

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 18th September 2018

Present:	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)	Mr. Stephen Block
	Mrs. Catherine Hammon (after 1934)	Mr. Ian Knight
	Mrs. Margaret Stanley (left at 2058)	Mr. David Stock
	Dr. Emma Waltham	Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)
Public:	County Councillor Ken Crofton	
Police:	None.	

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. Mike Smith (Chairman), Mrs. Christine Dinnin and Mrs. Helen McCash.

2. Public Participation

None.

3. Chairman’s/Clerk’s Report

None.

4. Declaration of Interests

None.

5. Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

• Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 17th July 2018

Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.

b) Review of actions

1. Investigate the purchase of lockable metal goalpost socket cover

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Smith is still investigating lockable metal goalposts socket covers. Mr. Knight said that now the goal posts are in place there is currently no need for the larger size caps. He expressed his view, that for safety reasons, it was the Parish Council’s responsibility to purchase the caps and not that of the Football Club.

It was agreed to purchase a couple of sets of the smaller plastic sized caps.

Action: J. Allsop

2. Upload articles to website and Facebook

The Clerk was instructed not upload the following topics to the website or Facebook, as it is not appropriate to do so at this time.

- Condition of village footpaths
- Community Hall advertising drive
- Advertise what is going on in the Community Hall.

This item to be placed under action points outstanding.

Action: J. Allsop

3. Contact reclamation yard in Waterford re renovation of K6 phone box

Mr. Knight said that the Waterford reclamation yard are not able to suggest anyone to renovate of the K6 phone box. Refer to item 7 d, Specific item - Renovation Red K6 kiosk that houses the defibrillator.

4. Ask P. J. Roofing to replace cracked tile on East lower roof

Mr. Meischke said that P. J. Roofing repaired a broken tile on the roof, but it was not the tile we had identified. He met with them today and they found a further 3 to 4 cracked tiles, which they will replace within the next couple of weeks. They will also clean out all the gutters whilst they are on site.

c) Action points resolved

1. E-mail Red K6 phone box renovation specifications to Mrs. Hammon
2. Amend June Parish Council minutes and give to Mr. Smith for signing
3. **Send a copy of Bob Thurlow’s e-mail re footpaths and dropped kerbs to County Councillor Crofton**
Refer to item 7f, Specific items – Footpaths.
4. Contact Farid Tilavi (HCC) re post-works monitoring activities in Station Road
5. Carry-out a footpath survey to identify specific problem areas within the village
6. Carry-out a detailed litterbin survey
7. E-mail Mr. Block the litterbin and bench location maps
8. Upload data protection documents to the website
9. Amend Community Hall hire agreement
10. Instruct Mark Burrows to proceed with the fitting of LED lamps on all the Parish Council streetlights

11. Ask cleaners to clean skirting boards in the Pavilion
12. Study Playground inspection report to see if any action is required
13. **Ask the Cricket Club to clean up the wooden doors to their shed**
Mr. Knight said that the Cricket Club have cleaned and painted the Cricket shed doors.
14. Instruct Frank Cooper & Son Limited not to cut the grass until further notice
15. Write to the allotment holders who are not cultivating their plots
16. Ask 1st Call signs to make one A3 allotment plan sign in Dibond
17. Get in contact with Mr. and Mrs. Crichton
18. Do the emergency escape lighting and manual alarm call tests
19. Arrange for the Community Hall gutters to be cleaned out Ask Rosemary Brown to clean the external doors on the north side of the Community Hall
20. Instruct David Payne to weed kill behind the tennis court kicker boards
21. **Ask Mark Blacktin to quote painting High Street benches**
Mr. Meischke said that he and Mr. Smith felt that the money that it would cost to refurbish the wooden benches in the High Street would be better put towards purchasing new benches made from recycled maintenance-free material. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.
22. Write articles for Parish News

6. Planning

In the absence of Mrs. McCash, Mr. Meischke read from Mrs. McCash's report.

