

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 18th November 2014

Present: Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman) Mrs. Christine Dinnin
 Mr. Denis Filer Mr. Iain Harris
 Mr. Ian Knight Mrs. Helen McCash
 Mr. David Stock Mrs. Margaret Stanley
 Ms. Emma Waltham The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)
 Sergeant Duncan Wallace (from 1925 to 1941)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. John Meischke.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

4 Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of interest were declared in item 9 a, New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee – Application for Funding. .

- Mr. Filer declared an interest in the War Memorial Hall application.
- Mr. Knight declared an interest in Parish Church application.
- Mr. Knight and Mrs. Dinnin declared an interest in the Youth Football and Cricket Club applications.
- Mrs. Dinnin declared an interest in the Dots and Tots application.
- Ms. Waltham declared an interest in the Beane Valley application.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance.

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st October 2014**
 Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

b) Review of actions

- 1. Draw up emergency traffic incident action plan for the village**
 Mrs. McCash said she had drawn up an emergency traffic-incident action plan and passed it to the Police for their comments. When she has had the plan returned to her by the Police and inputted their comment, she will forward it to Parish Councillors for their comments. **Action: H. McCash**
- 2. Obtain regular updates on from Fred Burnell re vermin problem**
 Mrs. McCash said that Fred Burnell has been giving her regular progress reports on the vermin problem near the play area. Mr. Burnell will continue to check the site fortnightly. **Action: H. McCash**
- 3. Arrange for installation of two seats on sportsfield**
 The two seats are on order from Glasdon UK Limited, but have not yet been delivered.
 The Clerk to chase. **Action: J. Allsop**
- 4. Draft letter to HCC re ownership of street lighting in the village**
 Refer to item 7 f, Specific items – Street lighting.
- 5. Give Mr. Filer items to be included in 2015/16 budget**
 Mr. Filer said that to date only Mr. Knight had e-mailed him budget items for 2015/16. He asked Parish Councillors to send him any items to be included in next year's budget as soon as possible.
Action: Parish Councillors
- 6. Purchase and install additional planting required for War Memorial garden**
 Mr. Stock has purchased and planted three young Holly bushes in the War Memorial garden. However he was unable to do anything yet about replacing the dead Berberis shrub because it would be difficult for him to remove the old root-system. Mr. Smith agreed to arrange for its removal and purchase a replacement Berberis shrub. **Action: M. Smith**
- 7. Update Community Hall entry for the Watton-at-Stone website**
 This action point has been completed.

