

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 15th January 2019

Present:	Mr. Mike Smith (Chairman)	Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. Stephen Block	Mrs. Christine Dinnin
	Mrs. Catherine Hammon	Mr. Ian Knight
	Mrs. Margaret Stanley	Mr. David Stock
	Dr. Emma Waltham	
	Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)	
Public:	District Councillor Sophie bell (19:18)	
Police:	None	

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

None.

5. Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

• Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th December 2018

Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes be approved.

b) Review of actions

1. Investigate reason the goal post got stuck in its ground socket

Mr. Knight said that it would appear that the goal post getting stuck was a one-off occurrence and he had not discovered what had caused the problem.

2. Investigate the purchase of a whiteboard for the meeting room

The whiteboard has been ordered and is awaiting delivery.

3. Notify EHDC Enforcement officers that the Mill building looks as though it has been breached

Refer to item 7 a, Specific items - Report from District Councillor Sophie Bell.

c) Action points resolved

1. Give the Clerk details of the style and size of the WW1 seat to be ordered
2. Write article reminding villagers to keep their vehicles locked and put on Facebook page
3. Write to planning department re Heath Mount School, Woodhall Park (3/18/2568/FUL)
4. E-mail planning application for 2 Rectory Lane to all Parish Councillors
5. Contact Adrian McWhinnie (HCC) prior to the Parish Council meeting in January
6. Install remaining lidded litterbins
7. Accept Mark Blacktin quotation to install two large bins and one bench on concrete bases
8. Arrange a meeting of the library volunteers early in the New Year
9. Provide illustrations of both styles of commemorative plaque options
10. Sign a copy of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee minutes dated 27th November
11. Notify the Sports and Social Club of hire charge increase for 2019/2020
12. Write to all contractors who submitted quotations
13. Amend the Parish Council budget figures
14. Notify East Herts Council of the Parish Council’s provisional budget requirements
15. Renew SLCC membership
16. Investigate alternative bank accounts and debit card options for the Parish Council/Community Hall
17. Dispose of the large fire safe
18. Contact contractors re replacing safety surface under rainbow multi play and slide
19. Remind the Tennis Club members to reset the door lock after use
20. Ask Mr. Knight of Parish Council’s instructions re Football Club pitch marking requests
21. Send Adam Welch revised maintenance work schedule
22. E-mail Parish Councillors the image of the recently resign-bonded base of the Richard Hale War Memorial
23. E-mail Parish Councillors a copy of Duncan Wallace’s police report

6. Planning

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

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

a) Applications

i) Land rear of 2 Rectory Lane (3/18/2696/FUL)

Erection of two new two-bedroom two storey dwellings with associated parking spaces

The plans for this application were e-mailed to all Parish Councillors. After extensive e-mail consultation Parish Councillors were unanimous in their strong objections and the following letter was sent to the planning department.

'The Parish Council strongly objects to this application.

This proposal is a gross overdevelopment of a restricted site. The area in which this application lies is without exception made up of ex Council Houses and they are typified by their long rear gardens or generous corner plots. Furthermore, the layout sees rows of opposed houses widely separated by these gardens and is an historic design which would be totally lost by the juxta positioning of dwellings at right angles to existing thus creating an overbearing and oppressive situation for neighbouring properties.

The emerging Neighbourhood plan will not support this type of development agreeing to linear development of a sympathetic nature and modest rear extensions. The Parish Council is aware that other developments have recently been constructed with little outdoor space but is opposed to infill delivering similar outcomes out of context.

The Parish Council is not aware of what arrangements have been agreed concerning access.'

ii) Land rear of 35, 37, 37a Station Road (3/18/2718/FUL)

Erection of detached two-bedroom two storey house and cycle and garden store with creation of 2 parking spaces with proposed new access

The plans for this application were e-mailed to all Parish Councillors. After extensive e-mail consultation Parish Councillors were unanimous in their strong objections and the following letter was sent to the planning department

'The Parish Council strongly objects to this application.

