

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 13th May 2008

Present: Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman) Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
 Mrs. C. Dinnin Mr. D. Filer
 Mr. I. Harris Mr. I. Knight
 Mrs. H. McCash Mr. D. Stock
 The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)

Police: PC Andy Woodward, PCSO Paul Weston and PCSO Neil Major (all until 1935)

Mr. Poulton welcomed PC Andy Woodward, PCSO Paul Weston and PCSO Neil Major to the meeting.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Clark and Mr. Smith.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Knight declared a personal interest in item 7 a iv, Planning Application - 14 Beane Road (Mr. Knight lives adjacent to the property involved).

Mrs. Dinnin declared a personal interest in item 7 a iv, Planning Application - 14 Beane Road (Mrs. Dinnin lives in the same road as the property involved).

Although she is not covered by the code of conduct, the Clerk declared a personal interest in 7 a iv, Planning Application - 14 Beane Road (The Clerk lives in the same road as the property involved).

Mrs. McCash declared a pecuniary interest in item 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - External audit of the Community Hall accounts by McCash and Hay (Mrs. McCash's husband, Murray McCash, did the audit of the Community Hall accounts).

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton had two additional urgent items for this meeting.

- **Benington Wind Farm planning application**

Mr. Poulton said that the Benington Wind Farm planning application is due to be submitted very soon. He has therefore tentatively asked the Clerk to book the Pavilion facilities in the Community Hall on Saturday 14th June, from 1200 to 1600, to enable members of the public to view the plans.

- **Lost property**

Mr. Poulton said that over the last few years quite a few items of clothing had been left behind by hirers. It was agreed that these items should now be donated to charity. **Action: N. Poulton**

5 Report from P.C. Andy Woodward on Policing matters relating to the village

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

A bong has been found in the Rivershill alleyway. For the benefit of councillors who did not know, PC Woodward explained that a bong is a way of smoking cannabis through water.

There were 123 reported crimes in the Watton-at-Stone area during the period 1st April 2006 to 1st April 2007. However this had almost halved to 63 reported crimes in the period 1st April 2007 to 1st April 2008. No other village in Hertfordshire obtained this reduction in crime.

An 18 year old male, who is already in prison, has been interviewed and admitted doing the burglaries at both Sandys and R. H. Newman -Butchers. He is originally from Stevenage and won't be back in the area for a long time.

An unregistered car was seized 2 weeks ago near Watton Green. The 17 year-old owner has still not claimed the vehicle back.

The main problems in the Watton-at-Stone area used to be caused by nuisance-youths. Currently these can be counted on one hand (in previous years these ran into dozens).

Due to the increased price of metals, there is a large increase in their theft countywide, especially of lead, catalytic converters and car batteries. Trying to solve these crimes is difficult. Some people don't notice they have had metal stolen for sometime after the event. The use of RedWeb on roofs, an invisible substance which when touched can be detected on skin and clothing by use of an ultraviolet light for up to 30 washes, can help detection. Each batch of RedWeb has its own unique DNA and therefore crimes can be pinpointed

to a particular location. However it only has a shelf life of 6 to 7 months (when the DNA degenerates and it is not readable).

The Hertford Police Station contact details given to Parish Councillors and entered in the April 2008 minutes were incorrect. The full postal address is Hertford Police Station, Hale Road, Hertford, SG13 8FL. The Main (front desk) telephone number is 01992 533608 and the direct line for PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston is 01992 533673.

Mr. Poulton said that neither the Watton Youth Drop Inn or the Summer Playscheme are being held over the summer holidays and therefore additional police presence will be needed, especially in the area of the Community Hall.

The Watton Youth Drop Inn will hold its last meeting on 16th July before closing for the summer holidays and will re-open on 3rd September.

Mr. Poulton said that due to increased Health and Safety and CRB checks etc the Summer Playscheme is not being run this year. Also, although 23 children registered for the scheme no more than 6 stayed in the Community Hall because they wanted to be playing outside where the leaders cannot keep an eye on them. The Summer Playscheme was also running at a loss.

Mr. Harris said that an accident is waiting to happen in the area in front of the Great Innings flats that back onto his property in the High Street. Very young children are playing unsupervised in the car park area and going down the pavements on trucks etc. PCSO Weston agreed to speak to South Anglia Housing Association to arrange for a joint letter to be sent to residents in the area.