8. **Request 25 salt bags for Watton-at-Stone**
Refer to item Specific items 7 e, Specific items - Salt for salt bins.
9. **Transfer new Homes Bonus funds to deposit account**
The Clerk said she had not completed this action point and requested that she did not do so until the New Homes Bonus grant awards have been paid. This was agreed by Parish Councillors. **Action: J. Allsop**
10. **Report growth around Walkern Road dog-waste bin**
An on-line report has been submitted on the Hertfordshire County Council Highway Fault reporting website - www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults.
11. **Look at options for additional seating around the sportsfield play area**
This item to be deferred until after the two seats on order from Glasdon UK Limited have been delivered and installed. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**
12. **Investigate options for small tree varieties for the sportsfield**
Mr. Smith showed Parish Councillors photographs, and growing details, of two tree varieties that would be suitable for planting on the sportsfield near the Community Hall.
He suggested that the Parish Council purchase a tree with a 25cm girth and between 4.5 to 5 meters tall at a cost of £410 plus VAT from Majestic Trees (St Albans).
Parish Councillors agreed to the purchase, from Majestic Trees, an Acer Platanoides Drumondii, which is a medium sized tree with green variegated leaves. **Action: M. Smith**
It was also agreed to purchase a metal tree-guard to protect the tree from grass cutting machinery and vandalism. **Action: M. Smith**
13. **Purchase compost bin for cricket table grass cuttings**
Mr. Smith said that he had purchased a compost bin, which was delivered to his farm.
Mr. Smith to arrange for the installation of the compost bin. **Action: M. Smith**
14. **Ask Mr. Harris and Mrs. Stanley to head up High Street traffic-calming**
Refer to item 7 a, Specific items – Traffic along Station Road and the High Street
15. **Contact Longmores re registration of land at Watton Green**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee – Watton Green.
16. **Chase HCC re procedure for applying for the installation of bus shelters for the village**
Refer to item 7 b, Specific items – Bus shelters.
17. **Ask Louise Beaton to carry out the consultancy work at Community Hall**
Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees – Development of the Community Hall.
18. **Look at the siting of the dog-waste bin on Footpath 17**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee – Dog-waste bins and litterbins in the village.
19. **If weather is sufficiently dry, arrange to cut the grass at Watton Green and the Lammas**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee – grass cutting at Watton Green and the Lammas.
20. **Chase Mark Blacktin re fitting of brackets on Church Walk bench**
Mrs. Dinnin said that Mark Blacktin seems reluctant to fit the bracket to the Church Walk bench. He told her the seat can only fall backwards without the bracket and there is not enough room at the back for the seat to fall over. Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to inspect this seat. **Action: C. Dinnin/M. Smith**
21. **Arrange working party meeting to discuss land at Rivershill and Rivershill Green**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee - Lane at Rivershill.
22. **Inspect roadside trees on the Cottage site**
This action point is outstanding. **Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock**
23. **Chase Tony Bradford re inspection of Elm Trees on the Lammas**
This action point is outstanding. **Action: C. Dinnin**
24. **Ask Adam Welch to quote for hedge cutting from Old School Orchard to the back of 78/80 High Street**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee – Hedge.
25. **Attend Allotment and Garden meeting on 22nd October**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee – Allotments.
26. **Arrange meeting with Environment Agency and Charlie Bell re work on the Lammas**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee- The Lammas.
27. **Speak to Maurice Gordon re siting of memorial Oak tree at Watton Green**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-committee- Memorial Oak tree for Watton Green.
28. **Ask Adam Welch to quote for removing Oak tree branches obscuring the floodlights on the MPPA**
Refer to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – MPPA.

c) Action points resolved

1. Write article for the Parish News re the renaming of the Community Hall
2. Change the Parish News advert for the Community Hall
3. Produce a poster re Parish and District elections in May 2015
4. Put a copy of the 6-monthly inspection of accounts report in the accounts for 2014/15
5. Order two seats from Glasdon UK Limited
6. Withhold payment to Kompan until remedial work on new play areas is completed
7. Remove broken shower door from referee's changing room
8. Contact D P Electrics re annual emergency lighting and PAT testing
9. Purchase baby changing table, toilet seat reducer and child step-up
10. Speak to Cricket Club re proposals for removable fencing
11. Speak to Cricket Club re grass cuttings
12. Carry-out emergency escape lighting and alarm call tests
13. Arrange for the removal of the damaged seat on sportsfield
14. Purchase recycled plastic sheeting for the rainbow multi-play and slide
15. Order replacement Community Hall and Sportsfield sign for the High Street
16. Inform Clerk wish to attend Beane and Mimram Catchment Partnership annual meeting
17. Ask Adam Welch to extend his leaf clearance work
18. Report online work needed to clear the High Street footpath from BT exchange onwards
19. Write article for Parish News

d) Items outstanding for more than two months

1. **Arrange for the War Memorial Land registry to have contact details changed**
Refer to item 7 g – Registration of land in Parish Council ownership.