This application is essentially a repeat of an earlier application where the Parish Council unanimously agreed that this was an overdevelopment of an existing site. The area in which this application lies is without exception made up of ex rear Council Houses and they are typified by their long rear gardens or generous corner plots which were intended to enable a degree of self-support by gardening or even livestock rearing. Furthermore, the layout sees rows of opposed houses widely separated by these gardens and is an historic design which would be totally lost by the juxta positioning of dwellings at right angles to existing. The emerging Neighbourhood plan will not support this type of development agreeing to linear development of a sympathetic nature and modest rear extensions.

Such conversations the Parish Council has had with neighbours do not support the proposals saying that it is not in keeping with the original concept and will overly encroach on their privacy and enjoyment.'

b) Decisions

i) 29 High Street (3/18/2214/HH)

Raising roof ridge. Creation of 1 no. rear dormer window, insertion of 2 no rooflights and 2 no. sun pipes
-East Herts Council – refuse permission

ii) 77 Rivershill (3/18/2316/FUL)

Change living room window to French doors with opening side windows - East Herts Council - granted

iii) Gregory's Farm (3/18/1990/FUL)

Change of use of land to residential curtilage - East Herts Council – granted

District Councillor Sophie Bell arrived at the meeting.

iv) Land adjacent to the Willows, Perrywood Lane (3/18/2478/FUL)

Demolition of brick stable building; removal of hard standings. Construction of one single-storey detached dwelling with room in the roof space and single garage with associated parking and access

-East Herts Council – refuse permission

v) Land adjacent Ponderosa, Perrywood Lane (3/18/2479/FUL)

Clearing and levelling of contaminated site including removal of hard standings. Construction of 1 no. 3 bedroom dwelling and garage

It was assumed that this application would be decided on at the same time as the above application (Land adjacent to the Willows). The Clerk e-mailed Susie Defoe, planning officer who responded that they have an extension until 28th January for a contamination response consultation.

7. Specific items

a) Report from District Councillor Sophie Bell

District Councillor Sophie Bell reported on items.

- Item 5 b 3, Review of actions - Notify EHDC Enforcement officers that the Mill building looks as though it has been breached – Sophie Bell said she has made EHDC aware of the problem and they will ensure that the building is made secure.
- The link footpath in Great Innings South is being repaired.
- Clarion Housing Association have appointed a new operation manager. The new manager is responding well to e-mails and Sophie Bell is confident that the problems she has encountered with Clarion over the last few months will soon be resolved.
She has asked Clarion to look at improvements for Glebe Court. This will include assessing the need for more accommodation at Glebe Court. This item has arisen out of the emerging Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood plan.
Dr. Waltham said that she was aware of the need for one and two bedroom affordable housing but did not know if any of the people wanting this accommodation fitted into the senior age category.
- EHDC are looking at the possibility of developing the old Doctors surgery site at Great Innings North, which includes the old surgery building and car parking area. The initial thoughts are for four 2-bedroomed houses.
Dr. Waltham expressed concern that there is already a severe parking problem in Great Innings and urged Sophie Bell to encourage District Council officers to visit the site and night, when they will find that the car park area is full of resident's vehicles.
Sophie Bell said that if the properties are built, they will be part of EHDC's portfolio under the management of Millbank. EHDC are also looking at developing another site in Hertford, which will be considered for development before the Great Innings site.
Dr. Waltham said that all new dwellings built after 1st April 2017 will be included in the 92 properties Watton-at-Stone are required to build.

b) Station road update

Adrian McWhinnie has provided us with a copy of HCC's 'Stage 5 Summary Report' re 'Station Road & High Street Traffic Calming Phase 1'. To avoid any confusion, Mr. Stock pointed out that the term 'Phase 1' refers to the schemes as a whole and that there is no Phase 2, and then explained the reasons behind the terminology. Likewise, 'Stage 5' signifies the end-report for the schemes.

