

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 15th December 2015

- Present:** Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman) Mr. John Meischke
 Mrs. Christine Dinnin Mr. Denis Filer
 Mrs. Catherine Hammon Mr. Ian Knight
 Mrs. Helen McCash Mrs. Margaret Stanley
 Mr. David Stock Dr. Emma Waltham (after 1918)
 Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)
- Members of public:** District Councillor Michael Freeman (to 20.08)
 DC Kirsty Richardson and PCSO Sally Brooks (to 1928)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: None.

2 Public Participation

Mr. Smith welcomed DC Kirsty Richardson and PCSO Sally Brooks to the meeting.

DC Kirsty Richardson said that the December figures to date show no crimes detected. For the same period in December 2104 there were 8 crimes detected.

She then read out her report as follows.

- **Dangerous Dog in High Street** - In February 2015, a dog ran lose on the high street attacking another dog and causing in injury to the owner. The owner of the dog has since been convicted and is now subject to a control order.
- **Arrest and seizure of van** - A male who is known in the village who had been committing various burglaries was stopped in a van, which was on cloned plates in March 2015. He was subsequently arrested and attended court. The van was seized and since this has not been seen and his criminality within the village has stopped.
- **Drug Dealer Benington** - In July 2013 after intelligence received, we found in progress a drug dealer. He had on him around £3,500 worth of cannabis. Intelligence suggested that he was dealing to the youths of Watton and this arrest completely disrupted the cannabis supply into the village and ASB calls reduced. In September, he was convicted and received a forfeiture notice on the drugs fine of £800, costs and other charges £235 and community service.
- **Burglary – Great Innings** - In November 2015 a male broke into his old address and threatened to kill officers. This male was arrested and charged with that offence. A few weeks later he then committed an armed robbery in Hertford. I arrested for this a few days after and he is currently in HMP and expected to receive a sentence in the region of around 12 years.
- **Shoplifter from Londis** - In November a shoplifter who was targeting the Londis store in the High Street has since been arrested and is currently in HMP. A Criminal Behaviour Order has also been applied for to prevent him from committing further crime to the shop.

Antisocial Behaviour Reports

- Since 24th October – there have been NO calls to the MUGA!
- Total of 12 stop/searches throughout the year around the village.

On 24th October 2015 two males committed drugs and public order offences both of which were summonsed to court. Both appeared at court on 7th December 2015 and received the following:

Public order offence: £220 fine, £85 costs, £20 victim surcharge, £185 court costs

Drugs offence: £180 fine, £85 costs, £185 court costs.

Parking tickets issues

- Clappers Lane junction with Station Road – 8 issued
- Total for the year: 33 for the year

District Councillor Mike Freeman said that the disused site in Mill lane has now been boarded up and a notice issued to the owners asking them to clear all rubbish from the site within 28 days

Mr. Freeman and all Parish Councillors expressed their thanks DC Kirsty Richardson and PCSO Sally Brooks for all the work they do throughout the Parish.

DC Kirsty Richardson and PCSO Sally Brooks left the meeting.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

4 Declaration of Interests

Mrs. Hammon declared personal interest in item 5 b 1, Review of actions – Establish ownership of land adjacent to Parish Council land (Mrs. Hammon may be interested in purchasing the Parish Council owned land at Rivershill).

Mrs. Hammon declared personal interest in item 6 b i, Planning decisions - Heath Mount School Woodhall Park (Mrs. Hammon's son attends Heath Mount School).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 17 November 2015**
Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.

b) Review of actions

1. **Establish ownership of land adjacent to Parish Council land**
Mr. Meischke said that from the gateway to the roadside access is across the private driveways of 48 and 50 Rivershill. The narrow stretch of land from the gateway to the Parish Council owned land at Rivershill is not registered. The land is therefore landlocked.
2. **Clean the moss from the War Memorial**
Refer to item 7 d, Specific items -War Memorial Report.
3. **Investigate matting for the goalmouths** - This action is outstanding. **Action: M. Smith**

