



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

THURSDAY 27th April 2023

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

MINUTES

1. Chairmans Welcome

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

2. Whalley Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2022- 2023 – Martin Highton

I would like welcome everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Whalley PC is made up of 9 councillors; we have had one resignation this year, Tracey Whistlecraft. We have co-opted Richard Vickers and Judith Carlton and welcome them to the council. There is an election next week, however four councillors have been re-elected unopposed and the other four have put themselves forward for co-option at the Annual Parish Council Meeting next month, there is still one vacancy. 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 Annual Parish Council Meeting 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 however we had to cancel one following the death of HM The Queen. 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. The proposed development off Accrington Road has re-appeared on the agenda and we appreciate the re-inclusion of a village car park, however 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.

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 of the village We now hold regular meetings on a 6-weekly cycle with the police and other interested parties to work towards resolution of these issues.

There will be a further CCTV camera installed looking down The Sands to monitor Anti-Social Behaviour, this has been funded from resources obtained by the

Partnership Officer at RVBC and as it cannot be integrated into the RV system, will be adopted by the Parish Council.

Some licensed properties have continued to be the center of anti-social behaviour and we continue to receive complaints regarding their late night and early morning activities from residents. There has been some progress with the work of the Environmental Health Officer from RVBC regarding enforcement of keeping the sound levels below an acceptable limit. We are disappointed that the police and the licensing department at RVBC are still not addressing this problem. Another related problem is the behaviour of Private Hire Taxis particularly on weekend evenings, we are lobbying for enforcement action.

Speeding is an issue, mostly highlighted by residents from Mitton Road. We continue to be unsuccessful in obtaining enforcement from the Lancashire Safety Partnership however we are pleased that the local police have been active with handheld devices. We have recently trialed a SpID on Mitton Road with the help of Rennie Pinder from Altham Parish Council and have received full details of the speed profile of passing vehicles whilst deployed. A new joint working group between Ribble Valley parishes has been set up primarily to lobby for 20mph zones in the villages and other related issues.

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

Churchyard: Whalley is a closed churchyard and is a major responsibility for the Parish Council. 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. A Sycamore tree was 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 4 new benches to the path through Procter's Field constructed by Ark Plastics from new cast iron ends in a similar style to the refurbished benches in Vale Gardens. The 3 benches removed were then refurbished and re-located to the path leading to Old Sol's Bridge and the Burial Ground. We will continue the bench programme by adding at least 3 more of this type this coming year.

The copings on the wall along Woodlands Drive have been replaced again following theft of a number of the stones and the boundary wall with a neighbouring property requires rebuilding.

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

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.

We have fitted a defibrillator that was spare after refurbishment into a new publicly accessible cabinet at the Mitton Road Business Park.

Christmas: The Parish Council continues to use the large cedar tree as a permanent Christmas Tree for the village and the new lights produce an impressive display. The adopted column displays have required further refurbishment and we continue to arrange and fund the repairs, installation, and removal of these Christmas Lights on the lamp standards.

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 which expires in 19 years. There has been a recent meeting to progress this and we await agreement to take this forward. There is the opportunity to use UKSPF funds towards the development of a sports hall and pavilion on the site and it is a necessary prerequisite that all parties operate under a unified structure. 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 Whalley Parish Council but still with representatives from Barrow and Wiswell's Parish Council.

Adam Cottam Trust: We have supported 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 project to be completed. 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 by funding the main contract of £28,000 for structural alterations and new ladies and pre-school toilet facilities.

Concurrent Functions: I am pleased to report that RV has continued to support Parish Councils 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 tree has been planted in Vale Gardens and we supported the occasion with grants to Chamber of Trade for flags and bunting and also other celebrations and activities throughout the village. There will be similar support to celebrate the King's Coronation next month.

The Website continues to be the main source of information on the Parish Council and continues to receive compliments on its appearance and functionality. All parish councillors have whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk email addresses.

Parish Council Newsletter: Unfortunately the publishing of another one is again overdue.

We continue to review our governance documents and have recently adopted new 'Financial Regulations' and all approved payments are now made electronically. I would like to thank our Clerk, Liz Haworth for the excellent contribution that she is making to the Parish Council and the support that she has given to me and the council throughout the year.

Issues going forward: Flood Mitigation Measures, have gone quiet again, we still await details of the Environmental Agency plan!

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

Local Parliamentary review: We are pleased that the proposals no longer involve us moving the Hyndburn constituency but splitting the village between two parliamentary constituencies is not a positive move!

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

Thank you. Martin Highton

3. Summary of Accounts ending 31st March 2023

Bank Reconciliation Whalley Parish Council 2022-23

Name of smaller authority:

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Financial year ending 31 March 2023

Prepared by (Name and Role):

Date: 31/03/2023

	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/23:		
Nat West	54,748.84	
Skipton BS	24,125.75	
QEI	<u>1,095.00</u>	
		79,969.59
Petty cash float (if applicable)		0.00
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/23 (enter these as negative numbers)		
	<u>0.00</u>	
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/23		0.00
		<u>0.00</u>
Net balances as at 31/3/23		<u>79,969.59</u>

Accounting Statement	
Balances Brought Forward	59,846.14
Precept income	61,728.00
Other Receipts	6,950.01
Staff costs	(13,370.82)
Loan interest / Capital	0.00
VAT (net)	1,089.43
Other payments	(36,273.17)
Balance Carried Forward	79,969.59

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 Monday 5 June – Friday 14 July 2023. Contact: clerk@whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk

4. Guest Speaker (TBC)

Guest Speaker - Chief Executive Officer Chris Oliver & Deputy Chief Strategy Officer/Director of Health Equity Joanna Stark of Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust to talk about the future intentions of Calderstones.

Chris Oliver delivered a presentation which is available on the Parish Council website and offered a question and answers session to the public.

Topics covered were the heritage of the building and site, historical events such as the annual memorial for veterans, the cemetery, request for a museum, funding of police presence and details of the care to be provided.

Chris Oliver stated LSCft have no intentions to sell or develop any of the land and their focus is on providing a high-end modern care facility for patients with mental health issues and rehabilitation.

The site will be sensitively developed with the community in mind. Reassurances were given that there is no risk to the community that any leave of site for patients would be accompanied.

Inclusive community use of the site is being investigated and the public were asked for their contributions to the conversation.

Any further questions can be directed to them – details shown at end of LSCft presentation available on WPC website.

5. Public Open Forum

Terry Hill on behalf of the Old Grammar School, WEF thanked the Parish Council for their support of the much-needed renovations to the ladies toilets. Other necessary development works will continue through the year as the foundation have secured funding from Laurus Homes and other grant providers.

Potholes continue to be of concern, residents were reminded to keep updated the Clean Street App with the information of holes needing repair.

The roundabout at the bottom of Station Road/King Street is an ongoing issue as drivers do not observe basic roundabout rules. The white marking lines are inadequate and the whole roundabout junction area requires review. Cllrs Mirfin & Hindle stated they are looking at lobbying for improvements with Highways on this matter.

The carpark on the Accrington Road development planning permission was discussed and it was noted that if Ribble Valley are not prepared to take on the responsibility of this car park, the Parish Council would.

Issues around Flooding and Environmental Agency remain and continue to be raised.

Accrington Road land for sale (Hellicliffes) was discussed within the public forum around the potential of a community /fundraising project to purchase the land, marketed at offers over £100,000. Attendees were investigating the various options available to them.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed by Chairman.....Martin Highton Date