-prepared minutes of the site meeting he and Ms. Waltham attended on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

He then continued by repeating his view (as stated during The Parish Council meeting held in September) that we de-couple and treat our concerns about pedestrian safety and traffic movements in Station Road and the High Street and from now on have them appear as separate agenda-items. In addition to giving the subjects a greater visibility, this would avoid the possibility of the issues involved in these two major-problem areas being confused and/or diluted (e.g., bearing in mind the history, funding aspects and specific issues involved). This was agreed by all present.

Again, following on from our meeting in September, Mr. Stock said he felt that we had talked long-enough about the problems in the High Street and now was the time to nominate two Parish Councillors to take on a lead role in 'ramping-up' the visibility and our activity on the subject and treat it with the same vigour as currently with Station Road. This was agreed by all present and Mr. Smith suggested that Mr. Harris and Mrs. Stanley be asked to take on this task. **Action: M. Smith**

**• Discussions with Ken Crofton**

Mr. Smith welcomed Councillor Ken Crofton to the meeting and invited Parish Councillors to raise any concerns that had with him.

The main topic discussed was hedge cutting, specifically the overgrown hedge from Old School Orchard to the back 78/80 High Street. Councillor Crofton said that he emailed the Clerk (on 14<sup>th</sup> October) to say that he had escalated the complaint with the Highways Authority, but reminded the Parish Council that regrettably Highways are overwhelmed with work and funding is fully stretched. He suggested that the Parish Council could take over some of the hedge cutting work done by the Highways department and use the New Homes Bonus funding to pay for it. Parish Councillors reminded him that the New Homes Bonus, which is for a limited number of years, should be used to improve the village facilities to accommodate the increasing population and not for maintenance work. If the Parish Council take on extra maintenance work from the Highways Authority, it would need to increase its annual precept to cover the costs.

Councillor Crofton left at 7.55.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that the Parish Council would arrange to cut back the overgrown hedge from Old School Orchard to the back of 78/80 High Street.

Mrs. Dinnin to ask Adam Welch for a quotation and ensure that Mr. Brett (5 Old School Orchard) is informed of the date that the work is to be carried-out. **Action: C. Dinnin**

**b) Nigel Poulton - plaques and bench**

Parish Councillors agreed to purchase, in memory of Nigel Poulton, the Stanford seat from Glasdon UK Limited at a cost of £895.71, plus ground anchor kit.

The new seat to be sited near the footpath by the main entrance to The Nigel Poulton Community Hall.

Deborah Freeman has asked the Parish Council to purchase the Phoenix seat from Glasdon UK Limited to replace the broken memorial seat on the sportsfield. It was agreed that the broken seat should be removed as soon as possible. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

The Clerk to order the two seats from Glasdon UK limited. **Action: J. Allsop**

On receipt of the two seats Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to organise their installation. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

Mr. Smith said that additional seating is also needed for the sportsfield play area and he is looking at the option of multi-coloured plastic seating. **Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Smith said that it is now common knowledge that Community Hall has been renamed ‘The Nigel Poulton Community Hall’. It was agreed that an article to be placed in the Parish News officially naming ‘The Nigel Poulton Community Hall’.

**Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Knight to change the Community Hall advert in the Parish News.

**Action: I. Knight**

It was agreed that a small variety of tree, such as an Acer, be planted on the sportsfield in memory of Nigel Poulton. Mr. Smith to investigate and report at the November Parish Council with his suggestions of suitable small tree varieties.

**Action: M. Smith**

**c) The 2015 election of District and Parish Councillors**

It was agreed that the Parish Council need to make members of the public aware of the District and Parish Council elections to take place in May 2015 and encourage them, if interested, to consider putting their names forward for election. Mr. Stock was asked to devise and produce a poster for display on our notice boards accordingly.

**Action: D. Stock**

**d) Report on HCC – 2<sup>nd</sup> Hertfordshire Town and Parish Councils Conference held on 16<sup>th</sup> October**

After receiving the agenda for this conference, Mr. Smith decided it was not beneficial to attend the meeting.

