

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
Minutes to the Meeting held on Monday 11th January 2016 at Lowton Social Club.

<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

Present:

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (Ed T), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Cllr Ed Houlton and Cllr Kath Houlton and Cllr James Grundy
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests
Apologies – Brian and Audrey Lobell, Gill Turner, Fred Dunstable

No. of Attendees = 44

1. **Minutes from last meeting** – Not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email, posted onto Facebook, and paper copies were available. LENDF's Bank Balance available to view for those present tonight.
2. **Rail Services** – Newton train station – A Traffic Counts is in place at the junction that will become the new carpark and bus interchange.

The proposals at Newton are heavily focussing on 'Infrastructure' i.e. transport links with buses. The timetables for buses and trains are to be reviewed with the intention of improving the services.

Northern Together these two companies will be investing £1.24 billion into the rail services for this area with old rail cars being replaced with new or refurbished ones that will be faster and longer. This should be completed by 2019.

Transpennine will have 2 trains per hour stopping at Newton.

In [Andy Burnham's New Year message](#), he refers to his new proposals for 'Leigh Parkway':

The most worrying thing about 2015 has been the growing gridlock on our roads. I know the roadworks linked to the Busway have not helped. But the truth is that our problem goes far deeper than that.

We live in an area close to major strategic routes - the M6, M60, M61, M62 and East Lancs - and they are all overloaded. The minute there is a problem on any of these roads, there is a knock-on effect on local roads and the whole area seizes up.

The only answer in the long-run is to re-connect our area to the rail network.

Early in the New Year, plans will be brought forward for HS3 - the new East-West high-speed link. It is possible that the preferred route will be to connect HS3 with HS2 as it crosses the Lancs in the south of my constituency. I believe this presents us with a major opportunity. I will launch a campaign in 2016 for a "Leigh Parkway" station. Giving people the chance to pull off the Lancs and park up to catch trains East, West, North and South could take traffic off our over-loaded motorways. But a station like this will also secure the prosperity of our area for years to come as an attractive location for inward investment.

Look out in the New Year for the "Leigh Parkway" campaign and get on board. I can't promise we will succeed but it is worth a go. It is 50 years since our rail links were taken away and it's time to demand a better transport deal for our grid-locked area.

3. Pensioners' Parties

Awaiting to hear about LENDF's application for funding from LINK. Also a new source has been found called Post Code Community Trust and LENDF will submit an application to that as well.

4. A580 – Traffic Lights

The sequencing of the lights is still causing long tailbacks on the roads which 'cross' the East Lancs i.e. Church Lane / Newton Road. Priority is being given to traffic on the A580 which is understandable, especially with the recent roadworks for the bridge work at Golborne. The Highways Dept will be asked to review the sequencing.

Post Meeting Note: The following response was received by Cllr Houlton

"I have raised your concerns with the Urban Traffic Control (UTC) Division of Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

The traffic signal at the junction of Church Lane and Kenyon Lane operate and run using a signal software package know as SCOOT.

SCOOT allocates additional green time to the busiest arms and as such the timings are continuously changing throughout the day to adjust to traffic flow. Over the past few years a great deal of work has been undertaken at the following four junctions to maximise capacity to ensure the network operates as efficiently as possible:

- * East Lancashire Road (A580) and Church Lane (B5207)
- * East Lancashire Road (A580) and Newton Road (A572)
- * Newton Road (A572) and Kenyon Lane (B5207)
- * Newton Road (A572) and Winwick Lane (A579).

All four junctions are linked and each set of signals is hooked up to the SCOOT system.

The UTC engineers have checked the junction for faults and everything is working properly with no detector faults. The problem may relate to specific days due to excessive traffic flows avoiding the motorway (e.g. accident/incidents).

If you have any further information in terms of specific times, dates or days when there is a particular problem UTC can investigate this further, however are confident the traffic signals are calibrated to work as efficiently as possible.

I trust the above information is of assistance and if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards
Richard Beamer
Area Engineer (Traffic - Network Management)
Places: Economy, Waste and Infrastructure
Wigan Council

5. Wainhomes – Stonecross Development

Cllr Grundy recently met with Wigan Planning Dept to discuss another amendment to the planning permission which is due to be heard by the Planning Committee on 19th

January. This amendment still does not include the completion of the Link Road until after the 175th house is built.

The amendment is: .. “to vary condition 17 on outline planning permission A/12/77592 to allow construction of the link road on occupation of the 175th dwelling with 100 properties taking access from Stone Cross Lane and 75 properties taking access from Church Lane.”

Post Meeting Note: The Planning Committee have granted this variation.

6. **Persimmon Homes – Poplars Estate**

Cllr Grundy received an update from Wigan Planning Dept with regards to Persimmon’s current ‘stance’ on this development. Persimmon is still trying to pursue the purchase of land next to Atherleigh Way which would then give them the opportunity to create an access to and from their development from Atherleigh Way, rather than through the existing estate.

7. **Solar Farm**

LENDF has written to Wigan Council [\[click here\]](#) with concerns over the number of Solar Farm applications, throughout the Borough, which have been submitted recently.

Warrington Council has recently rejected permission for a solar farm at Croft stating that it was an inappropriate development for the green belt.

Following submission of LENDF’s letter to Wigan, a response was received from the family at Dickenson’s Farm [\[click here\]](#) whose proposal for a Solar Farm off Kenyon Lane, Lowton, is possibly going to be resubmitted.

LENDF’s Chairman, Ed Thwaite, stated that the stance against Solar Farms (agreed with LENDF’s committee) was taken in order to try and protect Green Belt land from any type of development. Also there is a danger that if permission were to be granted then this may see the submission of more applications from the Energy Companies who wish to create these Solar Farms on what are Lowton’s remaining green spaces.

8. **M6 Upgrade**

Highways England have plans to improve the M6 motorway between junction 21a (interchange with M62) and junction 26 (Orrel) by making it a smart motorway.

This will use the latest technology to improve journeys by monitoring traffic flow and set speed limits accordingly to keep traffic moving smoothly. The proposal also involves converting the hard shoulder permanently to a traffic lane to create the much needed extra capacity. Information about road conditions and speed limits will be displayed to drivers on electronic road signs.



The scheme is currently in development and will be subject to completion of statutory processes, including environmental assessments, deliverability and value for money. No start date is available

9. St Helens Council

St Helens Council will be producing a new 'plan' for the borough and abandoning their Core Strategy which was adopted in 2012. Reasons for this are as yet unclear, but there could be implications for Lowton residents, especially as Parkside may be a front runner in the Council's new Plan. For more information please visit the website for [Our Local Voice](#).

10. AOB

- Reports via the local police of break-ins to various properties in the area, and also into garden sheds. Please be vigilant and if you have locks/alarms please use them.
- Recent road repairs to Laburnum have already started to deteriorate. Cllr Houlton will report this to Council and ask for them to be redone.
- Lowton East Labour candidate Garry Lloyd to be invited to the LENDF meeting.
- Current Councillors' contact details are:

[Cllr James Grundy](#)

[Cllr Kathleen Houlton](#)

[Cllr Edward Houlton](#)

11. Next Meeting:

Monday 15th February 2016.

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