

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 10th January 2007

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. V. Dunhill	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Knight	Mr. D. Stock
	The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)	
Police:	PC Andy Woodward (until 1928)	PCSO Paul Weston (until 1928)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs. McCash and Mr. M. Smith.

PC Andy Woodward gave apologies on behalf of Diane Wilson, the new Police Inspector.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that the 9-monthly statement of accounts had been missed off the agenda and will be taken under item 9 a Budget and Finance Sub-Committee (on page 4 of these minutes).

5 Report from P C Andy Woodward re policing matters

Mr. Poulton welcomed PC Woodward and PCSO Weston and then invited them to report on policing matters involving the village.

PC Woodward said that there has been a significant drop in the reported crime-figures for the year 2006, i.e. 96 compared with 142 for 2005.

Mr. Filer said that there had been several bicycle thefts (including his grandson's) over the Christmas period. PC Woodward confirmed that the bicycle thefts after Christmas were thought to be by known criminals from Hertford and not by people living in the village.

PC Woodward and PCSO Weston asked for an up-date on the new Youth Club.

Mr. Poulton said that 13 volunteers had come forward to help with the running of the Youth Club and Adrian Thomson had been elected as Chairman of the Management Committee.

The Youth Club hopes to open some time in March and will use the Pavilion on Tuesday evenings. Ideally, they would like the use of the Pavilion and Main Hall together. At present, this is not possible because the Main Hall is unavailable on Tuesdays due to an existing long-term booking. However, if the Main Hall was to become available on Wednesday evenings then the Youth Club would change its booking accordingly.

The youths will vote to decide on a name for the Youth Club. Grant applications have been submitted to cover the cost of setting up the club, including the first 6-months rental of the Pavilion.

PC Woodward said that the police have funds which they could make available towards the running costs. Mr. Poulton said that more funds would be needed later in the year and applications shall be made to the police fund at that stage.

Mr. Poulton read out an e-mail he sent to Inspector Pat Rawle who has left the Hertford Police Station.

'On behalf of myself as District Councillor, Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and the residents of Watton-at-Stone can I say a very big thank you for all that you have achieved for policing in the village.

Although crime rates are low in the village your policing methods have given great comfort to the residents and members of the Parish Council.

You will be sadly missed.

All the very best for he future and a very happy and prosperous new year to you and your family.'

Inspector Diane Wilson has been appointed as Inspector Rawle's replacement and is to be invited to attend the Parish Council meeting to be held on 14th March 2007 (PC Woodward and PCSO Weston will also attend).

Action: PC Woodward

PC Woodward and PCSO Weston left the meeting.

6 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th December 2006**

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the meeting.

- Page 3 item 6 a ii, Planning applications – 25 Rivershill – final line.
 ‘**Note:** Mrs. Dinnin took no part in the debate or vote due to his personal interest in the application.’
 Should read
 ‘**Note:** Mrs. Dinnin took no part in the debate or vote due to her personal interest in the application.’
- Page 3 item 6 c i, Applications withdrawn - Unit 1-3 Mill Lane Watton at Stone
 Delete ‘East Herts Council - permission granted’.