**e) Salt for salt bins**

Parish Councillors agreed to request 25 salt bags for the village and Mr. Smith agreed that they could be stored at Blue Bury Farm until they are needed. The Clerk to order accordingly.

**Action: J. Allsop**

**f) Great Innings play area**

Refer to item directly after 6 b, Review of actions - Report from PCSO Sally Brooks and DC Kirsty Richardson.

**g) Street lighting**

It was agreed to write to HCC regarding the ownership of street lighting in Watton-at-Stone.

Mr. Meischke agreed to draft a letter on behalf of the Parish Council.

**Action: J. Meischke**

**h) Parish Council land**

It became apparent when HCC notices appeared around the village requesting the owners of various parcels of land in the village to come forward that Watton Green and the sportsfield are not registered.

Mr. Smith said that over the history of the Parish Council’s ownership of Watton Green, there have been parts of Watton Green that have been exchanged with local landowner’s plots. It was agreed to formally register Watton Green as belonging to the Parish Council and ask Longmores Solicitors to quote for doing the work

**Action: M. Smith**

Refer also to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Land at Rivershill.

**i) Bus Shelter**

Mr. Smith said that he had tried to speak to both Sharon Parnell and Dave Burt concerning the exact procedure for applying for the installation of bus shelters for the village, however he was unsuccessful.

Hertfordshire Highways have said that bus shelters are part of the wider scheme and what the Parish Council are trying to tell them is we have the funds for two bus shelters and we want action sooner rather than later.

Mr. Smith to continue to pursue this matter.

**Action: M. Smith**

**8 Sub-Committees**

**a) Budget & Finance**

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments	
B. Bunyan	<u>13.25</u>	None	
	<u>13.25</u>		
<b>Cheques issued</b>			
Affinity Water Limited	Allotment water supply		165.09
Post Office	Tax and NI		163.11
Mark Blacktin			610.00
Frank Cooper and Son	September - 2 x grass cutting, 5th and 19th		134.40
Community Hall	1/2 year grant		2,580.00
St. Albans Diocesan	Sportsfield rent £125 = 1/2 year £210 backdated increase		35.00
Salary and wages	October 2014		1146.23
			<b><u>4,833.83</u></b>

<b>Cheques received</b>		
Sports and Social Club	Sportsfield facilities 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	362.50
14 Allotment holders	Allotment rent for 2014/15	397.50
Sports and Social Club	Sportsfield facilities 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	<u>362.50</u>
		<b><u>1122.50</u></b>

**Watton-at-Stone Community Hall**

<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty Cash -Payments</b>	
Carla Beach – Pavilion, meeting room	157.50	2 keys to internal cupboard	7.60
Vince Geoff - Main Hall, meet room	132.00	Mark Blacktin	20.00
Vicki Roos - Meeting room	105.00	HCC – Cleaning materials	<u>24.36</u>
Hannah Brownlow - Main Hall	58.00		<b><u>51.96</u></b>
Anna Bramley - Pavilion	25.00		
Stacey Thornton - Main Hall, Pavilion	60.00		
Catherine O-Hara – Main Hall	<u>30.00</u>		
	<b><u>567.50</u></b>		
<b>Cheques issued</b>			
Wages	October 2014		372.88
Kompan	New toddler play area		23,631.36
Kompan	Junior climbing frame		<u>22,581.32</u>
Kompan	Trim Trail		<u>11,361.84</u>
			<b><u>57,947.40</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>			
Sports and Social Club	Community Hall facilities		362.50
Parish Council	1/2 year grant		2,580.00
Badminton	Main Hall hire		135.00
Mrs. Dixon	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		52.00
Peter Khera	Main Hall hire		147.60
Watton Youth Drop Inn	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		222.75
Paula Sutton	Main Hall hire		194.40
Sports and Social Club	Community Hall facilities		<u>362.50</u>
			<b><u>4,056.75</u></b>

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

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

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the 6-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income items for both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts and explained the variations in both statements. Mr. Filer said that he was not unduly concerned in the variations of these six-monthly figures.

