

# Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

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Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday 12 September 2022 at Lowton Social Club

Irene Thomson  
Secretary  
Minutes Secretary  
Councillors

Covering Chairperson/Treasurer  
Liz Brown (Chaired the meeting)  
Gill Turner  
Kath Houlton, Marie Cooper, Edward Houlton

## Apologies

Julie Shawcross, Deputy Secretary

No. of attendees = 21

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## 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.

**The sad news of the passing of HRH Queen Elizabeth II and condolence books were discussed. Some churches have these, also Town Halls. The books will be kept at each church/town hall participating and will be kept for historical records of the area.**

NB – Lane Head South Residents Group meeting organised for 19 September 2022 has been postponed in respect for HRH Queen Elizabeth II funeral. This will be re-organised when dates agreed with the three Council Officers who were due to attend clarify dates. (*This meeting is now on Monday 26th September 7.15pm at the Conference Centre, Travel Lodge, Lane Head*)

Irene Thomson gave a report on LENDF's financial activities since recommencing the monthly meetings in March. A printout of these activities was available for those present to view which included 6 successful applications for Brighter Borough funding on behalf of other community organisations and groups.

## 2. Progress

- After being reported and looked at three times, the clanking grid on Hesketh Meadow Lane has finally been fixed.
- East Leigh football parking. The grounds are being used Saturdays/Sundays and some evenings. The club have been liaising with parents, and the home team have been informed they can use the rear car park on Lowton Social Club, the

visiting team to use parking near the pitches. Polite signage has been erected asking people not to park on double yellow lines or to double park. A request has been sent to Councillors to extend the double yellow lines on Hesketh Meadow Lane, alongside the field, up to the lay-by.

- Redrow house building - there are over 120 houses to be built and the 2 show houses are now open for viewing. The cheapest house is around £325,000 (excluding the affordable houses to be allocated on the site). It was reported there is a small car park for potential customers to park on the site. Action: Cllr Kath Houlton is to look at having a 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting with Redrow.
- Section 106 monies – This money has been given to Wigan Council as a building levy for allowing builders to create new housing in Lowton. Eighty per cent of this money (about £5,800,000) has been earmarked for 2 alterations to our roads. The roads are the East Lancs left turn onto Newton Rd South, and the bottom of Stonecross Lane onto the East Lancs. We sent out maps with the agenda for this month. These plans went to Wigan Cabinet on 7 July 2022 and the Cabinet approved them. No residents were aware of the plan until it appeared in the Manchester Evening News newspaper. This is large scale infrastructure and it hasn't been through the consultation process properly, residents and local groups feel the money would be better spent elsewhere as the changes imposed by the council are dangerous and will not address congestion problems in Lowton.

At our local Councillors' request, a meeting was planned for 16 September with local groups with Aiden Thatcher (Director of Growth and Economy at Wigan Council) to discuss the above problem but the council don't see the lack of consultation as a problem. The meeting has since been cancelled due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The groups are awaiting a new date to be organised as they want the Council to rescind their decision made on the 7 July 2022. Background: It is documented in the Council Cabinet minutes that there had been a public consultation in the form of a survey and online Teams meeting. Community groups, including LENDF, have stated that the council survey was extremely biased and at the Teams meeting none of the road alterations suggested by the council were considered to be worth doing. Unfortunately the council have pressed on regardless, and have ignored residents concerns, raising concerns that the 'consultation' was just a tick box exercise. Lowton has some of the busiest junctions in the borough of Wigan due to roads designed for a "small farming community village" being used for commuters and HGVs, passing through Lowton to get to the East Lancs and the M6/M62. The Council say they are trying to ease traffic issues but the majority of their information comes from modelling out-of-date data from their office desks. The many new builds and warehousing passed in a 5 mile radius of Lane Head is continuing to impact all access roads to the motorways, but no significant road or public transport has been put in place. Surely infrastructure changes should be done by the builders before a large amount of new housing is erected and councils should be able to reject housing applications if this is not the case.

Local groups have asked Wigan Council to extend the Atherleigh Bypass into Winwick Lane but Wigan say there is not enough money, but have not said if they have actually tried to get funding. LaGTAC (Professor Graham Wardle) has

written to Baroness Vere, Secretary of Transport, asking for funding to complete this but he has not had a response yet. Meanwhile Wigan are choosing to waste nearly 6 million pounds on ineffective and sometimes dangerous road 'tweaks'.