Mr. Stock proposed that the minutes as amended be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **Purchase fine sandpaper and Danish Oil for the interpretation boards on the Lammas:** Completed.
- **Ask Ted Brown to sand-down and apply Danish Oil to interpretation boards on the Lammas:**
 Outstanding. **Action: N. Poulton**
- **If unresolved, contact Raj Goutam (Hertfordshire Highways) re overgrown shrubbery on the Walkern Road**
 Mr. Poulton has spoken to Raj Goutam about this and several other issues within the village. Because Ian Bishop is still off work, Raj Goutam has had a heavy workload which has meant that some items are being delayed.
 This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council in March meeting. **Agenda: 03/07**
- **Write to planning department re 25 Rivershill (3/06/239/FP/SE):** Completed.
- **Write to planning department re Wagon and Horses 1 High Street (3/06/2307/AD/SD):** Completed.
- **Write to planning department re Wagon and Horses 1 High Street (3/06/2273/FP/SD):** Completed.
- **E-mail Mr. Poulton the amount of funds in the Youth Club bank account:** Completed.
- **Invite PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston to the January 2007 Parish Council meeting:** Completed.
- **Renew SLCC Membership:** Completed.
- **Send a copy of the invoice for the repair of the Community Hall car-park wall to Allianz Cornhill:** Completed.
- **Place annual-playground inspection on circulation:** Completed.
- **Investigate timing fault on the external lights at the Community Hall:** Completed.
- **Inform Mr. Filer that work to trees on the Cottage site is due to start in mid-December:** Completed.
- **Inspect the Church Walk Footpath to see if it has been cut back:** Completed and the work has been done.
- **Write to East Herts Council re litter at the Great Innings play area:** Completed.
- **Write to East Herts Council re 2007 Summer Playscheme:** Completed.
- **E-mail Oliver Heald MP re League of Mercy awards:** Completed.
- **E-mail Julie Russell, PA to Mr. Abel Smith, re Watton-at-Stone website link:** Completed.
 Mr. Poulton said that the Woodhall Estate has thanked us for allowing it to have a link to the Watton-at-Stone web site. When their site is up and running, they will give us their web address so a link can be included on the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council web site.
- **Put up re-cycling posters on the notice boards in Watton-at-Stone and Whempstead**
 Completed in Watton-at-Stone. However Mr. Clark has not yet reinstated the notice board he has refurbished for Whempstead. Mr. Poulton thanked Mr. Clark for his work on the notice board.
 Mr. Clark to reinstate the Whempstead notice board. **Action: C. Clark**
- **Complete and return recycling feedback form to East Herts Council:** Completed.
- **Write Parish News report:** Completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

7 Planning

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions**i) 39 Station Road (3/06/2016/FP/JS)**

First floor side extension single storey rear extension - East Herts Council - permission granted

8 Specific items**a) Lights in Lammas Road**

Refer to 10 f, Correspondence received - Copy of letter from Maurice Gordon to Hertfordshire Highways re Lammas Road street lighting (on page 9 of these minutes).

b) Youth Club

Refer to 5, Report from P C Andy Woodward re policing matters (on page 1 of these minutes).

c) Request for a memorial seat

Bridget Ward has been informed about the difficulties involved in getting permission from Hertfordshire Highways to erect a memorial seat opposite the Waggon and Horses public house. As agreed by the Parish Council, Mr. Poulton suggested that an alternative location would be to replace the damaged seat next to the Parish Council notice board adjacent to the Great Innings roundabout with the memorial seat. The Ward family are quite keen on this suggestion and Mr. Poulton has contacted Hertfordshire Highways (the land owners) for their agreement.

- **Seat removed from the Hockerill slope**

It was agreed that if the seat is not reinstated on the Hockerill slope, it could be used to replace of the damaged seat by the bus stop at the northern end of the village. Hertfordshire Highways permission would need to be sort before the seat was installed.

Action: J. Allsop

d) Parish Council Protocol for Planning Applications

Parish Councillors agreed the attached protocol for Planning Applications which was prepared by Mr. Stock in liaison with Mr. Poulton.

See attached

- **Parish Council starter kit**

Mr. Poulton said that he agreed with Mr. Stock that new Parish Councillors be issued with a starter kit. Items to be included are:

- Standing Orders
- The paper "What can local councils do"
- Code of Conduct and Standards Board
- Declarations of Interest
- Major incident plan
- All Parish Council Licenses
- Leases (Land)
- Asset registers
- Hire Agreement
- Key-holder agreements
- Planning protocol
- A copy of all schedules (grass cutting, leaf collecting, rubbish etc.)
- Village Directory

Mr. Poulton suggested that such a kit maybe of use to existing Parish Councillors. Further items to be added once the Clerk and Chairman have met.