c) Action points resolved

1. Fit new rubber feet on sports benches
2. **Accept Adam Welch's quotation for tree work on the sportsfield**
Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch is waiting for the ground to be drier before he does the tree work on the sportsfield.
3. Modify Risk Assessment re Clerk's salary and pay roll
4. Write to planning department re Gregorys Farm, Whempstead
5. Write to planning department re Bridge House, 1b High Street
6. Compose a letter to Michael Stutley (HCC) re Station Road and High Street
7. Send letter to East Herts Council re Green Belt review
8. Meet with a representative from James Turner Limited re boiler system
9. Accept Mark Morris's quotation to produce two new blinds and re-fit existing ones
10. Ask Peter Philips to supply a quotation for decorating the Pavilion
11. Obtain cutlery from Christine Grant
12. Contact BT again about their internet speeds
13. Monitor the condition of the sportsfield & cancel football matches if too wet for use
14. Purchase four new seats and one picnic bench
15. Arrange a meeting of the New Homes Bonus sub-committee
16. Submit meter readings to E-on
17. Notify East Herts Council that their dog bins near the War Memorial is breaking up
18. Notify Virgin Media the their box in Hockerill is damaged
19. Destroy all monthly village-reports that are older than three years
20. Report light out at Mill Lane
21. E-mail Parish Councillors correspondence received from Dr. Norden
22. Write to Mr. Morris re footpath maintenance

d) Action points outstanding

1. **Pursue both Environment Agency and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust re Lammas**
Mr. Smith said he did e-mail both organisations but had no response.
2. **Generate a new notice for the MPPA**
Mr. Knight said he had today given the Clerk the information to generate the Sports and Social Club priority usage notice. **Action: J. Allsop**
3. **Draw up an Asset Management plan:** In progress. **Action: M. Stanley**

6 Planning

Mrs. McCash reported on the following items.

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions

i) Heath Mount School Woodhall Park (3/15/1772/VAR)

Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of Planning Permission for Erection of six replacement classrooms and performing arts space

- East Herts Council – granted

7 Specific items

a) Traffic along Station Road

Mr. Stock said he attended a site meeting in Station Road, adjacent to the Gatekeeper Meadow development, at 0900 on Wednesday 9 December 2015, together with Mike Freeman (District Councillor), Ben Biggin (HCC), Michael Stutley (HCC), Lisa Page (EHDC Planning Officer) and Chris Simpson (HCC Highways – Senior Engineer development management).

He then continued by reporting on the main aspects of the meeting, a summary of which is as follows.

- Yet again it was easy for all present to witness and acknowledge the traffic problems and pedestrian safety-issues caused by the extensive on-street parking between Clappers Lane and, of late, onto the railway bridge.
- It appears that as far as the Clappers Lane junction is concerned, the developers have done what they were supposed to. That said it was again acknowledged by HCC that the problems caused by re-aligning the carriageway was not foreseen and should have been picked up at an early stage.
- Mr. Stock asked HCC about the status of the drawings issued as part of the public consultation and how accurately they reflect the reality of the scheme. Apparently the drawings are intended just to give a general idea of what is intended and not the detail of how it may be in reality. With regard to the laybys in particular he felt that this was very misleading because capacity was not shown and the layby next to the Clappers Lane junction appeared to be so close that it did nothing to improve safe access or sight-lines.
- The development has not yet been signed-off due to internal-estate safety issues, such as lighting etc. This sign-off does not involve the Clappers Lane junction.
- Further to this Mr. Stock asked Mr. Simpson to look into what the developer can/will do re an improved Gateway feature (i.e., something more than just road markings) that would work well with the proposed raised platform on the road. He also pointed out that on one of the original plans there is a reference to the inclusion of traffic-calming measures if required.
- Again, he talked them through what we, the Parish Council, would like in terms of a solution (i.e., as in his most recent letter to HCC from an action point at our last PC meeting) and repeated that we preferred minimum-capacity laybys and with the road returned to its original width, or better still and in the light of restricted funding, no laybys at all and the road returned to its original with double-yellow lines on both sides. Mr. Freeman pointed out that he could see that two of the cars parked in the laybys belonged to residents from other parts of the village, namely Rivershill and the High Street.
- Nobody is in any doubt that we have a serious problem; the only area of contention appears to concern the inclusion of laybys and related sight-lines. Again, our preference is to retain the street scene, with the current green buffer-zone between the housing and Station Road kept as originally planned.
- If the proposed laybys are built, Mr. Stock and Mr. Freeman felt that, human nature being what it is, it would not be surprising for them to be used (understandably so) as additional and convenient parking by the adjacent residents, thus doing nothing for commuter parking.
- HCC is still going through the public responses and plans to get back to us early in the New Year. Mr Stock said he looked forward to this and hoped that we could soon move on with a satisfactory Station Road scheme without further delays or undue expenditure leading to the loss of what we consider to be important components of that scheme. It seems that about 800 letters were issued and approximately 100 responses received; which is a very good result.
- At one point Mr. Simpson was confused about who was funding what, but this was clarified for him.
- With regard to the proposed re-positioning of the Hazeldell-side footpath that 'links' with Rectory Lane, Michael Stutley explained that this location was chosen due to technical issues related to sight-lines, etc. Mr. Stock said he remained content with this as long as there was much improved on-road and kerb-side signage to increase driver-awareness of this pedestrian crossing-point.