Mr. Poulton invited PC Woodward and PCSO Weston to attend the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 16th September to review the summer-months activities.

PC Woodward, PCSO Paul Weston and PCSO Neil Major left the meeting.

6 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th April 2008**
Mrs. McCash proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **E-mail Meta Reeves about garden open-day posters: completed.**
- **Give Mr. Poulton the contact details for Alistair Woodgate, Diocesan Surveyor: completed.**
Mr. Goldsmith (Hertfordshire County Council) has written to Alistair Woodgate regarding the damaged stiles in the Church field.
- **Spray-paint post at Watton Green: completed.**
- **Meet to discuss planning application for 14 Hazeldell, 5 Watton House and 81 Great Innings North**
Refer to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th April, items 6 a, Planning applications.
- **Write to Planning Inspectorate re planning appeal for 16 Moorymead Close: completed.**
- **Speak to John Phillips about installation of a gate from the allotments onto Church Walk**
Refer to item 11, Reports from other Organisations - Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association.
- **Write to Rick Thompson (Project Liaison Officer, BT Payphones) re K6 style phone box**
A new K6 style phone box has been installed and therefore this action point is cancelled.
- **E-mail Parish Councillors the details of the new Hertford Police Station: completed.**
- **Copy summary statement of accounts for presentation at the Annual Parish meeting on 13th May: completed.**
- **Arrange for internal audit of Parish Council accounts to be done by Jim Morrissey: completed.**
Refer to item 9 a Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Internal audit of Parish Council accounts by Jim Morrissey.
- **Arrange for Community Hall accounts to be audited by McCash and Hay: completed.**
Refer to item 9 a Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - External audit of the Community Hall accounts by McCash and Hay.
- **Write to Norwich Union re Parish Council insurance: completed.**
Refer to item 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Parish Council insurance.
- **Contact Prism Displays re acoustics panels: completed.**
Refer to item 9 a, Community Hall Trustees - Acoustic panels.
- **Accept Brian Bunyan's quotation for supplying and fitting replacement fire-exit doors in the pavilion: completed.**

- **Contact David Webster Limited (DW) re damaged floodlights**
Refer to item 9 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA Floodlighting.
- **Contact East Herts re request for dog-waste bin near station**
Mr. Poulton reported that East Herts Council has to establish ownership of the land before they can proceed further.
- **Ask Ted Brown to weed-kill around the play area safety-surface & the Community Hall: completed.**
- **Contact Adam Welch re War Memorial garden**
Refer to item 9 a, East Herts Council - Flowerbed Maintenance.
- **Purchase medium-risk first-aid recreation kit for 25 – 50 people**
This item is on order for delivery on 15th May.
- **Contact East Herts Council re letter received concerning 14 Beane Road: completed.**
Refer to item 10 a, Correspondence received - Alison Young - East Herts Council re planning application at 14 Beane Road.
- **Write to Cricket Club re sightscreens**
Refer to item 9 a, Community Hall Trustees - Cricket Club - sight screens.
- **Update asset register**
Mr. Poulton and the Clerk met to discuss this item and there are a number of amendments required. Because of the Clerk's recent family problems she has not had the time to complete the changes. This item to be deferred to the Parish Council meeting in June. **Agenda: 06/08**
- **Write to Roger Green re hedge in School Lane: completed.**
- **Write to Lyn Marsh, Watton-at-Stone Flower Festival: completed.**
The Clerk has written a cheque out to the Watton-at-Stone Flower Festival, however she was informed by Lyn Marsh that they do not have a bank account. Mrs. McCash agreed to speak to Mrs. Abel Smith about this matter. **Action: H. McCash**
- **Write to Churches Serving Watton re Community Service and inform Cricket Club: completed.**
- **Write article for Parish News**
The Parish Council missed the deadline for the May issue of the Parish News. It was agreed that Mr. Knight should submit his article about the River Beane to be included in the June issue. **Action: I. Knight**
However, because the BT phone box has been installed but the telephone equipment has not been fitted, we defer submitting an article about it in the Parish News.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

7 Planning

a) Applications

i) 5 Watton House, Ware Road (3/08/0381/FP/MC)

Replace window with French doors and full length windows. Create first floor balcony. - Revised application

The difference between this application and the one discussed at the Parish Council meeting in April is that the balcony support-posts to the ground have been removed.

In line with the Parish Council planning application protocol, Mr. Meischke visited the neighbouring residents and then discussed the application with two other Parish Councillors.

