



Minutes of the Events, Tourism and Development Committee Meeting

Held at the Westgate-on-Sea Town Council Office

78 St Mildreds Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RF

on Wednesday 22nd October 2025 at 6.00pm

Present

Cllr Charlotte Thomason (Chair)

Cllr Mike Livesey (Vice Chair)

Cllr David Donaldson

Cllr Stephen Fenning

Cllr Alice Mulinya

Cllr David Wallin

Ms Nabila Yakub – Town Clerk

Ms Emma Dublin – Community Engagement and Social Media Consultant

2 Members of Public

ETD/25/64 Welcome from the Chair

Cllr Thomason welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.

ETD/25/65 Apologies for Absence

None.

ETD/25/66 Members' Interests

None.

ETD/25/67 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2025 were received and approved as an accurate record.

ETD/25/68 Coat Donation Point

The Committee reviewed the annual coat donation event, which was deemed highly successful. Multiple bags of clothing were collected and donated to the Salvation Army. The initiative focused on donation rather than swapping, making it easier for community members to contribute.

ETD/25/69 Remembrance Sunday

It was confirmed that road closures for Remembrance Sunday had been approved. The Committee was seeking volunteers to assist with stewarding the procession from St. Saviour's Church to the War Memorial and managing road barriers. Meeting time confirmed for 9:30 AM on the designated Sunday for final briefing.

ETD/25/70 Christmas 2025

The Committee confirmed plans for the early installation of the Christmas tree to support the late-night shopping event on the 20th of November. New lights have been purchased and will be used to decorate both the main areas and previously unlit sections of Westgate, addressing past complaints. The only outstanding requirement is securing permission from Kent County Council to place the tree.

ETD/25/71 Pancake races 2026

The Committee noted last year’s successful Pancake Races, which featured a partnership with the Heritage Centre and a photo exhibition. For this year, they proposed boosting participation by adding a walking race for those with lower mobility, inviting schools and care homes, awarding safer “snap apart” medals, considering a pancake costume, and ensuring Shannen the photographer’s presence. As this year’s event will not fall during term-time, the Committee saw an opportunity to promote it as a special half-term activity.

ETD/25/72 Blooming Westgate 2026

The Committee reported progress on the Blooming Westgate initiative, with successful outreach on social media and positive community response. Plans are underway to finalise a working group comprised of local gardening experts and volunteers to help shape long-term beautification projects. The initiative aims to enhance civic pride, create a more visually attractive town and support Westgate’s growth as a community-focused and tourist-friendly destination.

ETD/25/73 Tourism Focus

The Committee discussed adopting a stronger tourism focus to complement existing community events. Strategies to raise Westgate’s profile included promoting its unique features such as the historic Carlton Cinema, highly regarded local restaurants and the town’s reputation for being clean, welcoming, and notably low in antisocial behaviour. Ideas such as developing a heritage trail with the Heritage Centre, organising a regular market, and launching new events were advanced as ways to draw more visitors from surrounding areas and attract tourists to Westgate. It was agreed to review previous Westgate Day events to identify elements that could be incorporated into current plans.

ETD/25/74 Councillor Reports

None.

ETD/25/75 Public Participation Session

A representative of the Westgate Christmas Lights Switch On committee attended and outlined the organisation of the annual event, detailing logistics, entertainment and the need for additional volunteer support, particularly for traffic management and setup. She clarified that the event is run by volunteers without personal payment, relying on stall fees and limited sponsorship for funding. The representative addressed ongoing concerns from some shop owners in relation to stall fees and access to their businesses during the event and explained that organisers offered stalls for a fee and aimed to maintain shop access, though some traders remained dissatisfied. Additionally, it was requested that the Christmas lights be turned off after the late-night shopping event to ensure their full impact at the official switch-on.

ETD/25/76 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 26th November 2025.

Signed: _____

Date: _____