6 Planning**a) Applications**

None.

b) Decisions**i) Glebe House, Rectory Lane (3/14/1502/FP)**

Erect detached dwelling and garage in the grounds of Glebe House - East Herts Council – permission granted

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

Change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse - East Herts Council – permission refused

- **Police report from Sergeant Duncan Wallace**

Sergeant Duncan Wallace gave a brief summary of the nine crime incidents recorded since the October Parish Council meeting

He said that the main reason for attending the Parish Council meeting tonight is to discuss the anti-social problems at the Great Innings play area. He has been liaising with East Herts Youth Connections team and the East Herts Council design team regarding the problems that have occurred since East Herts Council upgraded the play area at Great Innings. Instead of reducing the youth problems in this area, certain aspects of the new area has intensified problems, especially the enclosed pods in the football area. The police agree that the park should not be removed as it is an important facility in the village. Instead, the focus should be on the people who are not using it properly. He said he is in discussions with the design team at East Herts Council to see how the area can be modified to improve the situation. Police patrols have been increased in the area to identify who is using the area on a regular basis. They will reconvene in the New Year to see how to take this matter forward.

No drugs have been found in the area, but two or three youngsters in their mid-twenties have tested positive for drugs whilst visiting this area.

Ms. Waltham said that at the October Parish Council meeting she highlighted to PCSO Sally Brooks (who attended the meeting), the problems occurring at the Great Innings estate and agreed to write to East Herts Council about the problems. She said she had drafted a letter for the Parish Council's approval tonight, but said that it looked as though the police now have the problem in hand with East Herts Council and maybe it was no longer necessary to send the letter. Ms. Waltham said that the older children who congregate later in the day are quite intimidating.

Mr. Filer said that he was invited to attend an anti-burglary meeting tonight at Bayford, which he was unable to attend and asked if other such meetings are due to take place. Sergeant Wallace said people are invited to these meetings, which identify crime preventative ideas, if they have been subjected to a crime. He will be arranging a meeting in the Watton-at-Stone, Datchworth or Bramfield area.

The Clerk said that she noticed, through the hedge along School Lane, that there are bottles and cans at the back of the Cricket shed. Sergeant Wallace agreed to get one of his officers to inspect the site.

Sergeant Wallace said that they have inspected a homemade camp in the thicket down Mill Lane which they believe is being used by local youngsters. This is on Abel Smith land and the police will continue to monitor the area.

Mr. Smith said that the back wall of the building on the old mill site in Mill lane has a hole in it and trespassers could gain entry to the building. The police to keep patrol this area.

Sergeant Duncan Wallace left the meeting.

7 Specific items

a) Traffic along Station Road and the High Street

Mr. Stock asked that these two items appear as separate items on future agendas. Mr. Smith then asked him to reiterate his reasons for doing so. He did so and in summary said (as stated in previous minutes) it gives greater visibility and weight to the problems in each of the two areas, the nature of the problems are different, the history is different, as are the funding issues involved. When Mr. Stock and Ms. Waltham met with Highways representative, they were informed that S106 would most likely pay for the improvements in Station Road. Funding in the High Street is likely to come from some other source.

It was agreed that the problems along Station Road and those in the High Street would now appear as separate items on future agendas.

Mrs. Stanley and Mr. Harris agreed to prepare a summary of the problems and problem areas along the High Street, together with an indication of which issues are classified as needing 'immediate attention', 'urgent attention' or 'non-urgent attention'

They both said that, because of work commitments, they would be unable to meet with Highways representatives, this role would need to be fulfilled by other Parish Councillors. **Action: I. Harris/M. Stanley**

Re Station Road, Mr. Stock said that HCC had not responded to our request for immediate action to resolve the current parking and safety issues that have arisen along the stretch of road adjacent to the Gatekeeper Meadow development. (The Parish Council has asked Highways to address this problem quickly because it is unacceptable for us to have to wait for two years before a scheme is implemented to correct a problem that we feel is of their making.

Ms. Waltham said that there is a driver's-visibility problem exiting Clappers Lane to turn left towards the station when cars are parked outside the new development. This situation is aggravated when vehicles entering the village at speed. It was also noted that parking had increased in the entrance to the yard on the opposite side of the road too.

Mrs. McCash urged Parish Councillors to encourage people to report all accidents, however minor, to the police to highlight the problem in Station Road.