As a brief overview, Mr. Stock said that the report:

- gives the background reasons why the schemes were undertaken
- lists the measures that were taken to provide traffic-calming measures and improve pedestrian facilities
- identifies which Local Transport Plan Targets the schemes contribute to
- provides background information
- highlights issues raised as part of post-completion activities
- gives data about speeds and volume.

The conclusion of the report is that the measures introduced have:

- 'improved accessibility for school children, the elderly and disabled pedestrians'
- 'effectively reduced the speed at which vehicles are travelling and the new parking restrictions have deterred obstructive parking near junctions and at the side of the carriageway'.

Mr. Stock was pleased to see that the report acknowledged the high usage (especially by school children) and effectiveness of the raised platform adjacent to the entrance to Hazeldell. As far as Station Road is concerned, he felt that the hard-won improvements were well worth the effort put in to get HCC on-side.

As for the High Street, he still is of the opinion that significant problems still remain, in particular with regard to traffic congestion, conflicts and confrontations, and that these could get worse as the village continues to be developed further. This concern was shared by all Parish Councillors present. Notwithstanding these concerns, he together with the rest of the Parish Council, is keen to retain a healthy commercial presence on the High Street.

A copy of the report to be e-mailed to each Parish Councillor so that any matters/questions arising from it can be discussed during our meeting in February. **Action: D. Stock**

c) Neighbourhood plan – progress report

Dr. Waltham said that the Steering Group met on Thursday 10th January. Also present at the meeting was Consultant Jacqueline Veater and George Pavey (Principal Planner Officer at EHDC).

The Steering Group had planned to have a meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan group up at the School in late January, followed by a public consultation exhibition in February. However, following discussions at the meeting, both these events have been postponed, until the group has had a meeting with Woodhall Park to discuss their plans.

The Steering Group will be writing again to Woodhall Estate with the aim of meeting with them in February. If the Woodhall Estate still wishes to build over 100 houses on their site, then the Steering Group will need to consider next steps in the light of that.

Pending advancing discussions with Woodhall, the group will continue to develop the neighbourhood plan design code, green spaces assessment, assets register and policies. The village meeting and further consultation will be rescheduled once this work is ready and proposed policies regarding the Stevenage Road plot and the Walkern Road plot have settled and can be explained.

Some of the grant funds may need to be returned before the end of the year if the money has not been spent. However if this happens, the Steering Group would then reapply for more funds in the new financial year. Jacqueline Veater will be submitting an interim invoice for her consultancy work and Marine Goudoffre will be submitting an invoice for the production of two drawing illustrating the intentions of the plan and vision for Watton-at-Stone.

d) Village litterbins

Mr. Block said that all the new litterbins now fitted. He helped Mr. Smith fit the remaining five lidded litterbins before the Christmas holidays and Mark Blacktin installed the two large bins on concrete bases. One is located by the Community Hall and the other one adjacent to the dog-waste bin at the end of Glebe Close, near the pedestrian gate to the school car park.

e) Footpaths

Mr. Block said he is still awaiting the footpath report from Rosemary Chatindo (HCC).

f) Library update

Mrs. Dinnin said that a meeting of the Library volunteers was held this morning. It was a very positive meeting and volunteers agreed that although attendance is often low, they wished to continue to help keep the Library open. The Library evening session was stopped in early December because it was rare to have anyone attend

The Clerk to see if the Library has an entry in the village directory and if not add one. **Action: J. Allsop**

g) Village Benches

Mark Blacktin has installed the former Church Walk bench at the agreed location on Station Road.

Mr. Stock said that it was unfortunate that the seat already has graffiti on it and will probably attract more as time goes by.

h) Commemorative plaques

For various reasons, Mr. Stock has not made any progress on his action point to provide example-graphics.

