

Minutes to the meeting of LENDF held on Wednesday 23rd March 2011
Lowton Labour Club as per agenda.

- Welcome to Members, visitors and guests.
- Apologies from James Cowley Andy Sharrock, Andy Burnham, Paul Markland,

Agenda items.

- **Bank Balance**
- Information given out regarding the transfer of funds from HMAG to the New bank account in the name of LENDF,
- **New Web Site**
- ET informed everyone of the new website and all the excellent information it contained and suggested members logged into the www.lendf.co.uk and let us know what you think.
- **Letters regarding Core Strategy Issues and Wigan MBC**
- ET read out letter which lendf have sent to Joyce Redfearn CEO, Wigan MBC. This can be accessed on website.
- Also read out a copy of letter sent by all our councillors, James Cowley, Labour, James Grundy, Conservative and Andy Burnham MP. The committee and members thanked them for their support in opposing the sale of any land in this vicinity and also any future building developments.
- **Action point:** Discussion followed which land was Green Belt, and ED to produce maps showing green belt areas.
- **Action Point:** Colin to submit FOI request questions regarding Green Belt areas.
- **Lowton Live Community Day**
- Date to be arranged though expected now to be on 20th August, so put this in your diaries. This event is all done free of charge for everyone who attends. Other years recently it has been held at St Catherine's, but this year it is being hosted at Lowton St Mary's school. Pam Gilligan asked for any volunteers who could assist with the planning and logistics of such an event every at this stage or on the day, helping with traffic, etc.,
- If you feel you can offer some assistance, please contact Pam on 01942 262636 at Compassion in Action, Oakland's Road.

- First meeting was held on Monday 28th March, but please get involved.
- James Grundy is backing this event as he has done since the start.

- **Update re: Civic Hall**

- As you are probably aware the sale of the Lowton Civic Hall, Formby Hall, Atherton and the Monaco in Hindley has gone to a Company called 8th Wonder from Wigan.
- ET spoke with Simon Dale from Wigan MBC who assured us that the Civic will only be used as a Leisure venue and nothing is expected to change. The only thing we should notice are improvements, Much discussion on the speculated amount paid (£250,000 for all three venues), but as SD pointed out, if it was an issue of raising the most money, they would have just knocked it down and sold the land for residential properties.
- Covenants have been written into the sale documents, stating that this land cannot be sold for developments in the future but was discussion followed regarding how valid such agreements would be and what a solicitor could ignore.
- JG stated that had we known that the Council were willing to sell the Civic for such a low amount, we could have approached Viridor for funding to keep it open ourselves.
- JJ submitted FOI request to Council regarding further information on this deal and subsequent contracts.

- **Guided Bus and Rail, - Andy Burnham press release**

- ET read out article from Newspapers stating that AB was in favour of both options regarding future transport links, Bus lane and rail options.
- Leigh is one of the largest towns in Lancashire, without a train station.

- **Bus Report by Malcolm Jones**

Malcolm has carried out some good investigation work regarding the reliability of the buses, especially after 6.00 pm operated by First Bus, which run down Newton Road. They should run at 9mins to the hour and 21 minutes past the hour but recently they can be up to 10 minutes early. They are also deviating from their scheduled route at Lane Head. Malcolm wrote to First Bus with his evidence, and they replied that the bus in question left Wigan late

and arrived in Leigh early. This tells you that they are not abiding by their scheduled timetable. If you or anyone else you know is experiencing problems please log date, time and bus numbers and let Malcolm know.

- GMPTE is responsible for the public transport across Greater Manchester and it is suggested that they are contacted and informed of these issues.
- **Report re: Township Forum.**
- The township forums are not defunct as we have attended our last meeting under the existing set up., ET attended the Forum of Forums meetings where there was an extensive buffet available for all attendees, where as normally it is just hot drink and biscuits. The meetings were held in order to move forward on future planning and how they will be run, if at all.
- ET attended on behalf of HMAG, and was put on a table with four councillors. ET suggested that any future meetings should be held and the agendas set by groups such as ours. He suggested that no councillors needed to be present and if they are, they should not be allowed to vote on any issues under discussion.
- Previously these Township forums have been from the top down, with Wigan dictating what should be on the agenda, with little chance of any community representatives, raising any valid points for discussion when really they should be decided from the bottom up so issues important to this area are discussed and voted on.
- One more meeting to go and then the submissions are to go to Cabinet for the final decision as to the future of the Townships.
- **Home Office Anti Social Behaviour Press Release**
- JG to obtain copy of byelaws re Wigan policy of no public drinking across Borough.
- Talk of relaxing planning laws which could mean that the Mill at Mather Lane in Leigh could be turned into homes. Planning could be a much less complicated process and the community could be much more involved in the decision making as they do in France.
- Long standing planning disputes to be resolved within set period instead of dragging out through courts and other public bodies.

WE will keep you informed as to the progress of such legislation.

- **Confirm Acceptance of New additions that were requested to the Constitution.**

It was agreed that the new additions to the constitution be added. These were the fine points requested at our last meeting.

- **Any Other Business**

- Next Meetings are on Wednesday 20th April at Lowton Labour Club, upstairs at 7.30pm.

- John Galloway, raised concerns regarding the traffic using Hesketh Meadow Lane and Oakland's Road, as a rat run to avoid the traffic. Subsequent investigations indicated that traffic was queued back at far as Lowton High School and there was 305 vehicles turned right into Hesketh Meadow Lane, within the standard school morning run. It is not only the volume of traffic but the speed that these cars reach, more often than not, were between 40 and 45 mph down Oakland's Road. There is severe concern that a child will be killed or injured on this road, due to these issues.

John Galloway and others have contacted Wigan MBC regarding the installation of speed reductions measures being installed and was told that this area was not a priority also contacted Police regarding this issue, but without much success.

- Have you witnessed such problems, if so, please bring them to the meeting so that pressure can be put on the powers that be to resolve this dangerous practice.

If there are any items in these minutes which need amending or are incorrect, please let me know, so they can be amended,

Jan Johnston,
Secretary

LENDF.