

**Minutes of the meeting of the Tourism & Leisure Committee:**

**At 7pm on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 at The Ashcroft, Market Street, Whitworth**

**Attendees:**

Councillor Mike Royds, Chair (MR)  
Councillor Alan Neal (AN)  
Michelle Butterworth (MB)  
Clint Davies (CD)  
Les Hirst (LH)  
Stefan Kowal (SK)  
Linda Parker (LP)  
Steve Parker (SP)

Chris Rothwell (CR)  
Anne Tattersall (AT)  
Carol Thomson (CT)  
Angela Wardle (AW)  
Aimee Walker (ALW)  
Minutes taken by Rachel Hodson (RH) and  
Kodi Turner (KT)

**AGENDA:**

**1. To receive apologies.**

Apologies were received before the meeting from Mark Ambrose, Gail Halligan, Marilyn Jones, Gareth Connelly, Cllr Louise Burton, Cllr David Chorlton and Vicki Henshaw.

**2. To receive declarations of interest.**

None.

**3. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 20th November 2024, and to approve the minutes by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record.**

Done.

**4. To consider the TLC taking on the organisation of Remembrance Sunday.**

MR reported that there had been some observations into the organisation of the parade in 2024 and that there had been a suggestion that a former member of armed services personnel could organise the parade element of it. The committee discussed the suitability of a person and LH considered that there would still need to be a communication link for the event. RH clarified that currently Remembrance Sunday is a civic event and organised by the Town Council. LP asked who was liaising with the armed services representative and RH informed her that Cllr Whitworth had taken on this. MR suggested that the item be discussed at the next meeting, after an update has been received from Cllr Whitworth.

**5. To discuss the TLC investigating the organisation of a future Christmas tractor run.**

MR reported that Cllr Rhodes had suggested a Rossendale wide event and had enquired into the organisation of this. The committee agreed that this style of event would be too much for the TLC to take on.

**6. To debrief on the Christmas Craft event.**

LP reported that the event had gone well, and all the attendees seemed to enjoy it. There had been one comment from attendees that at times they had struggled to hear the instructor. The committee agreed that a headset could be purchased to alleviate this issue going forward. LP thought that the price was good for all of the events and the change of location worked well, she also reported that the instructors were happy to run the event again in 2025. RH reported that Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December at The Ashcroft had been provisionally booked for the event and the committee agreed to run the event again on that date.

**7. To debrief on Santa Express.**

SP reported regarding the weather and the issues with sound and lighting on the nights. SP considered that Santa did a great job of entertaining everyone and carried the event through. SP also reported that the ribbon lights are irreparable, and everyone was in agreement for replacement ones to be purchased. SP also reported that the cable between the speaker and the sound system was damaged and needs to be replaced. SP considered that the timings worked

well, the volunteers on the nights were excellent and felt that the organisation of the event was the best yet. SP requested that the importance of residents waiting at official stops needs to be urged in promotional information next time. The committee spoke about the stops and SP suggested that reflective tape could be added to the Santa Stop signs to make them more visible to both residents and the committee. The committee agreed to hosting the event on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December this year, to allow time for rearrangements if the weather is unsuitable on the planned dates.

SP also reported that the USB with the music had broken, ALW said that the DJ who is booked by The Ashcroft could assist with the new one. MR reported that despite the weather, the collection buckets were well used and RH reported that the event had raised a very similar amount to last year. MR also reported that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Rossendale really enjoyed attending the event and will help to promote it more next time. SP was pleased to report that there had been no negative comments about the event this year.