Mr. Stock and Ms. Waltham are to meet with Oliver Heald MP during his Watton-at-Stone surgery on Saturday 22nd November to explain the situation re the problems in Station Road and ask for his assistance, in particular with a view to some urgent action re the safety issues currently being experienced on the road adjacent to the Gatekeeper Meadow development. **Action: D. Stock/E. Waltham**

- **Item 9 a, Correspondence received - E-mails from Mike Freeman re s106 funding**

All Parish Councillors have been sent copies of e-mails from Mike Freeman concerning the results of their drive-safe programme and a request for S106 funding to be put towards equipment to deter vehicles from speeding in the village.

The Clerk has copied Mr. Freeman with extracts from the Parish Council minutes relating to traffic concerns in Station Road and the use of S106 funding and informed him that the Parish Council have no control on how these funds are spent.

Mr. Stock had some comments to make on Mr. Freeman's report (especially re our efforts to resolve the problems in Station Road) before it was published and agreed to contact Mr. Freeman accordingly. Subject to the inclusion of amendments requested by Mr. Stock, Parish Councillors approved of the contents of Mr. Freeman's article for insertion in the next issue of the Parish News. **Action: D Stock**

A copy of Mr. Freeman's report will be given to Oliver Heald as part of a small document-pack (re Station Road) during his surgery. **Action: D. Stock/E. Waltham**

b) Bus shelters

Mr. Smith said that he had e-mailed David Burt (Programme and Strategy Manager for East Herts District and Broxbourne Borough Hertfordshire County Council) on 3rd November and had received the following reply.

‘When I walked the site with three representatives from the Parish in September it was evident that there is little room available on the existing footways in the High Street to site bus shelters without causing an obstruction. Therefore it was agreed that we would review the locations of the bus stops and parking in the High Street to identify what changes can be reasonably made to facilitate the installation of shelters at the bus stops as well as improving access for disabled users. This process will ensure that the required road safety audit and permission from the highway authority is obtained.

I would be happy to arrange a further site meeting with you and relevant parish representatives in the Spring to ensure the team undertaking this review are suitably aware of your observations.’

Mr. Smith said he had spoken to the people who run the Bull public house about the possibility of a bus shelter just inside their car park area. He said they were quite open to the idea, and agreed to contact the Punch Pub Company to seek their permission.

Mr. Smith suggested that the semi-circular section of brick walling by the Arms houses, at the junction with High Street and School Lane, could be modified to make a bespoke bus shelter to accommodate seating for about six people and include a roof similar in style to the village pump roof. The Arms Houses, and this section of wall, are owned by the Abel Smith estate. Mr. Smith said he would speak to Mr. Abel Smith about his ideas.

Action: M. Smith

Ms. Waltham said that when she and Mr. Stock met with Hertfordshire Highways, they were intrigued by the semi-circular section of brick walling.

c) Nigel Poulton

A picture of Nigel Poulton now hangs in the meeting room at the Community Hall.

The memorial bench in memory of Nigel Poulton is on order from Glasdon UK Limited.

d) Posters advertising the 2015 election of District and Parish Councillors

The 2015 election poster designed by Mr. Stock is now on all three Parish Council notice boards.

e) Salt for salt bins

Thirty bags of salt have been delivered to Blue Bury Farm. Mr. Smith said he will fill the village salt bins as and when required.

f) Street Lighting

An e-mail has been sent to Peter Simpson (Eastern Herts Asset Management, Hertfordshire County Council) asking for clarification of Hertfordshire County Councils’ street lighting ownership in Watton-at-Stone.

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 12/2014

g) Registration of land in Parish Council ownership

It was agreed at the October Parish Council meeting, that Mr. Smith should contact Longmores asking them to quote for formally registering the Parish Council land at Watton Green.

