



VALE OF ALLEN PARISH COUNCIL

JOINT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WITCHAMPTON & MANSWOOD AND CRICHEL WARDS

The annual meeting of the Witchampton & Manswood Ward and the Crichel Ward of the Vale of Allen Parish Council will be held jointly in Witchampton Village Hall at 7.30pm on Thursday 18th May 2023

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the Witchampton & Manswood Ward Annual Meeting held on 12th May 2022 and the Crichel Ward held on 10th May 2022.
2. Matters arising
3. Financial Report – What money was raised and how was it spent
4. Issues addressed in 2022/23 – including
 - a. Traffic and Roadways
 - b. Changes to the Parish boundaries
 - c. The Millenium Avenue
 - d. Other parish assets
 - e. Planning and Development
5. Issues to be addressed in 2023/4 – including traffic and roadways, infrastructure refurbishment, the Vale of Allen Neighbourhood Plan
6. Composition of both Witchampton & Manswood and Crichel representation – there is one vacancy in each of our two wards to represent them on the Vale of Allen Parish Council
7. Discussion

We do hope you will be able to attend to learn more about the local governance of our two communities and to express your views on issues currently facing both Witchampton and Crichel. We are hoping that representatives of other community groups will attend to share their plans and raise issues for the next 12 months

Councillors: Dee Burford-May, Michael Porreta and Tim Read (Witchampton & Manswood)
Ken Lannon (Crichel)

**VALE OF ALLEN PARISH COUNCIL-
WITCHAMPTON AND MANSWOOD WARD**

**Minutes of the annual meeting, held at Witchampton village Hall
Thursday 12 May at 7:30pm**

Present

Councillors:

Cllr T Read, Chair
Cllr D Burford-May
Cllr M Porretta

Members of the public:

Mrs M Cook
Ms D White
Mr A Benson
Mrs F Read
Mrs A Hayter
Mr G Wayman
Mrs S Vaughan
Mrs K Elias
Mr M Shacklady

MINUTES

The meeting agreed the minutes of annual general meeting held 6 May 2021 by video conferencing

Financial Report

An overview was given of the main income and outgoings in the previous year.

Two principal sources of income:

Precept (money received from Dorset Council – raised by Council tax)

	Estimated Ward expenses	Estimated Ward expenses	Totals
Total VOAPC	£7,609	£11,962	£19,571
Witchampton	£2,644	£3,115	£5,759
Witchampton %	34.7%	26.0%	29.4%

Burial and interment fees

Witchampton Burial Ground £1,902

Total income for ward £4,546

In addition, we had available earmarked funds bought forward of £8,426.

Ward Expenditures

The legal costs of acquiring the additional burial ground and appropriate easements were high, although these were one of costs which when added to annual maintenance costs amounted to £4,187.

Other Expenses	£254
Bus shelters and maintenance	£130
R&BT seat grass cutting	£ 87
Manswood Seat	
Total ward Costs	£4,658
Allocated overheads	£3,619
Total	£8,277

Total expenditures of the VOAPC were £20,197 of which Witchampton was 41%, largely due to the legal costs of the burial ground.

Ward earmarked funds carried forward to 2022/23 were £8,343. A reduction of £83. On the previous year.

Looking forward to 2022/23 we have requested a precept of £2,516.

Planned increased expenditure on two major projects:

The Millennium Avenue needs cleaning up, brambles need cutting back, hedges trimmed, and ivy removed from trees. Contractor quotes have been requested and we are trying to arrange a community clearing day.

Ms D White commented, that going forward we are always going to have problems with these trees, as the wrong species of tree was provided and they have been planted too densely, but we can improve the look of the avenue by keeping on top of brambles etc.

All four bus shelters are in urgent need of repair, with woodworm, rot and leaking roofs.

Fingerposts

The fingerpost replacement programme has for many years been successfully managed by Marion Cook; this is now being handed over to the VOAPC. We would like to thank Marion for all her hard work and dedication to the programme. We hope this year to complete the programme with the replacement of the post at the top of Pound Hill, whilst not in urgent need of repair is not in keeping with all the others.

We are able to apply for a grant of £200 from Rural Britain towards the cost of each fingerpost. Mrs M Cook explained the importance of using the correct wood or metal letters, the Blandford Man Shed has previously helped in the refurbishment/replacement of previous fingerposts.