Mr. Freeman made the following points.

- HCC has to come up with firm proposals (which includes not going back and forth with Ken Crofton) very soon as we do not want to see much more of the S106 money eaten up by consultation and research.
- HCC officers effectively acknowledged that through lack of oversight (which given their available resource is not surprising) they had failed to observe what Barratt Homes had done to the road and had failed to anticipate, from past experience, what this could mean in terms of parking. So they really have got to do something to put it right.
- While at the site meeting he drew HCC's attention to the outstanding request he made to them to investigate flooding in the High Street (which may possibly be aggravated by Clappers Lane).
- He said it was useful to have Lisa Page there so that she could see for herself the negative impact that the Station Road parking has had on the street scene. This was not intended or envisaged when the plans were approved.
- He said the he (as a District Councillor), together with the Parish Council, is trying to carry the village with us re any future development and will stand a better chance if we can demonstrate that there will be no repeat of the Station Road issues.

Following these reports there was a general discussion about looking into the possibility of creating additional commuter-parking spaces elsewhere.

b) Traffic along High Street

As with Station Road, HCC is still going through the public consultation responses re High Street improvements. Ken Crofton has put on hold the installation of the passing places because of concerns highlighted by the High Street shopkeepers and publicans. The remainder of the scheme has not been put on hold. Mrs. Stanley said that with regard to the passing places in the High Street, the Parish Council need to take the advice of the Highways technical team to resolve these difficulties.

c) Neighbourhood plan

Mr. Smith emailed all Parish Councillors and volunteers on 1st December. He said he had received replies from 16/17 of these volunteers re the most convenient days for a meeting. The favoured dates for the first meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan committee are Wednesday 27th January or Wednesday 3rd February. He asked Parish Councillors to check their diaries and inform him which days are best for them. He said he was not expecting all Parish Councillors to attend the Neighbourhood Plan meeting. **Action: Parish Councillors** Mr. Smith said he would like someone, other than himself, to chair the Neighbourhood Plan meetings but agreed to chair its first meeting.

Richard Aston is reluctant to be part of the committee because of conflict of interests with his work. However, Matt Wood and David Humby are happy to volunteer their services.

Mr. Smith asked all Parish Councillors to put forward the good and bad things within the parish and e-mail them to him. This might save the Parish from having to have an environmental assessment, which would cost approximately £10,000 to £15,000, **Action: Parish Councillors**

Mr. Freeman said that there has been a drainage problem on Station Road since the building of the Gatekeeper Meadow development. During the summer months, some garages were flooding in the High Street. The High Street drains were unable to cope with the flow of water coming down Station Road.

The High Street has had a long history of drainage problems and some of the system is believed to be very old and the pipework far too small to cope with the amount of water that comes into the system. It was noted that the road drains from Hazeldell comes out by the Methodist Church and not down Station Road.

Mrs. Stanley said that the village hierarchy should reflect the fact that Watton School is over capacity.

