

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8 April 2024 at Lowton Social Club

Chair:	Prof. Graham Wardle (GW)
Secretary:	Liz Brown (LB)
Deputy Secretary:	Julie Shawcross (JS)
Minutes Secretary:	Gill Turner (GT)
MP:	James Grundy (JG) (end of the meeting)
Councillors:	Kath Houlton (KH)
Apologies:	Irene Thomson (IT) Jenny Gregory (JG) Garry Lloyd (GL)

No. of attendees = 27

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. Lowton Community HUB and Café (Newton Road, next to J&I Primary School)

Luke Brown from the Hub informed us of the major alterations completed to the old Youth Club to turn it into the Community Hub. He discussed his background, his hopes and what has been achieved so far. Luke explained the long road of funding he accessed to improve the tired building and its set backs. **It is now open.**

The Hub is currently **used for Judo, Karate, and Jujitsu**. He is hoping that other groups can use the rooms/halls in the future (Pilates, Yoga, baby classes etc.) They are working on having a recording studio. Luke continues to run his Physio business on site.

There is a **newly opened community cafe** run by Julie accessed from the side of the building, and is generally open 7 days a week, 8am – 6pm. The food is very reasonably priced. There is a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at the rear of the HUB, which is currently used as a **carpark** for about 15 cars.

The **derelict green pensioners hut** was discussed and there are ideas to put a new building there housing a pizza cafe, youth club and outside seating.
<http://lowtoncommunityhub.co.uk/> for further details.

The Hub have organised an OPEN DAY on Sunday 28 April 2024 09:30 to 17:00
Including face painting, a bouncy castle, with Judo, Jiu jitsu and Karate GB Sports displays throughout the day. The cafe will be open too. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

3. Traffic, infrastructure and housing issues – an update by Graham Wardle

Please see Appendix attached: Consultation on borough-wide travel plans; Feedback from 9th Jan Andy Burnham meeting; Golborne Station Active Travel; Completion of Atherleigh bypass; Wigan Transport Strategy and Local Plan; Service road alteration at Lane Head; Volunteer Community Speed Watch; New Housing – a recent history!

4. New Housing Developments: Pocket Nook Lane – [see Appendix attached]

This was passed despite many objections and Jenny Gregory speaking against it at the planning meeting. The Greater Manchester 'Places for Everyone Plan' is where major planning decisions are made, these cascade down to the 'Wigan Local Plan' It's a 'done deal' once on these plans; the 236 houses were on these plans (where we had also objected) and Wigan passed them anyway.

Be warned: In the Wigan Local Plan there are two more phases for the Pocket Nook Site (total 600+ houses) and possible access via Enterprise Way onto Newton Road.

A resident from Pocket Nook area asked if the new access road would be put in first for construction vehicles to use? Pocket Nook Lane has been used as construction vehicle access for other building work in the area and has caused much upset and chaos for residents. Kath Houlton will find out and report back.

5. More double yellow lines planned:

a) **Sandy Lane** (lines either side of Brook Street).

This was proposed by the property at 38 Sandy Lane so they can transport fairground equipment to and from their property. The planned lines are 10m on one side of Brook Street and 30m the other side (opposite No 38). Residents reported that this property had 'change of land use' rejected and were trying to get it by stealth instead. The property has enough space to widen its entry instead of mounting the kerb on the other side of the street when turning but has chosen not to do this. Many were not happy with the idea of these planned no parking lines, especially up to 30m, as they won't be able to park their cars near to their houses. **If this affects you then** please contact local councillors, also object to the order by writing with your reasons to the Assistant Director - Legal, Governance and Elections, Town Hall, Library Street, Wigan or by emailing the above email address **quoting reference RD/LS/DC/C108.949 not later than 09/05/2024**. Or email: reference above and reasons for objection to d.rumsey@wigan.gov.uk
LENDF will also raise an objection on safety grounds.

b) **Tarnway** (extending lines into Tarnway from Newton Road)

It was noted that vehicles were parking right up to the yellow lines causing access/exit issues. No objections were noted in the meeting.

6. Potential sewage issues:

a) **Excess water on soak-aways and road flooding issues.**

This happens more often now rain is becoming more frequent. Soak-aways are not maintained. Local Councillors will speak to the Council about this. In

addition, water companies are legally allowed to discharge untreated wastewater through sewer overflows into rivers and lakes during periods of heavy rain; heavy and persistent rain is becoming far more frequent.

b) Impact of new build developments on local flooding

Lowton has clay soil and previously had many ponds. The number of new builds are having an impact on the level of the water table and the amount of wastewater in the area. Are United Utilities coping with this escalating problem?