The applications below were dealt with in accordance with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol.

a) Applications

i) 23 Lammas Road (3/18/1553/HH)

Single and two storey side and rear extension

This application is an amendment to a previous application. Mrs. McCash e-mailed Parish Councillors suggesting a 'No comment' response. At least 2 other Parish Councillors were in support and the Clerk wrote to the planning department accordingly.

ii) 113 High Street (3/18/1741/FUL)

Demolition of pergola and wall. Single-storey rear extension with alterations to roof to side elevation. Alterations to extraction unit

This item also covers the listed building and conservation areas application below.

Mrs. McCash e-mailed Parish Councillors asking for their comments on this application. In accordance with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, the following response was agreed and sent to the planning department.

“Whilst the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council support the application in principal, they are concerned that once the building work is complete a new / replacement outdoor seating will be built, this will cause additional noise closer to homes in Rivershill, the residents there are already affected by noise and smells from the outdoor seating area as it stands at present.

Also, they have concerns at the loss of parking spaces in the car park as the overflow parking in the High Street already causes serious congestion.”

iii) 113 High Street (3/18/1742/LBC) – Listed building and conservation areas

Demolition of pergola and wall. Single-storey rear extension with alterations to roof to side elevation. Alterations to extraction unit and alterations to guttering. Internal alterations to include the blocking up and creation of doorways

Refer to the above item.

iv) 2 Moorymead Close (3/18/1704/HH)

Garage conversion

Mrs. McCash asked Mr. Smith to visit the neighbours of the property involved in this application. On visiting the site, Mr. Smith noted that the garage conversion had already been completed and presumed therefore that it was a retrospective application. He visited the neighbours who had no objections to the garage conversion. In line with the Parish Council Planning Protocol, the following letter was sent to planning department.

“The Parish Council notes that this application has already been completed and presume it is therefore a retrospective application.

They have no further comments to make on this application.”

v) 3 Newmans Court (3/18/1823/HH)

Single storey rear extension

Mrs. McCash asked Mrs. Dinnin to visit the neighbours of the property involved in this application. She did so, and no objections were received. Mrs. Dinnin suggested a 'No comment' response which was

supported by at least 2 other Parish Councillors. The Clerk then wrote to the planning department accordingly.

vi) Watton Scout Hut (3/18/1833/FUL)

Erection of new garage

Mrs. McCash e-mailed all Parish Council suggestion the Parish Council fully support this application. At least 2 other Parish Councillors were in support and the Clerk wrote to the planning department accordingly.

b) Decisions

i) Gregorys Barn, Gregorys Farm (3/18/0940FUL)

Incorporation of Groom's Cottage into existing Gregory's Barn

New internal opening to link buildings. New ground floor window and door openings and alterations to fenestration

- East Herts Council - granted

ii) Gregorys Barn, Gregorys Farm (3/18/0941/LBC) – Listed building

incorporation of Groom's Cottage into existing Gregory's Barn (curtilage listed)

New internal opening to link buildings. New ground floor window and door openings and alterations to fenestration

- East Herts Council - granted

7. Specific items

a) Station Road update

Mr. Stock said that he had hoped this item would be off the agenda by now and the only reason it remains is because we await feedback re the results of any monitoring performed since the completion of the remedial work carried out in the summer. Also, whether or not HCC now consider the project to be closed.

Although he tried to contact Farid Tilavi twice for an update, his e-mails remained unanswered to date.

However, he was happy to say that he was not aware of any issues or problems concerning the Station Road scheme and that, as stated previously, we should continue to monitor the situation; especially surrounding the bridge and ticket office.

Farid to be contacted again for an update.

Action: D. Stock

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 10.2018

b) Traffic along High Street

Mrs. Stanley said she had nothing to report, only to comment that when Station Road works were being done it had been suggested by Highways that they would be installing a bollard in the High Street near the entrance to the War Memorial Hall. However, this did not happen.

It was agreed to let everything settle down and take this item off the Parish Council agenda until March 2019.

Agenda: 03/2019

County Councillor Crofton agreed to investigate the pot hole reports the Parish Council made that were dismissed by Highways. They refer to holes in the carriage way in the High Street near the Station Road and the Great Innings roundabouts. The Clerk to forward the details to County Councillor Crofton.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Neighbourhood plan – progress report

Refer to item after 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee.

d) Renovation Red K6 kiosk that houses the defibrillator

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith will look into renovating the kiosk themselves in Spring 2019.