Mr. Freeman said if the two pieces of green belt land highlighted in the draft plan are developed, they are sufficiently far away from the central core of the village that the majority of people living in these areas will drive, rather than walk, to use local facilities such as the shops, school and station.

d) War Memorial Report

Whilst carryout out the cleaning of the War Memorial, Mr. Freeman noted that the base is tilting because the water he was using to clean the memorial was flowing towards the road.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke have thoroughly inspected the War Memorial and found that it has two cracks, one on the north-side and one on the south-side. They took measurements on the ground and estimated that the base is tilting by 19mm. A report has been compiled and is attached. **See attached**

It was agreed that the War Memorial should be inspected in detail every 6-months. This item to be put on the agenda for June 2016. **Agenda: 06/2016**

Mr. Filer to find out if the Parish Council insurance covers the War Memorial for subsidence. **Action: D. Filer**

Mr. Freeman said he had now completed cleaning the War Memorial and suggested that it should be inspected each October to see if it needs further cleaning. **Agenda: 10/2016**

e) **Library**

Mr. Freeman reported that he had to hold two separate meetings for the library volunteers as not all volunteers were able to attend on the same date.

Two main principles were agreed. There must be a good stock of books, which will need to be renewed on a regular basis so that fresh material is always available. As well as books, DVD and audio books to be available.

Mr. Freeman said that a very good calibre of people came forward as volunteers. HCC are happy to support the library and have agreed to supply a minimum of 100 extra books by the beginning of 2016. The aim is for a minimum stock of 500 books comprising of various titles including children's books. Another source of material is from one the charities who have too many books for their shops. Mr. Freeman said that the key thing is not to be too ambitious.

Additional service that could be provided are photocopying facilities and the provision of jigsaws.

It was suggested that the library be opened on a weekly basis to see how well the facilities are received.

Coffee and tea will be made available for visitors for a nominal fee.

The Community Hall has purchased one bookshelf, which is very shallow and therefore does not impinge excessively on the width of the meeting room. Mr. Meischke had to make some modification to the shelf unit, so that it fitted round the skirting board and sits tightly against the wall.

Mr. Freeman said that he had applied for an East Herts Council grant for four additional bookshelf units and two tables to replace the existing ones in the meeting room.

Mike Freeman left the meeting.

8 Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

• **Monthly accounts**

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments	
None		None	
Cheques issued			
GoPlastics Limited	2 Porto Benches		744.00
Marmax Products Limited	2 benches, 1 tree seat and 1 picnic table		1,402.32
J. Allsop	Amazon - power supply for LG computer monitor		23.93
Community Hall	1/2 year grant		3,010.00
Community Hall	New Homes bonus grant towards windows		10,000.00
Salaries and Wages	November 2015		1131.21
			<u>16,311.46</u>
Cheques received			
7 Allotment holders	Rent and water charges – 2015/16		<u>141.75</u>
			<u>141.75</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Carla Beach – Pavilion	126.00	EBay - 8 ferrules for sports bench	18.40
Phillip Little - Main Hall	24.00	EBay -Child safety sockets	<u>2.95</u>
Madeline Griffiths – Pavilion	28.00		<u>21.35</u>
Caroline Paton – Main Hall	6.00		
Dominic Manzi – Main Hall & Pavilion	65.00		
Ms. Lambourne – Main Hall & Pavilion	64.00		
Lottie Pickering – Main Hall & Pavilion	56.00		
Dawn Nightingale– Pavilion	21.00		
Dots & Tots – Main Hall & Pavilion	183.60		
Floodlighting donations 20/10 to 09/12	220.00		
	<u>793.60</u>		

Cheques issued		
Parish Council	S J Murphy Limited new wall of windows	20,160.00
J. Allsop for Kedal Ltd	2 x blue plastic sheeting to repair play equipment	230.26
J. Allsop for Newitts	Tennis Net Winder mechanism	93.90
Wages	November 2015	174.90
Total Contract Cleaners	Hall cleaning in November 2015 – 5 times	150.00
		<u>20,809.06</u>
Cheques received		
Paula Sutton	Pavilion	194.40
Dave Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion	187.00
Natalie Stichbury	Main Hall and Pavilion	32.50
Parish Council	1/2 year grant	3,010.00
Parish Council	New Homes bonus grant towards windows	10,000.00
Mrs. Harris	Main Hall and Pavilion	64.00
		<u>13,487.90</u>

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **Approval of minutes of Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting held on 1st December 2015**
Parish Councillors who attended the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 1st December approved minutes.

The following recommendations were approved.

