

# Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

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Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday 9 December 2024 at Lowton Social Club

## PRESENT

Chair	Professor Graham Wardle (GW)
Secretary	Liz Brown (LB)
Treasurer	Irene Thomson (IT)
Minutes Secretary	Gill Turner (GT)
Councillor	Garry Lloyd (GL)
Councillor	Mike Smith (MS)
Councillor	Jenny Gregory (JG)
Guest	Police Inspector Mike Crosthwaite
Guest	Councillor Stuart Mann (Burtonwood and Winwick ward)
Apologies	Julie Shawcross (JS) Luke Brown Liz Parsons

**No. of attendees = 16**

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## 1. Welcome and previous minutes

Minutes not read out at meeting, but copies have been sent out by email and posted on the Facebook page and put on the LENDF website. New visitors and guests were welcomed to the meeting.

## 2. Inspector Mike Crosthwaite gave a talk and presentation about local issues

He explained the police structure. Our local team in Lowton East can be found here <https://www.gmp.police.uk/area/your-area/greater-manchester/wigan/lowton-east/on-the-team/our-priorities> Wigan Borough is split into 3 areas. Each area has its own inspector and police officers. Mike heads Area2 which includes Lowton, Golborne, Ashton, Bryn, Abram, and Hindley. There are 3 sergeants, 10 PCs and 10 PCSOs (with no transport) There are regular **PACT** meetings (Police And Communities Together) with the 3 Inspectors, 3 Community Teams from the Council and other partners. They meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday to go through behaviours. For example, they could discuss children and antisocial behaviours, then do home visits to see parents/children where consequences are discussed and actioned if the behaviours continue. Another example, they could discuss drug dens and prosecuting/evicting these residents.

**Response times** after calling the police:

- ✓ Threat to life – Classed as Grade 1 with a response target of 15 minutes.
- ✓ Domestic/Neighbourhood – Classed as Grade 2 with a response target of 1 hour.
- ✓ Abandoned vehicles – passed to local Police.

**Off road motorbikes and quad bikes:** People are coming into Lowton/Golborne from different areas with their motorbikes or quad bikes to use footpaths and rights of way in a *dangerous* and illegal manner. The Police have been working with the Council to prevent

this while still allowing the normal activity of push bikes and mobility scooters. The police have confiscated 42 bikes across the Wigan Borough valued around £21,000 so far. Methods include using bikes, helicopters and drones to track culprits. Smart water (forensic marking) is also used to spray bikes and clothing. In Lowton East problem areas include Newton Road, Hesketh Meadow and Pennington Flash. Owners have to produce valid MOT and insurance when stopped. Drugs can be transported this way so this is checked too. **The Police are asking for intelligence from the community to find these culprits and where the motorbikes/quad bikes are being stored.** If anyone has any information (time/location/colour/model/person/storage), please report on the GMP website <https://www.gmp.police.uk/ro/report/> or anonymously on Crimestoppers <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information> The Crimestoppers number is 0800 555111 and the local police non emergency number is 101.

**Bee in the Loop** – this is a direct police messaging system for local communities. The website is <https://www.beeintheloop.co.uk/> and you can also sign up there for local alerts.

- ❖ Be among the first to know about incidents and emergencies.
- ❖ Receive targeted crime prevention advice.
- ❖ Be involved in shaping local priorities.

The local Police will start to hold more regular **Crime Surgeries** and these will be advertised soon as to where you can attend. Here you can also report details and receive feedback.

### Questions from the floor

- ❖ *Will the front desk at the Leigh Police Station re-open?* There are many officers using this building but there are no plans to provide staff for the front desk.
- ❖ *Will the Lowton Team still be based at Wigan?* They will possibly move to Bickershaw.
- ❖ *When will Section 59 signs for off road bikes be put up?* They are still awaiting delivery as the council officer has been on long term sick leave.

### 3. Presentation of “Service to the Community” Tankard

GW, Kathy Johnson, Gill Dickinson, and Kath Houlton presented **Terry Hewitt** with an inscribed tankard for his long-standing service to the community. Terry has regularly litter picked for many years around the Lane Head area in all weathers. We extend heart felt thanks.

### 4. Councillor Update

**Councillors attended:** The St Mary’s Remembrance Day Service and commented it was lovely to see children attending too; St Luke’s Christmas Tree switch on; Winton Road Christmas Tree switch on with carols around the tree.

#### **Council meetings:**

- Buses were discussed and they asked for a more reliable bus service, especially a late service after 18:00 from Newton-le-Willows Railway Station. There will be a meeting with Warrington Borough Council regarding a direct service to Warrington too.
- Baby Loss has now been recognised by employers within Wigan Council.

