

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting held on
Monday 8 August 2022 at Lowton Social Club

Covering Chairperson	Irene Thomson
Secretary	Liz Brown (Chaired the meeting)
Treasurer	Irene Thomson
Minutes Secretary	Gill Turner

Councillors: Kath Houlton, Marie Cooper

Apologies

Julie Shawcross, Deputy Secretary
Edward Houlton, Councillor
Professor Graham Wardle, LaGTAC
James Grundy, MP

No. of attendees = 23

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. Section 106 Monies

- There are 4 Lowton Groups working closely together for the area, LENDF, Lane Head South Residents Group, Lowton West Residents Group and LaGTAG.
- Discussions took place regarding the amount of new builds in the area and how the S106 money should be spent.
- Time limits when the money should be spent were discussed (5 years) and if not spent in this time is it given back to the developer. Can the money be kept until used? This 'time limit' previously worked as there was not a lot of building work in the area. Now it is not fit for purpose as larger projects necessary for rapid house building cannot access this funding as can't accumulate larger amounts of cash.
- Infrastructure improvements have been needed for a while now – the extension to the bypass was discussed again. It was reported there was not enough money for a bypass (£12M) in the budget and would have to liaise with Warrington council.
- It was reported there are two more new builds in progress and another 2 in planning / pre-planning; all of which would impact Lane Head or St Lukes.
- A question was asked about if the law could be changed regarding time limits for Section 106 monies.
- Suggested needs for the area to use the money has been known since 2017.

- Could all local groups come together about the preferred use of the S106 money as the council is not being transparent. This is evident with the suggested 'improvements' at Lane Head with the creation of an extra lane for turning left by using the 'residents' access road in front of their houses !!
- Creating an independent forum was discussed that was like the previous Golborne and Lowton Township Forum to contact the Council on various issues, including input from all 4 local groups.
- Lane Head left turn issue is part of the S106 monies issue and another meeting of the 4 groups has been called about this as it has a serious impact on people living next to the potential road works.

3 Update from Professor Graham Wardle, LaGTAC

The report is being looked at by Aiden Thatcher, Director of Growth and Economy, Wigan Council, and consulting on finalised plans. This could be weeks/months according to Aiden.

- Regarding the proposal at Lane Head and additional turning lane, the first thing residents knew was the article in the Manchester Evening News. The Council have not been upfront and transparent.
- Could there be new legislation giving councils more power over unfriendly neighbours (like Warrington boundary with Wigan) in regards the suggested bypass and the problems around this.

4. New Chair for LENDF

An email has gone out to all those on LENDF's mailing list as Lesley McGowan (New Chairperson) has given notice and reasons why. There are two temporary Chairpersons at the moment (Irene and Liz) but neither can sustain their commitment as they have other duties within and external to the LENDF committee. Anyone interested should be perceived as non-political and a Lowton resident who is ideally retired or a part-time worker.

5. Action points from previous meeting (Lane Head Left turn is in point 2+3 above)

1. Hesketh Meadow Grid.

- The noisy grid was reported 24.05.2022 by Councillor Kath Houlton and is the responsibility of United Utilities. The double manhole cover is the responsibility of Virgin Media and clicks loudly when vehicles drive over it. Ongoing discussion with Wiggett builders (*update: being fixed again Saturday 20th August*)

2. Freedom of Information requests.

- *The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by public authorities. It does this in two ways: public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities; and members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.*
- Requests could be sent on various issues around our area. Suggestions were given on what to request, especially if requests through other channels have repeatedly been deflected. Further notes to follow.

3. Newton Road Closed
 - For some Sundays of August and one in September, a portion of Newton Road will be closed during the day for road resurfacing.
4. Hesketh Meadow and Oakland Road
 - Times for vehicles delivering building supplies are different, Wiggett 07:30 and Redrow is 08:30. Redrow is part of the Considerate Builder Scheme. Could times be regulated? Hard evidence of issues are needed to pass on regarding times and noise pollution. (24 decibels is the limit for noise) this could be monitored for possible penalties.
 - Request for another banksman on Oaklands Road as well as Hesketh Meadow will be submitted.
5. Bellway Homes
 - Councillor Edward Houlton has sent a letter to the Builders and the Council are now involved regarding the issues.
6. Local Allotments
 - Research has found a few allotment sites locally: opposite Bents Garden Centre, Bickershaw (no water) and Firtree but all have long waiting lists. Bents has the shortest list but is also the most expensive. Firtree Allotment has a 'shop' which is open Wednesdays 12:00 to 1:00 and on Sundays 11:00 to 12:00 to buy and sell plants/seeds, plus fertiliser and compost is available to purchase.
 - Can anyone suggest any land that could be used as future allotments as there is only one in Lowton East?
 - It was reported there used to be allotments on the Civic Hall site but people were not sure of the location.
 - Contact is Paul Gallagher, Coordinator of Wigan in Bloom, for the possible creation of 'Lowton in Bloom'. Suggestions regarding areas that could be enhanced with additional trees and flowers could be put forward.
7. Bulb planting
 - This could be organised in different areas of Lowton, daffodils and snowdrops were suggested.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Last Night of the Proms – This event takes place on Saturday 15 October 2022 and tickets are £5.00.
This will be in Memory of LENDF's former Chair, Edward Thwaite, who passed away last year. 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 and Councillors.
- Golborne in Bloom community gardening group meets Thursday and Saturday mornings next to Golborne library if anyone would like to attend.

- Lowton Councillors hold a Surgery on Thursdays 09:00 to 12:00 at Lowton St Mary's Church Hall. All are welcome and for coffee and a chat. PCSOs call in regularly for about an hour. Cath Jones (Community Capacity Officer) also attends and discusses grants available from the Council.
- Signs have been requested for beware of the hedgehogs on Rowan Avenue as it was reported one had been run over recently.
- Winwick Lane – this is still being used by HGVs. It was suggested for access to the ANPR cameras put up for the "Clean Zone". An application to use them and software to get registrations of vehicles could be sought. Over 3000 emails have been sent by local residents for the policing of this but the Police do not have the time. Wigan applied to be the "Policeman" for this and will they keep the fines if accepted.
- The Environmental Officer has agreed to attend a meeting in a month or so. We need suggestions and questions for her and the team please (and not just to bombard with complaints).
Suggestions so far:
 - Litter
 - Plastic pollution
 - Recycling
 - Dog walkers
- East Leigh Football Club. 500 families are involved with the club. The pitch floods periodically and has recently been re-seeded, de-weeded and fertilized, costing around £15,000.
- Irene reported that during discussion with Sally Walker from the Lowton Social Club Committee, Sally expressed the need for a Defibrillator to be installed outside the club. She has been fundraising and had donations from The Rotary Club and The Lions. Irene offered a donation from LENDF's funds as well and asked those present at tonight's meeting if this was agreeable with the group. All agreed and Cllr Kath Houlton also offered to help via Brighter Borough Funding.

**Next Meeting: 12 September – 19:30
At Lowton Social Club**