

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 20th June 2017

Present:	Mr. Mike Smith (Chairman)	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mrs. Christine Dinnin	Mr. Denis Filer
	Mr. Ian Knight	Mrs. Margaret Stanley
	Mr. David Stock	Dr. Emma Waltham
	Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)	Mrs. Catherine Hammon after 7.40
Public:	District Councillor Michael Freeman until 19.44	

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mrs. Helen McCash.

2. Public Participation

None

3. Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

4. Declaration of Interests

Mr. Filer declared an interest in item 6 c i, Planning appeals – Land Adjacent To The Moat House Perrywood Lane (Mr. Filer’s daughter is part owner of the land).

5. Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017**
Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.
- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 16th May 2017**
Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.

b) Review of actions

1. **Investigate changing grey cable on the new Pavilion lighting to white cable**
Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees - Report on meeting held on Monday 19th June 2017.
2. **Investigate purchasing or making a large boot scraper**
Mr. Smith is investigating this matter. **Action: M. Smith**
3. **Ask Woodhall estate about making land available for parking in School Lane**
Refer to item 7 d, Specific items - Neighbourhood plan – progress report.
4. **Ask if the new football goal posts can be locked onto the cricket shed**
The Cricket Club have agreed that the football goal posts can be locked onto the cricket shed and Mr. Smith is sourcing suitable brackets. **Action: M. Smith**
5. **Inspect tree on Lammas bank**
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Lammas.
6. **Inspect trees at 1 Hazeldell that are overhanging the footpath and take actions if required**
Mr. Smith said that he had inspected the trees and no immediate action is required. It was agreed to monitor the tree growth over the summer. **Action: M. Smith**

c) Action points resolved

1. Accept James Turner Limited’s quotation to fit new pump
2. Accept Mark Blacktin’s quotation for work between tennis courts
3. Ask the goal post contractors to flatten area around boot brushes and concrete the area
4. Pick up new tennis court signs from 1st Call signs
5. Ask Adam Welch to quote for removing any dead sections of the Oak tree near the Tennis Courts
6. Write to planning department re 16 Glebe Close
7. Ask Mr. Freeman to repeat some speed-monitoring in this area.
8. Contact Bradley Joseph for a formal response to the Station Road issues raised
9. Report back to the residents re Station Road issues when a response has been received from HCC
10. Contact Bradley Joseph re joints between new and old tarmac and kerbs etc.
11. **Contact Bradley Joseph re parking issues on the High Street**
This action point is outstanding. **Action: M. Stanley/H. McCash**
12. Contact Bob Adams and Roger Bridges re ferreting licenses for 2017/2018
13. Issue license for temporary access across the land known as the “Old Cottage Site”
14. E-mail Parish Councillors a copy of Stuart McCash’s internal audit report
15. Send completed Annual Return and relevant documentation to BDO
16. Give McCash and Hay a signed copy of the Community Hall audited accounts

17. Renew Parish Council insurance policy
18. Investigate opening a deposit bank account and report findings to Mr. Filer
19. Chase D. P. Electrics re installation of in-line fuse for the new electronic lock
20. Give Mark Blacktin paint for disabled car park sign
21. Liaise over notice for unauthorised use of the Community Hall car park
22. Notify Little Gems re agreement of cleaning contract with Little Gems
23. Ask James Turner Limited to supply quotation for an on-demand water heater for the kitchen
24. Arrange for 1st Call Signs to make priority usage signs for the tennis courts
25. Arrange for netting to be installed on the lower part of the new tennis court fencing
26. Tell Adam Welch not to put down any more wood chippings on the Lammas footpath
27. Ask Ted Brown to remove broken glass in the area where the bike ramp has been removed
28. Write to Mr. Brett re hedge cutting
29. Arrange for Parish reports to be inserted in the June edition of the Parish News

d) Action points outstanding

1. Ask HCC to fit a seat in the bus shelter opposite the Bull Public House

Mr. Smith said that he had been in contact with Ken Crofton about the installation of a seat in this bus shelter. He agreed to contact the manufactures of the shelter, who informed him that the approximate cost of a seat is £250 plus delivery and fitting. Mr. Smith has taken photographs of the bus shelter which he will now e-mail to the manufactures so they can confirm the fitting costs. When he has all this information he will pass it to Ken Crofton asking HCC to fund the seat and installation. **Action: M. Smith**

2. Chase Paul Reynolds re pressure washing War Memorial

Mrs. Dinnin said that it did appear that the War Memorial may have been cleaned. Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Meischke agreed to inspect. **Action: C. Dinnin/J. Meischke**

6. Planning

This item was discussed directly after item 7, Specific items.