Mr. Meischke instructed the Clerk (on 6th May) to send the following letter to East Herts Council planning department.

The Parish Council strongly objects to the above application for the following reasons.

- Encroachment of 1st floor balcony onto property below.
- The creation of the 1st floor balcony would cause light restriction to the property below.
- Not in keeping with other properties in the surrounding area.

Parish Councillors agreed with the decision.

ii) 39b High Street (3/08/0622/FP/HS)

Front wall, piers and railings (retrospective)

Mr. Harris visited the neighbours in the area. He said that all those he spoke to felt that the wall was a great improvement to the site.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that they welcome the improvement to the property in this important part of the village. **Action: J. Allsop**

iii) 1-3 Mill Lane (3/08/0679/FP/HS)

Extension to roof and refurbishment of existing building to provide 3 no self contained commercial units with associated car parking and landscaping

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council endorsing this renovation from a derelict building to an attractive commercial conversion and asking for the following points to be clarified.

- Because the building is located in a quiet residential area, will the hours of use for the commercial units be restricted?
- Is sufficient parking being allocated to the 3 self-contained units to meet planning regulations?
- During construction, can the hours of work be restricted so as to minimize its affect on the local residents?

Action: J. Allsop

iv) 14 Beane Road (3/08/0650/FP/SD)

One new detached three bedroom bungalow and double garage.

Although Mr. Knight had declared a personal interest in the application, he had been the Parish Councillor responsible for showing the plans to residents affected by the application (in both Beane Road and Walkern Road) and therefore clarified certain aspects of the current application to the Parish Council. In February 2008 planning permission was granted to build a new two-bedroom bungalow with a room in the roof.

Because of his personal interest in the application, Mr. Knight passed this application to Mr. Harris.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that we strongly object to the application for the following reasons.

- It is an inappropriate level of development in an area of special restraint.
- It is an overdevelopment of the site.
- Restricted site access.

Also in addition to the points raised above, there appears to be several inaccuracies in the application. Firstly, the reference to a private driveway, which has no registered owner and is used by the owners of the three garages at the furthest end of the driveway. Secondly the application refers to the 'rarely used' garages when in fact they are in daily use by residents of Beane Road. Both these comments are very misleading. In the light of the strong objection made by residents of Beane Road and Walkern Road, the Parish Council has asked its District Councillor, Nigel Poulton, to request that this application goes before the Planning Committee and is not decided by officers.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

None.

8 Specific items

a) Foundation Trust Status for East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

The East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust has asked the Parish Council to complete a questionnaire re the suitability of a Foundation Trust Status for East and North Hertfordshire hospitals and if granted, how it should be run.

Parish Councillors agreed that a Foundation Trust is excellent because it enables funds to stay within the hospital rather than going back into the central NHS fund. It also gives hospitals a good incentive to make a profit.

Mr. Poulton and Mrs. McCash agreed to meet to complete and return the form.

Action: N. Poulton/H. McCash

b) Village Directory

Mr. Stock said that during its first meeting, the website working group thought that the Village Directory needed to be looked at with regard to its purpose, scope and contents. This was discussed and it was agreed that Parish Councillors review the current edition of the directory in detail so that the subject can be debated further during our meeting in June.

Action: Parish Councillors

c) Update from Website Working-Group

Mr. Stock said that the Website Working Group had not met again but work on the subject matter continues and is approximately 75% complete.

This item to remain on agenda.

Agenda: 06/08

d) Clerk's holiday and collection of post and keys

The Clerk will be away on holiday from 24th May to 8th June. Whilst she is away, it was agreed that Rosemary Brown will be responsible for handing out the keys to hirers of the Community Hall.

After discussion, Mrs. McCash proposed the Rosemary Brown be paid £50 for looking after the Community Hall keys. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour. The Clerk to notify all hirers accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

The Clerk to arrange for Clare Lewis to pick up the Parish Council and Community Hall post whilst she is away and deliver it to John Meischke.

Action: J. Allsop

e) Strimming work on PC land at Rivershill

Mr. Poulton said that the annual strimming-work on the Parish Council land at Rivershill is now due.

It was agreed to ask Mr. Clark if his son Tim is available to do the work again this year. **Action: J. Allsop**

f) BT phone box

A replacement K6 kiosk (old red style phone-box) has been installed. However the telephone equipment has not yet been fitted.

