



# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

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

## MINUTES

### 1. Apologies for Absence

**Present:** Cllr Martin Highton (Chairman) Cllr Clifford Ball, Cllr June Brown, Cllr John Threlfall, Cllr Jonathan Smith, Cllr Tracey Whistlecraft.

**Apologies:** Cllr Caroline Allen

**In Attendance:** Liz Haworth (Parish Clerk), 9 members of the public and Cllr Ged Mirfin.

### 2. Chairmans Welcome

Cllr Martin Highton welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked them for coming.

### 3. Whalley Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2021- 2022 – Martin Highton

I would like welcome everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Whalley PC is made up of 9 councillors; we have had 3 resignations this year, Paddy Brown, David Sleight and Gill Smith. We have co-opted Jon Smith back on to the council and we continue with 2 vacancies. I would like formally welcome Jon and thank the former councillors for their contribution. 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 Annual and Precept meetings, we held one meeting via Zoom, cancelled one and postponed the last Annual Meeting for six months due to the covid pandemic.

I would like to congratulate Councillor Ged Mirfin on his election to L C C and look forward to having an active county councillor who is happy to support the needs of and resolve issues for the residents of Whalley.

Planning meetings are normally held each month where any planning applications are considered and comments passed to RVBC, any objections can only be made on planning grounds. We were disappointed that the views of this council and others regarding the redevelopment of Queen Mary and Bridge Terraces on Mitton Road

were not taken on board. However, we are pleased that LCC as the lead flood authority has not agreed to the proposed development off Accrington Road. I would like to thank our Chairman of Planning, Councillor John Threlfall and the former Chairman David Sleight for the many hours of preparation particularly in setting up the electronic links and observations to the planning applications prior to these meetings.

A meeting to discuss Anti-Social Behaviour in Whalley was set up in October by the R.V.B.C. partnership officer which included many of the relevant groups but disappointingly the follow up meeting planned for December was postponed due to the lack of attendance. We still await a new date for this meeting, but a major issue is the lack of staff at R. V.

The 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 including the public toilets and surrounds, the library, Procter's Field playground, the Abbey, the Sands, the Swan Hotel and Vale House. There has been further significant damage caused to the toilets and another expensive refurbishment has been necessary. We look forward to the police working towards resolution of these issues.

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.

There has been no further extension to the CCTV in Whalley but we will continue to lobby for this from R.V.B.C.

Speeding is an issue, mostly highlighted by residents from Mitton Road. We have been unsuccessful in obtaining enforcement from the Lancashire Safety Partnership however we are pleased that the local police have been recently active with hand held devices. There are planned changes to the L.S.P. and we have a meeting arranged with A.P.C.C. next week.

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 not addressing this problem. We attempted applying for a licensing review following many issues with Benny's Bar but primarily from the lack of help with this process from the legal dept at R.V.B.C. we were not able to complete the application. We followed this up with a meeting with the licensee and her solicitor which appears to have been reasonably successful in addressing the problems. We are pleased that the Cumulative Impact Assessment has been reviewed and extended to 2026.

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 were shocked to find that some flagstones were stolen overnight following similar events at other locations but these have been replaced. A Sycamore tree is due to be felled on the advice from the annual tree survey. It is still hoped that a plan can be drawn up for the replacement of the mature trees around the churchyard as they approach the end of their lives but compliance with the requirements of the Diocese and the Borough Council make this process challenging. 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 added 2 new benches constructed by Ark Plastics from new cast iron ends in a similar style to the refurbished benches in Vale Gardens. We will replace the benches alongside the path through Procter's Field this year with 4 more of this type. We have fitted a new defibrillator into the cabinet at the toilets due to the long lead time to obtain spare parts to refurbish the existing one. We have ensured that the device is listed on a new database as the previous system seemed to be somewhat incomplete.

The copings on the wall along Woodlands Drive need replacing again following theft of a number of the stones.

The remains of the Yew bush around the old Christmas Tree site will be removed and the bed will continue to be planted by W i B. I would like to commend the work of the Whalley in Bloom volunteers throughout the village.

QEII Playing Fields: We have agreed to accept responsibility for the Sports Club land should the trustees agree to an early termination of their lease. Following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh this lease will now expire in 20 years. This is a necessary prerequisite for the further development of the site.

The P.C. adopted a large cedar tree as a permanent Christmas Tree for the village and have installed new lights in 2 phases. We have also adopted the column displays from the C o T and arranged and funded the repairs, installation and removal of these Christmas Lights on the lamp standards. The lamp standards were finally structurally tested, at no cost to the council and all have passed

Whalley, Wiswell and Barrow Cemetery, following the resignation of the committee in October, administration has continued with an interim body of the chairmen of the 3 parish councils. There is still an ongoing dispute with the Registrar to resolve, meetings continue!

Adam Cottam Trust, we have agreed to support the trust by providing a grant of £20,000 for the re-roofing of the Almshouses which together with a similar grant and loan from the Almshouses Association has enabled this essential work to take place. I would like to particularly commend Councillor Cliff Ball for his work with the Almshouses trust.

Old Grammar School, we have supported the Whalley Education Foundation trustees with a grant towards the preparation work towards the development plan.  
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.  
Section 137 grants increased to 4k this year, primarily made to local groups. The formal application procedure has continued and all applicants provided the necessary information. I particularly wish to commend work done for young people by all the sport groups in the village including football, cricket, tennis and table tennis.

Platinum Jubilee, an Oak has been planted in Vale Gardens. We have agreed to support the occasion with grants to C o T for flags and bunting and also other celebrations and activities throughout the village.