7. Specific items

a) District Councillor Michael Freeman's Report

District Councillor Michael Freeman reported on the following items

- **Parking restrictions in the High Street** - Mr. Freeman asked Parish Councillors to respect the parking restrictions on the single yellow lines in the High Street. He said that it was embarrassing that a Parish Councillor had been seen parking in this area during the restricted time.
- **Station Road roadworks** - there are some snagging issues to resolve before the project is signed off. Mr. Freeman and Mr. Stock are meeting with Bradley Joseph on Wednesday 28th to discuss these issues on site. He said all Parish Councillors are welcome to attend.
- **EHDC Leisure Strategy** – last week, Mr. Freeman presented the EHDC's Leisure strategy for the next 20 years. This will go to the executive board next week and then to EHDC committee. The strategy will include updating the Hartham facilities, unfortunately Fanshaw school pool facilities will close, but the new Hartham facilities will easily accommodate this loss.
- **Commercial contracts**
Due to the current low interest rates, East Herts Council are embarking on buying their own maintenance equipment which commercial contractors can use, thus lowering the overall costs of the contracts.
- **Parish Councillor numbers**
Mr. Freeman said that EHDC have said that while in theory there is no maximum number of councillors a Parish Council can have, this guidance suggests that for parishes with an electorate of up to 2700 persons, the number should be 10. Watton-at-Stone currently has an electorate of 2046.
- **Litter bin for Great Innings**
East Herts Council have agreed to install a new litter bin at Great Innings.
Veolia have agreed to include the emptying of the litterbin installed at the top of Church Walk in their weekly contract for the village.
- **Village library**
The Village Library is continuing to be well used by residents.
- **CVS community car scheme**
At the request of two Watton-at-Stone residents, Mr. Freeman has been looking into a car scheme for villagers to enable those without transport, in particular the elderly, to be transported to and from events, such as hospital appointments, for a small fee. He has found out that CVS run a car scheme and agreed to send the details to Parish Councillors.

This items to be placed on the July Parish Council for consideration.

Agenda: 07/2017

Michael Freeman left the meeting at 19.44

b) Station Road update

Mr. Stock said that he continues to be frustrated by the slow progress in getting the agreed corrective rework and snagging done in Station Road so that the project can be said to be completed.

Further to his recent site meeting with Bradley Joseph (HCC), Mr. Stock had noted that the two missing signs warning of the raised platform and speed cushions had been installed but other work (e.g., rebuilding of the two speed cushions and the re-alignment of the white centre-line) still awaits the return of the Contractor.

He raised the subject of the lack of over-banding with Bradley Joseph and was told that this together with other 'snagging matters' would be recorded and the Contractor notified accordingly and "they are obliged to address these before permanently leaving site".

With regard to the street-lighting issues raised by residents adjacent to the Hazeldell/Station Road junction, Mr. Stock has been told that an HCC street-lighting-designer has confirmed that the current lighting configuration is sufficient to illuminate the highway area around the raised platform and the entrance to Hazeldell without leaving dark patches and that "they have tweaked the lighting output levels to ensure they match the calculations produced following the design".

The cutting back of the tree restricting the output from one of the street lights is yet to be done.

It is proving very difficult to get any accurate indication of when the Contactor will return to the site and complete all of the work outstanding.

Mr. Stock is to attend another site meeting with Bradley Joseph, together with Mike Freeman (who has other issues to discuss re Station Road and the High Street) on Wednesday 28 June and will chase the work outstanding.