Mr. Poulton and the Clerk to put together the starter kit.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

e) Overgrown hedges in the High Street

The hedges along the High Street between School Lane and the George and Dragon public house have been cut back. Mr. Poulton said that he had recently walked this section of footpath and there were no obstructions.

Mr. Filer said that the hedges along the 'Chestnuts' stretch of the High Street (southern-end) had also been cut back.

f) Modify Village Directory

All Parish Councillors were given a copy of the current Village Directory dated 05/06. It was agreed that the directory should be updated in May 2007 after the Parish Council elections.

Agenda: 05/07

g) Agree meeting dates for the Civic Year

In accordance with the Parish Council's preference to hold its meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, all Parish Councillors were issued with the resultant list of meeting dates for the Civic Year 2007/08.

Parish Councillors to check that these dates are acceptable so that they can be agreed during the Parish Council meeting in February. If any Parish Councillor is unable to attend 70% of the meetings, they must contact the Clerk without delay so that alternative dates can be discussed.

Action: Parish Councillors

This item to be placed on the February agenda.

Agenda 02/07

9 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

- **9-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the 9-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 31st December 2006.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income figures. There were no major concerns with the Parish Council accounts. The main cause for concern in the Community Hall accounts was the low income from hiring of the facilities.

- **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 14th November 2006**

Mr. Meischke proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by Mr. Filer as a true record.

Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour. Mr. Filer signed the minutes.

The Clerk to attach the budget (and associated notes) to the minutes of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Budget 2007/2008 and recommendation from meeting held on 14th November 2006**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the draft budget-figures for 2007/2008.

Mr. Filer said that he and the Clerk had reviewed each item and compared the figures to those already spent this year, and in previous years, by reference to the ledger. A similar process was then repeated at the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee meeting held on the 14th November and alterations made where necessary.

Mr. Filer proposed that the following recommendations made by the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee be agreed.

- Community Hall hourly-rates remain the same as they are now.
- The Sports & Social Club hire-charge to be increased from £2200 to £2300.
- Frank Cooper and Son Limited's quotation of £37 per cut, to gang-mow the sportsfield grass only be accepted.
- Frank Cooper and Son Limited's quotation of £64 to set out using a line indicator and over-mark one full-size football pitch be accepted. (The net cost of the line-marking is reimbursed by the Sports and Social Club.)
- Ted Brown's quotation of £70, per cut, to strim the perimeter of sportsfield, around the MPPA, bike ramps and seats and mow between the MPPA and Church Walk be accepted.
- The following Blue Bury Contractors quotation for grass cutting work on the Lammas and Watton Green be accepted:

To cut twice and remove operations as required	£997.50 (plus VAT)
Flail cut option	£210 (plus VAT)
- Adam Welch's quotation of £175, per cut, for strimming and mowing work in the village during 2007 be accepted.
- The following Grass Roots quotation works be accepted.

Leaf clearance in November 2007	£200
Leaf clearance February/ March 2008	£200
Flowerbed maintenance (War Memorial Garden and High Street flowerbeds)	
Last week of May, July and September 2008	£750 (£250 per time)

Mrs. Dinnin seconded the recommendations and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to write to all contractors accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Allotment rent**

Increasing the current allotment rent of £13 per full allotment was discussed.

It was agreed that we find out what the rent is charged by Hertford and Ware Town Council.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Meischke to speak with the Allotment and Garden Association about the level of rent review.

Action: J. Meischke

This item to be placed on the agenda for the February Parish Council meeting.

Agenda: 02/07

- **Floodlighting charges**

The possibility of increasing the floodlighting charges was discussed, however no decision was made.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the February Parish Council meeting.

Agenda: 02/07

- **Floor cleaning - Community Hall**

Mr. Filer proposed that the following quotation from Care Group for cleaning the floors in the Community Hall be accepted (all prices exclude VAT).