This item to be placed on the agenda for March 2019.

Agenda: 03/2018

Catherine arrived at the meeting

e) Village litterbins

Mr. Block said that he had surveyed the village litterbins. There are 43 litterbins in the village, 11 of which are lidded and 12 dog waste bins

Mr. Block proposed purchasing an additional 10 lidded post mounted litterbins, in the same style as the others in the village. These would be installed in the High Street, Hazeldell and the sportsfield areas, where birds are actively removing rubbish from the open bins.

Debra Freeman would like to donate a large litterbin, in memory of her husband Michael, to be located near the Village sign. In addition, the Parish Council would also purchase at least two large litter bins, one to be located near the War Memorial and one on the footpath at the end of Glebe Close near to the school.

Parish Councillors agreed in principal to the bin purchases. Mr. Block to liaise with Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith re the style of the large bins.

Action: S. Block

The post mounted bins will be Super Trimline 50 lidded bins from Glasdon UK Limited. A decision needs to be made about the style of large bins.

The Clerk to negotiate a discount from Glasdon UK Limited for the purchase of the litterbins and e-mail councillors the prices for their approval.

Action: J. Allsop

The bin located adjacent to the Beadle family memorial bench, near Watkins Hall Farm, is currently not emptied by EHDC contractors. Michael Freeman had tried, unsuccessfully, to get this included in the EHDC weekly emptying schedule and instead used to empty the bin himself. Mr. Meischke suggested that either David Payne or Rosemary Brown could be asked to empty it. County Councillor Crofton offered to find out how much it would cost the Parish Council to have the bin emptied on a weekly basis. Another option would be to remove the bin from site.

It was agreed to discuss the future of this litterbin at the October Parish Council meeting. By this time, the costings of having it emptied by EHDC contractors may be known and if David Payne or Rosemary Brown would be willing to empty it.

Agenda: 10/2018

Mr. Block agreed to e-mail District Councillor Sophie Bell to request that EHDC change all their litterbins in the village to lidded ones.

Action: S. Block

f) Footpaths

Mr. Block said that further to our Parish Council meeting in July, he and Mr. Stock did a survey of some of the footpaths in the village and identified a number of specific problems and issues. Following this, they both had a site meeting and walk with Ian Richardson (HCC - Highways Locality Manager for North and East Herts), Rosemary Chatindo (HCC), County Councillor Crofton, and Bob Thurlow (High Street part only); who had highlighted the High Street footpath-problems to the Parish Council during his recent experiences of using a mobility scooter.

Mr. Block and Mr. Stock identified and demonstrated many problem areas, and these were acknowledged by all present. They then shared their information and concerns with HCC in writing via e-mail-letter. (In which there is a note by Mr. Stock highlighting the long-standing problems with the footpaths in Hazeldell.)

See attached

Subsequently, Mr. Richardson informed us that he was to discuss this at the next Resourcing Meeting and assign an Engineer to undertake an investigation as per our on-site discussions, and that Rosemary Chatindo will then work with County Councillor Crofton to identify funding opportunities.

County Councillor Crofton said that he had spoken to the engineering team, who have booked a survey of the footpaths commencing on 21st September. From this survey they will draw up a scheme and do the costings and hopefully work will take place within the next year or two. As with previous highways schemes, the parishioners of Watton-at-Stone will be informed of the plans and will be able to make comments before a final scheme is agreed. County Councillor Crofton said that his locality budget is all spent until May 2019, but there may be some funding from integrated works programme, which he will try to get hold of. Mr. Stock asked County Councillor Crofton to keep the Parish Council in the loop as this item progresses.

County Councillor Crofton informed us that residents in the Great Innings Estate have asked Sir Oliver Heald MP to help get the grass verges changed to concrete so they can park on them.

g) Data Protection

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Smith had highlighted a problem with our Data Protection document online. The second paragraph of the second item on page two, namely: "What is my personal information used for?" states.

"We have a Data Protection regime in place to oversee the effective and secure processing of your personal data. More information on this can be found on our website <https://www.watton-pc.org.uk/files/Data-Protection-Policy.pdf>."