Action: D. Stock

c) Traffic along High Street, including the mini roundabouts

Although Mr. Smith reminded Parish Councillors that several weeks ago the High Street had been gridlocked with traffic, it was agreed that it was too early to judge the effect of the current waiting restrictions (i.e., single and double-yellow lines) and we need to continue to monitor the situation. To this end Mr. Stock said that, as for Station Road, the Clerk is keeping a file on all matters arising from the work that has been done to ease the traffic issues and improve pedestrian-safety in the High Street and that any problems brought to our attention must be copied to her.

It was agreed that the restrictions on the use of the layby opposite the Bull appear to have helped to ease the traffic-flow by providing a passing place, albeit in our opinion on the 'wrong side' of the road.

Mrs. Stanley said that we need to remind Highways that they had agreed to install bollards to stop cars mounting the pavement along the area outside the War Memorial Hall. She asked Mr. Stock to raise this with Bradley Joseph during the site meeting planned for 28 June, and this he will do.

Action: D. Stock

Mrs. Stanley, together with the Clerk, is to produce a list of items/problems/issues arising re the High Street so that they can be brought to the attention of Bradley Joseph via a meeting during the early autumn; this will allow enough time to determine the effectiveness of the current waiting restrictions on the overall traffic flow in the High Street. This meeting shall include the issues outstanding re the mini-roundabout at the Great Innings/High Street junction.

Action: M. Stanley

d) Neighbourhood plan – progress report

Dr. Waltham said that it had been very busy month for the Steering Group.

Mrs. Hammon attended the HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils) run seminar on Neighbourhood Plan on the 24th May in Bishops Stortford. This was a well-run event and ran through all the processes of delivering a Neighbourhood plan. Later that day, the Steering Group committee met with the Neighbourhood Plan volunteers at Watton-at-Stone School, to update them on the progress made to date.

Dr. Waltham said that the Steering Group had subsequently met on 14th June to discuss the HAPTC meeting Mrs. Hammon attended and the outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan volunteers meeting. There was some good feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan volunteers meeting.

Watton-at-Stone has been granted free help from an AECOM consultant, who will conduct an appraisal of the importance and contribution of the green belt classification of the various plots of land identified for possible release from the greenbelt. AECOM is set to deliver a wide range of planning and environmental services to help communities across England develop their neighbourhood plans and shape development and growth in their local area. The Steering Group will have their first meeting with an AECOM consultant on 29th June, when they will show them around the village and the identified Green Belt sites for potential release. The Steering Group will then all meet at the Community Hall at 1800 to discuss the options with the AECOM consultant. The AECOM report will not be completed until September. Once that report is complete, AECOM has also been asked to consider how much money the village might generate if certain pieces of land are released for development.

In the meantime, the Steering Group need to crack on with lots of other jobs that need doing to put the plan together. The conference which Mrs. Hammon attended highlighted that the group has a number of other

issues to focus on, in addition to green belt issues. Dr. Waltham said her next job is to put together a draft vision statement for Watton-at-Stone, after which the group will draft the plan's objectives, which will then drive the plan's substantive policies.

Dr. Waltham said that Mr. Thornhill, who owns the land adjacent to the BT exchange, has been eager to meet with the Steering Group. However, he is currently under Police investigation for clearing the site during the breeding season. The Police are in liaison with various agencies re vertebrates and invertebrates having their habitats disturbed. The Steering Group will meet with Mr. Thornhill when these issues have been resolved. However, any development on this site will not be a high priority for the Steering Group as it will only surmount to 2 dwellings and there is a high probability that planning permission will get turned down because the land is on a floodplain notwithstanding the fact that it is currently Green Belt

Mr. Freeman has agreed to be the contact point for Mr. Thornton at this stage.

Mr. Smith said that the planning inspectorate has questioned the housing levels outlined in the East Herts District Plan. The preliminary was for 16,500 but the inspector pointed out that the current demand was estimated to be 18,500 dwellings. Also, it has been questioned why land beyond the green belt has not been identified and the response has been that there are sustainability issues for development in these mainly rural areas because of limited infrastructure.

No decision has yet been made as to who will deal with the Green belt issue in Watton-at-Stone.