- Pavilion £50
- Kitchen £20
- Common parts and toilets £25
- Meeting Room £50
- Jet-wash showers and Changing Room £90

Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to write to Care Group Limited accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Bank account interest**

Mr. Filer said that the Parish Council could get a better rate of interest on their high interest accounts than at present. It was agreed that he should investigate.

Action: D. Filer

- **Precept 2007/2008**

Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council agrees a Precept of £26,688 and that the Precept forms be duly completed and returned to East Herts Council. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Employees and self-employed remuneration**

The following self-employed remuneration was agreed.

- Ted Brown's pay to be increased from £6.50 to £7.00 per hour.
- Rosemary Brown's pay to be increased from £6.00 to £6.50 per hour.

The Clerk's remuneration to be discussed at the end of the meeting after the Clerk has left (Refer to page 10 of these minutes).

- **Asset register**

Asset registers for the Parish Council and Community Hall to be placed on the agenda for the March Parish Council meeting.

Agenda: 03/07

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Verbal report on meeting held on 9th January 2007**

- **Insurance policies**

The Trustees will be looking at both the Parish Council and Community Hall insurance policies on 6th March at 1930. All Parish Councillors are welcome to attend.

The Clerk to copy both insurance policies to the Trustees in advance of that meeting. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Child Protection Policy**

Louisa Bailey and Ian Vosper have notified us that they are the appointed Child Protection Officers. Louisa Bailey has adopted our Child Protection Policy Statement and Ian Vosper has provided a copy of his and other associated documents.

Jim Keen and David Boddy have promised to provide the required information soon. This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 02/07

- **Rosemary Brown's holiday**

Rosemary Brown is going on holiday on 5th February and her last working day at the Community Hall is Friday 2nd February. She will return to work on Friday 2nd March.

Mr. Meischke is hopeful that he has found a temporary cleaner to cover the period of Rosemary Brown's absence.

- **See-saw**

The Community Hall Trustees have been successful in their application for a grant to replace the see-saw and make good the damaged safety-surface. Refer to item 10 a, Correspondence received - Local Network Fund for Children and Young People 2006 – 2007 (on page 8 of these minutes).

- **New Fire Regulations**

Mr. Meischke completed an on-line business fire-risk check list. Most of the form was straight forward. However, when he said 'No' to the question 'Have you asked your insurers for advice regarding the fire protection of your premises?', the following advice was given.

'Insurance companies employ fire surveyors who have experience of all aspects of fire safety including the installation and maintenance of sprinkler systems, automatic fire detection and alarm systems, fixed fire fighting installations etc and they are always happy to offer free advice on such matters.'

Other questions that he answered 'No' to were:

Do we have an emergency plan in case of fire?

Is the fire equipment tested weekly?

The Trustees agreed the following.

They write to Allianz Cornhill telling them that we have completed a fire-risk check and asking them for their comments on the above quoted paragraph concerning advice on all aspects of fire safety relating to the Community Hall.

Action: Trustees

Parish Councillors to be given a copy of the completed on-line business fire-risk check list.

Action: J. Allsop

The fire equipment be tested monthly prior to the Parish Council meeting.

Action: Trustees

Note: Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke tested the fire alarm over the weekend of 21st/22nd January.

- **Evacuation policy and map**

The Trustees are preparing an evacuation policy and map for the Community Hall. Copies will be attached to the minutes of the Trustees meeting held on 9th January and will be issued to all Community Hall hirers.

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items concerning the Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee.

- **Sports and Social Club hire agreement for 1st April 2007**

The Sports and Social Club hire agreement has to be altered because it needs to refer to both the Parish Council and Community Hall Trustees.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the February Parish Council meeting, so that the alterations can be agreed.