However, he did use two plaques (one circular and one oval-shaped) within the Meeting Room to illustrate his proposed layout. In doing so, he suggested that the oval plaque would be the best option to adopt and the reasons why. This was agreed and he is to contact a supplier to get an example illustration of what we want to achieve. **Action: D. Stock**

i) Streetlight update

Mark Burrow (acting on behalf of HCC) has confirmed that all the Parish Council streetlights have now been converted to LED lanterns. He is now in the process of chasing up the legal agreement and get the draft across to the Parish Council based on a transfer date of 1st December 2018.

He also informed us that when the streetlighting asset is included within the HCC inventory, it will be subject to the dimming/part night lighting regime as follows:

Switch on at dusk, maintain full power until 2100, when the lighting will be dimmed by 50% until 2300, then dimmed by a further 30% from 2300 until 0100 when the lighting will switch off until 0500, the lighting will then operate on full power until dawn.

Mrs. Dinnin said that the new streetlights did not give good cover in her section of Beane Road. It was agreed to wait until the new lighting regime comes into force and act, if required, after this time.

j) Meeting dates for the Civic Year 2019/20

It was agreed that Parish Council meetings shall continue to be held on the third Tuesday in the month, except for November and December 2019, which will be on the 2nd Tuesday.

• 21 st May 2018	• 12 th November 2019
• 18 th June 2019	• 10 th December 2019
• 16 th July 2019	• 21 st January 2020
• No meeting in August 2019	• 18 th February 2020
• 17 th September 2019	• 17 th March 2020
• 15 th October 2019	• 21 st April 2020

The Parish Council meeting in May 2019, will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

- **February Parish Council 2019 meeting**

The February 2019 meeting which was scheduled to held on 19th will be brought forward by one week and will be held on Tuesday 12th February. The Clerk to advertise the change of meeting date on the Parish Council notice boards and website.

8. Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Block reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments	
None		BT phone calls – June, July, August	<u>42.02</u>
			42.02
Cheques issued			
Margesson Photography	Ariel photography for Neighbourhood plan		125.00
Information Commissioners	Data protection registration Department re CCTV		35.00
David Payne	Mow around Community Hall and car park		22.50
Wages and salaries	December 2018		1254.39
Bidwells	Allotment rent		335.00
SLCC	Annual subscription		156.00
Mark Blacktin	install two large litterbins on concrete bases		240.00
Mark Blacktin	install bench on concrete base		320.00
Matt Stanley	work to trees on the Lammas		1,500.00
HMRC	NI contributions for the Clerk and PC		217.74
			4,205.63
Cheques received			
Ware Rotary	Donation for use of portable floodlights		50.00
Sports and Social Club	Sportsfield facilities – 4 th quarter		<u>375.00</u>
			425.00

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments	
Carla Beach - (4 weeks)	126.00	Philip Smith – travel expenses	27.00
Tony Silvestri - Pavilion (2 weeks)	20.00	JSM Archery- Archery	40.00
Lucy Dodd - Main Hall, Pavilion	60.00	Tony Silvestri- Yoga instruction	<u>45.00</u>
Emily Pomroy - Main Hall,	72.00		112.00
Youth Girls Football - Main Hall	10.00		
Floodlighting donations	80.00		
Active East Herts – December	<u>279.00</u>		
	647.00		
Cheques issued			
Mick Taylor	kitchen decoration		150.00
Wages	December 2018		413.78
BSWW Parish News	Annual advert		90.00
Hertfordshire County Council	Cleaning materials		<u>94.78</u>
			748.56
Cheques received			
Hannah Soutar			136.80
Youth Club	Main Hall and Pavilion hire		153.00
Philip Smith - Table Tennis	Main Hall		114.00
Nina O'Brien	Pavilion hire		32.00
Claudia Rain	Main Hall and Pavilion		60.00
Stuart Blackburne	Main Hall		90.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall		171.00
EHDC	Active East Herts Grant towards tuition costs		340.00
Louise Bater	Pavilion hire		349.00
Felicitas Dixon	Main Hall and Pavilion		22.00
Sports and Social Club	Hire of the Community Hall facilities		<u>375.00</u>
			1842.80

Parish Councillors agreed the payments.