The Woodhall estate are trying to improve parking for their tenants in the village and six to eight places are to be provided to the rear of 112 High Street. They have also suggested that increased parking may be provided as part of the new Scout Hut lease agreement. Land adjacent to Old School Orchard may also provide parking for tenants but not public car parking.

e) Defibrillator/kiosk adoption update

Mr. Smith said that the 42-day consultation period, which started on 10th May, is almost over and he would now investigate how to proceed with applying for listed building consent. The Parish Council will need to obtain a certificate of ownership from BT before they can apply for this consent. **Action: M. Smith**

f) Hazeldell roads

Mr. Smith said he was approached by Richard Aston concerning the condition of the footpath that links two areas of Hazeldell. Residents whose properties are on the boundary with this footpath are not keeping their hedges cut back and there are weeds along the verge. Mr. Meischke said he had walked down this footpath and although it is not tidy, the footpath is passable at all points. There was no evidence of dog fouling when he visited the site, however during a recent visit, Mr. Smith found fouling on this footpath. Ken Crofton has been made aware of the situation and will try and escalate the area being tidied up. There are currently 4 complaint logs on the online Highways incident map, two of which the Clerk is responsible for uploading.

g) Update on land adjacent to telephone exchange in the High Street

This item was discussed under 7 c, Specific items, Neighbourhood plan – progress report.

h) CCTV

Mr. Smith, Mr. Meischke and Mr. Stock met with Mike Reed (Operations Manager, Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd) on 25th May to discuss options for the installation of CCTV coverage at the Community Hall and sportsfield area. Mr. Reed was at pains to explain to them that overt CCTV was not a problem and that they have many schools and public areas covered. Mr. Reed subsequently e-mailed his report to all Parish Councillors on 1st June, which include the costings involved.

Camera	£4284
Sim Card	£310 (12 months)
Monitoring costs	£400 per year (subject to an annual increase generally in line with RPI).

The camera has a 360-scan capability and can be installed in the lighting column at the Community Hall car park, which has already had wiring installed in it for such purposes. All camera footage will go directly to Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd via the sim card in the camera and they will be keeping the footage for 28 days. If any incidents occur the Parish Council can request the footage, which is evidential quality and can be used by the police to obtain a conviction. The Parish Council does not have to get involved with any of the legal paperwork, including CRB checks and data protection, that would be required if they were personally responsible for the CCTV video footage

The Community Hall Trustees, at their meeting held on 19th June, recommended that the Parish Council purchase the CCTV camera and enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Lt re the recording and monitoring of the camera.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed in principal to the purchase of the CCTV camera system from Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd... However, they would seek first clarification on the vulnerability of the device to vandalism and if the direction of surveillance can be determined with the suggested model. Also, if

they are aware of any public/private finance initiatives that might be available to the Parish Council. If funding is not available New Homes Bonus funds could be used to purchase the camera.

Mr. Smith to contact Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd accordingly.

Action: M. Smith

Mrs. Stanley raised her concern that CCTV in the sportsfield area may push problems to another area of the village. Parish Councillors agreed that they needed to do all they could to keep the areas they are responsible for in the village safe and CCTV installation would give parents peace of mind.

• **Gypsies at Dane end**

Mr. Smith said that the Parish Council had received a letter via e-mail, from the Friends of Rowney Lane, re the unauthorised Gypsy/Traveller development at Wheelwrights Farm, Dane End. A retrospective planning application was refused by East Herts Council and enforcement notices have been submitted. Mr. Smith asked Parish Councillors to support the Friends of Rowney Lane, by logging our objections on the appeal site. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

Action: M. Smith

Note: Mr. Smith logged the following objection on 21st June.

“Dear Inspector

We, Watton-at-Stone Parish Council, have a common boundary with the parish of Dane End and as such have common purpose. Indeed, we are currently looking to accommodate another 100 houses within our parish and it is being done through a Neighbourhood Plan which is all about consultation and design within and in accordance with planning law as set out in East Hertfordshire's district plan. We are left with no option other than to condemn the action of the applicant for, if nothing else, acting with total disregard of planning policy and enforcement. We accept that there is a housing shortage but provision exists within policy to address these needs by lawful means.”

