

# Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum

## Meeting Minutes – Monday 12th February 2024 @ 7.30pm

Chair (Currently vacant)

Secretary: (Chaired the meeting) Liz Brown (LB)

Covering Chairperson/Treasurer: Irene Thomson (IT)

Deputy Secretary: Julie Shawcross (JS)

Councillors: Kath Houlton (KH), Jenny Gregory (JG), Garry Lloyd (GL)

Apologies: Minutes Secretary Gill Turner (GT)

*No. of attendees = 29*

### **1. Welcome and previous minutes**

Minutes not read out at meeting, but copies were emailed, posted on our Facebook page, and put on the LENDF website. The LENDF financial report was available at the meeting for people's perusal.

Catherine Casey, new Chair of The Voice, attended to see how we function. Gill Dickinson and Kathy Johnson from the Lane Head South Residents Group were introduced to her.

### **2. AGM: Election of Committee, minor constitution amendments and finance report**

Irene talked through the process for the AGM. The following were elected:

**Graham Wardle** as Chair - Kath Houlton proposed, Garry Lloyd seconded

**Liz Brown** as Secretary – Jenny Gregory proposed, Mike Smith seconded

**Julie Shawcross** as Deputy Secretary – Michelle Oakley proposed, Kathleen Johnson seconded

**Gill Turner** as Minutes Secretary – Malcolm Young proposed, Jason Hargreaves seconded

**Irene Thomson** as Treasurer – Liz Parsons proposed, seconded Gill Dickinson

Irene went through the finances. LENDF is a **Community Interest Company (CIC)** which means Brighter Borough monies can be processed through our account.

*Donations* from meetings totalled £221.98

*Expenses* included: website (domain name and hosting service), printing costs, tulip bulbs, donation to St Luke's Church as Brighter Borough application rejected. Totalled at £722.40

*Brighter Borough funding* for many local projects were also processed, passing through the LENDF account, and totalled £11,973.68. These included funding towards: Lowton Social Club concert chairs, refurbishing of upstairs room, black chairs, handrail and upgrading electrics; Parties for Pensioners, Kids Christmas Party, Last Night of the Proms, King's Coronation Party; St Mary's Kids Christmas Hampers, St Mary's Community Hall Kitchen additions of pots, pans and new canteen water boiler; LagTAC speed guns, PA system and Defibrillator.

**ACTION:** Tim Ashcroft offered to help with printing of LENDF materials

### **3. Parks: Oaklands Rd & Pond St (Speaker: Martin Smith Corporate Land Management)**

A concept plan of the upgrades to the parks were shared by Martin in order for him to gain valuable feedback from residents at the meeting.

**OAKLANDS ROAD** – Currently play equipment is in good condition and lots of free space for more equipment. The site is wet and muddy with no access path. Surfacing is poor and bins, benches and signage need replacing.

Plan is to become more accessible to all, existing large play unit and zip line will be left in and a new toddler play unit for younger age ranges will be added. Path added, some surfacing changed, bins, bench and signage replaced. Plan not yet finalised.

<http://www.lendf.co.uk/5301099%20Wigan%20Council,%20Oaklands%20Road%20A3.pdf>

### Questions from residents:

- Wheelchair usage? - Plan is to replace one of the swing sets with a basket, roundabout will be accessible for a wheelchair, play panels are inclusive.
- Martin to feed back to council about the concept of tactile installations
- A resident informed Martin there is already a hard-core path under the grass, it just hasn't been maintained. Grass cutting strategy needed to keep the new path accessible.
- Sand will remain by the zip wire, residents would like all sand removed if budget allows
- No fencing to be added around the perimeter of the whole site itself as too costly. Main play area is far enough from the road and enclosed. The existing metal fence around the younger play area will remain as in good condition.
- New path to be tree lined. Tree types would be kept small and far enough away to ensure leaf litter on the path isn't an issue.
- The access path needs to come from the North of the site as well as many children come on from this direction.
- Could children be involved in the consultation? Martin is happy to bring young people into the process if councillors/residents wish to involve their network of contacts.
- Would staggering the path help to stop electric scooters misusing it? Good idea. Martin also asked residents to report any misuse of the play area to help reduce incidents. *(FYI : Incidents can be reported anonymously through the charity Crime Stoppers, either online or by calling 0800 555 111)*
- Drainage is an issue on the site. The current sand area and the bottom edge near Oaklands Rd floods – Martin will speak to the contractor to look at this
- Is there scope for more trees on the site? Most residents wanted this to happen, type of tree discussed but nothing decided.

