



# Wiswell Parish Council

Three Year Business Plan

October 2023 to October 2026



## Version Control

Ver.	Author	Date	Revision/Changes	Approved by
0.1	Mike Hill. Parish Clerk	15/10/23	First Draft	
0.2	Mike Hill. Parish Clerk	22/10/23	Changes include comments received from Councillor Scholfield.	
1.0	Mike Hill. Parish Clerk	09/11/23	No changes from version 0.2	Members at Council Meeting 08/11/2023

## Table of Contents

- 1. Vision..... 3
- 2. About Wiswell Parish Council. .... 3
  - 2.1 Current Councillors: ..... 3
- 3. How the Parish Council operates. .... 4
- 4. Business Plan Objectives and Activities: ..... 5
  - 4.1 Parish benefits and community engagement:..... 5
  - 4.2 Parish Council administration: ..... 5
  - 4.3 Parish Council development: ..... 6
  - 4.4 Financial planning and control: ..... 7
  - 4.5 Strategic planning/key projects: ..... 7
  - 4.6 Committees and Groups: ..... 8
- 5. Business Plan review ..... 9

## 1. Vision.

Wiswell Parish Council aims to be a positive, efficient and reliable organisation and meet the needs of the parish through its:

- ⇒ Commitment to parishioners.
- ⇒ Awareness of the needs of all parishioners.
- ⇒ Active communications within and for the parish.

The Council seeks to promote and improve the quality of parish life by using the knowledge of groups and individuals within the parish and by making efficient and positive use of its income.



It will strive to be pro-active in the introduction of measures that will enable the community to thrive in a safe, friendly and comfortable environment, with special emphasis on community engagement.

## 2. About Wiswell Parish Council.

Wiswell Parish Council is the first tier of local government and as such is the closest to the community, with a key role to play in promoting the parish by representing its interests to other agencies such as Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC), Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Lancashire Constabulary.

Within its limited remit, the Council monitors and reports on planning matters, as well as monitoring and reporting on amenity and highway issues. It works to influence decision makers at Borough and County level and strives to improve the quality of parish life by providing a range of services to meet local need. These range from



providing grit bins, maintenance of the village defibrillator, village benches, verges and public rights of way and the upkeep of Coronation Gardens. In addition, the Council organises social events including Christmas carol singing, lunches, quiz nights, as well as Remembrance Sunday commemorations.

Parishioners elect 5 parish councillors every four years. The Council elects a Chair and a Vice-Chair annually in May. Councillors are unpaid and receive no allowance for their duties other than travel costs for duties beyond the parish.

### 2.1 Current Councillors:

				
Stephen Houghton <i>Chair</i>	Alan Scholfield <i>Vice Chair</i>	Oi Mei Wrightson	Judith Pursglove	Sarah Clemson

Details can be found on the Council's website: [www.wiswellpc.org.uk](http://www.wiswellpc.org.uk)

## 3. How the Parish Council operates.

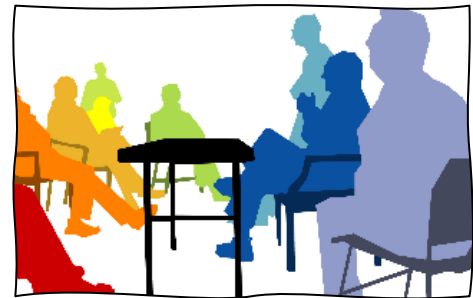
The Parish Council performs its statutory duties by:

- ⇒ Meeting six times per year to deal with the business of the Council.
- ⇒ Operating within the Standing Orders of the Council.
- ⇒ Holding an Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at which the Chair and Vice-Chair for the coming year are elected.

All Council meetings are open to the public with a period set aside for members of the public to address the Council. The meetings take place in Pendleton Village Hall which has good access and adequate parking.

