

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting from Monday 9 October 2023 at Lowton Social Club

Chair	(Currently vacant)
Secretary (Chaired the meeting)	Liz Brown (LB)
Covering Chairperson/Treasurer	Irene Thomson (IT)
Minutes Secretary	Gill Turner (GT)

<u>Councillors</u>	Kath Houlton (KH) Jenny Gregory (JG)
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<u>Member of Parliament</u>	James Grundy (MP)
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<u>Apologies</u>	
Deputy Secretary	Julie Shawcross (JS)
Councillor	Garry Lloyd (GL)

No. of attendees = 20

1. Welcome and previous minutes

Minutes not read out at meeting, but copies have been sent out by email and posted on the Facebook page and put on the LENDF website.
New visitors and guests were welcomed to the meeting.

2. Updates:

- a. **Last Night of the Proms** – was last Saturday, a good annual event, which everyone enjoyed. Many thanks to the Three Town Choir and Golborne Brass Band who performed on the night. Proceeds will go to local wildlife charities: Lowton Hedgehog Rescue, Wildlife of Warrington, Wild Wings Birds of Prey, Prevent Unwanted Pets (PUP)
- b. **Braithwaite Mobile Mast** (owned by Three) – The mast has been repainted grey by Three, covering the graffiti. The Police have cautioned the 13 year old who did some of the graffiti. Wigan Solicitors are still in conversation with Three over use of private Council land instead of Highways land. Some residents have written and sent a letter addressing further serious issues (*see attached*) Jenny Gregory has also passed on this letter to Paul Prescott at Planning, Wigan Council. If you feel strongly about this situation, feel free to use this letter too.
- c. **Notice boards** – There is a new notice board at Lane Head, outside Lime House. This was installed by National Highways (£3000) as a goodwill gesture for the night-time M6 SMART motorway disruption. If anyone wishes to use it there is a key at Lime House and Gill and Kathy from Lane Head South Residents also have keys. The noticeboard from the side of Lowton Social Club has been moved to the front of the Social Club. Councillor Kath Houlton has

been given a key from the council but it doesn't work. She will ask for new locks and have keys cut. Councillor Jenny Gregory has a key for the new notice board near the Co-op on Church Lane. Braithwaite Resident Group seem to have disbanded but still have the keys for the Brathwaite Road notice board: if anyone has them please get in touch, if the keys are lost then the Council will be asked to change the lock and provide new keys.

- d. **Bradwell Road** – pavement to be resurfaced around the 6 November 2023. Also **Newton Road** each side of the Travellers Rest has recently been resurfaced and Kath Houlton has put in a request to get the edges sorted out.
- e. A/22/94882/Major (**Murphy's planning application** to consolidate the Lowton, Golborne and Abram sites onto the existing site on Wigan Road in Golborne) This application was passed by Wigan Planning Committee with only 1 independent voting against it. A resident said the planning minutes did not reflect the meeting discussion accurately. After being called in, the Department of Levying Up has not objected <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/called-in-planning-applications> so the development will go ahead. Finlay Rowden, Community Outreach for Murphy's, emailed to say: It will mean less internal traffic between sites although maybe a bit more on Wigan Road, so no major traffic change for the area. HGV activity has already moved from Kennedy Road, Abram to Golborne. There are no changes to pre-consolidation working practice; this practice includes some emergency weekend work.
- f. **Wooded area by St Catherine's school** – The stream dried up in August, so waders were not needed to remove Himalayan Balsam. Many have now been removed for this year. Need to plan an annual community balsam bashing /litter picking afternoon for May/June next year. Seeds stay in the soil for 3+ years.
- g. **Suggest spots for autumn/spring litter picks or bulb planting** – Red tulips near the Fire Station and perhaps invite the Fire Service to help? Councillors will be walking some areas in the next week or so to advise the 3rd council deep clean of Lowton East grot spots. Temporary skip locations were discussed to clear unwanted items and the **skips will now be available in the parking bays on Maple Avenue, WA3 2DB on Sat 21st Oct 8am-noon**. Bodden Street and the Sandy Lane area were suggested for clearing fly tipping.

3. Wigan Local Plan:

- a. Update on **Places for Everyone** (Greater Manchester's Plan)
The green light has been given by the Council for amended plans for 165,000 new homes across Greater Manchester over the next 15 years, including 600 houses on Pocket Nook Lane, despite objections.
- b. The Council are now consulting on a more detailed **Wigan Local Plan** that will sit underneath the Places for Everyone Plan. (Append: The '**Future of Wigan Borough to 2040 Consultation**' have changed provisional dates for workshops; these are now at **7-9pm in Leigh Turnpike Tues 7th November** and **Golborne Parkside Club Wed 22nd November**.) You need to sign up on <https://participate.wigan.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/options-and-preferences> Each

workshop will start with a 10 min presentation and then have open discussion about issues local to the meeting area. We can only assume Lowton issues will fall under either of the above two workshops. This is an opportunity to change detail, especially as outdated HS2 plans for **Pocket Nook** are currently still in place.) The first phase of 200+ houses on the Places for Everyone Plan at **Pocket Nook** currently in the planning stage on the Council website, have not yet been debated by the Council Planning Committee. There are 7 things to look at on the local plan: homes, jobs, transport, environment, town centres, places and people.