Agenda: 02/07

- **Community Hall hire agreement**

The Community Hall hire agreement needs to be altered because it refers to the Parish Council whereas it should refer to the Community Hall Trustees.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

Environment

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Cottage Site**

Tony Bradford did some work to the Cottage Site on 17th December and will notify us when he can return to complete the task. The tree work is concentrated on the middle of the site leaving the road-side area untouched.

Mr. Filer said that over the Christmas holidays he was without electricity to his property. As a result, the electricity company had to dig up the front of the Cottage Site to replace the damaged cable.

- **Trees on the Lammas**

Greenwood Tree Care (Adam Welch) submitted the following quotations for work to two Willow Trees on the Lammas.

• Work to the Willow tree (adjacent to Mill Lane)	
Remove	£420
Pollard and deadwood	£320
Tidy and deadwood	£180
• Work to the Willow tree (inside the stone bridge)	
Reduce by one third, tidy and remove overhanging limbs from path	£420
Tidy and remove overhanging limbs from path	£260

A text quotation was received from Grass Roots as follows.

• Work to both Willows	
pollard both trees and scatter chippings on site	£870 plus VAT
pollard both trees and remove chippings from site	£1070 plus VAT

It was agreed to accept Adam Welch's quotation to

- pollard and deadwood the Willow tree adjacent to Mill Lane for £320
- reduce by one third, tidy and remove overhanging limbs to Willow tree inside the stone bridge at £420.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Walkern Road Flooding**

On Saturday 30th December the Walkern Road flooded due to an excessive amount of rainfall. The road was impassable for several hours and remained partially flooded until the following morning.

Mr. Knight said that before the footpath was extended to meet the bridge over the River Beane, the excess water would flow over the grass verge and back into the river. The only way of overcoming this problem would be to drop the footpath to allow excess water to drain away.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Knight suggested that they could ask the environment agency for flood warning signs, which they could erect in the event of a flood. It was agreed not to proceed with this because of problems regarding liability etc.

Mr. Meischke suggested that in the event of a flood the police should be responsible for the appropriate safety-signage.

b) Routine reports

i) Monthly village-report

Mr. Poulton completed this report on the 6th January 2007, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Very muddy.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	Both empty.
General	Does the area around the teen shelter need more grass sowing?

- **Children’s Play Area:**

Condition of surface	Fine – grass starting to grow by teen shelter.
Litter/Litterbin	OK – no litter.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	Is in the process of being replaced.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK.
Teen shelter	OK.
General	Weed spray around soft surface areas.

- **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK.
Double Ramp	OK.
Fun Box	OK.

- **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)	Weed spray around Community Hall. Small amount of water running from boiler. Turners are aware but this needs chasing.
Litterbin	None.
Car Park	Good.
General	Clear mud from bottom of car park by drain.

- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface	Good, but moss starting to appear around inside boundary.
Boundary Fencing	Still needs repairing, will be done by 12/01/07. Chase contractor.
Tennis nets	Small hole in right hand net.
Litter	None.
General	Somebody has tried to burn a small hole in surface – luckily nothing to worry about.

- **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment	Good.
Surfaces	Good.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	None.
Comments	Very good condition.

- **Allotments Area:**

Access	Ok for time of year, some litter.
Condition of paths between Allotments	OK.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	OK.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	OK.
Litter	Only at entrance, ask Ted to clear.
Comments	-

- **Culverts on Mill Lane**

Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	None.
Dog-fouling	None.
Comments	-