- **6-monthly inspection of accounts**

Mrs. McCash said that she carried-out the six-month inspection of the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts and they were in good order.

A copy of Mrs. McCash’s reports to be included in the Community Hall and Parish Council accounts for 2014/15.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Arrange meeting for Budget and Finance Sub-Committee to discuss budget**

Mr. Filer said that he would arrange a meeting of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee after the November Parish Council meeting.

- **Budget items for 2015/16**

Mr. Filer asked all Parish Councillors to e-mail him any items they would like included in the 2015/16 budget, as soon as possible.

**Action: Parish Councillors**

## Community Hall Trustees

In the absence of Mr. Harris, Mr. Meischke reported on the following items concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Community Hall cleaning**  
The new cleaners have now completed their 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of cleaning at the Community Hall. Apart from some teething problems in the first couple of weeks (e.g., excess water left on the changing-room floor), work is being carried out to a good standard.
- **Development of the Community Hall**  
At the September Parish Council meeting, under the heading of New-Homes Bonus Sub-committee, Mr. Smith was instructed to ask Kath Sexton (CDA for Hertfordshire) to provide consultancy work re recommendations for the possible development of the building to maximise its potential use. Mr. Smith said that he had subsequently been in contact (via e-mail) with Louise Beaton, who will be carrying out the consultancy work, and provided her with some preliminary information concerning the hall.  
Parish Councillors agreed that although the main aim is to maximise the potential use of the Community Hall, it must remain readily accessible to the local community for which it was built.  
Mr. Smith to ask Louise Beaton to carry out the consultancy work as soon as possible. **Action: M. Smith**
- **Quotations for replacing the Pavilion window frames**  
This item to remain on hold until after the CDA-for-Hertfordshire consultancy work re recommendations for the possible development of the building have been received.
- **Lock to the referee changing room**  
The door to the referee's changing-room used as a store cupboard by Beane Valley Children's Centre has had the lock changed back to the original one. It was agreed that we now remove the broken shower-door from this room. **Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith**
- **Quotations for installation of new boiler system**  
This item to remain on hold until after the CDA-for-Hertfordshire consultancy work re recommendations for the possible development of the building have been received.
- **Annual boiler inspection**  
Turners have completed the annual boiler-inspection. The current boiler for the hot water system appears to be "living on borrowed time". Refer to the above item.
- **Annual emergency lighting and PAT testing**  
The Clerk to contact D. P. Electrics about this. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Water meter**  
Affinity Water submitted a water bill for over £4,500 to the Community Hall. After investigation by Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke, it was found that Affinity Water had not been reading the correct meter. Mr. Smith met a representative from Affinity Water who confirmed these findings and a new invoice has now been issued for £57.76.
- **Baby and toddler equipment**  
Mrs. Dinnin has received a request from Dots and Tots for us to provide a baby-changing table (to be installed in the disabled toilets), a toilet-seat reducer and step-up stool to enable small children to wash their hands.  
The Trustees present at the meeting agreed to these purchases and welcomed such feed-back from the users of our facilities.  
The Parish Council instructed the Clerk to spend up to the value of £200 excluding VAT on the baby-changing table, toilet-seat reducer and the step-up stool. **Action: J. Allsop**

## Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **New play equipment update**  
Mr. Smith and the Clerk met two representatives from Kompan to discuss the outstanding items that need resolving on the new play equipment. These are mainly end caps and security bolt cap inserts to stop Allen keys being used by members of the public to loosen the play equipment.  
Kompan have been paid for the two large invoices but payment of the trim track is being held back until all outstanding work has been completed. **Action: J. Allsop**  
Mr. Smith did ask the Kompan representatives to donate a seat for the play area because of all the extra work that he had to do taking equipment to and from his farm to the sportsfield. The Clerk has chased this item but received no reply.

- **Report on vermin traps installed near the play area**

Mrs. McCash said that Fred Burnell has been giving her regular updates on the vermin traps he has installed around the play area. Mrs. McCash to report on Fred Burnell's progress at the November Parish Council meeting.