- **Hire charges for 2016/17**
The Community Hall hire-charges to remain the same gross amount (i.e. gross including VAT regardless of the percentage rate).
 - **The Sports and Social Club hire-charge for 2016/17**
The Sports & Social Club hire-charge to be increased to £2,960 (increase of £60)
The Clerk to write to the Sports and Social Club accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**
 - **Floodlighting charges for 2016/17**
The floodlighting charges remain at their current level of £1 for 10 minutes.
 - **Allotment rents for 2016/17**
The allotment rent remains at £25 per full allotment and £12.50 for one-half of an allotment.
Allotment water charges to be reviewed at the September 2016 Parish Council meeting, prior to the annual invoices going out on 1st October 2016. **Agenda: 09/2015**
 - **Various quotations**
Parish Councillors agreed that the following quotations be accepted.
 - **Frank Cooper and Son Limited (dated 10th November)**
To gang-mow sportsfield (per cut) £59 (plus VAT)
 - **Nick Whitehead – Sportsfield hedge cutting (text message quotation)** £400 (plus VAT)
 - **Lammas and Watton Green grass-cut**
 - **Blue Bury Contractors**
Blue Bury Contractors’ quotation remains unchanged for 2016/17 at £1,320 plus VAT for the following work.
 - Cutting and removal of grass from both areas
 - Secondary flail cut as necessary
 - Trimming under trees
 - Keeping boundary shrub incursion under control
 - Trimming ditch and banks at Watton Green
 - **Ted Brown – has verbally quoted for the following work in 2016.**
 - Perimeter of sportsfield, around the MPPA, bike ramps and seats
 - and mow between MPPA and Church Walk hedge £90 per cut
 - Cutting the grass where the gang mowers can't go from the gate, around the Community Hall to School Lane plus the weeding the Community Hall £40 per cut
 - Pruning the Community Hall garden once a year £60
- Write to all contractors who submitted quotations. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **High Street maintenance work, leaf clearance, mowing and strimming work in the village Greenwood Tree Care** (Adam Welch) – was awarded a three year contract (at £2800 per annum) commencing in 2015.
- **Employees and self-employed remuneration**
Parish Councillors agreed the following increases in the self-employed remuneration rates.
Ted Brown's self-employed remuneration increases from £8.20 to £8.35 per hour.
Rosemary Brown's self-employed remuneration increases from £7.95 to £8.10 per hour.
- **Budget 2016/17**
Mr. Filer highlighted the main items listed in the Budget notes for the benefit of Dr. Waltham, who was the only Parish Councillor not present at the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 1st December.
Parish Councillors approved the budget figures.
- **Precept 2015/16**
It was agreed that the provisional precept requirement for 2016/17 is £32,810.
The Clerk to notify East Herts Council accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Parish Council audit**
Mr. Filer reported that the arrangements for external audits are changing owing to the abolition of the Audit Commission and a new regulatory framework being introduced. This affects all councils and therefore NALC and SLCC have set up a company to procure audit services on behalf of all Parish and Town Councils. They have officially written by e-mail inviting all councils to become an opted-in authority to this scheme.
Mr. Filer recommended that the Parish Council opt-in to this scheme rather than set up our own independent audit panel and procure relevant services. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.
No further action is required, because by not opting-out the Parish Council will automatically be included in the arrangement for the next five years.
- **SLCC Membership**
The SLCC membership renewal is £149, which remains unchanged for the year 2016. Mr. Filer said that the membership provides the Parish Council with legal advice and useful information about changes in legislation, e.g. change in accounting practices. Although this information is also available from the Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils, their annual membership fee would be in the region of a thousand pounds. Parish Councillors agreed to renew the SLCC membership. **Action: J. Allsop**