#### **8. To debrief on the Duck Race.**

MR spoke about the continuation of inclement weather at the Duck Race. RH has purchased rain/windproof clip boards for future events. MR considered that CR's suggestion for using tarpaulin to launch the ducks went well but the weather meant that his car was full of water for a long time after taking the ducks home. There was a discussion regarding the loudhailer and the committee agreed that a person should be allocated for this next time. MB informed the committee that a member of the public had submitted a complaint regarding people standing in the area where the memorial trees are located. A discussion was had regarding signage and publicising this next time. LP thanked CD for clearing the overflow, who reported that he will do this on a regular basis going forward. RH will contact UU to ask for permission to do this. CD enquired about purchasing waders. SP offered the use of his catchment net which the TLC can borrow. AN suggested that a request is made to WTC's finance committee for the purchase of the waders. MB reported that the winners of the event were extremely happy to receive the good news that they had won. RH reported that Steve Butterworth from the Sportsman had sold 200 ducks for the committee – MR asked if a thank you card could be sent to him. RH reported that KT had set up the duck sheets for the 2026 event.

#### **9. To debrief on the Christmas Trees on Brackets project.**

LH reported that 78 trees had been sold and that both the admin and the prep had gone well. LH reported that he had purchased 22 sets of new lights in the sale after Christmas. LH reported that the taking down of the trees had not gone as well. It was delayed due to weather conditions and due to the company having fewer vehicles and members of staff. LH also reported that there had been a miscommunication at the Cemetery and approx. 35-40 trees had been chipped with the lights still on. RH felt that the Gleam Team should replace those lights. A discussion was had regarding this. ALW suggested getting quotes from different companies this year.

#### **10. To confirm the TLC's planned events for 2025.**

RH reported on outline plans for an Easter Trail during the school Easter holidays.

The committee agreed that no family fun day would take place this year as the VE Day event was planned instead.

AN reported that the Town Twinning Committee had met the previous evening and a delegation from Kandel would be visiting to coincide with the Rushcart. RH confirmed that this event was planned for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September. AT asked if St Barts were still required to do the catering for this event. MR confirmed this.

MB spoke about a proposed Christmas Light Switch on and a planned Santa's Grotto, combined with the Ashcroft's Christmas market on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, and that she has provisionally booked an inflatable grotto that will be available free of charge. Timings were discussed and 12noon until 4pm was suggested, with a Christmas Light switch on at 4pm. The committee suggested asking

Mike Burgess if he wanted to take on the role of Santa and other local suggestions were offered if he was unavailable. Discussions took place regarding charging for this and also the suitability of gifts. AT will look into this and feedback at the next meeting. LP suggested the use of a post box for letters to Santa.

**11. To update on plans for a VE Day commemoration event in May 2025.**

RH confirmed that WVHB are available and would cost £400. MR suggested booking Rossendale Majorettes to open the event – RH will contact them. CT will contact u3a's ukelele band to see if they are also available. The committee discussed food options – ALW will get a price for pie and peas and the committee agreed that the ticket price will cover the food cost. MR will liaise with Whitworth Museum. KT will prepare the poster/banner for the event.

**12. To receive and note the TLC's 9-month outturn.**

Members were provided with the 2024-2025 income and expenditure of the TLC up to 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Discussions were had regarding the promotion of the Poppy Project, and it was suggested that there could be a stall at the VE Day event providing information regarding the project.

**13. To discuss future purchases to support future TLC events and to discuss an application to Crook Hill Community Benefit Fund for a 2025 Christmas event.**

LH suggested that a milling machine be bought to assist with the preparation of the Christmas Trees and has found one that costs approx. £2,000. The machine would make the preparation job easier and allow for a higher number of trees to be offered. CR suggested that the machine could be stored at Whitworth Cemetery and transported to the preparation area when required. Members suggested that the machine could also be rented out for additional revenue. The committee agreed to apply to Crook Hill for this purchase. ALW suggested purchasing magnetic car signs for the escort cars for Santa Express and Creative Signs were suggested as a local firm to use.

**14. Any other business.**

LP enquired about hosting another First Aid event, MB will contact the providers regarding their availability.

**15. To set a date for the next TLC meeting.**

The next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm in the Council Chamber, The Ashcroft, Whitworth, OL12 8DP.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 9pm.