Mr. Smith took the relevant documents into Longmores, who subsequently telephoned the Clerk and gave her a verbal maximum figure of £700 (plus VAT) for doing the work. Mr. Harris said that this price reflects good value for money. The Clerk said that Longmores would be willing to change the addresses on other land registrations in the Parish Council’s name within this price. Mr. Harris suggested that the Community Hall could be used as the Parish Council’s address for all land registrations. Mrs. McCash disagreed with this suggestion and said registration should be the offices of the Parish Council, which are the Clerk’s home address. Mr. Smith to seek advice on this issue from Longmores.

Action: M. Smith

The Clerk said that Longmores had said that the registration of Watton Green is not straightforward because of the land transfers that have taken place. They suggested that to enhance the Parish Council’s chance of having a single land registry, rather than multiple ones for this site, Watton Green should be identified on an ordinate survey map.

Mr. Smith agreed to contact Longmores for further clarification.

Action: M. Smith

h) Report on Draft Planning Executive Panel meeting on 22nd October

Mr. Smith attended the East Herts Council meeting on 22nd October. There were three main points of interest.

- East Herts Council need to decide on the location of a new permanent travellers site in East Herts. When the site is agreed, it could form part of a S106 agreement for improvements in that area.
- Deposit plan, due to be released in February for comments which will be recorded and forwarded to the inspectorate as part of the decision process.
- Current planning regulations do not take into consideration parking or traffic congestion as grounds for refusing an application.

i) Replacement Community Hall and Sportsfield sign for the High Street

The replacement sign has been purchased and now awaits installation.

Mr. Smith to arrange for Mark Blacktin to install the sign.

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	
Mark Adkin – Allotment	<u>13.25</u>	None	
	<u>13.25</u>		
Cheques issued			
Ted Brown	cut and strim grass around Community hall		15.00
Perfect Ground Solutions	Work to the Cricket table		710.00
J. Allsop	Archer Safety Signs - The NPCH sign for bus stop		109.14
RBRA	Donation towards video of River Beane		100.00
J. Allsop	Post office - stamps 100 1st class		62.00
Frank Cooper and Son	October - 2 x grass cutting, 5th and 19th		134.40
David Stock	B&Q plants for War Memorial		10.00
Earl Haig Fund	Poppy donation		70.00
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpicking @ £8.10 per hour		259.20
Adam Welch	Grass cutting, strimming, leaf collection, hedge cutting, remove branches near MPPA. Reduce buddleia at Mill Lane		1840.00
J. Allsop	November salary + allowance		847.03
			<u>4156.77</u>
Cheques received			
19 Allotment holders	Allotment rent for 2014/15		404.50
			<u>404.50</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Carla Beach – Pavilion and meeting room	126.00	A P Access – changing room lock	40.00
Vince Geoff - Main Hall and meeting room	86.00	Albany Radio – 3.5 litre kettle	<u>29.99</u>
Vicki Roos – Meeting room	63.00		<u>69.99</u>
Floodlighting to 27 th October	381.00		
Verity Jones – Pavilion hire	28.00		
Patrick O-Hara – Main Hall hire	<u>10.00</u>		
	<u>694.00</u>		
Cheques issued			
Total Contract Cleaners	Cleaning on 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th October		100.00
James Turner Limited	Annual boiler service		237.60
D P Electrics	Safety lighting check and PAT testing		138.00
John Phillips	Toilet opening from 1st August to 31st October		92.00
Hertfordshire Count Council	Cleaning materials		86.09
Rosemary Brown	22 hours cleaning @ £7.85 per hour		172.20
Mark Blacktin	To fit baby changing mats, soap dispenser and other repair job		90.00
			<u>915.89</u>
Cheques received			
M. Murray	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		64.00
			<u>64.00</u>

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Development of the Community Hall (including quotations for installing new Pavilion window frame and boiler system)**

Mr. Smith said that he and the Clerk had met with Louise Beaton to discuss the development of the Community Hall and we now await her report.

Ms. Beaton did discuss alternative heating systems such as air source heat pumps.

Mr. Smith agreed to contact an air source heating company to obtain details and costings.