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Minutes and report on meeting of the Trustees held on Tuesday 24th November 2015**
The Trustees agreed that the minutes be approved.
- **Community Hall action plan**
Parish Councillors agreed that Dr. Waltham put together a very comprehensive report. The Trustees will now be acting on this report.
- **EHC Village Hall conference Report and booking**
Mr. Meischke attended the East Herts Council village conference on 2nd December at Hunsdon Village Hall. He said that it was a very interesting and informative meeting and it transpired that the Community Hall might be eligible for a grant towards modifying the Main Hall. Unfortunately, we are too late for the current round of funding, but a similar scheme should be available in June 2016.
- **Repair to roofing**
Mr. Meischke said that City Roofing Contractors estimate that up to 30% of the roof tiles, over the Pavilion and meeting room end of the building, are broken. The damaged tiles are tearing the roof felt when they are lifted in the wind, which has caused the Pavilion roof to leak. Mr. Meischke said he that to date, he had been unsuccessful in obtaining a quotation for the repairs from City Roofing Contractors.
Mr. Meischke said that he was looking into other options for a new roof. For example, a steel roofing would cost approximately £4,000-£5,000. There are now more advanced plastic finish options available, which might not cost much more than repairing the current roof. Unfortunately, a clay tile system cannot be used because of the problem with vandals throwing things onto the roof, which would then break the tiles.
Mr. Meischke to obtain estimates for both the repair and replacement of this roof. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Replacement boiler**
James Turner Limited have fitted a water flow meter to the showering system and Mr. Meischke will be taking weekly readings every Monday. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Kitchen cutlery & plates**
Mr. Meischke said that Christine Grant has provided the Community Hall with a large amount of cutlery glasses and plates from the former Papillion restaurant for a total cost of £50. Parish Councillors agreed this payment
- **Rainbow multi play and slide repairs**
Mark Blacktin will be carrying out the repairs required to the Rainbow multi-play and slide next week. He will be replacing delaminating sections of plywood with coloured re-cycled plastic sheeting.
- **Internet connection on hold**
This item has been placed on hold because BT cannot provide a good internet connection and Virgin Media want over £2,000 to lay cabling to the Community Hall.
Mr. Freeman suggested that the Trustees could apply for a grant towards a Virgin Media connection.

Recreation & Amenities

Nothing to report

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Benches and picnic table**
The four seats (which include a tree seat) and picnic bench have all been received and are currently stored at Blue Bury Farm. Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke will arrange for these to be installed in 2016.
Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke

New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee

Mrs. Stanley reported on the following.

- **Minutes and report of meeting held on 7th December 2015**
All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the minutes of the New-Homes Bonus Sub-Committee meeting prior to this meeting. Parish Councillors present at that meeting approved the minutes.
Mrs. Stanley said that the New-Homes Bonus Sub-committee had reviewed and discussed the applications in detail on 7th December. Their recommendation is that a total of £10,617 of grants be awarded to the following organisations (the individual award amounts are detailed in the minutes of the meeting).
 - War Memorial Hall
 - Parish Church
 - Lunch Club
 - Dots and Tots
 - Friends of Watton school
 - Cricket Club
 - Youth Football (under 7s, 10s and 11s)

This was agreed by Parish Councillors. All New Homes Bonus applicants to be notified accordingly.

Action: M. Stanley/J. Allsop

Parish Councillors agreed to the purchase of 22 child seats from New Homes Bonus funds, for use in the Community Hall. Dots and Tots had requested 22 child seats in their New Homes Bonus grant application, however the New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee were not happy with the quality of seats specified and had recommended that the Parish Council purchase them for the Community Hall.

Mr. Stock said that because it was a 'living document', to be revised in accordance with experience, he was happy to modify Edition 3 (August 2015) of the 'Application for funding from the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Parish Council' to clarify the funding criteria with regard to repairs, overheads, running costs and maintenance. He will then pass the revised document to Mrs. Stanley for her comments.

Action: D. Stock

b) Routine Reports

- i) **Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests**
Mr. Meischke said he would complete these inspections tomorrow. **Action: J. Meischke**
- ii) **Gas and electricity meter readings**
Mr. Meischke said he would take the meter readings and forward them to the Clerk. **Action: J. Meischke**

iii) **Fire Inspection**

Mr. Meischke said that Rosemary Brown had not identified any problems during her weekly inspection of the fire equipment and he had duly signed the fire inspection booklet accordingly.

iv) **Monthly village-report**

Mr. Stock completed the report on 14th December 2015.

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

• **Play area**

- Safety surface under the swing-seats needs to be monitored.
- Plywood panel on the Rainbow multi-play and slide: wood exposed and plywood delaminating. Also signs of the safety-surface cracking.

Mr. Meischke said that Mark Blacktin is due to replace the plywood with recycled plastic sheeting.

• **Community Hall**

- Small section of external electric-cable (from the outside light above the Main Hall fire-exit door) pulled from one of the wall clips.