**POND ST** – Currently equipment is at end-of-life stage, surface sand needs removing, bins and benches need replacing. Need to be sensitive to residents as to what can be put in as it's a very small park, very close to housing. Equipment will be replaced and will be accessible to all where possible. Surface will be new sand filled carpet.

**4. Litter Picking:** Liz gave a presentation on litter picking for groups and individuals. Presentation included: benefits for all; health and safety; what to do with collected rubbish; resources such as Leigh Litter Pickers Facebook Group and the Wigan Council website; and how to help minimise litter in the first place. <http://www.lendf.co.uk/LitterPicking.pdf>

A LENDF litter pick with the local B Corp **Foilco** Company on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb went well. Twelve adults and children picked 14 bags of rubbish from the Hesketh Meadow Field. The children especially enjoyed it. Liz passed on information to Foilco about getting their own picking equipment to enable them to do their own litter picks. They have now got this equipment and will be doing another litter pick in March for 'B Corp volunteer month'.

**Free sticks, blue bin bags and thick gardening gloves** were then given out at the meeting. Please contact LENDF or our Lowton East Councillors if you would like further free equipment.

**5. Travel:** - due to lack of time at the meeting this item was not discussed. However **a detailed file of the item can be read via the following link** <http://www.lendf.co.uk/Update%20on%20Travel%20Issues.pdf> and a summary of key points are below.

### **5a. New Consultation on borough-wide travel plans.**

**Please can everyone comment on this, especially bus routes:** A six-week public consultation on a new a draft 'Travel Plan Supplementary Planning Document' (SPD) will run from Thursday 8 February until **23:59 on Thursday 21 March 2024**. The draft SPD (26p) can be viewed online at <https://participate.wigan.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/draft-travel-plan-supplementary-planning-document>

### **5b. Feedback from Teams meeting 9<sup>th</sup> Jan chaired by Andy Burnham**

This meeting focused on 'Local Traffic and Transport Plans for Lowton and Golborne (LTTPLG)'.

This includes walking/cycling routes, public transport, and roads including the possible bypass extension and controversial left turn modification at Lane Head.

### **5c. Opinions required for bus routes, cycle routes and walking routes to Golborne station**

Please contact Graham Wardle via his LaGTAC email about this [LaGTAC.data@gmail.com](mailto:LaGTAC.data@gmail.com)

### **5d. Online Golborne station consultation now closed**

**5e. GMP's Community Speed Watch (CSW) scheme** Two volunteers are to undergo induction training next month, with hopefully a further two LENDF volunteers soon. We still need **more** people, contact Graham to find out more. [LaGTAC.data@gmail.com](mailto:LaGTAC.data@gmail.com)

## **6 Updates**

**6a. Double yellow lines on two junctions on Hesketh Meadow Lane** have now been painted making it easier to see and turn at these junctions. There are strict rules for the length of the lines (20m) and the council will not allow any wiggle room.

**6b. Section 59 notices** – not gone up yet.

**6c. Tulip bulb planting** – we had a successful tulip bulb planting session early in the year by Leigh Fire Station at the edge of the Lowton East ward. Note the fire scene red tape as you pass by! Although some of the 100+ bulbs have been eaten by squirrels, the majority are starting to pop their heads above the ground.

If anyone is dividing the more native bulbs/tubers in their garden over the next month or so and have some to spare then Liz would be interested in planting them in agreed spaces around Lowton. Thanks to a resident at the meeting who has promised some traditional snowdrops.