The link goes directly to the same document. Parish Councillors agreed that the second sentence of the above paragraph should be deleted. The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

h) Parish Council owned lighting

At the July Parish Council meeting, Parish Councillors had agreed to ask Mark Burrows, from Ducreux Limited (who is acting on behalf of HCC), to proceed with the fitting of LED lamps on all the Parish Council owned streetlights, apart from the one streetlight on School Lane, that is already fitted with an LED lamp. Mark Burrows e-mailed the Clerk on 18th July as follows.

"I have now spoken with Ringway, who have advised that the installation works will be undertaken towards the end of October.

The costs I have provided to the PC are based on 'target costs' which have been put forward by Ringway, the 'actual costs' of carrying out the works will be the invoiced amount, and Ringway have indicated that the 'actual costs' should not exceed the 'target costs'.

I'll keep you advised of progress."

i) Library

Mr. Meischke said that Mrs. Dinnin had a meeting with all the library volunteers, who came up with various suggestions for keeping the library open.

All the hardback books have now been removed from the library freeing up shelf room to allow the Children's books to be displayed instead of being in boxes. All the DVD and box sets have also been removed and donated to charity.

When the new kitchen has been fitted, the Youth club cupboard currently located in the kitchen, will become redundant. This cupboard will be relocated to the cleaner's storeroom and house the Parish Council items currently stored in the meeting room cupboard. The puzzles can then be stored in the meeting room cupboard, freeing up more space for books on the library shelves.

Jenny Allman (of Beane Road) has designed a Facebook page name "Watton-at-Stone Community Library"

The library will open for one hour in the early evening from October onwards. The revised opening times will be from 1000 to 1200, 1400 to 1600 and 1700 to 1800 every Tuesday.

Parish Councillors agreed to spend between £25 and £30 on having two banners made to advertise that the library is open. The Clerk to instruct 1st Call signs to make the banners. **Action: J. Allsop**

j) Replace bench in Church Walk

Mr. Meischke said that Mrs. McCash had written the following re the reinstatement of the Parish Council bench on Church Walk.

"The Church would strongly request that Parish Council do not replace this bench.

The unfortunate siting of this bench leads to continued damage and graffiti on the ancient building known as the Bier House. Also, anti-social behaviour and drug use

Following Police advise, the church have removed all benches from this area of the church yard and have placed a bench in a position where it can be seen by passing traffic on Church Lane and is therefore less inviting to youths, but still offers seating to those who need it.

Elderly people visiting the church yard have said how nice it is not to have to run the gauntlet of noisy and awkward youths when they are visiting."

Parish Councillors agreed to support these objections and agreed that an alternative location should be found for this bench, which is currently stored at Blue Bury Farm.

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith to look at alternative sites.

Action: J. Meischke/M. Smith

k) Election of a New District Councillor for Watton-at-Stone

Sophie Bell was elected as the new District Councillor for Watton-at-Stone. Mr. Smith has e-mailed inviting her to attend our October Parish Council meeting but has not received a reply to date.

Parish Councillors agreed that, if possible, they would like Councillor Bell to attend every Parish Council meeting, so she knows what is going on in the village and can be directly involved in some of the issues as appropriate. Mr. Stock said that he would like her to take on the tasks that Mike Freeman had undertaken to resolve the on-going issues concerning the unreliable train service that we endure and the subject of the future removal of our train service to Stevenage and the resultant rail replacement bus service. This was agreed by all present.

l) Tree outside no 6 Hazeldell

County Councillor Crofton said Ringway have inspected the trees and have determined that they are not causing a hazard to no 6 Hazeldell or an obstruction. It therefore falls outside their remit to cut back these beautiful trees. They have said that if Tina and Mick Roberts wish, they are entitled to cut back any branches that overhang their property boundary.

Note: County Councillor Crofton e-mailed Mr. and Mrs. Roberts on 27th September as follows.

"I had a successful meeting with my Highways Officers yesterday. The trees have been declared safe and healthy but despite their findings I have persuaded Ringway to make an exception and to attend to the tree in this financial year. We must be patient but at least the work has been scheduled before March.

I hope this is of assistance."