Action: M. Smith

- **Shower in the referees changing room**

The shower in the referees changing room (formally used for storage by Beane Valley) does not work. The Clerk believes that James Turner Limited fitted an isolation valve following a leakage problem in this shower and the showers water supply was been turned off. It was agreed to ask James Turner Limited to turn the water supply to the shower back on, when they next visit the Community Hall.

- **Annual emergency lighting and PAT testing**

The Annual emergency lighting and PAT testing has been completed.

The PAT testing included items owned by the Parish Council and used by the Clerk at her home (namely: laptop-computer, printer, shredder and laminating machines). The kettle in the Community Hall kitchen failed its PAT test and Mr. Meischke has purchased a replacement kettle.

The emergency lighting test highlighted a problem with the emergency exit sign in the Pavilion. This needs a new battery pack and will not work if there is a power cut. See item below.

- **Quotation for repairing and replacing lighting**

Following a request from the Youth Club for additional outside lighting on the sportsfield side of the Community Hall building, Mr. Meischke asked D P Electrics to quote for providing two external lights. When the Community Hall was originally built there were two outside lights, however these were vandalised and were not replaced.

D P Electrics have submitted a quotation, dated 4th November, as follows.

‘To replace one em light battery and lamps.

To supply and fit two new 500 w t/ halogen lights fittings with grilles.

Labour and materials £320.00 + vat

To use two LED lights will cost about £70.00 + vat more’

The Trustees present at the meeting agreed to accept D. P. Electrics quotation and welcomed such feedback from the users of our facilities.

The Parish Council instructed the Clerk to accept D. P, Electrics quotation.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Purchase and installation of baby changing table, toilet reducer seat and step-up**

The baby-changing table has been fitted in the disabled toilet and the toilet reducer and step-up are also in place.

Mrs. Dinnin said that the Dots and Tots mothers were very pleased with this new equipment.

Mr. Smith suggested that the wooden panelling in the toilets are painted and has asked Mark Blacktin to quote for it

The Trustees to discuss at their next meeting.

Agenda: Trustees

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **New play equipment update**

Kompan are expected to fit the end caps and security bolt cap inserts sometime in November. When this work is completed, the Clerk to pay Kompan’s invoice of £11,361.84.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Repair of Rainbow multi-play and slide**

Mr. Smith has purchased the recycled plastic sheeting for the rainbow multi-play and slide to replace the delaminating marine ply. When this has been delivered he will arrange for Mark Blacktin to fit it.

Action: M. Smith

- **Sportsfield**

Mr. Knight said that the sportsfield is looking good and he and Mr. Smith will inspect it in March/April 2015 to agree what work needs doing.

- **MPPA**

A moss-kill and pressure wash are planned for March/April 2015.

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Hedge**

Parish Councillors were all sent Adam Welch’s quotation of £340, to cut back the overgrown hedge from Old School Orchard to the back of 78/80 High Street which they accepted by e-mail. Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch has now completed the work and done an excellent job.

It was agreed to write to Mr. Brett (5 Old School Orchard) to say that now that the hedge has been cut back the Parish Council will expect him to cut back this section of hedge in his ownership, once a year around June/July time.

Action: M. Smith

- **War Memorial**

Refer to item 5 b 6, Review of actions - Purchase and install additional planting required for War Memorial garden.

- **Allotments**

Mrs. Dinnin said that most of the allotment holders have renewed their tenancies for 2014/15, one has relocated to a different plot and several other plots are now vacant. Some of the vacant plots at the far end of the allotments will be used to widen the footpath to allow for larger grass cutting machinery to gain access to the Church Walk side of the plot to carry out any maintenance work.

The person who has relocated to a different plot asked for two bits of carpet on her new plot to be removed. Another allotment holder has a large amount of rubbish on half of his plot that he inherited from the previous tenant.