**Note:**

- ⇒ That the Council has its own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which lay down the rules by which it operates and conducts its business. Council's Standing Orders are based on a model prepared by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
- ⇒ All Parish Councillors are expected to adhere to the April 2021 Code of Conduct, issued by RVBC, which is based on the Model Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- ⇒ The Council will facilitate the holding of an Annual Parish Meeting between 1 March and 31 May each year to review the activities of the previous year and give an opportunity for residents to raise issues of concern. If in attendance, the Chair of the Parish Council will preside over the meeting.
- ⇒ The Parish Council aims to promote the social and environmental wellbeing of the Parish and to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive community.



## 4. Business Plan Objectives and Activities:

### 4.1 Parish benefits and community engagement:

- ⇒ To provide a channel of communication for the views and expressions of the local community and to be responsive to its needs and aspirations.
- ⇒ To represent the parish of Wiswell and to improve the facilities, infrastructure and overall amenity for all parishioners.

This will be achieved by being a professional and competent Parish Council, which is open and accountable and ensures sound fiscal management of Parish Council resources.

Action	Measure
Ensure continuous communication and engagement with residents and village groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Councillors to be involved with existing village groups.</li> <li>● Look to hold advice surgeries and public meetings.</li> <li>● Issue a twice-yearly Parish newsletter and other newsletters, as necessary.</li> <li>● Introduce a Parish Facebook page.</li> <li>● Ensure the Council’s website and noticeboard are up to date.</li> </ul>
Donations to parish organisations	Donations considered on request.
Ensure engagement with all age-groups within the village	Continue to engage with the ‘Village Elders’ and look to establish a similar group for young persons under 18.

### 4.2 Parish Council administration:

- ⇒ To ensure the ongoing administration of the Council and the facilitation of the Parish Council’s activities.
- ⇒ Continue to seek and improve established channels of communication and find new ways of engaging and communicating with parishioners.

Action	Measure
Ensure functional Council meetings are in place and statutory obligations are met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hold six meetings per year including an Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.</li> <li>● Ensure Council agendas are posted on the Council’s website and noticeboard at least three working days before the meeting</li> </ul>
Council transparency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public sessions are available at all meetings.</li> <li>● Ensure meeting minutes are available on the Council’s website in a timely manner.</li> </ul>

# Three-Year Business Plan

Action	Measure
Ensure all actions from the Parish Council meeting are completed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Action Sheet' issued after each meeting.</li> <li>• Actions reviewed at each Council meeting.</li> </ul>
Liaison with LCC and RVBC.	County and Borough Councillors to attend Council meetings, provide updates, and answer questions.
Liaison with Lancashire Constabulary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Council has updates from the PCSO.</li> <li>• The Council to function as a conduit between the parishioners and the PCSO.</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Parish Council development:

- ⇒ To provide all Councillors and the Parish Clerk with the knowledge to enable them to contribute to the advancement and improvement of the Council.
- ⇒ To ensure Councillors keep abreast of new opportunities and policies.
- ⇒ To improve Council activities by encouraging Councillors and the Parish Clerk to develop their skills through appropriate training.

Action	Measure
Ensure all Councillors, as a minimum, receive basic training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new councillors attend Councillor training provided by Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC).</li> <li>• Ensure all Councillors receive an individual training record, which will be provided to Councillors each year.</li> <li>• All Councillors involved in planning matters attend a planning training course provided by LALC.</li> <li>• All Councillors attend the Code of Conduct Training provided by RVBC.</li> </ul>
Maintain links with LALC to ensure the Council has the best advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Council continues to be a member of LALC.</li> <li>• At least one Council representative attends the annual Parish and Town Council Conference.</li> </ul>
Ensure Councillors have the knowledge to enable them to contribute to the advancement and improvement of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide all Councillors with information to ensure compliance with statutory instruments and financial regulations.</li> <li>• Provide the opportunity for Councillors to request individual training requirements as necessary.</li> </ul>

## 4.4 Financial planning and control:

- ⇒ To ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Council.
- ⇒ To ensure the Financial Budget is monitored on a regular basis and that any anomalies are highlighted to the Parish Council for action.
- ⇒ A financial report will be presented at each meeting of the Partish Council.

