



#### **4. HS2**

Ed Thwaite has attended meetings with a Culcheth group regarding a proposed response to whatever the Government's decision on HS2 will be following the General Election. The response (in the form of a report) will be sent to all MPs and LENDF will also email this out to everyone on our circulation list and upload to the website.

#### **5. Persimmon Homes – Development to the south of Poplars Estate**

Objection/Comment letters were distributed around the estate. Many thanks to those residents who did this in their own time and collected them in as well. Over 200 were taken into the Council to be registered and many more were sent in by email.

Cllr Grundy and Ed Thwaite met with the Planners to discuss the residents' concerns. The Planners were sympathetic with the views of the residents and have a similar concern that any access to the development should not be through the estate but via another route.

A suggestion was made that contact be made with a District Valuer for a Development Appraisal to be done – as this would provide evidence regarding costs involved in providing access to the By-pass (something that Persimmon Homes have stated is not cost-effective or feasible).

The application will be going before the Planning Committee probably in June.

A general discussion then took place on various options/future development/Council aspirations/percentage of affordable homes/school places/S106 monies and ways of making sure that any public monies from the development is actually spent in the Lowton.

#### **6. Seddon Homes – Sandy Lane development**

A resident asked to speak to the group and these are her comments:

“I am a local lady. My family go back six generations and owned most the houses and farms on Sandy Lane and many members of my family still remain in my grandfather's farms. I don't like to see too many houses being built in Lowton but this development is a good thing. The proposed housing is on a former army site and has 70,000 pounds worth of contamination on it, so it needs cleaning up. It may be Greenbelt but it's a brownfield site surrounded by housing I know the industrial estate is Wigan's oldest, largest, and key employment site. Over the last 80 years the Moss family have put all their time and money (some £120 million) into creating local employment. Because of this dedication, over 2 thousand local people have a job. The council benefit from £2.7 million in business rates a year! Moss industrial estate have never asked for any support before. Funding is not easy and the estate are wanting to complete larger units for existing companies to expand, thus keeping local jobs here and creating the opportunity for another 232 new jobs for local people. Otherwise these companies will leave the estate to somewhere like St Helens or Liverpool that can accommodate their companies growth. These business units will generation £150 thousand business rates a year which the local council get to keep. That's £1.5 million in just ten years. The industrial estate have spent 3 years working with the council to get funding through grants etc with no success. The additional employment units cost £4.59 million to build. The Moss family have secured £4.09 million and the small housing development by Seddons on the contaminated site provides the £500 thousand gap funding needed. This is one of the few housing projects that actually helps our local economy. 60 people will be kept in a job during the construction period and I for one want my family's jobs to stay local and not be relocated and if 232 new jobs are to be created then let's have them here. The industrial estate is a major feeder to Leigh town centre and the local economy.”

A general discussion then took place with the pros and cons of such a development. The most important issue being that the land is Greenbelt and if the Council were to approve Seddon's application then this could be catastrophic for all Greenbelt areas in the Borough. LENDF will continue to oppose this development.

## **7. Diggle Green – New Planning Application**

Warrington Council's Planning Enforcement Officer, Dan Matthewman, has put forward a number of 'conditions' which he recommends should be attached to any planning permission given to the operators of Diggle Green. <http://www.lendf.co.uk/digglegreen.html> LENDF support this approach as it will ensure that the business operations are more controlled and hopefully reduce the level of tractor/trailers which use the village roads of Lowton/Culcheth. Also the amount of waste allowed onto site should not exceed 40,000 tonnes and that the amount requested (75,000 tonnes) should be refused.

Both Wigan and Warrington Councils' Environment Departments are monitoring the site, together with Environment Agency. Some residents at tonight's meeting reported that they still suffer occasional bad odours coming from Diggle Green. They were asked if they had rang the Environment Agency – they had not done so on each occasion, but all agreed it was important to do this as it helps to build information to go into the monitoring.

Cllr Grundy stated that if any future applications are made to increase the tonnage then using local roads will not be acceptable and a 'commercial road' should be created to the East Lancs Road.

## **8. Senior Citizens' Parties**

These events will recommence in October (14<sup>th</sup>) so anyone with a March ticket will still be able to use them for the October date ☺

## **9. Litter Picking Event – in association with Wigan Council's Big Borough Spring Clean**

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 10.30am. Meeting point will be St Luke's school. All equipment will be provided.

We need lots of volunteers who can spare their time to help so that we can cover as much ground as possible i.e. public footpaths and open areas, Church Lane, East Lancs Road, Heath Lane, etc. As the binbags get full don't worry about carrying them back to the meeting point as will drive around the groups to collect them and provide fresh bags. The Council are providing a skip for the day which will be at the front of the school - so if you wish you can do your street/area and then bring the bags of litter to the skip.



There are issues with fly-tipping in certain areas and this should be reported to the council via their email [eshelpline@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:eshelpline@wigan.gov.uk) It is recommended that you attached a photo of the fly-tipping as it helps the Council to send out the correct type of vehicle to deal with it (plus a visual image always seems to get a faster result!).

There is also a service called 'The Beat It Team' who rotate their work around the Borough. The council's Beat It Team deal with clean-up requests from Ward Councillors. In addition to the regular cleansing operations, the BEAT IT team visit every ward four times each year. Their work includes clearing overgrown footpaths, tidying derelict land and an involvement in general environmental improvement work. If you know of an issue or 'grot-spot' that needs attention then please report it to the eshelpline or to Cllr Houlton, Cllr Grundy or Cllr Gilligan.

## **10. Any Other Business**

### Newton Train Station

Mr Ray Bent gave an update on the proposals:

*"Everything that I am up dating for you is second hand, but have seen a copy of the official copy of the project details including the demolition of Mill House School and land*

*behind the PRESTIGE CAR showrooms plus the time table for completion of the whole by the beginning of 2018.*

*I have also seen a copy of what I would call an artist's impression of the project of modernised train station, bus interchange and extended car parking.*

*The 1st item is the school demolition and creation of 110 car spaces to enable the existing car park i.e. which has only 85 spaces, to be moved.*

*2nd item is the build of the new Bus Interchange on the SOUTH side of the station which will have new lifts built up to platform level, new toilet facilities, plus other items.*

*Without going into the realms of 'perhaps' and 'maybe', the 3rd item was to be the land behind PRESTIGE MOTORS to be cleared to create a further capacity of up to 245 spaces! At this moment in time I cannot get confirmation from MERSEY TRAVEL that the land for the 3rd item is now not available".*

LENDF want to thank Ray for keeping everyone up to date with these proposals. Better public transport will certainly be a benefit to us all.

Highfield Moss, Lowton <http://www.lancswt.org.uk/reserves/highfield-moss>

Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Natural England have started work to 'rewet' the moss. The first thing to be done was to remove invasive species which are drying it out, i.e. birch trees and bracken. Then the water channels will be rerouted in order to guide natural water back to the Moss. This is a SSSI site and needs this regeneration work in order to maintain its status and protect the plants which need it to be soggy. It will also reduce the risk of land fires which have been a problem in recent years.

#### **11. Next LENDF Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015 @ 7.30pm (St Mary's Community Hall)**

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

Irene Thomson – Secretary, LENDF