- c. **Local government Ombudsman** could be involved for use of S106 monies for the proposed the left turn at Lane Head. Wigan Council's complaints procedure has been exhausted as the Council shut the door from the beginning despite much knocking! Residents on the East Lancashire Road have had no contact regarding any detailed plans for this road change and are still in the dark about their fate over a year later. MP James Grundy said he will push to have the law scrutinised regarding residents entry to the Watchdog Process.

4. **Bryon Hall Wood** (Speaker *Linda Graham*):

This item was minuted and sent out last week to catch the consultation deadline. Thank-you to Linda and all who commented on Forestry England's plans.

5. **Transport issues:**

- a, **Double yellow lines** are mooted by the Council **on the junctions of Oaklands Road, Burnsall Avenue and Hesketh Meadow Lane** – this is due to football parents parking illegally on the junctions. The football Club have tried to educate parents about dangerous parking but it is mainly the away teams causing the issue. The council have written to affected residents asking for their comments. Double yellow lines will remind parents that parking on a junction is illegal. The Council's Traffic Wardens can issue tickets, it is not a police role. Residents have asked if the council can periodically send wardens to patrol on match days as emergency vehicles and larger vehicles can't pass when double parking occurs.
- b, **Section 59 warning signs to deter anti-social use of vehicles** – There has been a significant increase in dangerous driving on electric scooters, bikes and motorbikes in Lowton. Police have to stop and warn before confiscation but with the signs up, they can just confiscate as the sign is the warning. Signage was suggested for various sites around Lowton and Kath Houlton will take the suggested locations and liaise with the local police regarding installation. Signs have already been erected on the Parsonage Retail park and appear to have made a difference.
- c, **Local Transport Plans:** What are they and why they are useful? These should report on up-to-date travel patterns of Greater Manchester residents to inform effective public transport, car, cycle and walking routes. In reality this isn't an exact science! At present, travel routes for Golborne, including a new node at Golborne Station is in progress. Ashton residents are also consulting on travel routes. A "Lowton travel plan" has not been started but is

very much needed, especially as it is still actively marketed by the Council as commuter belt despite existing congestion issues. Lowton is a challenging area with lots of through traffic, and is on the boundary of three different boroughs, who all have very different agendas regarding traffic flow and public transport.

- d, **GMP's Community Speed Watch Scheme (CSW)**
The vetting process for the first volunteers is in progress. There are several more people who wish to apply and Graham Wardle is liaising with the police to reopen the application portal. Please email Graham at lagtac.data@gmail.com if you wish to have more details of the scheme.
- e, **Lane Head Bypass update** – A **working group** has been formed, made up of officers of the relevant 3 councils (Wigan, Warrington, St Helens) and chaired by Peter Boulton from Greater Manchester Transport. Traffic from all three council areas feed into Lane Head. This working group met on 24.07.2023, and although no minutes were taken, they did produce a list of action points. A meeting with Lowton East Councillors and local Community Groups will get together to pool local information from residents. There is a follow-up large steering group meeting with Mayor Andy Burnham scheduled for 08.11.2023 where the working group will present their progress. Due to the large number of stakeholders in this steering group, the input from Lowton residents groups may be limited.

6. Water issues:

- a, Residents have questioned the quality of Lowton water and if it meets safety regulations. The water taste and content has certainly changed since blending began in July. The United Utilities letter to residents in July (*see attached*) stated water would include underground water with a higher mineral content. Lowton East councillors have had a number of water related complaints. Jenny Gregory and Garry Lloyd are meeting with United Utilities next week to discuss issues. It was suggested that United Utilities could send a representative to a future LENDF meeting to explain how the water system works, the tests they carry out to ensure water safety and the current challenges they face. MP James Grundy reported there are also water quality issues in West Leigh. In addition to contacting councillors, James asked for residents to write to him with any water issues so he can get an overview of the extent of the problem.
The Hesketh Meadow Lane water burst has been fixed twice.

7. AOB.....

- a, MP James Grundy reported that any **HS2 safeguarding of land** is being lifted imminently. Properties that have been purchased by HS2 will now be sold off. Anyone that claimed monies will not have to pay it back.
- b, Rumours the Fire Station near Pennington is closing down are NOT true. Kath Houlton said the *change of use* simply means staff will be trained in technical rescues as well as standard domestic rescues.

Next meeting: Monday 11 December 2023