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 06.08

g) Land development site-meeting

Mr. Poulton said that the field opposite Moorymead Close and the Station and between the railway line and 41 High Street is going to be sold for housing. This field also abuts School land and backs onto Church Lane. Plans for the development of this site have been on the cards for several years.

The plans will include approximately 100 houses, a Doctor's Surgery and an Early Learning Centre with a car park for these new facilities (including for coaches visiting the school). The only access to the site will be from Station Road. The school field will remain undeveloped.

The developers hope to submit a planning application in September and have already had meetings with the planners who suggested they should meet with the Parish Council to discuss draft plans for the site.

Parish Councillors are invited to view the plans on Tuesday 15th July at 1830 in the Community Hall (prior to their monthly meeting). Parish Councillors comments will be taken into consideration and amendments made to the plans as and where necessary.

h) East Herts Council - Rural Parish Conference on Thursday 29th May 2008

The Clerk is no longer able to attend the conference because she will be away on holiday.

The Parish Council will therefore not be presented at the Rural Parish Conference.

9 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

• **Monthly accounts**

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Payments

None

Cheques required

| | | |
|----------------------|--|----------------|
| Ted Brown | 32 hours litterpicking | 225.00 |
| CPRE | Annual membership fee | 28.00 |
| Ted Brown | Sportsfield strimming, mowing and weed-killing | 90.00 |
| J. Allsop | April salary | 585.08 |
| Ted Brown | 32 hours litterpick | 232.00 |
| Frank Cooper & son | Sportsfield grass cutting | 183.30 |
| Bluebury Contractors | Weed killing on the Lammas | 70.50 |
| J. Allsop | 15 reams copy paper | 32.97 |
| J. Allsop | May salary | <u>585.08</u> |
| | | <u>2031.93</u> |

Cheques received

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| East Herts Council | Leaf picking | 400.00 |
| Mr. J. Aston | Allotment rent 2007/08 | <u>8.00</u> |
| | | <u>408.00</u> |

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Floodlighting | 119.00 |
| Jim Keen – Main hall hire in March | 80.00 |
| Vicki Steward Main Hall & Pavilion | 30.00 |
| Watton Dots & Tots – Pavilion hire | <u>56.00</u> |
| | <u>285.00</u> |

Payments

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| VAT return for 3/08 | 43.77 |
| Rosemary Brown – 6 hours cleaning | <u>42.00</u> |
| | <u>85.77</u> |

Cheques required

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Rosemary Brown | 18 hours cleaning | <u>126.00</u> |
| | | <u>126.00</u> |

Cheques received

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Dave Boddy | Main Hall and Pavilion hire | 367.20 |
| Badminton Club | Main Hall hire | <u>198.00</u> |
| | | <u>565.20</u> |

Mrs. McCash proposed that the Parish Council approves the above payments. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

• **Parish Council insurance**

As agreed at the Parish Council meeting in April, Mr. Filer wrote to Norwich Union about his conversation with Peter Came of Came and Company (who act as agents for Norwich Union) re their policy only to quote against figures provided by other insurance providers. Norwich Union responded by confirming that this is their policy.

The Clerk to e-mail Parish Councillors copies of these letters.

Action: J. Allsop

Two other insurance companies were also asked to provide quotations and said that they were unwilling to do so because the Parish Council was tied into an agreement with Allianz until 2010. The Clerk investigated and found that this was indeed so. In 2007 Allianz, without our agreement, extended our agreement date to 2010 and this went unnoticed by the Parish Council at the time. The agreement gives us a 5% discount on our premium. Because we renewed with them last year (2007) they claim we have tied ourselves into a tacit agreement that we accept this long-term understanding.

Mr. Filer said that because none of the insurers we approached are willing to provide a quotation we have no option but to renew with Allianz. It was agreed to inform Allianz that we do not want to extend our agreement with them beyond 2010.

Action: D. Filer

Iain Harris said that this matter was outrageous and suggested we could contact the insurance ombudsman and the competition commission. He said this could be a breach of European Law and a matter for the FSA. Mr. Filer agreed to pursue this matter further as appropriate.

Action: D. Filer

• **Asset register**

This item was discussed under 7 b, Review of actions - Update asset register.

• **Internal audit of Parish Council accounts by Jim Morrissey**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter dated 9th May, from Jim Morrissey.

