

Minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Leisure Committee:
At 7pm on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at The Ashcroft, Market Street, Whitworth

Attendees:

Cllr Kim Blezard (KB), Chair
Cllr David Chorlton (DC)
Mark Ambrose (MA)
Michelle Butterworth (MB)
Gill Chorlton (GC)
Clint Davies (CD)
Kirstie Healey (KH)
Les Hirst (LH)

Stefan Kowal (SK)
Linda Parker (LP)
Glen Royds (GR)
Christopher Rothwell (CR)
Carol Thomson (CT)
Aimee Walker (AW)
Clive Morton (CM)

Minutes taken by Rachel Hodson (RH) and Abbie Luxton (AL)

AGENDA:

1. To receive apologies.

Apologies were received before the meeting from Cllr Michael Whitworth, Cllr Louise Burton, Jemma Harden, Angela Wardle and Marilyn Jones.

2. To receive declarations of interest.

None.

3. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on Thursday 13th August 2025, and to approve the minutes by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record.

Done.

4. To debrief on the Rushcart.

KB thought that a well done was needed for those who were there on the day and personally thanked AW. AW discussed the day was a panic, however it was the right decision to make to cancel it, SK agreed with this. RH discussed the payments regarding suppliers such as traffic management, which the company are trying their best to cut the costs as much as possible. CM reported that next year's Rushcart will be the 50th anniversary of the revival of the Rushcart. CD suggested possibly involving TV or radio and creating a bigger event. CM reported that the actual procession and things regarding the Rushcart itself such as size etcetera will remain the same due to the people involved not having enough time to take on more tasks. AW suggested extending the event inside the Ashcroft after the procession. CD suggested involving more people through schools and possibly holding a competition such as designing a poster for the Rushcart, to bring more attention and interest to the event. KB suggested for the committee to come up with ideas and send them through an email for the committee to discuss next meeting. MA reported that they are looking for a better source of heather, DC suggested that perhaps the Town Council could ask the Lord of The Manor for permission to cut the heather from his land. DC suggested selling more memorabilia for next year, CM suggested having new sets of badges with new art or items such as pencils, mugs and fridge magnets. MA will speak to the designer of the previous badge designs.

MA and CM left the meeting.

5. To discuss plans for the Christmas Light Switch On/Santa's Grotto.

MB reported that the Grotto is booked with no charge. AW reported that the festive backdrops have been delivered and discussed CR being able to make the frames and put them up on the Friday or Saturday before the event. KB reported that Rossendale Borough Council's (RBC) Communities Team has contributed £500 for the event. RH reported that there has been bookings already. AW suggested buying bigger selection boxes as the presents using the contribution from RBC. KB reported that she has emailed various supermarkets asking for donations through money or selection boxes but is still waiting for replies. The committee has agreed to set up on the 21st

and 22nd of November so they are not rushed on the day of the event. RH has informed RBC regarding the date and time of planned light switch on. KB suggested contacting the schools soon regarding the Light Switch on Christmas Card competition. LP will purchase wrapping paper for the presents. Rh suggested badge making as part of the crafts outside the grotto.

6. To discuss plans for the Christmas craft event

LP reported that she will contact Lindsay regarding wreath making. The committee discussed needing more kitchen rolls for the Christmas Crackers. RH discussed buying the refreshments. RH reported that she will send out an email to the attendees from last year regarding this year's craft event.

7. To update on the Christmas trees on brackets.

LH reported that he has 81 orders for trees so far. LH also reported that he has 12 requests for brackets, however he may be short of materials. RH reported that the milling machine has now been delivered. LH reported that the machine will now allow them to do more trees because it will make things easier and quicker. KB thanked LH for his hard work.

8. To update on the Santa Express.

The committee discussed needing to do a recce to decide on stops and times. RH asked for this to be done soon so that posters can be made, etc. RH reported that she has applied for a street collecting license, however, is still waiting for it to be accepted. The committee agreed to do the recce on the 25th October at 11:30am. SK and AW agreed to help set up the vehicle on the week leading up to the event.

9. To discuss plans for the Duck Race.

The committee discussed doing a pub crawl and the pubs they will visit. They agreed to do the pub crawl on the 28th November. AW, LP and KB agreed to assist with the distribution of the duck sheets. CD reported that he had bought a wire brush to help clear the run. KB reported that she rang the helpers, however, has not had a response, so she will contact them again, as well as Nick McGarry regarding food. The committee agreed to decide in the next few weeks on a duck checking date in their WhatsApp group.

10. Any other business.

The committee discussed having TLC branded items such as pens. KH suggested looking at a company called 4imprint for this.

11. To confirm the date of the next meeting.

The next meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 12th November at 7pm.
There being no further business the meeting finished at 20:35pm