- HGV restriction on local roads off A580 was discussed and no access "except for access". Residents have been asking for weigh restrictions for over 2 years. Warrington Council have already put weight restrictions through Croft/ Culcheth and this is impacting on our local roads as heavy lorries are coming this way instead. It was reported another new building site had been passed for the road at the side of Newbank Garden Centre (Newton).
- Inappropriate double decker buses have been used around the estates (590 old Jim Stones bus route). Cllr Kath Houlton has sent a letter regarding this and reported it was "looking good" for the outcome.
- LENDF Chair is still vacant. More time will be given to advertise this further. The person must be non-political and will receive full support from the group and all local Councillors.
- Newton Road re-surfacing. It is completed but reports of sunken grids and top surface not being smooth have been reported. Cllr Kath Houlton will look into this.
- It was reported that the roads around Lowton are not good for cyclists: there are many sunken grids and grit/stones at the kerb edge of the roads; cars and lorries pass very close to cyclists and some drivers shout out to scare cyclists. The redesigning of the junction of Newton Road with Mayfield Drive is an issue as cyclists are now more vulnerable here; parked cars on Newton Road, close to the junction, mean that cars overtaking the parked cars end up in the middle of the road in the new right hand turn space for the opposite side of the road!
- A defibrillator at Lowton Social Club has now been installed. LENDF donated £500 towards the cost of this vital piece of life saving equipment.



- November Meeting of LENDF. Environment Officer from the Council, Abbie Lawson, has agreed to attend. She will talk primarily about recycling options and ways to 'reduce and reuse'.
- Bulb Planting. Week commencing 19 September 2022 was suggested and volunteers were requested. Where the bulbs are planted will be discussed and type of bulbs. Wigan Council has a plan of where bulbs are already planted and Cllr Ed Houlton will request a copy of this for reference. It was suggested requesting Brighter Borough funding for the new bulbs.
- Last Night of the Proms, Saturday 15 October 2022. This will be in Memory of Edward Thwaite. Sally Walker from the Social Club has suggested doing a memory board and if anyone has any photographs of Ed, please pass onto Sally or email LENDF with them. You can purchase tickets from Lowton Social Club, behind the bar or from Councillors.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- A report of flies in the area around Diggle Green Farm. Anyone with any issues regarding this please email LENDF. People can also log it with The Environment Agency on 0800 807060. The number of reports can then be monitored. Any concerns around public health or transportation and spreading of compost onto land should be directed to Warrington Council on 01925 443322. A survey can also be completed <https://bit.ly/3wViAQb> one per household and the survey ends on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September.
- Dangerous parking outside the Fu Kwai Chinese and Morrisons, Newton Road around and on the pedestrian crossing has been raised. This was discussed and Parking Enforcement has been contacted.
- Service road on the East Lancs Road. Illegal access and speeding through it was discussed. Are the Police going to check how many people use it to speed though it to avoid the lights on the left hand turn, even though it is 'No Entry' from the East Lancs Road and prosecute culprits? One resident reported that when the lights are on red and traffic is stationary, there have been cars seen using this No Entry road to bypass the lights.



- A request has been made for a speed camera/Speed Watch Scheme outside Lowton J&I School. Professor Graham Wardle reported they have heard nothing from the SWS department regarding enforcement of speeding vehicles in areas in and around Lowton, even though people applied for the scheme. Rat runs and speeding vehicles on roads around Lowton were discussed: Hesketh Meadow estate, Sandy Lane area, Braithwaite Road and Newton Road estates were reported tonight. Many areas in Lowton have the same issues with speeding vehicles making roads dangerous.
- If anyone wants to report graffiti around the area, please contact LENDF or one of the local Councillors. This seems primarily to be on telephone boxes, electric boxes or bus shelters at present.
- The PCSO's visit the Coffee and Chat on Thursday mornings at Lowton St Mary's Church Hall. There are no regular dates booked with them and the visits depend on their shift patterns.
- There was a meeting at Lowton St Mary's Church hall with James Grundy, MP earlier in the year and the question was asked when the next meeting would be organised for residents to attend with any Police issues.  
[Dave.Law@GMP.police.uk](mailto:Dave.Law@GMP.police.uk) to be contacted asking for dates of any future meetings,
- Cars broken into on Laburnum Road, any problems, please report and log it.

**Next Meeting**  
**Monday 10 October 2022 – 19:30**  
**At Lowton Social Club**