

Minutes to the Meeting of
Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
held on Monday 14th May 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 Dennis Eubank, Norman Parry, Scott Lancaster, Bill Bound, Gill Dickinson, Ed Houlton, David Baxter*

No. of Attendees = 27

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. The grant monies for LENDF's Olympic Events has now arrived in the bank, total £893.86.

3. **Correspondence**

Gill Dickinson, Secretary of Lane Head South Residents Group, has sent a letter to the RC Bishop of Liverpool in respect of the awaited decision on St Catherine's of Siena Church. LENDF received a copy from GD and ET read out this letter to the meeting. It was agreed that LENDF would assist LHSRG by sending a Freedom of Information request to the RC Bishop of Liverpool. Both letters will be loaded to the website shortly.

Peter Sergeant sent a letter to the Planning Inspector regarding the Inspector's request for comment on the effect of the new planning laws (NPPF) on Wigan's Core Strategy. LENDF received a copy from PS but as it was lengthy and technical ET did not read it out and it will be uploaded to the website shortly.

LENDF's response to the Planning Inspector has also been sent and ET read this out and explained the attachments which have been sent with it. This is available to view on the website now.

4. **Oaklands and Meadows Residents Association – Park Open Day**

All those present sent their congratulations to the OMRA group, especially Darren, Tina and Malcolm, for a successful and well organised Open Day. Some members of LENDF were there on the day to give assistance and reported to the meeting the good turnout of both children and adults, the fun atmosphere and great entertainment by the Play Bus Team, puppeteer and clown act.

OMRA had requested the presence of the local Community Police Team but unfortunately they did not attend. Darren has written to ask why and this letter was copied to LENDF and ET read it out to the meeting. There had been an incident during the day involving some youths throwing bottles at a wall to break the glass

and a young girl asked them to stop but she was ignored and was later shot at with a pellet gun!

It is hoped that the small amount of criminal damaged to the play equipment, which had occurred before the Open Day, will now diminish as the novelty of something new wears off – but if anyone sees anything suspicious please use 101 to report it – or better still use 999 as the police respond far quicker and may catch them in the act.

The general issue of policing in Lowton was discussed and it was agreed that LENDF would write to ask for clarification of how many officers are allocated to Lowton and how often they patrol. It was also agreed that LENDF would write and request that a Police Sergeant attends our next meeting.

Malcolm Jones reported that he was going to a meeting with Wigan's Antisocial Behaviour Team and would be asking for a 'Dispersal Order' to be put into place for the Oaklands Road area for 6 months, especially the play park.

Information on Dispersal Orders:

<http://www.wlct.org/young-people/linconline/dispersal-orders.htm>

5. Civic Hall

Even though our latest Freedom of Information request has not yet been answered, JJ has found out that a new contract has been sent to the owners of the Civic Hall. We will keep you posted.

6. LENDF's Olympic Events

The sub-committee have met twice and the first meeting included members from Lane Head South Residents Group to discuss joining forces and monies. The LHSRG has already started preparations for a Jubilee Street Party on 4th June and following deliberations over the scale/venue/dates for an Olympic event it was agreed that the LHSRG would carry on with their arrangements as before and LENDF would start its own arrangements for 2 events to occur in August. The sub-committee are due to meet again on 17th May.

7. Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

ET gave a report regarding the additional meeting held last month at Wigan Council, regarding the 'supply of housing land'. The Inspector announced that he had found there to be a shortfall of housing supply in Wigan's Core Strategy !! Approximately 2,500. He asked the Council where these could be built in the Borough – and the Council said "*Lowton/Golborne*". You can image our reaction.

The majority of the day was then spent debating this issue with ET pointing out to the Inspector that the Council have never properly consulted the residents of Lowton, and that was too large a number of properties for what is already a 'congestion hotspot'. ET asked the Council to programme a 'local consultation' rather than borough-wide.

The Inspector quizzed the council over their evidence base and the source of their figures. In fact during the meeting the council made some recalculations and had a secretary type up a new table which was handed around those present. The Council was generally poor in its all responses.

The Inspector is still to conclude his findings with regard to the soundness of the Core Strategy and he has suggested that he would recommend either:

- 1) The document be withdrawn and the Council start again from scratch, or
- 2) The Council can have 6 months to reassess its evidence base, double-check its calculations and resubmit the document for inspection.

Option 2 was voiced by those present to be preferred. This of course included all the housebuilders! We are now waiting for the Inspector's final decision.

Cllr Grundy, although not present on the day, reported that he had phoned Mike Worden (Head of Planning), in the days following to enquire about the Inspector's comments. Cllr Grundy repeated Mike Worden's comments that both Ed Thwaite and Peter Sergeant had made good points during the meeting and had represented Lowton and Golborne well.

If Option 2 is chosen (and it probably will) then there will be the possibility of consultation by the Council with the residents of Lowton and Golborne. LENDF plan to leaflet the whole of the area to keep all residents up to date and fully informed of the situation and, if needs be, on how to object to so many houses being planned for our village.

8. Congestion

A new resident to the group mentioned she had telephoned Greater Manchester Transport to report the traffic light system not 'staggering' the traffic properly at Church Lane/East Lancs Road junction. GMT took the details and acknowledged that the Lowton area was well known for its congestion problems and 'promised' to assist if possible.

Any new houses in the area would bring with it extra vehicles to our roads – 2,500 houses with possibly 2 cars each = chaos. Mums will have to have their children 'bused out' because the school run would become impossible.

9. Housebuilders – Land Ownerships

The meeting then moved on to discuss the various farms in the Lowton area and which ones may be due to be built on. Rothwells Farm next to Golborne High School has now completed its sale to a house builder. This site could accommodate 500 homes.

Land to the east of Stone Cross Lane is identified as being owner by 'Taylor'. This is possible Taylor Wimpey !

10. Any Other Business

LENDF's website is undergoing some updating which includes a page being given to Lane Head South Residents Group (see Community Links). Also links are being provided to the website for Lowton Youth and Community Centre, Oaklands and Meadows Residents Association, and the various churches in the village.

Lowton Bridges

JJ was pleased to announce two events due to take place at Lowton COE High School on 20th and 27th June – both Wednesdays. A group of children want to 'interview' residents of Lowton about their memories of the village, its history and characters. If you want to be involved and share your stories with them then please contact Jan on 01942 603436 - Mob: 07771 514846

E: janjohnston86@hotmail.co.uk

On the Saturday 30th June the High School is holding a Community Day. Plenty to see and do – please come along and join in.

Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes (RAOB) Lodge

If you wish to join the 'Buffs' then you are welcome to come along on a Sunday night to the Lowton Labour Club when the 'Lodge' is open. The organisation aids members, their families, those left behind by deceased brethren (Widows/Orphans) and as well as other charitable organisations. On Friday 22nd June they are hosting a 'Family Night' to help raise money to go towards St Mary's Infant/Junior School's appeal for a new surfacing of the play area which will cost in the region of £7,000. Ticket Information will be available soon.

Lowton Labour Club

LLC is changing its name soon – to either:

- a) Lowton Village Club
- b) Lowton Community Club
- c) Lowton Social Club

To join the club it costs around £4 per year.

Pond Street Play Area

A request was made to LENDF for assistance in applying for grant monies to re-surface the play area on Pond Street. ET to investigate and asked Gill Turner, Malcolm Jones and Cllr Grundy to meet together and research costs, etc. Other options for funding are Section 106 monies or Lottery Funding.

11. Date of Next LENDF Meeting

Monday June 4th 2012 (Bank Holiday)

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