Action	Measure
Set and monitor annual budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget to be set annually to inform precept requirement for the following year.</li> <li>● Annual precept form to be submitted to RVBC by the deadline.</li> <li>● Actual to Budget monitoring reports to be presented to each Council meeting.</li> </ul>
Ensure internal audit is procured by the Council	At its Annual Meeting of the Parish Council an internal auditor will be appointed for the following year.
Perform internal annual audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Internal Auditor will provide an annual audit report detailing actions to be completed by the next internal audit.</li> <li>● Ensure all matters arising from the internal audit are actioned in a prompt and appropriate manner.</li> </ul>
Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).	Ensure AGAR is submitted in a timely manner and complies with all legal obligations and maintains transparency by making the documents publicly available.

## 4.5 Strategic planning/key projects:

The following activities/objectives are included in the Parish Council’s Three-Year Plan:

- ⇒ Ensure continued communication with LCC, RVBC and other agencies and groups to discuss areas for improvement regarding public rights of way, parking, road signage and road markings, road safety in general, planning and planning enforcement, road verge and hedgerow maintenance, weed control, edge maintenance of carriageways and cleaning of traffic signs.
- ⇒ Work with RVBC on the provision of public and dog waste bins.
- ⇒ Continue a rolling program of bench maintenance and confirmation of bench ownership with RVBC.
- ⇒ Improvement of communication and engagement with parishioners, by introducing social media streams such as Facebook and increasing the opportunities for villagers to meet up and consider the introduction of a ‘Welcome Pack’ for new residents.
- ⇒ Continue to address the concerns of noise, smell, lighting and out of hours operation, by residents living near the Freemasons public house.
- ⇒ Continue to address the need for CCTV in and around the village.

# Three-Year Business Plan

- ⇒ Continue with a programme of village improvements including a complete revamp of the area around Coronation Gardens, including the seating area, phone box and notice board.
- ⇒ Continue to assess the viability of converting old/unused buildings into a community centre/village hall.
- ⇒ Ensure that the Council’s Action Plan is updated on a regular basis and includes feedback from parishioners.
- ⇒ Ensure that the Council’s funds are spent on projects that have been identified as providing, improving, replacing, or maintaining infrastructure that supports the development of the Parish and parishioners.

Action	Measure
Ensure continuing engagement with RVBC and LCC	Councillor attendance at meetings arranged by RVBC and LCC and are reported at Parish Council meetings.
Ensure the Parish Council continues to respond to all planning applications as a statutory consultee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council to nominate a Councillor who has responsibility to deal with the coordination of comments on planning applications.</li> <li>• The Parish Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair will continue to consult with RVBC on planning matters and planning enforcement.</li> </ul>
Ensure succession planning for the Chair, Vice Chair and Parish Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage ‘newer’ councillors to seek nomination as Vice Chair and ensure they lead meetings throughout the year.</li> <li>• Look to appoint a person to shadow the Parish Clerk.</li> </ul>
Review Action Plan	Standard Agenda Item at each Council meeting.
Review this Business Plan	To be reviewed every six months.

## 4.6 Committees and Groups:

Members of the Council will continue to represent the Parish at the:

- Parish Council Liaison Meeting (PCLM), including any Working Groups that have been constituted by the PCLM such as the Road Safety Working Group.
- Whalley Educational Foundation.
- Whalley, Wiswell and Barrow Joint Burial Committee.

Action	Measure
Ensure continued membership of the groups.	Membership of the groups to be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.



## 5. Business Plan review

As some of the areas covered in the Business Plan are ongoing and will cover more than one financial year, the Parish Council will review the Business Plan on a 6-month basis in March and September each year, thereby ensuring that it is updated regularly and that any further actions identified during the period are included or, where appropriate, are signed off as having been completed.



The areas of activity will relate to the budget which is set in December of each year and finalised the following January. This budget will also include projected spend for regular items of expenditure.

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