- **9-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall**
 Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the 9-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 31st December 2018.
 Mr. Block highlighted some of the main expenditure and income items for both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts.
- **9-monthly inspection of accounts**
 Mr. Smith carried out the 9-month inspection of accounts on Monday 14th January and found the items he inspected were in order.
- **Approval and signing of Precept forms for 2019/20**
 At its December 2018 meeting, the Parish Council agreed that the provisional precept requirement for 2019/20 is £36,070.
 Parish Councillors agreed to formally adopt this figure and the Precept form was duly signed.
 The completed precept form to be returned to East Herts Council. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Bank accounts and signatories**
 Mr. Block said he was still investigating alternative banks that would maximise interest for the Parish Council and Community Hall.
 Mr. Block suggested that the Parish Council maximise on interest by moving funds into the Santander deposit accounts. The Community Hall can transfer funds into the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Tennis Court Fund account to gain interest. This was agreed by Parish Councillors present.
 The Clerk to find out if Santander can change the name of the account to remove the wording 'Tennis Court Fund'. If Santander are unable to do this the account will be known as the 'Watton-at-Stone Community Hall deposit account' for accounting purposes only. **Action: J. Allsop**

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items

- **Grant - Active East Herts**
 Mr. Meischke said that he had been successful in obtaining an EHDC grant of £340 towards tuition fees for their Active East Herts sessions.
- **Path around Community Hall**
 The Trustees and Mr. Smith approved Mark Blacktin's quotation of £165 to level the uneven paving slabs around the Community Hall. Paul Reynolds of Strong-Base Landscaping submitted a quotation of £6,350 plus VAT, to lift, level and relay the existing paving slabs.
- **Safe**
 The safe has now been disposed of.
- **Pavilion door handle**
 Mr. Meischke has tightened all the screws on the Pavilion door handle because it had become very loose.
- **AEH new booking**
 An archery class has been set up to run once a month on a Sunday under the Active in East Herts scheme. So far one event has been held, of which 16 people attended. Mr. Meischke was hopeful that these numbers would increase further.
- **Shower heads**
 Mr. Meischke removed the shower heads to enable Rosemary Brown to clean them.
- **Timing of outside lights**
 Mr. Meischke said he had adjusted the timing on the outside lights.
- **Annual lighting**
 The annual emergency lighting and PAT testing needs doing. Mr. Meischke to contact D. P. Electrics accordingly. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Broken glass on sportsfield and vandalism to the external toilets**
 Mr. Meischke said that a dog walker phoned him on Saturday morning to say that their dog had cut its foot on broken glass on the field. Early the same morning (12th January), Rosemary Brown had cleared lots of broken glass bottles from the play area and surrounding grass, whilst carryout out her daily litterpicking duties. However, she did not clear the broken glass on the path near the tennis courts and some on Church Walk until later that afternoon. It is most likely that the glass breakage occurred on the Friday evening and was caused by teenage drinkers.
 On Monday, at around 1700, Rosemary Brown found that the external toilets had been vandalised. Both toilet roll holders and the soap dispenser had been broken and the bits thrown down the toilet as well as a beer can.

The Clerk e-mailed PCSO Sally Brooks, and cc Sergeant Duncan Wallace, asking her to report both the incident of broken glass and toilet vandalism.

It was agreed to put a notice up on the outside toilets as well as on Facebook and in the Parish News.

Mr. Meischke agreed to write the notice, which Mr. Knight will include in the next issue of the Parish News.

Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight

The Clerk to post the notice on Facebook.

Action: J. Allsop

Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Football Pitch Line marking**

Mr. Knight reported that the Football Club are now liaising through him to request the football pitch markings. He in turn instructs the Clerk to ask Frank Cooper to do the work.

- **Cricket nets**

Mr. Knight said that the cricket nets have not been removed and will be remaining in place.