**Regular Councillor Surgeries** are held as below, residents are welcome to drop in:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at Compassion in Action 10:30 to 12:00.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at Lowton Social Club 18:30 to 20:30.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at Bethany Church 10:30 to 12:00

### 5a. Update on S106 road works at Lane Head and Stone Cross Lane

Graham had a recent meeting with Jo Platt (MP) to discuss ways forward regarding the proposed plans using S106 monies. (Background: S106 monies should not have been used, proposed plans were passed before consultation with affected residents.) Meeting outcomes:

- The Major Project Team (Mike Orrell) will have consultations with affected residents.
- There will be a site visit with residents by the Project Team very soon.
- There needs to be better communications with the community. Further meetings with residents to take place with updates such as details of construction timings.
- The original plans passed were not workable! After several meetings requested by community groups, current plans were improved for residents living on the East Lancs service road Eg 20 mph, service road still 2 way and about the same width, exit point to East Lancs slanted to discourage vehicles entering illegally.
- Still lots of disagreement as to whether these road alterations are actually useful. Also when the extension to the Bypass, now on the Wigan Local Plan, is finally built, the left hand turn traffic at Lane Head would decrease dramatically and this new dedicated left hand lane would not be needed.
- Copies of detailed plans (managing/modelling) were requested from the Council on a number of occasions but they have not yet been received. The Council need to get permission from Transport for Greater Manchester to issue this information.
- **Question:** There are many building projects and road works planned/on going for the local area. Will they be coordinated so they **all** don't happen at the same time?

5b. See attached for the **Speed Watch Presentation** given by GW.

### 6. Parkside Tritax Symmetry Update (see attached presentation)

LB and Cllr Stuart Mann spoke of the three phases of the Parkside freeport development. The Parkside Site is very close to the edge of 3 boroughs: Wigan, Warrington and St Helens. **Phases 1 and 2** are completely in Merseyside and have already passed the planning stage. A link road and several modifications to existing roads to allow for large vehicles, have already been completed. The link road will be opening soon. Looking at the plans and existing weight limits on roads it looks like a significant number of HGVs that don't use the M6 J22 will be channelled through Lowton to the A580. Warrington council have refused to put a weight limit on Winwick Lane, towards Lane Head. Stuart said he will ask Warrington Council to reconsider this decision. Wigan Council need to have meetings with Warrington Council to press home their duty of care to Lowton residents who have lived with illegal pollution levels of Nox over a number of years. **LHSRG** will write again to Wigan Council about this. In addition they will ask why the ANPR camera installed by Wigan on Winwick Lane towards J22 is still not active.

**Phase 3** is known as Parkside East and is the brainchild of Tritax Symmetry. It has not yet submitted plans to various councils. If passed, this will have a substantial impact on our local area. Tritax are also calling it **Intermodal Logistics Park North**, a national rail freight interchange: <https://www.tritaxbigbox.co.uk/our-spaces/intermodal-logistics-park-north/>

- Tritax has bought the land in yellow on the presentation (all land opposite Kenyon Hall Farm, up to Dolly's Bridge) It almost surrounds Highfield Moss, our SSSI.
- The original plans for Parkside were smaller but if Phase 3 is passed this will be a much larger total footprint.

- Parkside would be a (Liverpool) freeport and a strategic freight interchange, loading and unloading HGV's from freight trains and using HGVs to transport good over the North West of England. Winwick Lane will be used from east link road.
- If there is congestion on the M6 then traffic from Parkside will be very tempted to use Winwick Lane and Lane Head, especially if heading towards the A580.
- When asked, Warrington refuse to put a weight limit on their side of Winwick Lane. There is a weight limit from Lowton side and the camera there will eventually be used to issue weight limit fines. See above.
- The Government may change the **National Policy Framework** to allow greenbelt to become grey belt, which means one of the major obstacles to phase 3 plans will be removed.
- Wigan Council have had talks with Tritax but are keeping quiet about the outcome.
- It is now more pressing than ever to have the Bypass extended. Wigan have finally, after 20 years of asking, agreed to put it on their draft Local Plan document.
- The Parkside footprint would be larger than the size of original plans and could open up all surrounding land to use – similar to Burtonwood.
- **Question:** Will Parkside developments be accurately described on the Wigan, Warrington and St Helen's Local Plans? Wigan's Local Plan is still in draft form with no mention of Parkside at all, despite being very close to its border.
- If you have noticed traffic logging strips around a large local area, these were for Tritax traffic information collection.
- Our **Lowton East Councillors** said they would write to the Chief Executive in Wigan with major concerns over Phase 3 and to ask for a weight limit on Winwick Lane, towards Lowton.
- **Any residents wanting more updates** about this, can attend Lane Head South Resident's Group on **20 January 2025** at the Travelodge, Newton Road – 7.15pm. Stuart Mann has agreed to attend this meeting.

**7. Raffle:** Everyone got a free ticket and several people won prizes! Happy Christmas!

## **8. AOB**

- a) LENDF website very old, need a new one urgently – more discussion needed
- b) Key for the Braithwaite noticeboard not the right one, Councillors to chase up
- c) Traveller site mooted for Kenyon Lane, very likely to be 2 new detached houses instead.
- d) Oaklands Park – work now in progress. (Update – work finished and vandalised)

**Next meeting:**  
**Mon 10 February 2025 at 7:30pm**  
**at Lowton Social Club**