• Fireworks

Mr. Meischke asked if Ware Rotary Club could borrow the portable floodlights again this year their fireworks party in November. This was agreed by Parish Councillors present at the meeting. Last year they gave the Parish Council a £50 donation for their use. Ware Rotary Club will be responsible for any damaged caused to the units. Mr. Meischke to notify them accordingly. **Action: J. Meischke**

8. Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

- Monthly accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments
None		None
Cheques issued		
East Herts District	Annual Playground inspection	52.32
Blue Bury Contractors	Work within the village	1,116.00
Wages and salaries	July and August 2018	2508.78
David Payne	Grass cutting and strimming around Sportsfield and hall	100.00
Jane Allsop	1st Call signs - cricket sign	36.00
British Telecom	Phone line - 1-year line rental	208.80
CDA Herts	Annual Membership	35.00
Hertfordshire Council		30.36
Community Hall	½ year grant	3,680.00
Community Hall	NHB grant towards archery equipment	404.17
David Payne	grass cutting and strimming around hall	30.00
David Payne	paid out by bank in error, D. Payne to deduct will next invoice	30.00
1st Call signs	Allotment signs - 2 invoices	43.20
		8,274.63
Cheques received		
Ashley Nsimbi	Allotment deposit - plot 3a	
Groundwork Trust	Grant for Parish Plan	7,000.00
Cricket Club	Donation re cricket nets runs	8,288.00
Cricket Club	Donation towards signs for cricket runs	30.00
		15,368.00

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments
Carla Beach – (9 weeks)	283.50	Cleaning materials
Tony Silvestri – Pavilion (7 weeks)	70.00	56.11
Floodlighting donations	80.00	
Felicitas Dixon – Hall and Pavilion	22.00	
Forever Active – July 2018	318.00	
Nicola Hayward – Pavilion	40.00	
Nicola Hayward – donation	5.00	
Football Club – donation for keys	60.00	
Forever Active – August 2018	258.00	
	1136.50	
Cheques issued		
Wages	Cleaning in July and August 2018	829.28
		829.28
Cheques received		
Tumble Tots	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	160.00
Tanya Basa	Pavilion hire in September	32.00
Catherine O'Hara	Main Hall and Pavilion	54.00
Louise Bater	Pavilion hire	136.80
B White & Espe Minoz	Main Hall and Pavilion	56.00
Parish Council	½ year grant	3,680.00
Parish Council	NHB grant towards archery equipment	404.17
Tumble Tots	Main Hall	160.00
Paul Sutton	Main Hall	205.20
Peter Khera - Karate	Main Hall	176.70
Watton Place clinic	Pavilion hire	24.50
Felicitas Dixon	Main Hall and Pavilion	22.00
Youth Club	Main Hall and Pavilion	153.00
		5,264.37

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **PKF Littlejohn LLP – completion of annual audit for the year ending 31st March 2018**

Mrs. Stanley said that the Parish Council has now received ‘a clean bill of health’ from the new Auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP, who have signed off the annual statutory approval of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018.

Mrs. Stanley said that the Parish Council is required to display a notice of conclusion of audit on the Parish Council notice board as well as on the Watton-at-Stone website, together with sections of the completed annual return. The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Request for Budget items for 2019/20**

Mrs. Stanley asked Parish Councillors to submit their budget requests to the Clerk for the 2019/2020 budget as soon as possible. Where possible, Parish Councillors should supply quotations for budget items.

Action: Parish Councillors

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following item.

- **Kitchen**

Mr. Meischke said that the new kitchen is now on order and was approved by all Parish Councillors via e-mail. Work is expected to start sometime between the end of October to the middle of November.

- **Way-forward presentation**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of Victoria Nightingale’s presentation to improve the income of the Community Hall. The Trustees will now have to look at the document in detail to see how to implement some, or all, of her proposals.

Mr. Meischke said he had met with a representative from Active East Herts, who are taking over a lot of running of Forever Active when it gets disbanded at the end of October.

If the Community Hall does link up with Active East Herts, there will be the opportunity for free advertising of activities at the Community Hall, including producing banner, fliers and advertising on the Active East Herts Facebook page. For a small fee of around £5 Facebook will allow you to set up the advertising of events in advance of them going live. There will also be the opportunity to apply for a grant from East Herts Council of approximately £200, which would be used mainly towards archery coaching and travel expenses for the table tennis coach.