**Action: H. McCash**

- **Removable fence posts for the sportsfield**

The Cricket Club have asked for the Parish Council's permission to install sockets in the ground near the sportsfield hedge that runs along School Lane, so a removable fence can be installed. The fence would be removed at the end of the Cricket season, also to allow any hedge cutting to take place.

Parish Councillors agreed to the principal of the removable fence but await further details before they finally approve the project.

Mr. Knight to contact the Cricket Club accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

- **Cricket square maintenance**

Mr. Knight said that Cricket Club approached him because the cricket square was in urgent need of attention. He liaised with Mr. Smith, Mr. Meischke and Mr. Filer and agreed to accept Perfect Ground Solutions quotation to do the work at £710 including VAT. This work has now been completed.

The Cricket Club have sent the Parish Council a donation of £591.67.

- **BIFFA grants**

Mr. Knight said that BIFFA have said that the Parish Council are unlikely to be eligible for funding towards the new tennis court.

- **Cricket square grass cuttings**

It was agreed that the grass cuttings deposited by the Cricket Club under the sportsfield hedge look unsightly and attract weeds growing by the hedge.

Parish Councillors agreed to purchase a compost bin and ask the Cricket Club to deposit their cuttings in the bin.

**Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Knight to inform the Cricket Club accordingly.

**Action: I. Knight**

## Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Benches**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Mark Blacktin has done an excellent job of painting the benches in the village. He still needs to fit some brackets on the bench on Church Walk. Mrs. Dinnin to chase this outstanding item.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Hedges**

Refer to the two paragraphs immediately before item 7 b, Specific items - Nigel Poulton - plaques and bench.

- **War memorial**

Mr. Stock agreed to purchase and plant a replacement Berberis shrub to fill the gap left in the hedge by the one that died. Also to purchase and plant two variegated Holly bushes to fill gaps in the War Memorial garden.

**Action: D. Stock**

- **Allotments**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she, Mr. Smith, Mr. Meischke, Mrs. McCash and Ms. Waltham met at the Community Hall to discuss the overgrown areas of the allotments.

It was agreed that any plots that are vacant or become vacant at the end furthest away from Glebe Court should not be let out again. Some allotment holders will be offered the option of moving to vacant plots in the main section. The disused area of the allotments can then be managed by keeping the grass trimmed down and weed-killing as required. This area can then be used for additional parking.

Mrs. Dinnin will attend a meeting of the Allotment and Garden Association on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Watton Cottage Site**

Mrs. Dinnin said she met Tony Bradford on site at the Cottage site at Watton Green. Tony Bradford has cleared half of the site and has planted new trees such as Hornbeam and Oak.

Mr. Bradford is monitoring the Ash trees in the area for disease.

Some of the trees along the road are growing around the power cables, Tony Bradford pointed out that he had neither the insurance, skills or labour available to do this type of work.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to inspect the site.

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

- **Lammas**

Adam Welch has done some cutting back of the trees on the Lammas, however due to extreme tree growth during this season, this work is now barely visible. Mrs. Dinnin said that she needed to arrange a site meeting on the Lammas with Environment Agency and Charlie Bell to look at the work so far and help us make a plan to complete the clearance work using the S106 funding. **Action: C. Dinnin**

Both the Lammas and Watton Green could do with a second grass cut if the weather remains sufficiently dry for it to be cut. **Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Knight, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Dinnin and Mrs. McCash attended, on 9<sup>th</sup> October, the launch of the film titled 'On the Banks of the Beane that was made by the RBRA in collaboration with the University of Hertfordshire. The film is about the plight of our local chalk stream, the river Beane, which has suffered decades of unsustainable water abstraction.

- **Oak Tree**

Parish Councillors agreed that the Oak tree, to be donated by a member of Watton Ramblers should be sited on Watton Green.

Mrs. Dinnin to meet Mr. Gordon on site to show them where the tree can be planted and to ask them to provide a metal tree guard to protect it. **Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Land at Rivershill**

Mrs. Dinnin agreed to set up a working party to discuss the Parish Council land at Rivershill and other Parish Council land in the village.