- **Salt bins**

Perrywood Lane	Full.
Entrance to Great Innings	Full – lid damaged.
Great Innings South – outside number 93	Full.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Station Road | Full. | |
| Moorymead Close (2) | Both full, lid damaged at entrance. | |
| Hazeldell | Full. | |
| Footpath 17 | Full. | |
| • Dog-waste bins | | |
| Footpath 17 | OK. | |
| Sportsfield | OK. | |
| Church Walk | OK. | |
| Walkern Road | OK. | |
| Station Road | OK. | |
| High Street (by Memorial) | OK. | |
| Great Innings | OK. | |
| Mill Lane | OK. | |
| Opposite 5 School Lane | OK. | |
| • War Memorial | | |
| Comments | Good. | |
| • Ornate Village Sign | | |
| Comments | Good. | |
| Post | Good. | |
|
 | | |
| • Grass seed around Teen shelter | | |
| An e-mail to be sent to Mike Smith to ask if more grass seed is required in this area. | | Action: J. Allsop |
| • Ted brown to be asked to do the following work | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weed-spray around play area • Weed-spray around Community Hall • Clear mud from bottom of car park by drain • Clear Allotment entrance. | | |
| | | Action: N. Poulton |
| • MPPA boundary fence and external repairs to the Community Hall | | |
| James Hale has promised to do the external repair-work to the Community Hall and MPPA before the end of this week (12 th January 2007). This work has been outstanding for several months. | | |
| If James Hale fails to do the work, Mr. Meischke knows someone else who can do it instead. | | |
| • Moss on MPPA | | |
| Mr. Knight said that the Tennis Club had obtained a generator and hope to pressure wash the internal perimeter of the MPPA. | | |
| • Great Innings notice board | | |
| Mr. Meischke to obtain adhesive Velcro fixings for this notice board. | | Action: J. Meischke |
| • Tennis net | | |
| Mr. Knight said that he will inspect the damage to one of the tennis nets reported to him tonight. | | Action: I. Knight |
| • Community Hall boiler | | |
| Mr. Meischke to chase Turners about small amount of water coming from overflow pipe in boiler room. | | Action: J. Meischke |
|
 | | |
| ii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action | | |
| There was nothing to report from Ted Brown's weekly inspections. | | |

10 Correspondence received

a) Local Network Fund for Children and Young People 2006 – 2007

The Hertfordshire Community Foundation wrote on 15th December to confirm that the Community Hall Board of Trustees had been successful in its application to the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People for a grant of £3043 to install a new see-saw on the sportsfield and making good the damaged safety-surface. The work is expected to be done before the end of January 2007.

b) East Herts Council –Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Unauthorised advertisement and fly-posting

Glyn Day (Principal Planning Enforcement Officer, Planning Control, East Herts Council) wrote on 18th December concerning the problem of fly-posting, He suggested that Town and Parish Council's nominate sites within their towns and villages where notices, including banners advertising local events (not commercial events) can be displayed. East Herts Council can then select a site after assessing its suitability from a planning and highways point of view.

It was agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council will monitor the situation and take appropriate action as and when required.

Action: J. Allsop

c) East Herts Council cultural strategy consultation

Mr. Poulton to meet with officers from East Herts Council and complete the cultural strategy form.

Action: N. Poulton

d) HAPTC – Computer grant fund

HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils) has awarded the Parish Council a grant of £130.56 towards the purchase of a flat-screen monitor. This presents 90% of the cost (including postage and packing but excluding VAT). The cost to the Parish Council is £14.51, plus the VAT element (£25.39) which will be reclaimed in April 2007.

e) Hertford Museum – ‘Our village our Museum Project with Hertford Museum’

Hertford Museum is embarking on an ambitious development project and is in the process of applying for funding to enable improvements such as a lift and a complete refurbishment of the first floor, which will tell the story of the county town. One of the aims is to develop a project to work with local villages to promote the history of their parish. They have named this ‘Our Village: Our Museum’ because many people are unaware that the museum contains lots of objects in its collection from these areas.

To enable Hertford Museum to apply for Lottery funding it must demonstrate that there is a need for improvements and that it will be beneficial to its users. If the Parish Council agrees with Hertford Museum’s aims, they would like us to write in support of the application.

Parish Councillors agreed to write in support of Hertford Museum application for lottery funding.