7. Defibrillator Batteries and ancillaries – maintenance costs.

Defibrillator batteries only had a life span of about 3 years. Also pads need replacing if used. It was agreed that Local Councillors will be asked if they can help towards costs through Brighter Boroughs Funding at the appropriate time.

8. UPDATES:

a) Leigh Fire Station procedure changes *(from Mr Mellor – Station Commander)*

Kathleen Johnson relayed details from a recent LHSRG meeting with Mr Meller: Mr. Mellor talked of the changes which are taking place at Leigh Fire Station and assured everyone that the operation changes and the vehicle changes will not affect the fire cover in Leigh and Lowton. The station in Leigh is to hold two fire fighting vehicles one is the technical response unit and the other is the standard fire service vehicle. He explained the difference between the two vehicles and that the staff at the unit will be trained to man either. There have been a number of new recruits at the station and all are being fully trained to use either vehicle. In the Greater Manchester area there are currently 48 fire appliances and 2 technical response vehicles. There is also currently at Leigh a hydraulic platform, this may be moved to Wigan fire station. Mr Mellor explained that the number of primary turnouts for house fires has dropped but the secondary fire turnout is the largest number in Leigh and Leigh West ward. These secondary fires are wheely bin fires and rubbish fires usually antisocial behaviour related. Mr. Mellor reiterated that there will be no alteration to fire cover in the area. There were 56 fire personnel before the changes and 44 after the changes, partly due to fire engines being more easily operated.

b) Community notice board at Brathwaite Road – vandalised.

This has been reported to all three Councillors and they will try to sort this out.

c) Oaklands Road – New Trees

Martin Smith attended the LENDF meeting in Feb and we discussed planting trees. About 35 Norway Maples (*Acer platanoides*) have now been planted on the edge of the park along Oaklands Road and 15 Hornbeams (*Carpinus betulus Fastigiata*) along Alder Road. Phase 2 will begin next year when the rest of Alder road will be planted with trees.

d) Section 59 notices

The signs will allow Police to confiscate vehicles driven unsafely, without a further warning. *(Update from Kath H – They will be put in place at the top of Hesketh Meadow Lane; outside 4 Brunskill Ave; outside 20 Bainbridge Ave; near the top of Laburnum Rd; near the ginnel at Fir Tree Ave. currently progressing through the paperwork stage. Not sure yet about Highfield Moss)*

e) Net Zero house at 27 Oaklands Road

Graham and the 3 local councillors were given a guided tour. The house generates and conserves as much energy as currently possible. It will be rented out by the council soon.

f) Potholes: McColl's carpark

The pothole repair has stalled, McColl's got as far as marking out pre-repair instructions on the footpath and then stopped. Customer services have now gone back to their default position of not answering emails. James Grundy (MP) said he will write directly to them regarding the deepest hole. McColl's have officially known about this hole since the 3rd of March when LENDF sent them an email, although in reality they will have known about it far earlier as many people report it verbally to staff at the shop.

g) School crossing on Church Lane

Kath Houlton reported the bus stop would be moved by Transport for Greater Manchester soon to allow the crossing to be sited safely.

h) Dollies Bridge planning application

There have been issues on the site regarding buildings being put up and generators running. James Grundy will write to the Building Inspector. Jenny wrote there was an Informal planning meeting on 16.04.2024.

AOB.....

- A question was asked about water quality in the area. Had people noticed any difference – better or worse. It was reported the water supply had been moved over in February to softer water from rivers/reservoirs, not boreholes. The majority of people at the meeting reported the water quality was better since February.
- **James Grundy (MP) gave updates:**

The extension on Atherleigh Bypass

Following a meeting with James, Andy Burnham (Mayor of Greater Manchester) and Huw Merriman (Minister of State of Transport) it was recommended that a bid would be put forward by Transport for Greater Manchester to complete the bypass (Southern part) to Junction 22 of the M6. Bolton Council also want the Northern end of the bypass completed. All 4 Councils in the surrounding areas want the bypass completing. It was reported the funding will come from old HS2 monies. James reported it was a productive meeting.

The funding pot for this has been identified and the bid will need to be put in for this budget year. If accepted, the start date the extension will be asked for sooner, rather than later. There is no specific route agreed yet but it is looking realistic now.

Golborne Station

The bid for Golborne Station has been completed and awaiting approval.

Next meeting:
Mon 10 June 2024 at 7:30pm
at Lowton Social Club