David Payne will need to liaise with the Cricket Club during the grass cutting season re strimming around the nets to ensure that no damage is done.

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following item.

- **War Memorial**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the Environment Sub-Committee need to meet to decide where the Mike Freeman WWI Memorial bench will be located, as well as any upgrades to the surrounding hardstanding areas around the War Memorial.

Mrs. Dinnin to liaise with members of the Environment Sub-Committee, to agree a date for a site meeting

Action: C. Dinnin

She said that Adam Welch has quoted £80 for each extra weeding and hedge clearing around the War Memorial garden and £40 per time for just weeding. It was agreed that the Environment Sub-Committee will discuss this item at their next site meeting.

Action: Environment Sub-Committee

- **Watton green**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Tony Bradford (CMS) had informed her that the artwork for the Watton Green Information board precedes the digital era and CMS have not found any hardcopies of the artwork.

Mr. Meischke agreed to obtain a quotation for reproducing the Watton Green information board artwork from Jono Meischke.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Leaves at bottom of Station Road**

Mrs. Hammon said that there are still a lot of leaves at the bottom of Station Road, particularly on the pump side, but both sides need doing.

Mrs. Dinnin to check to see if Adam Welch has cleared the leaves, as he was instructed to do so.

Action: C. Dinnin

Sophie Bell said that she had asked EHDC to clear some of this area and they have now cleared the footpaths they were responsible for, which does not include the rotting leaf mulch in the gutters.

b) Routine Reports

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

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith did the above tests prior to the meeting.

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**

None.

iv) **Health and Safety for Community Hall**

None.

v) **Monthly village-report**

Dr. Waltham completed the report on 12th January 2019 and reported on the negative items highlighted in the monthly village-report.

- **Broken glass** - on path near the tennis courts.
Dr. Waltham said that the Clerk had explained that Rosemary Brown had cleared glass from the play area and surrounding grass early on the 12th January. However, she had not cleared the broken glass on the path near the tennis courts and some on Church Walk until later that afternoon.
Refer also to item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – Broken glass on sportsfield and vandalism to the external toilet.
- **Missing litterbin by table tennis court** - When the tennis court fencing was replaced, the litterbin was removed by the contractors. It was agreed to fit a replacement litterbin from our existing old stock.

Action: M. Smith/S. Block

- **Allotments** - as previously reported over the last few months, the trellis attached to the fence by the property 'Chestnuts is causing it to fall into the allotment area.

Mr. Smith said that the Chestnuts is a Woodhall Estate owned property and Linsey Holt had agreed several months ago to organise the repair work.

Mr. Smith agreed to chase Lindsey Holt for an update on this fence.

Action: M. Smith

Mill Lane – as reported at the December Parish Council, the Mill building in not secure with some of the bricked-up window and door areas have holes in them. Sophie Bell has made East Herts Council aware and they will be arranging to have the building secured.

- **Salt bins** – all full. The Moorymead Close bins also had some rubbish in them.

vi) **Weekly sportsfield**

None.

vii) **Website/Facebook**

Mr. Stock pointed out that the website entry for the new 'Crumbs' needs to be updated and therefore asked the Clerk to make contact with the owner accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Mrs. Hammon to give the Clerk the telephone number of the new owner.

Action: C. Hammon

viii) **Highway and Lighting faults**

None.

ix) **Dog fouling reports**

Mr. Smith said he refilled the dog waste bag dispensers by footpath 17, which are being well used by the public. He said he would contact Mr. Morey, when he next visits the site, to ask him if he wishes to take over the filling of the dispenser again.

Action: M. Smith

x) **Police reports**

The Police have not provided the Parish Council with a Police report this month.

9. Correspondence received

None.

10. Village organisations

11. Items for Parish News

It was agreed to include an entry about the village library in the next edition of the Parish News.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mr. Knight said that if space is available, the entry could be included in every edition of the Parish News.

The meeting closed at 2048.

The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 12th February 2019.