6. Planning

In the absence of Mrs. McCash, Mr. Smith reported on the following items.

i) Applications

i) Old Coach House, 11 Rectory Lane (3/17/1224/HH)

Proposed single storey rear extension

In accordance with our Planning Protocol, Mrs. McCash had asked Mrs. Hammon to visit the neighbours of the property involved in this application. Mrs. Hammon said she had not yet been able to do this and Mr. Smith agreed to contact them before the deadline on Monday 26th June.

Action: M. Smith

Mrs. McCash had recommended that if there were no objections from neighbours, the Parish Council should make a 'no comment' response. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

The Clerk to write to East Herts Council following instructions from Mr. Smith.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

i) 132 High street (3/17/0815/HH)

Erection of a single storey oak frame extension to replace existing conservatory

EHDC – permission granted

ii) 8 Rivershill (3/16/0658/HH)

Construction of detached garage

EHDC – permission granted

iii) 37 Station Road (3/17/0802/FUL)

Erection of a single storey dwelling

EHDC – permission refused

c) Appeals

i) Land Adjacent To The Moat House Perrywood Lane Watton At Stone (Appeal ref: 17/00046/REFUSE)

Construct two detached dwellings

ii) Gregorys Farm Dane End Ware Hertfordshire (Appeal ref: 17/00076/REFUSE)

Change of use of Barn 1 and 2 to 2 holiday lets

iii) Planning Appeal: Barn 4 Gregorys Farm Dane End Ware (Appeal ref: 17/00037/REFUSE)

Change of use and alteration to Barn 4 to create 1no. dwelling house.

iv) Barn 4 Gregorys Farm Dane End Ware (Appeal ref: 17/00077/REFUSE)

Change of use and alteration of Barn 4 to create 2 no. Holiday lets.

8. Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

• **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments	
Donation – towards picnic table (play equipment)	<u>20.00</u>	None	
	20.00		
Cheques issued			
Kompan	50% of replacement arson attached play equipment		13,288.12
Wages and salaries	April 2017 salary and house allowance		1256.86
AON UK	Annual insurance premium - 01/06/2017 to 31/05/18		1,618.64
Affinity for business	water - allotments		67.43
BSWW Parish News	Annual Parish reports + accounts insert		77.50
Frank Cooper and Son	3 x sportsfield grass cuts in 5th, 12th, 26th May 2017		212.40
Blue Bury Contactors	Work on Sportsfield and Lammas areas		1,024.80
J. Hart & Son Ltd	remove old goat posts and install new ones, concrete area		618.00
1st Scout and Guide Group	New Homes Bonus award		2,611.98
1st Call signs	4 notices for the tennis courts		64.80
1st Call signs	4 notices for tennis courts (2 dog and 2 cycle)		86.40
			20,926.93
Cheques received			
Crawford & Co	AON insurance claim re arson attack – 2 nd payment		10,948.43
			10,948.43

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Carla Beach – (4 weeks)	166.00	Gibbs and Dandy - sealant	6.00
Tony Silvestri – Pavilion (3 weeks)	30.00	HCC – cleaning material	45.72
Forever Active	298.00		51.72
Donations for toy use	15.00		
Floodlighting to 18/05/17	60.00		
Adam Welch – Main Hall & Pavilion	52.50		
	621.50		
Cheques issued			
James Turner	Call out to diagnose shower temperature problem		£60.00
E-on	Gas		213.04
E-on	Electricity		76.10
HMRC	VAT		121.62
Wages	May 2017		652.80
			£1123.56
Cheques received			
Dean Capon	Hire of Community Hall		20.00
Runaround Rascals	Main Hall		133.00
Chloe Teoli	Main Hall - Saturdays in May		60.00
Post Office	Cash banked		85.00
East Herts Council	Pavilion hire		128.00
E-on	Gas rebate		76.58
Post Office	Cash banked		415.00
Peter Khera	Main Hall hire		209.95
Paula Sutton	Main Hall hire		222.30
Chloe Teoli	Main Hall - Saturdays in June		60.00
			1,409.83

Mr. Filer said that after the VAT element on the Kompan invoices has been reclaimed, the recent arson attach will have cost the Parish Council £125, being the insurance excess on this claim.

Aon Limited have increased the insurance excess in respect of losses arising from Theft and Malicious damage to £1,000 (from 1st June 2017) for each and every loss.