Once Forever Active is finished, the events that continue to be held at the Community Hall will need between a minimum of 8 people attending each session, which would barely cover costs, with the hope that numbers will be as high as 20 per session.

Mr. Meischke said he would like to do a Christmas Fare at the hall, but due to other commitments could not consider doing it this year.

Mr. Meischke has been in contact with someone from HCC’s Stevenage offices at Farnham Hall, who is considering hiring the Community Hall for training sessions on two or three days a week from April 2019. Other halls in the area are also being considered.

- **Maintenance work**

- Mark Blacktin has altered the shelving in the internal storeroom to allow other stuff to go underneath. He has charged £70 labour costs for doing the work.

- Rosemary Brown has cleaned down the double external boiler cupboard doors and the adjacent fire exit door. As the doors required painting, Mark Blacktin was instructed to do the work. He has charged £150 labour and £25 for doing the work.

Parish Councillors approved the above works.

Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Sportsfield – work on cricket square**

Mr. Knight said that work to the cricket square has been completed. Parish Councillors agreed, via e-mail, that the work should be done. As in previous years, the Parish Council will pay for the work and the Cricket Club will give the Parish Council a donation for the net value of the invoice.

- **Tennis courts – wire netting replacement**

Mr. Knight said that Sports Courts Limited are scheduled to start work on the new fencing for the double tennis court fencing on 24th September. Mr. Meischke asked for the old wooden kicker board material to be removed from site as soon as it is dismantled because if it is left overnight in a skip, vandals might set light to it. Mr. Knight said that Sports Courts Limited will be removing all the old fencing material from site and he would ask them to do this as soon as possible.

Action: I. Knight

Environment Sub-Committee

In the absence of Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- **Allotments**
The allotment renewals will be going out in early October. At present there are three empty plots and two that will not be renewed on 1st October. Currently there is one person on the waiting list.
- **Watton Green and the Lammas**
Mrs. Dinnin will arrange a site meeting of the Environment Sub-Committee to discuss issues on the Lammas and Watton Green on her return from holiday. **Action: C. Dinnin**
- **High Street flowerbeds**
Adam Welch has recently cut the hedges and flower beds.
- **Brett hedge**
Mr. Brett's hedge, on his boundary with the Hockerill footpath, will need cutting.
The Clerk to contact Mr. Brett to get his authorisation for the work to be done by Adam Welch. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **War Memorial - Centenary**
The Clerk said that she had obtained the following quotation from Hugh McAlpine, who has previously done cleaning and repair work to our War Memorial.
"Thanks for your enquiry regarding repairs to the War Memorial, Watton at Stone.
As I no longer live in the region my costs now need to reflect distance and travel. I would charge £450.00 for the works specified.
Both items are rather trivial and less of a concern than other issues found on the structure of the memorial i.e. fractures to step treads etc. When finance allows, it may be better to tackle all of the problems apparent in one hit. There would certainly be a saving in the long run."
The Clerk said she had recently contacted 'In Stone Memorials', who do work to the Parish Church. They have agreed to inspect the site but will not be able to do the work if any of the stonework is load bearing. The Clerk she had failed to get in contact with S. C. Dass, who has also cleaned and repaired our War Memorial.

Neighbourhood plan – progress report

Dr. Waltham said that on 11th September, EHDC was issued with a holding direction on the District Plan, which was due to adopted by the council later that day.

The Secretary of State has issued the holding direction following several requests to intervene in the District Plan, including from Stephen McPartland MP (Stevenage), the Hertfordshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Aston Parish Council, Eastwick & Gilston Parish Council, Thorley Parish Council, Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation and Protecting Aston's Community Existence (PACE).

These requests raise a number of issues including the proposed release of land from the Green Belt.

Consultant Jacqueline Veader had informed the Steering Group that something similar has also happening in Stevenage and still has not been resolved a year on.