A damaged fingerpost was bought to the meeting from Long Crichele to be repaired and replaced.

Issues addressed in 2021/22

Traffic and roadways

Several complaints were made to us regarding traffic congestion on the road between the Club and Mount Pleasant, destruction of verges both at the top of Pound Hill and at the top of Roman Road and parking problems both at Crichele gates and Nicky House. We relayed these complaints to Dorset Highways who eventually responded with a meeting with representative from the VOAPC. We have agreed a list of priorities to be addressed, the most relevant to Witchampton being the flow of traffic through the village, with a possible 20mph zone and the state of the C2. We raised the issue of oversized agriculture machinery, but this is a problem shared by most Dorset villages where infrastructure is inadequate for the demands made upon it.

A discussion took place with the members of public present, comment was made that the narrowing of the C2 have caused Harvesters to come through Witchampton as they can no longer fit through the C2. Problems with HGVs trying to turn right at the top of Pound Hill. Suggestion that we look to reduce the size of the Triangle in conjunction with Dorset Highways, and that the Parish Council speak to the farm landowners to discuss the damage that their machinery is doing to our village.

Concerns about the T-junction at HighLea and the B3078 being very dangerous, a suggestion of installing rumble strips to try and slow traffic down, and the need for sightlines to be maintained.

With regards to sight lines, the Chair explained that any member of the public can report to Dorset Highways any sightlines that need cutting.

Burial Ground Extension

An area to the east of the burial ground has been gifted to the village by Georgina Marten, it is unlikely to be utilised for many years but does provide long-term security for the parish. Planning permission for a change of use from agricultural land to burial ground has been lodged with DCC and the ground has been levelled. We have commenced a clear up of the whole burial ground, a compost bin for composable materials has been added and signage requesting visitors to remove non degradable litter have been sighted.

Visitor footfall

This remains a problem for the village but seems to have subsided to some degree with the end of lockdown restrictions, but there continues to be isolated issues. The Litter pick of last May was a great success and we may repeat it later in the year if deemed necessary.

Planning and Development

VOAPC have considered a number of planning applications relevant to this ward, but none have related to greenfield developments. We have seen an increase in the number of conversions of redundant agricultural buildings for residential use.

We have now seen and commented on the first draft of the Dorset Plan, which has classified Witchampton as being category 4 which seems to rule out any greenfield development apart from affordable housing under a rural exception site and here the rules have been tightened considerably. We will continue to make comment to further consultation drafts as they appear.

Governance Review

Dorset Council opened a Governance Review to look at parish and ward boundaries in the County. In response, the VOAPC has responded with a number of modifications to our boundaries. Within Witchampton, this includes the Millennium Avenue into Witchampton (this is currently in Hinton Martell) and resolving the Bradford anomaly.

Bradford is currently part of Pamphill and Shapwick stemming for when it formed part of the Kingston Lacy estate. Bradford residents only have vehicular access through Witchampton yet have to vote in local and parliamentary elections at Pamphill. They also fall under the Pamphill school catchment area rather than Witchampton.

The old Drivers Road across King's Down is now gated so there is no direct access to and from Pamphill other than through Witchampton. Public consultation finishes on 23 May 2022 and effected people are urged to contact Dorset Council directly to register their views.

Composition of the Council

We were delighted to welcome Mike Porretta during the year as a co-opted Parish Councillor for our ward. There however remains a vacancy for a fourth representative for Witchampton and we would urge anyone interested in joining the VOAPC to either contact one of the three of us or contact the Parish Clerk directly. It is important to ensure that our village has its full complement of councillors so that its interests are properly looked after.

General

The Chair thanked the members of the public for giving up their evening to attend the meeting. He explained that within the village we have a number of different organisations, groups and clubs. We had representatives from all of the below at tonight's meeting: -

- Sports Club
- Village Hall
- Jubilee Lunch
- Village Fete
- P.C.C
- Open gardens
- Witchampton Club

Each were asked if they would like to provide an update on what they were involved in and planning. The details of the discussions have not been formally minuted within this meeting. However, all involved agreed that a meeting of all the different groups within the village, and the opportunity to communicate what their different plans were was very helpful and identified the importance of communication.

Meeting closed at 9:30