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **New deposit account for the Parish Council**

Mr. Meischke said that he and the Clerk had completed an on-line application to open a Nationwide 95-day savings account. The signatures on this account will be Mr. Meischke, Mrs. McCash and the Clerk. As part of their compliance checks, Nationwide have requested the addresses and dates of birth of two Parish Councillors.

Mr. Meischke said that he would be looking at obtaining a pay as you go credit card for the Parish Council, which can be topped up as and when required. The details of how the card is used will be worked out at a later stage.

Mr. Smith said that he had successfully used a pay as you go card whilst on holiday. He had also used it to make online payments and cash withdrawals.

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following item.

- **Report on meeting held on Monday 19th June 2017**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the minutes of the Trustees meeting held on 19th June.

Mr. Meischke went through the main items and the Trustees recommendations.

- **Outside toilets** - The Parish Council approved the Trustees recommendation to fit replacement locks on the internal doors of the outside toilets.
- **Pavilion lighting** - The Parish Council approved the Trustees recommendation to take no further action about the visible grey cabling to the new LED lighting units.
- **CCTV** – refer to item 7 g, Specific items – CCTV.
- **Hedge behind sportsfield play area**

The Trustees recommendation is to install a 3-foot high boarded fencing from the swings up to the gap in the hedge, to prevent hedge growth into the play area and enable the area to be kept clean and tidy.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that this item should be investigated further and costed before any decision is made.

Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith

Refer item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Tennis Court/MPPA.

Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Tennis Court/MPPA**

The new signs (no dogs, no bike and priority usage signs) have been put up on the fence work of both sets of courts. Also, the new signs designating 'Courts A' (MPPA/double courts) and 'Court B' (new tennis court) have been put up.

Now that the reseeded grass areas have established, the permanent fence work between the tennis courts and the horses field needs installing. Mr. Smith said that two extra sections of fencing bars need installing at either end of the slope to stop dog walkers using this area. At the moment dog walkers are using this area of the field, which is mostly part of the horses field and is not actually part of the area the Parish Council lease from the Diocesan Board. Mr. Smith said that we need to discourage dog walkers from accessing the horses field via the back of the tennis courts.

It was agreed that when obtaining a quotation for this fencing, Mr. Meischke should also get a quotation for fencing along the hedge behind the swings up to the gap in the hedge. (Refer item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees, final bullet point - Hedge behind sportsfield play area.)

Action: J. Meischke

Mr. Knight said that the gap in the hedge between Church Walk and the sportsfield needs cutting back so that the streetlight on Church Walk illuminates the steps at night. Mr. Meischke to arrange for the work to be done.

Action: J. Meischke

Mark Blacktin has done a very good job of the hard-standing area between the single and double courts and the railway sleeper retaining wall. It was noted that the cyclists were using the slope to ride down and then go straight into the tennis courts, barely missing the top bar of the entrance door. This problem has only occurred since this entrance onto the tennis court has been left permanently unlocked for safety reasons. Mark Blacktin has installed a wooden cross bar and rail to prevent this occurring.

Mr. Knight suggested that Mark Blacktin makes some steps made from sleepers to prevent the bank turning into a muddy slope. These steps could be used by tennis players to retrieve tennis ball. Mr. Meischke to obtain a quotation from Mark Blacktin.

Action: J. Meischke

Mr. Knight showed Chris Rolf (Sports Courts) the faulty cement/concrete along the court edge and he accepted that it was not satisfactory and it will be remedied.

Chris Rolf estimated that, although MPPA is currently in good condition, it will need resurfacing in the next 3 to 4 years. The current cost for resurfacing are around £15,000 plus an additional £10,000 if new fencing is installed at the same time, which would also get rid of the wooden kicker boards. Fencing is only required on three sides of the double court/MPPA as the 4th side is the new conjoined fencing between the old and new courts. It was agreed that the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee need to ring fence money in reserves for this work and any other items that will need doing in the future. This also serves to justify why the Parish Council keep money in reserves.

It was agreed to update the Long-term capital expenditures list. The Clerk to e-mail this document to Mr. Smith, Mr. Meischke and Mr. Filer for updating and the revised document will then be forwarded to all Parish Councillors for their comments. **Action: J. Allsop/M. Smith/J. Meischke/D. Filer**

- **Sportsfield**

The new goal posts have been installed.