Action: N. Poulton

f) Copy of letter from Maurice Gordon to Hertfordshire Highways re Lammas Road street lighting

A copy of Mr. Gordon’s letter dated 29th December and Paul Patmore’s (Senior Engineer, Hertfordshire Highway) reply dated 8th January to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

g) Inter-Parish Conference

Benington Parish Council has verbally informed us that they will be hosting the 2007 Inter Parish Conference on 28th February.

Topics for discussion include:

- The Role of the Parish Council - Present and Future
- The East of England Regional Assembly Plan.

An official invitation giving more details will be sent to us shortly.

Parish Councillors to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend.

Action: Parish Councillors

11 Reports from other Organisations

• River Beane Restoration Association

Mr. Knight reported that a presentation has been produced and sent to all three MPs in the area plus all Parish Councils in the Beane Valley.

Despite the recent high rainfall, the water levels in the boreholes are only just starting to increase. Levels are still at a nine year low.

The River Beane Restoration Association will put a short article in the next issue of the Parish News.

• Watton-at-Stone School Pre-school play group

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had finally attended a meeting of the Watton-at-Stone School Pre-school play group. This is the second invitation and the first meeting that she has attended since she was elected as their Parish Council representative in May 2004.

• Watton-at-Stone Parish Church

Mr. Filer said that he will be attending Child Protection Basic Awareness Training 'to enable him to take up child protection duties on behalf of the Parochial Church Council.

• Watton-at-Stone School Governors

Mr. Clark said that the School has had an OFSTED inspection and are now waiting for the official report.

• Perrywood Lane

Mr. Filer reported that Marietta Morrissey had cleared the mud from her driveway and the road down to the junction opposite the church, resulting from on-going building work.

It was agreed to write a letter of thanks.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

12 Items for Parish News

The following items to be sent to the Editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

- Policing Matters
- Parish Council budget
- New see-saw for play area

Mr. Filer and Mr. Poulton to write the entries accordingly.

Action: D. Filer/ N. Poulton

13 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Ann Moray – Allotment rent 2006/07	6.50	
	<u>6.50</u>	

Payments

None

Cheques required

Ted Brown	32 hours litterpicking	208.00
J. Allsop	Flat screen monitor	170.46
Greenwood Tree Care	Remove Oak tree limb	260.00
SLCC	2007 Annual membership	95.00
St. Albans Diocesan Board	½ year allotment rent	300.00
Russell Scanlan	Allotment holders liability insurance	82.95
J. Allsop	January salary	559.05
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 3.01.07	<u>25.00</u>
		<u>1700.46</u>

Cheques received

C. Howell	Allotment rent 1 st October 2006 to 30 th September 2007	<u>6.50</u>
		<u>6.50</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Floodlighting to 09.01.07	360.00
Jim Keen – Main hall hire	55.00
Gill Gilbey – Main Hall hire	<u>10.00</u>
	<u>425.00</u>

Payments

Bulbs for outside light	9.38
HCC – fire extinguisher	<u>41.36</u>
	<u>50.74</u>

Cheques required

Rosemary Brown	24 hours cleaning	144.00
John Phillips	Opening toilets 14/11/06 – 19/12/06	35.00
G. Smith	Window cleaner	56.00
P. J. Roofing	Replace broken tiles	<u>82.25</u>
		<u>317.25</u>

Cheques received

Circle Thirty	Meeting room hire	24.00
Essex County Council	Pavilion hire	56.00
Sue Fuller	Main hall hire	<u>178.20</u>
		<u>258.20</u>

Mr. Filer proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments, Mr. Knight seconded the motion, and all present were in favour.

- Mr. Stock and Mr. Dunhill gave their apologies for absence from the next Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk left the meeting so that the following item could be discussed.

- **Clerk's salary**

It was agreed that the Clerk's basic salary be increased by 3.7%, this being the RPI figure for the month of October 2006. This means an increase from £7155 to £7240 per annum from 1 April 2007.

Mr. Filer to write to the Clerk accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 14th February 2007.**