County Councillor Crofton said that the whole of the district, with the exception of the Green Belt, is now at risk of speculative development, as a result of not having a Plan in place. He has seen what happens when development takes place in an unplanned way, and without the related infrastructure that the Plan would have ensured, such as schools, health facilities and transport. He said it was imperative that this situation is resolved as soon as possible as potentially it could cost the council millions of pounds if they need to resubmit a revised plan together with going through the public consultation process all over again.

Dr. Waltham said that it also put the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan in a difficult position because ideally, they do not want to submit their plan before the District Council has adopted theirs as it may conflict.

County Councillor Crofton said that Watton-at-Stone's Green Belt remains protected during the delay in adopting the East Herts District Plan.

Dr. Waltham said that the Groundwork Trust grant application she submitted to cover the net costs of Consultant Jacqueline Veader quotation has been successful and funds of £7,000 are now in the Parish Council's account. She is going to see if she can apply for £1,500 funding for visuals, however the rules state that you cannot apply for this until the other funds have been spent.

The Steering Group are meeting tomorrow (19th September) with Jacqueline Veader, but EHDC representatives won't be present because of the holding direction on their District Plan.

She said it is going to be a very busy autumn for the Steering Group if they are to be ready before their December meeting

Network Rail and HCC have outlined plans to build approximately 14 dwellings on the depot site. This would include a property at the depot entrance which has its own access onto Station Road. The remaining properties would have access onto Moorymead Close. They need to carry out a technical specification of the site and would involve the village in a public consultation as well as keeping the Parish Council fully informed before any planning application. There is also a legal hurdle with a change of use to get through first. HCC also talked about installing a footpath at the back of the depot development to connect with the Great Innings estate, however the Steering Group do not feel this is necessary.

Dr. Waltham said that the Steering Group have not engaged with the Woodhall Estate since their public exhibition in May but have had a meeting with Fairview New Homes.

Mrs. Stanley left the meeting.

b) Routine Reports

i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Block carried out the above tests on Monday 17th September.

ii) Gas and electricity meter readings

Mr. Meischke gives the Clerk gas and electricity meter readings at the end of each month and she uploads these readings to the providers websites.

iii) Weekly reports - Fire Inspection and shower tests

Nothing adverse to report.

iv) Health and Safety for Community Hall

Nothing adverse to report.

v) Monthly village-report

Mr. Stock completed the report on 17th September 2018 and reported on the negative items highlighted in the monthly village-report.

- **Football pitch** - rabbit holes and droppings on pitch
- **Rainbow multi play and slide** – Ok but surface cracking and grass at bottom of steps.
Mr. Meischke to inspect and act as required. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Trim trail** - the grass needs strimming around certain items.
Mr. Meischke to ask David Payne to do this work. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Community Hall roof vents** – one missing
Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Tennis Courts** - Tree growth near floodlighting columns needs monitoring. **Action: I. Knight**
- **Allotment entrance** – there is a long length of wood, approx. 3” x 3”, running almost parallel with the hedge line but sticking out slightly into the allotment entrance.
Mr. Block agreed to inspect. **Action: S. Block**
- **Culverts on Mill Lane** – totally overgrown.
- **Dog bin on footpath 17** - no lid.
- **War memorial** – some paving joints need repointing.
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee – War Memorial centenary.

vii) Weekly sportsfield

Nothing to report.

viii) Website/Facebook

items to be uploaded as and when they arise.

ix) Highway and Lighting faults

Refer to final paragraph of item 7 b, Specific item - Traffic along High Street.

x) Dog fouling reports

Mr. Stock said that there was very little evidence of dog fouling in the areas he visited whilst doing the monthly village-report.

xi) Police reports

None.

9. Correspondence received

None

10. Village organisations

- **War memorial Hall Committee**
Mr. Stock had nothing to report because the scheduled meeting was cancelled.
- **Forever active**
Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Brett is now in charge of the Table Tennis.

11. Items for Parish News

The following items were identified for inclusion in the November 2018 issues of the Parish News.

- Library **Action: J. Meischke**
- **October 2018 agenda item**
Commemorative plaques for Nigel Poulton and Michael Freeman to be put on the October Parish Council agenda for discussion. **Agenda: 10/18**

The meeting closed at 2130.

The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 16th October 2018.