Mr. Smith said that we need to order some drop-in caps to cover the goal post sockets in the sportsfield, so they do not get filled up with earth and debris when the goal posts are not in situ. Each goal post socket requires 4 caps of 2 varied sizes. It was agreed to order two sets and a spare cap in each size. The approximate cost for 8 caps is £70. **Action: M. Smith**

- **Cricket nets**

Mr. Smith said that the Claytons have asked for £500 plus legal fees, which is currently an unknown figure, for the Diocesan Boards' to apply a 'Deed of Waiver' on the sportsfield covenant. The Cricket Club have been awarded a grant of £1,000 from Tesco and the Parish Council have earmarked £3,000 from the New Homes Bonus funds. It is unclear how the Cricket Club will raise the additional funds required for the cricket runs and it would need to be established who will pay for the Diocesan Boards' fees if we pursue the 'Deed of Waiver'.

Mr. Smith to contact Claytons about the costs involved. **Action: M. Smith**

- **Picnic table**

The Clerk said that she had been approached by Hannah Brownlow, who gave her another £20 cash donation towards play equipment, to ask what we intended to do with the funds raised towards new play equipment. She suggested an additional picnic table, like the Marmax rainbow picnic table already installed on the sportsfield. The Parish Council currently holds a total of £464.55 in reserve from donations towards play equipment. The cost of a rainbow recyclable picnic table from Marmax is £434 including delivery (excluding VAT). This would leave funds of £30.55. which could go towards the insurance excess from the arson attack. Parish Councillors agreed to the purchase of the picnic table from the £464.55 of funds and put the remaining funds towards the insurance excess costs. **Action: J. Allsop**

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Allotments**

There have been a series of complaints about dog fouling on the allotments. Mrs. Dinnin said that Mr. Freeman was very prompt in putting up two official dog fouling signs on either end of the allotments footpath.

Mrs. Dinnin will put a notice about dog fouling in the next issue of the Parish news. **Action: C. Dinnin**

Two or three allotment plots are in a very poor state and one lady has given up her plot today. She has agreed to pay for the plot to be strimmed. Mrs. Dinnin to get Adam Welch to strim this plot and another disused plot in this area. **Action: C. Dinnin**

On Saturday night, a rotavator was stolen from plot 10. On that same night, the gate from the allotments onto Church Walk was broken open. This might have been done by the person stealing the rotavator.

Parish Councillors agreed to remove the gate and block up the gap and allow the hedge to grow across it. **Action: M. Smith/C. Dinnin**

- **Lammas**

The P3 work is scheduled to be done in September.

At the May Parish Council meeting Mrs. Dinnin reported that Heidi Hutton (CMS) had informed her that there was a tree on the Lammas bank that needs immediate attention. This tree was blown down in a recent storm.

Mrs. Dinnin e-mailed Parish Councillors on 6th June to say that a smallish tree had fallen across the footpath at the entrance to the Lammas. Adam Welch quoted £75 to cut the tree up and leave the logs at the site. Parish Councillors approved the quotation via e-mail and the tree was cleared.

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had been down and had a look at the willows trees in the corner of the Lammas near the gate and they are all in need of attention as a lot of them have split branches. Adam Welch informed her that it is approximately 10 years since he pollarded these trees.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith to inspect the Willow trees and the Lammas bank and report back to the Parish Council. **Action: C. Dinnin/M. Smith**

Mr. Smith said that technically the grass at Watton Green and the Lammas is cut back in July, which allows the grass to seed itself and regenerate. However, Blue Bury contractors intend to do this work before the end of June. He said that last year he was against cutting all the grass at Watton Green because there are lots of wild flowers and wildlife in this area. He suggested that the Parish Council only have the area between the road and the trees, to the boundary with the new fencing, cut back and allow the remaining part of the green to be left as a wildlife area until autumn. This was agreed by Parish Councillors. Mr. Smith said he would ensure that the areas that had previously been encroached are kept cut back.

- **War Memorial**

As reported earlier, Mrs. Dinnin said that the War Memorial did appear to be cleaner and that she and Mr. Meischke would inspect it.

