

Minutes to the Meeting of
Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
held on Monday 2nd March 2012, at Lowton Labour Club as per agenda.
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (ET), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests
- Also present: Cllr James Grundy (JG)
- *Apologies received from David Baxter, Sue Jackson, Ian Wood*

No. of Attendees = 22

1. **Minutes from last meeting** – not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.

Some members do not have computers and paper copies are delivered to those individuals. In the case of a meeting date change, or police alerts, it would be useful to have mobile numbers so that 'text messaging' can be used. Please contact ET.

2. **Bank Balance**

LENDF current balance details on view at the meeting for those present.

3. **St Helen's Council – Inspector's Session – Re: Parkside**

Peter Sargeant informed LENDF that he had attended this meeting and that Parkside Action Group had put across a number of their concerns and proposed an alternative development option for the use of Parkside Colliery. The Inspector's comments and recommendations to St Helen's Council, with regard to its Local Development Framework as a whole, will be available later this year.

Many thanks to Susan Spibey who emailed out notification of the meeting.

It is important for us to monitor this due to the potential impact on Lowton.

4. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

This document has now been finalised (March 2012) and a copy has been uploaded to our website. The new 'planning system' will be useful to communities as a single source of guidance as it replaces thousands of pages of previous laws. Local authorities are 'expected' to take on board the new system within the next 12 months – though Wigan Council may have progressed their new LDF too far to make changes now.

5. **Wigan Council – Additional Meeting with Government Inspector**

On Wednesday April 18th the Government Inspector is due to chair an additional meeting with Wigan Council and relevant participants (i.e. LENDF, Peter Sargeant, Colin Sinclair and of the course the 'house builders') to "*consider the procedural and practical implications of potential changes to the submitted plan to address the supply of housing land*".

<http://www.lendf.co.uk/Government%20Inspector%20Extra%20Meeting.pdf>

Members of the community are welcome to sit in the audience of this meeting so if you are free on that day please come along to Wigan Investment Centre, Waterside Drive, Wigan, WN3 5BA. Your show of support for LENDF, and the Lowton area,

will carry a strong message to the Inspector. If you can 'car share' please let us know and then we could go by convoy !

Meeting starts at 9.30am and is programmed to last all day!



ET read out some facts and figures obtained recently i.e.:

- Wigan's population number has not changed since the 70s
- Empty homes = 3,130 (though 230 are Housing Association properties)

ET also read out details applicable to Lowton from the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Update 2011. More information available here ...

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/Planning/Policies/DevelopmentFramework/WiganStrategicHousingLandAvailabilityAssessment.htm>

Wigan's 'aspirations' for housing and attracting new people to the Borough was analysed by those present at tonight's meeting. Various issues/implications of the Inspector's concerns were also discussed (including the non-movement of the Bickershaw sites).

North Leigh residents are now strongly opposing proposed development in their area (there have been articles each week in the local media regarding their concerns).

6. **LENDF's application for a grant for an 'Olympic-Themed Event'**

In order to receive the monies awarded to LENDF (£836.46) we need to arrange Public Liability Insurance. We have been researching insurance companies for the cost of 'single event' insurance and have received advice and suggestions from various members. [\[Post-meeting Note: Insurance has now been secured and notification sent to Wigan Council so that the monies can be released to LENDF's bank account\]](#)

We would like to ask for *ideas please* for a community event. Our original application suggested 2 events, though the money awarded will not stretch that far:

Event 1

This event will occur during the day for the elderly residents from the area and children from Lowton High School.

We plan to run an afternoon concert, with entertainment, and to encourage interaction amongst the two groups (as we have done in similar events previously but not with a sports bias). We would hope to use the services of the Wigan Active Team, with tai chi and Zumba Gold/salsa participation and Groundwork Trust demonstrations.

Engage the services of speakers, especially who have overcome adversity and gone on to succeed in their chosen sport or profession. Such as champion wheelchair fencer from Warrington, Adrian Derbyshire, if he is not too busy from the Olympics. He is young, vibrant, and inspirational.

We would invite well known celebrity speakers who can generate the dedication that is needed to succeed in life and highlight the message that work and commitment always pays off.

We would show vintage film footage from previous Olympics, sports events, using EFS Audio visual from Bolton.

The audience should be part of this event and the whole Olympic ethos, and get behind Team GB and join in the spirit of this major sporting occasion.

Event 2

The second and final event, would be similar to the last Night of the Proms with an invited audience, and maybe a hotpot supper, with the music being provided by Golborne Brass band.

It is hoped to celebrate the Olympics and Team GB and generate a feeling of pride and gratitude in the work that everyone has undertaken to stage such a major event. Lowton as a community is well established and always comes together to celebrate special occasions.

It is also worth remembering that this is the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee so it is hoped to help celebrate the fantastic work and dedication undertaken by our Majesty and promote a sense of civic pride.

It is planned that both these events would be staged at the Rose Centre, formally Lowton Civic Hall.

Date of Events: To be confirmed. Every effort will be made to ensure that the dates are relative to the events that are taking place in London.

Cllr Grundy suggested that the Brighter Borough Fund may be able to make a contribution.

7. Thursday May 31st – Olympic Torch comes through Lowton

The route for the torch will be via Lane Head (approximately 3.15pm), along Church Lane and continuing onto Abram. See Wigan Council's website for more details. <http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/LeisureCultureTourism/Olympics> There will be 'celebrations/events' along the route so come out and watch a piece of history pass by.

8. Civic Hall

The ongoing saga of who actually owns/rents/leases the Civic Hall is now taking a more serious turn. Our Freedom of Information requests have still not been responded to and a selection of email correspondence has been uploaded to our website for you to view. <http://www.lendf.co.uk/LENDF%20-%20Civic%20Hall.html#Apr01>

It was suggested that all the properties now being run by Rose Leisure should be independently valued so that the 'sale price' originally agreed between the Council and RL can be verified.

9. Any Other Business

- Jan Johnston's 'Lowton Bridges' project is looking for people to donate an hour of their time on:

Wednesday 27th June

To attend Lowton High School and share their life experiences with the children. This is great fun and tells the kids about the area, where we lived, how we lived. Jan ran a similar session at Christmas and they were amazed that some people didn't have their own beds let alone bedrooms !! The session will run from 1.30pm to 2.30pm and the children usually provide refreshments too.

Tuesday 10th July

To attend Lowton High School where the children will put on an entertainment show and provide afternoon tea, made by their own hands. Again great fun. Start time to be confirmed but probably in the afternoon.

If you are able to volunteer your time please contact Jan on:

Tel: 01942 603436

Mob: 07771 514846

E: janjohnston86@hotmail.co.uk

- **Website**

As the site is rapidly growing with more and more documents/articles being added each week, ET asked if people were able to locate information easily. The answer was "Yes – eventually ☺"

Gill Turner requested that the HMAG pages on the website should include photographs of the protest demonstration which occurred in relation to HMAG's opposition to the 'Mega School'. IT was unsure where to locate these from and asked for copies or a link in order to copy them across to the LENDF site.

- **Press Release / Leaflet Drop**

As we need to get information re the proposed housing situation out to the residents of Lowton the idea of a Press Release or Leaflet Drop was discussed. More information will be available on this at the next LENDF meeting.

10. Date of Next LENDF Meeting

Monday May 14th 2012

Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes please contact me on lendf99@gmail.com and let me know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified.

Irene Thomson, Secretary – LENDF