

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

THURSDAY 1st MAY 2025

7.00pm Calder Room, Whalley Old Grammar School
Station Road, Whalley

Minutes

1. Chairmans Welcome

Cllr Highton welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming.

2. Whalley Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2024-25

I would like welcome everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Whalley PC is made up of 9 councillors. This year has seen the retirement of our longest serving councillor, June Brown after 29 years of service to the council and village. I would like to publicly thank June for her immense contribution over this period and especially her support of me as my vice-chairman for most of this time. We have co-opted Peter Duckworth to join us last month.

We do have another vacancy for a councillor which will be advertised by the normal process shortly.

Councillors are volunteers and receive no financial support for the many hours spent working for the village. It was an honour to be re-elected Chairman at last years AGM, and I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their support throughout the year.

The council normally hold 11 monthly meetings plus the Annual and Precept meetings Planning meetings are normally held each month where any planning applications are considered and comments passed to R V B C, any objections can only be made on planning grounds. The proposed development off Accrington Road has not appeared on the R V agenda yet and although we appreciate the inclusion of a village car park, we await with interest the views of LCC as the lead flood authority. I would like to thank our Chairman of Planning, Councillor John Threlfall for the many hours of preparation prior to these meetings.

A major concern remains about anti-social behaviour which has included drug taking, drinking, general vandalism and verbal abuse when challenged. There have been numerous complaints received from several areas of the village. We hold regular meetings with the police and other interested parties to work towards resolution of these issues.

Some licensed properties have continued to be the centre of anti-social behaviour, and we continue to receive complaints regarding their late night and early morning activities from residents. We are disappointed that the police and the licensing department at R V B C are still not addressing this problem. We understand that a mediation meeting has been arranged between one specific premise operator and local residents affected by their customers. The C I P is due be renewed by R V B C and although it is of limited value it is the only means of controlling further licence applications. The further related problem of the

behaviour of Private Hire Taxis particularly on weekend evenings continues, we have lobbied for enforcement action and observe that the provision of a taxi rank is unlikely to improve the situation.

Speeding continues to be an issue on several roads and there has been no success in obtaining enforcement from the Lancashire Safety Partnership. We have a rolling programme of deploying Spids at various locations on the major roads throughout the village with the help of Altham P C. The results have been downloaded from these devices, and we now have accurate details of the speed profile for these locations and an accurate count of passing vehicles whilst deployed.

We have endeavoured to have an additional boundary sign on Wiswell Lane but so far without success!

Waste bin servicing remains a problem, and we are disappointed that R V has postponed the introduction of a new agreed regime due to the lack of funding from central government.

Remembrance Day: we have continued to fund a road closure of King Street so that the traditional march from the Parish Church and the silence at 11am at the War Memorial can take place safely and respectfully.

Churchyard: Whalley is a closed churchyard and is a major responsibility for the P C. The general maintenance contract has continued with Abbey Gardening Services, and I am pleased with the continued improvement of the appearance of the churchyard. Trees and slippery paths continue to be a major problem and need constant attention. We still plan to flag a section of the path leading to the lower cemetery area subject to resources being available. We have had to remove a further large mature Horse Chestnut following a major branch failure and will replant three Oak trees. We also need to remove a multi stemmed Sycamore from the internal corner with Back King Street that is causing failure of the perimeter wall which will need to be re-built.

Grounds & Gardens: Abbey Gardening Services continue to make good progress enhancing the environment of the village in two roles, firstly as gardening contractors and also with the contract as lengthsman for the village.

We have installed a further 4 new benches this year, constructed by Ark Plastics from new cast iron ends in the standard style of the refurbished benches in Vale Gardens. One of these was funded by our Memorial Bench scheme and three replaced life expired benches. We will continue the bench programme by adding at least 4 more of this type this coming year.

We have started using parish mapping software which identifies the location and condition of all our assets, I would like to thank Councillor Richard Vickers for his work on this project. I would like to commend the work of the Whalley in Bloom volunteers throughout the village and wish to congratulate them on the awards received. More details will be provided by their representatives later on the agenda this evening.