Action: C. Dinnin/J. Meischke

There are a lot of weeds in the War Memorial garden and Adam Welch is scheduled to weed and clear the area today.

- **Oak Tree on the Meadow**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had received a quotation for the work on the Oak tree from Adam Welch but was still waiting to hear from Tree Smiths who had also inspected this tree.

New Homes Bonus Sub-Committee

- **Scout and Guide grant**

The Scout and Guides have submitted their invoices associated with their NHB grant. The invoices total £2,611.98m against a grant award of £2,550 plus banner costs of approximately £170. It was agreed to reimburse the Scout and Guides the sum of £2,611.98.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Funding**

Mrs. Stanley asked Parish Councillors if they wished to enter another round of funding awards for this year for village organisations. After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed not to do so until the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan is finalised as we may need to keep funds in hand to support items such as sporting facilities, play areas and car parks.

The Parish Council would also like to be able to support the Scout and Guide Group with the rebuilding of the Scout Hut in Mill Lane. This would not preclude other village organisations from asking the Parish Council for financial support should they develop a desperate need for funding.

b) Routine Reports

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

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

ii) **Gas and electricity meter readings**

The Clerk to e-mail either Mr. Meischke or Mr. Smith, at the end of each month, to ask them to take the gas and electricity meter readings.

Action: J. Allsop

iii) **Weekly reports - Fire Inspection and shower tests**

Nothing adverse to report.

iv) **Monthly village-report**

Mrs. Dinnin completed the report on 19th June.

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

- **Toddler area**

Mrs. Dinnin said that glass bottles had been smashed on the newly installed play equipment, which she, Rosemary Brown and Mr. Meischke cleared up. Mr. Meischke said that some of the shards of glass are still wedged between the framework and the plastic sheeting, which had swelled with the heat of the sun.

Mrs. Dinnin said she had informed the school and a notice has been put up on the Watton-at-Stone Facebook page and the incident reported to the Police.

- **Allotment gate** – refer to Environment Sub-Committee - Allotments.

- **Mill lane** – an old bike has been dumped by the dustbin at the Mill Lane entrance to the Lammas.

Mr. Smith agreed to remove the bike and dispose of it.

Action: M. Smith

- **Nettles** - need strimming around the following areas

- Mill Lane to the entrance of the Lammas
- Bottom of the Lammas steps
- Along the hedge at the back of the play area.

Mr. Smith will arrange for Blue Bury contractors to trim the nettles at the entrance to the Lammas and at the bottom of the Lammas steps. **Action: M. Smith**

- **Hedge in Church Walk/sportsfield** - needs cutting back so that the streetlight on Church Walk illuminates the steps at night. Mr. Meischke to arrange for the work to be done. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Playground sign in School Lane** – Mr. Stock said that this sign is obscured by growth. Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect and Hertfordshire Highways or the Abel Smith estate to be notified as required. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

v) **6-monthly check**

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Knight completed the report on 19th June.

Mr. Knight reported on the adverse items highlighted in the 6-monthly check, most of which are covered under the monthly village report above.

- Benches.
 - High Street near Mill lane - seat needs painting
 - Harry's bench (sportsfield) - slat broken.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect both benches and agree what action should be taken.

Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke

vi) **Weekly sportsfield**

Nothing to report

vii) **Website/Facebook**

It was agreed to put a notice on the Parish Council's Facebook page asking owners to keep their dogs on leads on the allotments **Action: J. Allsop**

viii) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

ix) **Dog fouling reports**

Refer to 7 f, Specific items – Hazeldell Roads and 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Allotments.

9. Correspondence received

None.

10. Village organisations

- **War Memorial Hall**
Mr. Stock said he would be attending a meeting of the War Memorial Management Committee on 21st June.
- **RBRA (River Beane Restoration Association)**
Mr. Knight said that the RBRA will be holding their AGM on 27th June.
- **Abel Smith estate**
Mr. Smith said that the Abel Smith estate are putting together a brochure based on their recent public exhibition.

11. Items for Parish News

No items were identified for inclusion in the July 2017 issues of the Parish News.

The meeting closed at 2132.

The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 18th July 2017.