Adam Welch has quote £270 to remove the carpet and the rubbish from site. Parish Councillors agreed to accept his quotation. **Action: C. Dinnin**

It was agreed that the disused section of the allotments could be treated like the Lammas and Watton Green and have two grass cuts per year. Mrs. Dinnin to have this extra grass cutting work included in the annual strimming and mowing schedules. **Action: C. Dinnin**

Mr. Smith confirmed that the water stock-cock for allotment was turned off at the beginning of November.

- **Lammas**

Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Smith and Mr. Knight met with Charlie Bell on site at the Lammas on Monday 17th November to discuss the work to the Lammas this year and further works required. The elaborate scheme to divert the main flow of the river, via the culvert into the Mill Pond, has been abandoned. The Environment Agency has now gone back to the notching of the wear scheme. However, the wall on the Willowdene side of the wear is not in good condition and the Environment agency cannot get their insurance company to underwrite the work. They have asked if the Parish Council would consider getting a one off insurance policy to underwrite the work, otherwise they cannot proceed with the notching. Parish Councillors agreed to investigate the cost. **Action: M. Smith**

During the site visit, they walked along the Lammas riverbank to look at the tree work Adam Welch completed earlier in the year. The aim is to open up 70% of the riverbank area and leave 30% with shade cover. There are only a few trees of interest along the Lammas riverbank as not much of the current trees are worth saving. Mr. Smith said that to remove two-thirds of the trees will cost in the region of £4,000. Funding will come from the S106 funding.

Plans are still going ahead to install log baffles to help this chalk stream river go back to its naturally meandering state. This work will probably cost in the region of £5,000 to £6,000.

Hertfordshire Living Rivers (Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust) have £8000 of funding towards all the proposed work on the Lammas stretch of the River Beane, including the notching of the wear. The rest of the funding will come out of the S106 funds held by Hertfordshire County Council.

Bob and Anthea Thornton have completed planting their trial sites. The Lammas section has a picket fence around the area to protect the plants until they have established. They have also planted 2 sections on Abel Smith's end of the riverbank.

Mr. Knight noted that the plants are potential replacements for the Himalayan Balsam, which are very invasive. Many people find this plant visually attractive and therefore are happy to encourage them to grow in their gardens. The hope is that the public will be happy to replace Himalayan Balsam for some of the plants being trialled by Bob and Anthea Thornton.

- **Land at Rivershill**

It was agreed to defer meeting to discuss Parish Council land at Rivershill and Rivershill Green until the New Year. This item to be put on the January 2015 agenda under Specific items. **Agenda: 01/2015**

- **Dog waste bins and litterbins in the village**

Lif Bishop (Beane Valley Children's Centre) had suggested that the dog-waste bin adjacent to their gate, be located at the corner of the footpath 17 as it goes up to Church Lane. However, there is very little room for the bin at this location.

Mr. Smith looked at the relocation of the dog-waste bin and suggested that the best position would be on the right hand-side of the salt bin, on the Glebe Close side. He has spoken to the residents living at the adjacent house, and they have no objections. Ms. Waltham has spoken to Lif Bishop accordingly and she is happy with the proposed site. Parish Councillors agreed that the dog-waste bin should now be relocated.

Mr. Smith to contact Mark Blacktin to ask him to quote for moving the dog-waste bin. **Action: M. Smith**

Mr. Smith said that the litterbins at either end of footpath 17, between Rectory Lane and Glebe Close, are too small for purposed. He said that there are two new large litterbins in the Community Hall internal

storeroom and suggested that the small bins are replaced with these new large ones. Parish Councillors agreed to the exchange. Mr. Smith to arrange for the bins to be fitted.

Action: M. Smith

It was agreed to contact East Herts Council to find out how often the litterbins are being emptied, as it would appear that it is only once a fortnight.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Memorial Oak tree for Watton Green**

Mrs. Dinnin has spoken to Maurice Gordon about siting of the Oak tree in memory of one of the Watton-at-Stone Ramblers.

- **Oak tree branches obscuring the floodlights on the MPPA**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed Adam Welch's quotation of £80 for cutting back the oak tree branch by the MPPA. The work has now been completed following e-mail approval from Parish Councillors. Mr. Knight and Mr. Stock confirmed that enough of the branch had been removed to remedy the obstruction it was causing to the floodlights on the MPPA.

