

# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2024

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 2023-24

I would like welcome everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Whalley PC is made up of 9 councillors; Following the election last year, four councillors were re-elected unopposed and the other four former councillors were co-opted at the Annual Meeting of the Council. The one remaining vacancy was filled by co-opting County Councillor Ged Mirfin. 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 year's Annual Meeting of the Council 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 RVBC. Any objections can only be made on planning grounds. The proposed development off Accrington Road has not appeared on the RVBC 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 the Planning Committee, 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.

A further CCTV camera has been installed looking down The Sands to monitor ASB. This has been funded from resources obtained by the Partnership Officer at RVBC and as it cannot be integrated into the RVBC system, has been adopted by the Parish Council.

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. There is an ongoing court case against the main source of these problems. We are disappointed that the police and the licensing department at RVBC are still not addressing this problem. We are also surprised that the Cumulative Impact Assessment is only considered by RVBC if an objection to a licence has been submitted.

Another related problem is the behaviour of Private Hire Taxis particularly on weekend evenings, we have lobbied for enforcement action.

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 installed 9 further SpID mounting plates throughout the village and have a rolling programme of deploying these devices with the help of Altham Parish Council. The results downloaded from these devices give full details of the speed profile and an accurate count of passing vehicles whilst deployed.

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

Remembrance Day: we have agreed 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 Parish Council. The general maintenance contract has continued with Abbey Gardening Services Ltd 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 plan to flag a section of the path leading to the lower cemetery area. 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 Ltd 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 6 new benches this year, constructed by Ark Plastics from new cast iron ends in the standard style of the refurbished benches in Vale Gardens. Two of these were 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.

The boundary wall of the bus station has been repaired.

I would like to commend the work of the Whalley in Bloom volunteers throughout the village and wish to congratulate them on the three awards from NWiB.

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 provided a full responder's kit including a defibrillator to the local Ribble Valley First Responders and councillors have attended a first aid course including practice in the use of a defibrillator from Councillor Judith Carlton.

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. We hope to make a further addition to the display this year.

QEII Playing Fields: We have agreed to apply for planning permission for the building of a community sports hall and have commissioned all the technical reports required for this. It was not possible to complete this in time for UKSPF funding but we must complete the planning process before we can apply for alternative funding for the project. We have also improved the access to the MUGA and Green Gym by surfacing the access path with grant support from the LEF. 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 with representatives from Barrow Parish Council and Wiswell Parish Council. Meetings are held quarterly.

Adam Cottam Trust: The Almshouses are now in good condition following the work supported by the Parish Council 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. The structural alterations and new ladies and pre-school toilet facilities have been completed. 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 Ribble Valley Borough Council has continued to support the Parish Council with a grant towards expenditure on the lengthsman, burial grounds and parks.

Grant Funding: Increased to 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 Parish Council.

King's Coronation: Celebrations and activities throughout the village were supported by the Parish Council.

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

Parish Council Newsletter: unfortunately, the publishing of another one is still overdue.

All 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 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, however there is a meeting in 3 weeks!

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

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

Thank you. Martin Highton

### 3. Summary Accounts ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

| Financial year ending 31 March 2024               |                         |           |                  |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Prepared by (Name and Role):                      | Liz Haworth Clerk & RFO |           |                  |
| Date:   | 29/04/2024              |           |                  |
|   |                         | £         | £                |
| <b>Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/24:</b> |                         |           |                  |
|   | Nat West                | 8,803.43  |                  |
|   | Skipton BS              | 54,819.15 |                  |
|   | QEll                    | 1,095.00  |                  |
|   |                         |           | 64,717.58        |
| Petty cash float (if applicable)                  |                         |           | -                |
| <b>Net balances as at 31/3/24</b>                 |                         |           | <b>64,717.58</b> |

| Accounting Statement     |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Balances Brought Forward | <b>79,969.59</b> |
| Precept income           | 64,753.00        |
| Other Receipts           | 29,131.40        |
| Staff costs              | (14,010.31)      |
| Loan interest / Capital  | 0.00             |
| VAT (net)                | (591.14)         |
| Other payments           | (94,534.96)      |
| Balance Carried Forward  | <b>64,717.58</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 Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June – Friday 12 July 2024. Contact: [clerk@whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@whalleyparishcouncil.org.uk)

**4. Guest Speaker – Chief Executive Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust - Chris Oliver – Update on Calderstones**

Main Points in Summary:

- Took over the whole site from MerseyCare on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024;
- Had opened up some services prior to this at the Woodview Ward;
- There is a 10 year plan to develop the site;
- Calderstones is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest health site in the UK with 106 acres;
- There is some excitement about the amount of green space and how this can be used for both patients and the community and there are ideas about creating a unique community resource for restorative and regenerative health benefits;
- Innovations would see some family services for children and young people; since the pandemic there has been a great increase in demand for therapeutic care; the green space will be a benefit;
- There are plans to celebrate the heritage of the Calderstones facility while at the same time looking to the future;
- The 10 year plan sees 4 zones identified for development but time and again the value of the green space came up;
- Funding will be a key issue and the Trust is definitely not about competing with the Parish Council;
- Partnerships will be key as no one body can do everything in isolation – it's a journey together.

Questions:

What is the level of occupancy going to be over 10 years?

*There are three wards with 32 in-patients at the moment. The Maple Ward would be for acute cases and may be used to decant patients from elsewhere during refurbishments. Whalley is planned to be a state of the art facility. It could house a further 45 patients one day. The idea of introducing some Primary Care functions is being discussed with local Health Care bodies including GP Practices.*

This is a revolutionary change from being a closed site.

*The emphasis will be on community open space and development of services for young people. Engaging the community is essential but tricky. There has been some contact with local residents to try to allay concerns. The L & SC NHS Trust cares about the site and wants to develop it.*

Will there be a communications plan?

*Things are now at a stage where communication strategies will be developed e.g. mail shots, an engagement plan, and not least use of St Luke's Chapel which has had some refurbishment. The Local History group could be a user of space in St Luke's as could young people from Whalley and there are plans to introduce a coffee shop. It is still the position that there are no plans to develop any of the site for residential or business use.*

Calderstones is still a mystery for many people and in the past there have been concerns about “out of area” placements.

*Part of the Trust’s solution is that patients should only spend the shortest amount of time as in-patients.*

There is a lot of heritage.

*There are lots of photos, artefacts and so on which go to recognising the history of Calderstones. St Luke’s Chapel has been renovated and may make a great showcase.*

Is the site private or will there be access?

*At the moment the site is not accessible. There are plans for cycling and walking routes in the ground in due course but there will be some security on site.*

Presentation available here <https://tinyurl.com/3dyza6xd>

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

What is happening with the traffic signals on A671 and the recent signage for a temporary 30mph limit?

Works will be carried out to do some resurfacing, renew road markings and deal with some localised flooding problems.

Is the land at the bottom of Accrington Road earmarked for car parking?

There is a plan for a 25-space car park as part of a residential development. Plans have been with RVBC for many months. The Parish Council has indicated that it would be prepared to manage such a car park. Previous plans were rejected by LCC (lead Flood Authority).

When will the Lawsonsteads Link Road open?

It is scheduled to open when the last property in Phase 2 of the development is sold.

Regarding the Calderstones Cemetery, has the Bishop made a decision over a request for deconsecration?

No.

The meeting closed at 20:15.

Signed by Chairman.....Martin Highton ..... Date