‘Dear Mr. Filer,

I am writing to confirm that I have completed the Internal Audit for Watton-at-Stone Parish Council for the year ended 31st March 2008 and returned the relevant forms to Mrs Allsop, duly signed.

The reserves position is as follows:

31st March 2008 - £ 7831, 31st March 2007 - £11551 a decrease of £ 3720 in the year.

Income and expenditure for the year was very similar to the budget forecast to breakeven, and the decrease in reserves indicated above was created primarily by:

Additional payment to Community Hall £5000 as authorised in minutes dated 25th April 2007.

- Election costs in budget, of £1000, not actually incurred in year.

The ‘Total Fixed Assets’ position also decreased from £83229 on 31st March 2007 to £78246 on 31st March 2008, primarily due to the Parish Council decision to exclude certain assets previously included as Fixed Assets. Certain assets were also revalued, most notably the War Memorial being increased to £30000 from £20420.

I trust the above information is self-explanatory but should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.’

- **Annual Return of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2008**

Jim Morrissey completed and signed sections 1 and 4 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2008 (all Parish Councillors have been given a copy of the completed Annual Return).

Mrs. McCash proposed that the accounts, detailed in section 1 and the Annual governance statement, detailed in section 2 of the Annual Return, be approved by the Parish Council and that the Chairman and the Clerk sign the Annual Return. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Poulton and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Return and the Statement of Assurance.

After the public inspection period (which starts on 27th May and ends on 23rd June), the Clerk to return all relevant documentation to BDO Stoy Hayward LLP.

- **External audit of the Community Hall accounts by McCash and Hay**

The audit of the Community Hall accounts has been done by McCash and Hay and everything is in order. A copy of these accounts is attached to these minutes. **See attached**

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Cricket Club - sight screens**

The Cricket Club does not wish to proceed with funding for the sight screens.

- **Acoustic panels**

Mr. Eddie Turner (Prism Displays) has now delivered the free-standing wooden acoustic panels to the Community Hall. These were placed around the perimeter of the Main Hall and the Community Hall Trustees have assessed the effect they have on the acoustics problem. Mr. Stock said that the Badminton Club noticed an improvement in voice clarity but confirmed that there was still an echo problem. The Trustees agreed that free-standing wooden panels did slightly improve the acoustic problem and that there would be further improvement with better quality panels fitted in an elevated position.

Prism Displays have provided a quotation of £2080, plus £450 for installation, for ten 3.0 x 1.2 meter soft board panels. These have a better acoustic value than the wooden ones on loan.

It was agreed that Mr. Poulton prepare and submit a grant application to East Herts Council of £1265, which presents 50% of the cost. If the grant application is unsuccessful we do not proceed with the acoustic installation until an alternative grant is obtained.

- **Repair of window-closure system in the Main Hall**

The window-closure system has been repaired and is working well.

- **Purchase and replacement of unserviceable strip-lights in Main Hall**

All but one of the unserviceable strip-lights has been replaced. The remaining strip-light needs attention from an electrician. It was agreed that because the unit is safe, not to have the work done at this time.

- **Electricity contract**

British Gas wrote on 29th March to advise us that our electricity contract is due to end on 8th August 2008 and offering us a new two-year contract at a rate of 35.340p per day for standing charges and a unit charge of 18.970p per kWh. Mr. Poulton asked the Clerk to dig out the existing contract but due to family problems over the recent death of her Father, she failed to do so by the deadline date of 10th May 2008. The Community Hall Trustees are therefore tied into these prices until August 2010. Mr. Poulton said that the figures did appear to be competitive. The Clerk apologised for this error.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **MPPA Floodlighting**

Mr. Knight has been in contact with David Webster Limited but they are not willing to do any work because we do not have a hard-standing area to access the MPPA.

Mr. Knight said he is to meet with CU Phosco on Friday to see if they are able to help us replace the broken parts on the Floodlighting units. Mr. Knight will also invite them to quote for the floodlights for the new tennis court.

Environment

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

- **Flowerbed Maintenance**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch had done his first flowerbed-maintenance work since being awarded the contract for 2008. However, he was unsure exactly what is expected.

It was agreed that some cutting back of the bushes around the bed outside Willowdene was required, especially around the bench seat. Also that further weeding is needed in some of the other beds.

Mrs. Dinnin to show Adam Welch what is required.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Weed killing and grass cutting**

The weed killing on the Lammas has been done but some small areas of nettles remain.