The Website continues to be the main source of information on the P.C. and continues to receive compliments on its appearance and functionality. All parish councillors now have whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk email addresses  
Parish Council Newsletter: we finally published a newsletter in November! We intend publishing another one shortly.

We have adopted a new 'Code of Conduct' in line with current recommendations and as adopted by R.V.B.C.

We have also had a change of Clerk, I would like to introduce Liz Haworth who was appointed in January. I would like to thank both Liz and her predecessor, Mandy Richardson for the support that they have given to me and the council throughout the year.

Issues going forward;

Flood Mitigation Measures, we still await details of the E A plan!

Car Park: is a long stay car park off Accrington Road more of a possibility with the report from the lead flood authority on the proposed development?

Local Parliamentary review, we will continue to resist moving Whalley and Painterwood to the Hyndburn constituency.

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

Thank you. Martin Highton.

### 3. Summary of Accounts ending 31st March 2022

<b>Bank Reconciliation Whalley Parish Council 2021-22</b>			
Name of smaller authority:	Whalley Parish Council		
County area (local councils and parish meetings only):	Whalley, Lancashire		
<b>Financial year ending 31 March 2022</b>			
Prepared by (Name and Role):	Liz Haworth Clerk & RFO		
Date:	06/04/2022		
		£	£
<b>Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/22:</b>			
	Nat West	36,309.4	
	Skipton BS	24,006.7	
	QEll	-	
			60,316.14
Petty cash float (if applicable)			0.00
<b>Less: any un-presented cheques as at 31/3/22 (enter these as negative numbers)</b>			
	3715	(15.00)	
	3716	(455.00)	
			-470.00
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/22			
		-	0.00
<b>Net balances as at 31/3/22</b>			<b>59,846.14</b>

<b>Accounting Statement</b>	
Balances Brought Forward	<b>60,945.36</b>
Precept income	60,823.00
Other Receipts	3,530.34
Staff costs	(10,481.32)
Loan interest / Capital	0.00
VAT (net)	(1,101.63)
Other payments	(53,869.61)
Balance Carried Forward	<b>59,846.14</b>

Each year **Whalley Parish Council's** annual return is audited by an external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission and any person interested can inspect and make copies of the annual return and all books, contracts, bills, and receipts relating to them. These documents are available on reasonable notice, after the audit. The period for the exercise of public rights is from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022. Contact: [clerk@whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk)

#### **4. Guest Speaker (TBC)**

Unfortunately a guest speaker was not available on this evening.

Cllr Martin Highton took this opportunity to inform the Parish of some well worth community projects including Campfire & Conversation for people living with Dementia, outdoor sensory activities held in the grounds of Whalley Abbey Mondays 10.30am – 12pm. For further information please see the Parish Website News section or contact Ribble Valley Crossroads Care.

Volunteers are proposing a Whalley Weekend Open Gardens with Food Activities Competitions on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The objectives are to boost local economy, support the community suffering the aftermath of COVID, bereavement and loneliness and to raise money for the National Garden Scheme beneficiary charities.

The intention is to include all aspects of the community including the allotments, local businesses, cafes, shops, restaurants, clubs, and schools. A possible bake-off competition with judges, along with other activities are to be planned over the weekend.

Early planning is essential as all promotional material under the banner of NGS needs to be completed by August 2022. Further information will be available via social media and village websites.

#### **5. Public Open Forum**

Representatives from Ribble Valley Rail were in attendance and thanked the Parish Council for their support of grant monies. They confirmed that the concerns around the closing of the carpark at Whalley train station which would have hindered disabled access has now been resolved.

The Chairman Whalley Community Woodland, Ian Lloyd updated everyone on the progress of the Queens Jubilee Celebrations to be held on the Green at Calderstones Park which so far include 15 stallholders, 18 exhibitors, picnic on the park, bar, tombola, bouncy castles, fire brigade/engine, obstacle courses and games for children to name a few. Ian thanked the Parish Council for their support and invites everyone to the day's celebrations, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June from 1pm.

Representatives from Whalley in Bloom were in attendance and thanked Whalley Parish Council for their support and that of LCC Cllr Ged Mirfin.

Cllr Ged Mirfin updated the Parish around the Licensing issues and advised that he felt there had been a positive shift in attitude to the problems Whalley residents face with late night licensing that run into the early morning and that Ribble Valley were to act as a Responsible Authority and are now liaising with Environmental Health to pursue licensed premises that are flouting the licensing agreements.

Cllr Mirfin reported that the footpath works in Whalley were now almost complete, although it was noted that taxis are parking on the new paved areas, and this is to be reported as this is not a vehicle stopping or parking area. Residents are encouraged to take a note of car reg plates and report any indiscretions to prevent this from continuing.

Cllr Mifin also reported that the recently appointed Inspector Pearson is to meet with Cllrs to discuss the issues Whalley suffers with anti-social behaviours around the village.

Cllr Mirfin talked about the work he had done around objections to planning applications in flood areas and intends to take up a meeting with UU as he did previously with the Lead Flood Local Authority to hopefully prevent further applications in these areas.

He also advised the parish community groups of available grant monies from Lancashire Environmental Fund and the Local Members Grant Scheme. The grants can be used to fund projects that will directly benefit the community, from gardening workshops and knit and natter sessions, to football activities to help young people stay active. See their website;  
<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/grants/local-member-grants-scheme/>

Members of the Parish Council are meeting with Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Andy Pratt on Monday 9th May to discuss traffic speeding issues in the area, particularly on Mitton Road.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.