

Minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Leisure Committee:
At 7pm on Thursday 10th July 2025 at The Ashcroft, Market Street, Whitworth

Attendees:

Cllr David Chorlton, (DC) Chair (items 1-3)	Gill Chorlton (GC)
Cllr Kim Blezard (KB), Chair (item 4 onwards)	Chris Rothwell (CR)
Cllr Michael Whitworth (MW)	Clint Davies (CD)
Carol Thomson (CT)	Michelle Butterworth (MB)
Marilyn Jones (MJ)	Les Hirst (LH)
Aimee Walker (AW)	
Minutes taken by Rachel Hodson (RH) and Abbie Luxton (AL)	

AGENDA:

1. To receive apologies.

Apologies were received before the meeting from Anne Tattersall, Angela Wardle, Gail Halligan, Jemma Harden, Mark Ambrose (MA), Kirstie Healey (KH), Councillor Louise Burton and Stefan Kowal

2. To receive declarations of interest.

None

3. To elect a chair of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2025-2026.

It was resolved that Councillor Blezard be elected chair of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2025-2026. This was moved by Councillor Chorlton and seconded by Councillor Whitworth.

4. To elect a vice chair of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2025-2026.

It was resolved that Councillor Chorlton be elected as vice chair of the Tourism and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2025-2026. This was moved by Councillor Whitworth and seconded by Councillor Blezard.

5. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 10th April 2025, and to approve the minutes by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record.

Done

6. To report on the finances of the TLC for the year to 31st March 2025.

This was discussed and everyone was happy to accept the report on the finances of the TLC for the year to 31st March 2025

7. To receive the 3-month outturn to 30th June 2025.

KB discussed with the group that she was going to chase up any poppy certificates still outstanding. The Committee were happy to accept the 3-month outturn.

8. To debrief on the 80th anniversary of VE Day event.

RH thanked everyone who helped at this event. Councillor Blezard discussed that she felt embarrassed by the lack of town councillors at the event, however despite this she received good feedback. AW felt that the food served at event worked better than the previous event's afternoon tea. Councillor Whitworth suggested organising an event for the 80th anniversary of VJ Day and possibly putting more focus on marking this historical event going forward.

9. To debrief on the first aid event held on Monday 7th July 2025.

MB reported that there were 10 attendees on this night and the people who attended left happy and also enquired about a future event.

10. To update on plans for the Rushcart – Sunday 7th September 2025.

AW discussed needing marshals and Councillor Chorlton was happy to arrange marshals. The committee discussed the TLC stall and suggested glitter tattoos, popcorn and children's crafts. The committee also decided on selling magnets and badges as well as having volunteers to check the storage cupboards to see how what they have and what they may need to buy. Members also suggested a pre-event marshal meeting to discuss the roles people would take to ensure the event ran smoothly. RH shared MA's report on the dance troupes confirmed for the day. AW reported that she hadn't had confirmation that the Circle can attend on the day and the Committee agreed to contact Wood Fired Pizza instead. RH reported that PA Leisure, St Barts Church, a

balloon modeller, Ice Dream Experience, Rossendale Radio, Kays Traffic Management and Community Medics are all booked in for the event together with 16 indoor stalls and 8 outdoor stalls. Volunteers able to assist on the day are CT, GC, CR, MB, CD, MJ, RH, AL, DC, KB and LH. The Committee agreed on a set up time of 10am.

11. To update on plans for Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 12th November 2025.

Councillor Whitworth decided he was happy to organise the parade and agreed to reclaim it as a Town Council event.

12. To update on plans for a Christmas Light Switch On/Santa's Grotto – Sunday 23rd November.

AW discussed the history of the Christmas light switch on and the success of previous years. MB reported she has access to an inflatable Santas Grotto that can be used at the event. DC discussed the organisation of the event and suggested a working group to discuss any uncertainties of how the event will work, the committee decided to do this on **Wednesday 6th August at 7pm** and a venue is still to be decided. The Committee agreed to supply selection boxes as a gift for the children.

13. To update on plans for a Christmas Craft event – Saturday 6th December 2025.

Members discussed this event and agreed that they are happy to organise this event as done previously. CD suggested advertising this at the Rushcart and MW reported that he can advertise the event at Helmsore Textile Museum if A4 posters are provided.

14. To update on plans for the Christmas Trees on Brackets – Winter 2025.

LH gave an overview of the event last year and plans to do the same as last year regarding the price and timing of fitting the brackets and trees. He discussed the issues he has last year regarding subcontracting and problems with the removal of the trees; however, the committee has now agreed that CR will be subcontracted to install and remove the trees for winter 2025. LH also reported that he will not longer be using battery lights this year due to the lifespan of the batteries and will only be using mains powered lights.

15. To update on plans for New Years' Day Duck Race – Thursday 1st January 2026.

RH discussed selling the ducks on the new website for the Town Council and the Committee agreed that it will be a minimum of 10 ducks sold online. Councillor Chorlton reported that new barriers were needed to catch the ducks as the ones that have been used in previous years are now in poor condition, however CR informed that he had barriers that are available to use. KB agreed that she would get in contact with the usual catchers to check they will be available for this event. CD agreed to clear out the res again this year and for RH to ask United Utilities regarding permission to access overflow at Cowm Reservoir. A duck selling pub crawl was suggested and also a night checking ducks (Duck Bingo) also needs to be arranged.

16. Any other business.

Members discussed Santa Express that will be happening on the 13th and 14th of December. CD has agreed to put up the signs for the stops. AW suggested for Santa to wear a headset this year because of the difficulties he had last year using a handheld microphone. The committee agreed that the route needs to be organised for the proposed Santa stops. KH offered to drive the lead car and CD offered to drive the rear car. RH to apply for street collecting licence. Committee agreed to invite both the Mayors of Rossendale and Whitworth. LP reported that she had already arranged with Lobden Golf Club that Santa will visit there on the Saturday night.

AW brought up the idea of using a drone for future events to capture better videos and pictures. CD informed members that he has access to a drone however may have difficulty using it for events due to needing a licence to fly it. However, CR reported that he will speak to someone he knows who has a drone and a licence.

LP discussed the idea of recycling plastic for vouchers and reported that Councillor Whitehead have spoke to Co-op to ask about funding a project like this. LP and JW are going to look further into this.

17. To set a date for the next TLC Meeting

The next meeting has been arranged for **Wednesday 13th August at 7pm.**

There being no further business the meeting finished at 9:15pm