Mrs. Dinnin said she would speak to Mr. Smith on his return from holiday.

Action: C. Dinnin

The grass on the Lammas and Watton Green will be cut in early June.

- **Request from Peter Knight re Scouts**

The Scouts would like the Parish Council to identify an environmental task they could do in the village.

Mr. Stock suggested that clearing the culverts and bike-ramp area in Mill Lane may be appropriate. This was agreed. Mrs. Dinnin to suggest this to Peter Knight.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Cottage Site - Trees**

Mrs. Dinnin was pleased to report that Tony Bradford had obtained the trees for the Cottage (planted in autumn 2007) free of charge.

b) Routine reports

i) Fire-alarm test

The fire-alarm was tested before the start of the meeting.

ii) Monthly village-report

Mr. Clark completed this report on the 11th May 2008, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass

Recently cut looks very good.

Litter

Very little – except by Harry’s bench.

Dog fouling

-

General

Jack Turner bench needs attention

Lavatories need signage. Ladies cistern (left) not working properly.

- **Children’s Play Area:**

Condition of surface

Good.

Litter/Litterbin

Empty.

Large swings

OK.

Small swings

OK.

See-Saw

OK.

Rainbow multi-play and slide

OK.

Two spring sit-on

OK.

Teen shelter

OK.

General

Very good.

- **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump

} No evidence of use.

Double Ramp

} Rubbish round Harry’s bench.

Fun Box

} Area around other bench needs strimming.

- **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)

Good – being painted.

Litterbin

Empty.

Car Park

OK.

General

Very good.

- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface

Clean.

Boundary Fencing

Church Walk side, kicker board needs attention.

Tennis nets

New looking.

Litter

None.

General

Good.

- **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment

Litter in wooded area behind goals.

Surfaces

Good.

Litter

Good.

Dog fouling

None.

Trees

None.

Comments

Good.

Very tidy and nice looking.

- **Allotments Area:**

Access

Good.

Condition of paths between Allotments

Tidy.

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Condition of Allotments under cultivation | Good. | |
| Condition of Allotments not under cultivation | Overgrown though not many of them. | |
| Litter | None. | |
| Comments | Very good. | |
| • Culverts on Mill Lane | | |
| Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts | None. | |
| Dog-fouling | None. | |
| Comments | Stinging nettles will need attention. | |
| • Salt bins | | |
| Perrywood Lane | ¾ full. | |
| Entrance to Great Innings | Full. | |
| Great Innings South – outside number 93 | 2/3 full. | |
| Station Road | Full. | |
| Moorymead Close (2) | Full and nearly full. | |
| Hazeldell | Full. | |
| Footpath 17 | Full. | |
| Beane Road | ¾ Full. | |
| • Dog-waste bins | | |
| Footpath 17 | In use. | |
| Sportsfield | Empty. | |
| Church Walk | Empty. | |
| Walkern Road | In use – no lid. | |
| Station Road | Empty. | |
| High Street (by Memorial) | Empty. | |
| Great Innings | In use. | |
| Mill Lane | In use. | |
| Opposite 5 School Lane | In use. | |
| • War Memorial | | |
| Comments | Needs weed killing and weeding. | |
| • Ornate Village Sign | | |
| Comments | Grass needs cutting. | |
| Post | Good. | |
| • Cutting of the grass verges – School Lane to Rectory Lane | | |
| Ted Brown and Adam Welch are duplicating the cutting of the grass verge along School Lane. | | |
| Mrs. Dinnin and the Clerk to check both Ted Brown and Adam Welch’s schedules to find out who is responsible for doing this work. | | |
| | | Action: C. Dinnin/J. Allsop |
| • Sportsfield | | |
| It was agreed to ask Ted Brown to strim around the benches and check to see if any of the benches need attention. | | |
| | | Action: J. Allsop |
| It was agreed that the bench identified by Mr. Clark as needing attention could not have been the Jack Turner seat | | |
| • MPPA - kicker boards | | |
| Mr. Knight to inspect the kicker boards on the Church Walk side of the MPPA. | | Action: I. Knight |
| • War memorial | | |
| Mrs. Dinnin to inspect the War Memorial to see if it needs weeding. | | Action: C. Dinnin |

iii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action

Nothing to report.