- **Watton Green**

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Stock are to visit Watton Green to see what work is required on site, especially with regard to Millennium Bench and new tree-planting. During their visit, they intend to inspect the trees at the edge of the cottage site. Tony Bradford reported that some of these trees are growing over the telephone line and that he did not have the resources to cut them back.

Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock

New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee

- **Applications for funding**

The following organisations have submitted applications for funding from the New Homes Bonus funds.

- War Memorial Hall
- Parish Church
- Youth Football (under 7's)
- Dots and Tots
- Beane Valley
- Cricket Club
- Allotment and Garden

All Parish Councillors have been e-mailed a summary of the grant applications.

The Allotment and Garden form was not properly completed and they appear to have misunderstood the criteria for applying. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to contact the Allotment and Garden applicants to go through the details of their application.

Action: C. Dinnin

It was agreed that the New Homes Bonus sub-committee meet to discuss each application in detail. After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that they will accept the decision of the New Homes Bonus sub-committee and that successful applications will be notified as soon as possible.

The New Homes Bonus sub-committee to meet on Tuesday 25th November at 1830, to discuss in detail the merits of each application.

b) Routine Reports

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

Mr. Smith and the Clerk did the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm prior this meeting.

- ii) **Monthly village-report**

Mr. Harris completed the report on 13th November.

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

- **Community Hall gutter** - needs clearing. The Trustees to review this during their next meeting.
- **Windows** - need painting. The Trustees to review this during their next meeting.
- **Kicker boards** - have splinters/cracks.
- **MPPA notice** – stating, - “In poor weather conditions, players use the courts at their own risk”, this needs rewording.

Mr. Knight said that the LTA insurance covers users on the MPPA and required this notice to be erected. He agreed to check the requirements for this notice and if the MPPA is covered by the LTA insurance as neither the Parish Council nor Community Hall pay a subscription to them.

Action: I. Knight

- **Play area** – large swings need attention. The Trustees to review this during their next meeting.

- **Referees changing room** – These were in an unacceptable condition. One smelt very badly due to a tarpaulin being left there and needs to be removed and urgently taken to the dump. The other contained kit that had been left there. Junk needs removing and needs to be disposed of at the dump.

Action: I. Knight/M. Smith

It was agreed that all of the changing-rooms must be left clear of any equipment and/or kit. Mr. Knight to pursue this via the Sports and Social Club.

Action. I. Knight

iii) **6-monthly check of MPPA, Play Area on sportsfield and Community Hall equipment**

This was carried out by Mr. Harris (as part of him doing the monthly report) together with Mr. Stock. Refer to above item.

iv) **Weekly sportsfield**

Nothing to report.

iv) **Website**

None.

vi) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

9 Correspondence received

a) **E-mails from Mike Freeman re s106 funding**

Refer to item following 6 b, planning decisions – Police report from Sergeant Duncan Wallace

10 Village organisations

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

Mr. Stock said that he is to attend the War Memorial Hall Management Committee's AGM, and the following committee meeting, on 19th November.

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

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

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight said that the film titled ‘On the Banks of the Beane’ will be re-shown at the War Memorial Hall on Wednesday 25th February 2015. The Parish Council has donated £100 towards the films production and DVD copies are now on sale.

- **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**

Mrs. Stanley said that the Pre-School Playgroup are currently closed. They moved to their new premises adjacent to Beane Valley Children Centre, but cannot open until OFSTED have completed an inspection of the new facilities.

The group will ultimately suffer in the short term from this delay because some parents who work have moved their children to nursery schools in the area, including Watton-at-Stone nursery.

- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club:** Nothing to report.

- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.

11 Items for Parish News

The Parish Council is too late to submit an entry in the joint December/January issue of the Parish News.

- **The meeting closed at 2118.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 16th December 2014.**