I would also like to commend all the good work for the benefit of the community done by Whalley Lions, particularly the regular litter picking which improves the appearance of the village.

The P C continues to use the large cedar tree as a permanent Christmas Tree for the village and the new lights produce an impressive display. This year we have added four additional column displays to the lamp standards around the bus station, and we continue to arrange and fund the repairs, installation and removal of these Christmas Lights. We hope to make a further addition to the display this year.

QEII Playing Fields: We have had a reply to our pre application advice meeting which has been mainly positive about the plan for the building of a community sports hall. We must complete the planning application process before we can apply for funding. I would like to particularly commend Councillor Jon Smith for his work on the project.

Whalley, Wiswell and Barrow Cemetery, the Burial Committee is now a committee of W P C but still with representatives from Barrow P C and Wiswell P C. Meetings are held quarterly. We have recently started using cemetery management software which has been challenging but will be worthwhile once we are more familiar with the system.

Adam Cottam Trust, the Almshouses are now in good condition following the work supported by the P C and continue to be a valuable provision for the village. I would like to particularly commend Councillor Cliff Ball for his work with the Almshouses trust. Old Grammar School, we continue to support the Whalley Education Foundation trustees. Major work has continued with the development of a new room immediately above us and a new extension to the rear of the building.

Concurrent Functions: I am pleased to report that R V has continued to support P C with a grant towards expenditure on the lengthsman, burial grounds and parks. Grants were maintained at 5k this year, primarily made to local groups. The formal application procedure has continued and all applicants provided the necessary information. However we were disappointed that many groups in the village did not take advantage of this support from the P C.

The Website continues to be the main source of information on the P C and continues to receive compliments on its appearance and functionality.

Parish Council Newsletter: is still pending, perhaps an online version should be tried! Further policy and governance documents have been reviewed and updated this year I would like to thank our Clerk, Liz Haworth for the excellent contribution that she is making to the P C and the support that she has given to me and the council throughout the year. I also congratulate her on her CILCA award which means that we now have a fully qualified clerk!

Issues going forward;

Flood Mitigation Measures, we are disappointed that the E A no longer support the provision of these measures and the F L A G has disbanded

Car Park: the long stay car park off Accrington Road is still on the development plan for the site

Unitary authority, it is likely that R V will be absorbed into a larger unitary authority within the next two years. We oppose this change but the likely affect on the P C itself may well be positive if we receive a transfer of assets from R V.

I look forward to continuing to work for the benefit of the village.

Thank you. Martin Highton

3. Summary Accounts ending 31st March 2025

Whalley Parish Council

YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2025

Accounting Statement

Balances Brought Forward	64,717.58
Precept income	76,675.00
Other Receipts	7,344.53
Staff costs	(18,180.98)
Loan interest / Capital	0.00
VAT (net)	334.92
Other payments	(38,154.10)
Balance Carried Forward	<u>92,736.95</u>

£

£

Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/25:

Whalley Parish Council Current Account	9,936
Whalley Parish Council QEII Current Account	1,095
Whalley Parish Council Skipton Building Society Account	81,706

92,737

4. Guest Speakers – Whalley In Bloom Representatives - Val, Louise & Gaja

Representatives Val, Louise, and Gaja delivered an excellent talk, sharing the story of Whalley In Bloom, how it is funded, and how those funds are used. They highlighted the areas they maintain, this year's themes and initiatives focused on the environment and sustainability, and past, current and future projects. It was a thoroughly enjoyable presentation from all three speakers. We do hope you'll come again.

One exciting current project is the Best Kept Village Competition—a wonderful opportunity for the entire village to get involved and showcase our community pride.

Thank you to Whalley In Bloom for your continued dedication and for the beautiful floral displays that brighten and enhance our village throughout the year. You are appreciated!

5. Public Open Forum

The opportunity was given for members of the public to raise any issues in relation to the village.

Signed by Vice Chairman.....Cllr John Threlfall Date