

Minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Leisure Committee:

At 6pm on Monday 10th August 2026 at The Ashcroft, Market Street, Whitworth

Attendees:

Cllr Kim Blezard (Chair, KB)
Cllr Louise Burton (LB)
Cllr Mackenzie Ritson (MR)
Cllr Michael Whitworth (MW)
Michelle Butterworth (MB)
Gill Chorlton (GC)
Karen Grayson (KG)

Kirstie Healey (KH)
Marilyn Jones (MJ)
Stefan Kowal (SK)
Linda Parker (LP)
Glen Royds (GR)
Carol Thomson (CT)
Aimee Walker (AW)

Minutes taken by Rachel Hodson (RH) and Sarah Cutler (SC).

1. To receive apologies.

Apologies were received before the meeting from Clint Davies, Kath Proctor, Angela Forster and Councillor David Chorlton.

2. To receive declarations of interest.

None.

3. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on Monday 10th August 2026, and to approve the minutes by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record.

Done.

4. To debrief on the Rushcart.

Members of the committee discussed aspects that went well including:

Very well attended

Volunteers worked hard on the day

Good feedback from majority of stallholders and dance troupes

Stallholders appreciated receiving layout of stalls before the event

Thanks to Gareth for stepping in on the day as lead marshal

And aspects that could be improved for future events:

Put out cones/similar marking stallholders pitch area

Possible signage "more stalls" for car park

Self-service light refreshments/hot drinks for road marshals

Marshalling plan needs looking at including radio use

Traffic management needs to have a plan and risk assessment with them

Speak to Rossendale Radio re a radio mic near the musicians

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

Discussion regarding equipment hire. The committee agreed to use an inflatable snow globe again this year, MB will research costs and size. RH to purchase ratchet straps to tie globe down.

The following was agreed:

- Book the same face painter as previous year
- Keep the grotto costs the same as previous year
- The timings provided and keep the last half an hour free for walk ins (but not to advertise this to keep numbers manageable).
- Sell Christmas cards again
- Keep the location of crafts/face painter/grotto the same with a marquee for prams/buggies outside in case of rain. Possibly limit the number of adults in the craft area.

A discussion took place regarding food vendors. MW will send AW details of food vendors use by his employer. GC will make red glitter for reindeer food. RH to WhatsApp MR costs involved for a possible grant.

6. To discuss plans for the Christmas craft event.

KB will confirm with Janice that she is available for the cracker making. Lindsay has confirmed she can assist at the wreath making. RH confirmed that bookings are now live on the website.

7. To update on the Christmas trees on brackets.

RH reported on the orders and plans for these.

8. To update on plans for Santa Express.

LP will liaise with KH re a date for the recce. RH to invite the Mayors of Rossendale and Whitworth to attend. GC will check lights and let the committee know if they are working.

LP suggested starting at 5pm both days. KH happy to drive the lead car and keep supplies in her car in between dates. TLC will advertise that this is the last year the event will run unless a new volunteer is able to support it with a suitable vehicle.

9. To update on plans for the Duck Race.

Discussion regarding refreshments, MR to contact Ninja Coffee.

KH reported that WLC were very grateful for the loan of the ducks and they would like to store them indefinitely and check them before the duck race. The committee were in agreement for this.

10. Any other business.

None.

11. To set a date for the next TLC Meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Tuesday 13th October at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 8.15pm.