The working party will consist of Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Smith, Mr. Stock, Mr. Filer and Mrs. McCash.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Dog bin**

Mr. Smith, Mrs. Dinnin and Ms. Waltham agreed to look at the relocation of the dog bin on footpath 17.

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

The dog bin on the Walkern Road is partially obscured by tree growth. The Clerk to report this on the Herts Direct Faults website. **Action: J. Allsop**

### New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee

- **Applications for funding**

To date only one application for funding has been received.

The Parish Council are expecting a minimum of another three applications.

- **New homes account**

Parish Councillors agreed that the New Homes bonus funds be transferred to the Parish Council's deposit account with Santander. **Action: J. Allsop**

### b) Routine Reports

i) **Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests**

Mr. Meischke said he would arrange for the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm within the next few days after this meeting. **Action: J. Meischke**

ii) **Monthly village-report**

Mr. Meischke completed the report.

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

- **Sportsfield** – the damaged bench needs removing. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

- **Large swings** – it was agreed to include in the 2015/16 budget, the painting of the large and small swings and provision of new seats and chains including anti wrap bars. **Budget: 2015/16**

- **Rainbow multi-play and slide** – the marine ply wooden ramp that was replaced last year is delaminating and urgently needs attention. Mr. Smith said he had found a company who can supply 15mm recycled plastic sheeting to replace the damaged plywood. The approximate cost of the sheeting is £250.

Parish Councillors agreed to the purchase of the recycled plastic sheeting. **Action: M. Smith**

- **Community Hall sign in High Street** – Mr. Meischke said that when the bus stop sign that was knocked down opposite the bull public house car park was replaced, they did not reinstate the sign pointing towards the Community Hall. It was agreed to purchase a new double-sided sign with the three lines of wording as follows.

The Nigel Poulton  
Community Hall  
Sportsfield

**Action: J. Meischke**



- **Oak tree by MPPA** – some of the branches are overhanging the MPPA floodlights.  
Adam Welch to be asked to quote to cut back the overhanging Oak tree branches. **Action: C. Dinnin**

iii) **Weekly sportsfield**

Nothing to report.

iv) **Website**

Mr Stock felt that we should update the Community Hall section to say something about when and why the building was renamed after Nigel Poulton. This was agreed by all present and Mr Stock to revise the text accordingly. **Action D. Stock**

vi) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

## 9 Correspondence received

### a) **Beane and Mimram Catchment Partnership annual meeting - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

Parish Councillors to inform the Clerk if they wish to attend the above meeting. **Action: Parish Councillors**

- **Email from Rosemary Cooper**

Rosemary Cooper has requested that the High Street footpath from opposite the BT exchange to the last house in village (Stevenage end) be cleared of leaves this autumn.

Mr. Stock said that the Station Road footpath on both sides of the entrance to Watton Place Clinic and down to the junction with the High Street needs to be monitored with a view to clearing leaves as necessary, and likewise with the short stretch of footpath directly opposite on the other side of Station. This was agreed.

It was agreed to ask Adam Welch to include the additional leaf clearance work to his schedule.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

Hertfordshire Highways to be asked to clear the footpath from the BT exchange onwards of overgrowing branches and debris on the footpath.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **East Herts Council – District Planning Executive Panel meeting**

Mr. Smith said he would be attending the Draft Planning Executive Panel meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and would give his report on the meeting to Parish Councillors at their November meeting. **Action: M. Smith**

## 10 Village organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone War Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Mr. Stock said that the War Memorial Management Committee's AGM is to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> November. He will attend this and the regular committee meeting that follows the AGM.

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

- **Watton Youth Drop Inn:** Nothing to report.

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

- **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.

## 11 Items for Parish News

The following items were identified for inclusion in the November 2014 issue of the Parish News.

- 2015 District and Council elections

**Action: D. Stock**

- Renaming of the Community Hall.

**Action: M. Smith**

- **The meeting closed at 2158.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014.**