**6d. Byrom Hall Wood** – Although not at the meeting, Linda Graham has asked us to thank the residents who attended the recent volunteer activity at the wood, just off Slag Lane. Events are run by Forestry England. She also asked us to mention the next event on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. Although the times are 10am – 3pm you can attend for just part of the day as necessary. If interested, please sign up via <https://www.forestryengland.uk/forest-event/events-viridor-wood/woodland-management-volunteer-days-byrom-wood> then click on the link for the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

**6e. New defibrillator Garton Drive/Lane Head Avenue, Lowton, WA3 2TR** A new public access defibrillator for Sudden Cardiac Arrest went live for the benefit of the Lowton community on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024. This unit is located at the corner of Garton Drive and Lane Head Avenue, WA3 2TR, Lowton.

50% funding for this defibrillator was achieved via LaGTAC's (Lowton and Golborne Traffic Advisory Committee) application to the DHSC (HMG's Department of Health and Social Care)

Community AED Grant Team in association with the London Hearts charity (londonhearts.org). The additional 50% funding needed plus certified electrical installation costs was kindly provided via Wigan Council's Brighter Borough scheme. LaGTAC wishes to gratefully thank all three Lowton East ward **Councillors Kath Houlton, Jenny Gregory and Garry Lloyd** for their encouragement and Brighter Borough contributions.

<http://www.lendf.co.uk/DEFIBRILLATOR%20LOCATIONS%20%20LOWTON.pdf>

For more locations and details of defibrillators throughout the UK please visit the website [www.defibfinder.uk](http://www.defibfinder.uk) – just type in your post code to find addresses and post codes for your closest defibrillator units.

If someone is found to be unconscious, not breathing, and without a pulse then simply dial 999 stating your location. You will be told the access code for the yellow AED box. Simply open the box and take out the unit. A green flashing light indicates that the unit is active. Open the defibrillator unit and follow the verbal instructions which are activated once it is opened.

**6f. Community Noticeboard keys** – keys have been chased up by Kath H (thank-you) so we now have access to Braithwaite Rd and Lowton Social Club community noticeboard keys. Graffiti on the Braithwaite board has been reported to the council by Kath H as the board is currently not fit for purpose. Kath, Jenny and Garry have/will be given access to these keys.

**6g. Braithwaite Mobile Phone Mast** – this mast is now operational despite not having planning permission for its exact location. It is still stuck with the council's legal department and has been stuck there for a considerable time – all councillors are actively chasing the status of the mast. When the mobile phone company was contacted they said they are just asking for retrospective planning permission and are going ahead with the mast as normal until told otherwise (!)

A resident is circulating a letter to Braithwaite residents drawing attention to its illegal location and potential issues for residents who may have electromagnetic hypersensitivity. The resident has also contacted the Braithwaite Road surgery to inform them of Swedish research into a few cases of EMF sickness and their associated symptoms.

[http://www.lendf.co.uk/FACTSHEET%20%20Real-life%205G%20Case%20Studies%20\(Hardell%20Nilsson\)%20\(V2\)%20\(10-02-2024\).pdf](http://www.lendf.co.uk/FACTSHEET%20%20Real-life%205G%20Case%20Studies%20(Hardell%20Nilsson)%20(V2)%20(10-02-2024).pdf)

## **7. AOB:**

- A few tickets left for the **LHSRG Darts and Domino night** on the 27th Feb, ring 01942 677578 or 01925 224659 for more details. It's always a good night.
- **Defibrillator** in the phone box on Slag Lane has been **stolen** recently. £1000 is needed to replace it. If you wish to donate then please click this gofundme link for the Lowton West Defibrillator fund: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/ywxp6-lowton-west-defibrillator-fund>
- **Leigh Fire Station** – a resident reported the station had been downgraded so it was no longer active. This information has also come from a few other sources. KH has already contacted the Fire Station Commander who said this is **not** the case and it will remain active. The 3+ fire engines are still there and ready for action. There **have** been some changes though. (Update: *The LHSRG will invite the Station Commander to their next meeting in March if he is available. We hope he can explain the changes and how it might affect services*)

***Next meeting: Mon 8th April 7:30 at Lowton Social Club***