10 Correspondence received

a) Alison Young - East Herts Council re planning application at 14 Beane Road

All Parish Councillors have been given a copy of Alison Young’s letter, dated 18th April, retracting the statement - ‘the local Member who raised no objections to it’.

b) Mr. T. Welsh re planning appeal for 16 Moorymead Close

The Clerk to e-mail a copy of Mr. Welsh’s letter to all Parish Councillors.

Action J. Allsop

c) Bob Adams re ferreting

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 17th April) from Bob Adams.

'Please find enclosed figures for the amount of rabbits and rats dispatched on the following areas of parish land

| | Rabbits | Rats |
|----------------|---------|------|
| Lammas | 112 | 8 |
| Lammas Paddock | 43 | 0 |
| Watton Green | 9 | 0 |
| Allotments | 5 | 4 |

Yours sincerely'

Mr. Poulton said that Bob Adam's licenses to ferret the above areas have been renewed and the Allotments holders have been informed accordingly.

11 Reports from other Organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association**

Mr. Poulton said there has been trouble about the installation of the gate from the Allotments onto Church Walk. The original problem being that the Parish Council should have met with them to discuss the gate. However, the gate John Phillips installed is not as high as originally planned nor is it rabbit-proof and he is failing to keep it locked. Mr. Meischke agreed to monitor the locking of the gate and if by Sunday it still remains unlocked, he will speak to Mr. Phillips to tell him it has to be locked at all times. Mr. Stock said that the gate looked good.

It was agreed that in future the Parish Council contacts not only the Allotment and Garden Association but also all Allotment holders regarding any issues concerning the allotments.

Mr. Meischke reported that the following re-elections were made during the AGM on 6th May.

- Phil Moore - Chairman
- Bob Thurlow - Treasurer

Anne Wilkinson was elected as the new secretary in place of Linda Thurlow.

The Parish Council wrote to Sarah Cullen on 18th June 2007 requesting that she cultivate her allotment, otherwise her tenancy agreement would be terminated. Her allotment remains uncultivated. It was agreed to terminate her tenancy agreement with immediate effect. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke to meet on-site with Mr. Smith and the Allotment and Garden Association re clearing part of the disused allotment area to create new plots.

- **Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch**

Mrs. McCash said she had been invited to be a member of the Neighbourhood Watch Regional Committee because of the success she had obtained in running the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

She is also to be given a pager so that events happening in the village can be reported more efficiently.

Mrs. McCash has arranged a meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators on Wednesday 11th June in the Memorial Hall. They will be briefed on the new OWL e-mail system and Inspector John Speed has been invited to speak on rural policing and helping the general public in a rural community.

- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup held a Quiz Night on Saturday 10th May which she had been told was successful.

- **Watton-at-Stone School Governors:** Nothing to report.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group**

Mr. Stock went to the Scout and Guide AGM on 17th April and was happy to report that it was well-attended.

Roger Green was re-elected as Chairman, Ann Wilkinson as Secretary and Christine Emsley as Treasurer.

The group appears to be in a good state with regard to its activities and finances, and has had a successful year. There are plans for a programme of works to refurbish their hut (which includes the removal of the asbestos roof) and improve facilities, etc.

- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club**

The Sports and Social Club had its AGM on 7th May. Rod Willis was appointed Chairman, replacing Colin Straker.

To avoid problems of overlap, the Sports and Social Club Management Committee has redefined the start and end dates for team priorities re the use of the sportsfield for the cricket and the football teams.

In the spring, the last Sunday in April is the last day of Football priority, with first Saturday in May being the start of the Cricket priority.

In the autumn, the last Sunday in September is the last day of Cricket priority and the first Saturday in October being the start of Football priority.

The Sports and Social Club is looking for Parish Council support in establishing these priorities.

- **Bonfires on the Allotments**

Mr. Knight said he had received a genuine complaint about bonfires on the allotments on three consecutive Wednesdays which caused problems for tennis players.

Mr. Meischke said that he had heard the allotment holder's side of the story and had been told that a tennis player had been very aggressive.

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight to liaise over the facts in this incident. **Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight**

- **Watton Youth Drop Inn:** Nothing to report.

- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight said that the River Beane Restoration Association will be holding it AGM on 20th May in the Community Hall.

12 Items for Parish News

The following item to be sent to the Editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the June issue.

- River Beane.

Mr. Knight to write the entry accordingly.

Action: I. Knight

- **The meeting closed at 2140.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 17th June 2008.**