• **MPPA**

- Surface: appears that someone has been riding a bicycle on it.
- Fencing: jagged edge on top of plywood panel on far right-hand padlocked gate.

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight to inspect and take action as required. **Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight**

- Notices: new and revised liability-notice missing.

The Clerk is in the process of order two notices for the MPPA. One the revised liability notice and the Sports and Social Club priority usage notice. **Action: J. Allsop**

• **Allotments**

- Access slightly overhanging on Glebe Court side of the access road.
- Some of the plots are very untidy and look like dumps, in particular those adjacent to the boundary with Kimberly.

Mrs. McCash said that an allotment holder had reported that a car had been driven down to one of those allotments several times in one day and deposited a headboard and crates etc., on a plot.

Mrs. Dinnin to investigate.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mrs. Dinnin reported that the new owners of Kimberley had cut their boundary-hedge down to a height of approximately 4 feet.

• **War Memorial**

- Clean and 'new planting' taken hold ok. He suggested that one of the shrubs needs to be supported by a stake to stop if falling over. Mrs. Dinnin to inspect and take action as required. **Action: C. Dinnin**

• **37 Station Road**

- The hedge on the boundary with Glebe Close is restricting and, in places, blocking the footpath. Mr. Stock said that in accordance with our protocol, two more Parish Councillors must confirm the situation before our standard letter is sent to that address. **Action: C. Dinnin/H. McCash**

• **Mill Lane**

- This area is spoilt by the dilapidated Mill building and the associated rubbish on the site.

Mr. Stock did end by saying that, overall, it was pleasing to see the village clean and in good shape; especially for this time of the year.

vi) **Weekly sportsfield**

Nothing to report.

vii) **Website**

Mr. Meischke said that he and Dr. Waltham have discussed updating the current Watton-at-Stone website and having a new site developed. Dr. Waltham agreed to investigate further. **Action: E. Waltham**

viii) **Highway and Lighting faults**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the streetlamp attached to the house wall near the entrance to Mill Lane, is still not working. The Clerk said she reported this fault to Highways, using their online service, on 18th November. She agreed to chase. **Action: J. Allsop**

9 Correspondence received

a) Correspondence from Dr. A. Norden

The Clerk to e-mail correspondence received from Dr. Norden to all Parish Councillors. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **DMG cleaning services**

Mr. Meischke said that the Clerk had forwarded him an e-mail (dated 15th December) from DMG cleaning services who specialise in commercial deep cleaning. He agreed to contact this company for a quotation to carry out a deep clean of the Community Hall. This would serve as a cost comparison against the amount charged by Total Contract Cleaners. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Letter from John Archer**

John Archer wrote on 5th December requesting information about any World War II Army searchlight locations in our area. It was agreed to forward Mr. Archer's letter to Allan Rattue and John Phillips asking them if they are able to help. **Action: J. Allsop**

10 Village organisations

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

Mr. Stock attended the War Memorial Management Committee's AGM (and the following committee-meeting) on 18th November.

- Booking and finances remain in a healthy state.
- Helen McCash was re-elected as Chairman, Pam Filer as Treasurer, Ian Tyler as Secretary and Christine Grant as the Bookings Secretary.
- Mr. Stock to continue as their Parish Council representative.
- Plans and work continue to ensure that the building and facilities are maintained/improved.
- The Trustees remain happy with the efforts of the management committee and thanked everyone involved.

- **Youth club**

Mr. Meischke said that, as reported during the November Parish Council meeting, the Youth Club (formerly Wotton Youth Drop Inn) is now operating on a fortnightly basis.

The Club are having problems with the storage of their equipment in the internal cupboard at the Community Hall, because other users are dumping equipment on top of and in the way of their items.

The Parish Council has not elected a representative to either the Scout and guide Group or the Pre-school playgroup. As the latter now forms part of the school, it was agreed to ask the school if they wish to have a Parish Council representative involved with the school, although their governing constitution no longer has a requirement for a Parish Councillor to be one of their governors. Mr. Meischke to speak to Mr. Clark (Chairman of the Governors). **Action: J. Meischke**

11 Items for Parish News

The following items were identified for inclusion in the February 2016 issue of the Parish News.

- New homes bonus results

Action: J. Allsop

The meeting closed at 21.03.

The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 15th January 2016.