

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LEPDF)  
Minutes to the Meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at Lowton Social Club.  
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (Ed T), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Cllrs Grundy and Houlton
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests

*Apologies – Brian Powell, Derek Walkden,*

No. of Attendees = 70+

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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.

2. **HS2**

Ed T introduced two guests to tonight's meeting:

- Mr Raj Chandarana, Community & Stakeholder Engagement Manager – North West
- Ms Charlotte Bowen, Community & Stakeholder Engagement Advisor – North West

Raj deals with the HS2 route from the Crewe area upwards, and Charlotte deals with the areas of Wigan, Trafford and Manchester.

They gave a presentation to the meeting regarding the local community's feedback and comments given to HS2 during the consultation period. They were specifically grateful for the detailed response submitted by LENDF which had in fact triggered some re-thinking of certain proposals. Raj and Charlotte wish to continue working with LENDF and Wigan Council and will return again to a LENDF meeting as things progress.

The HS2 Plus report produced by David Higgins, Chairman of HS2 Ltd, has also questioned the original proposals and has asked for a review of the whole scheme.  
<http://www.hs2.org.uk/david-higgins-launches-his-vision-for-hs2>

The likely timetable for the proposals will be a draft decision late in 2014 which will go before the Government, though a full decision by the Secretary of State will not be made until after the 2015 General Election.

The format of the presentation then opened into a question and answer session and Raj and Charlotte also encouraged residents to contact them via email if they have any further questions/queries. [raj.chandarana@hs2.org.uk](mailto:raj.chandarana@hs2.org.uk) [charlotte.bowen@hs2.org.uk](mailto:charlotte.bowen@hs2.org.uk)

Question	My house is to be demolished and I can sell to HS2, but when? My life is on hold.
Answer	If you want to sell now it is possible to qualify for the Exceptional Hardship Scheme. Raj is happy to talk on a one-to-one basis with anyone who wishes to investigate this option. The process of making a decision on the route is taking longer and Raj apologised and will feedback to HS2.
Question	Was the Depot at Golborne picked before the route?
Answer	Route to Manchester was chosen and then options for connecting to the ECML. Then a site was chosen for Rolling Stock Depot at Golborne. The depot though is probably not viable and HS2 are looking at sites closer to Manchester. Now that a Crewe station is in the scheme, a depot is more logical to be built close to this station.

Question	Liverpool are backing Crewe as it gives better connections and Liverpool have been missed out from the scheme.
Answer	Liverpool's recent regeneration projects have only just recently been taking shape. When the original proposals were drafted the economic situation at Liverpool was different.
Question	If Scotland votes for independence will HS2 continue to Scotland?
Answer	The HS2+ report looks at more East-West connections to northern cities, rather than connections to Scotland.
Question	Northern Hub improvements are happening now. Is HS2 hi-jacking it?
Answer	HS2 realises it needs to be part of the cities of the north, especially East-West including Leeds, Sheffield, etc.
Question	Any more consultations due to the changes?
Answer	As no decision has been made it is difficult to say, but it is possible that the section between Crewe and Birmingham could be built by 2025 and the section from Manchester to Leeds by 2029. Any monies released from the Treasury could also bring the timescales forward. With regard to East-West connections his view is that the upgrading of lines will occur rather than building a full high speed link.
Question	The upgrading in some sections means widening tracks from 2 to 4 lines. What will be knocked down?
Answer	Consultations and reviews of the areas affected will be done before any major upgrading which could include 'land take'.
Question	How do people of Crewe feel about HS2?
Answer	Councillors in Crewe thought a new station is good idea i.e. jobs, opportunities, connectivity to the wider network, etc
Question	What do you think of Andy Burnham's view?
Answer	Andy Burnham and David Higgins have had conversations about a train station for Leigh. It is unlikely that the current scheme will warrant a station. But 'HS3' could provide an opportunity for a station on existing lines as long as appropriate infrastructure is also included.
Question	Do you mean Kenyon Junction?
Answer	A station for this area is back on the agenda with the Department of Transport. The general view is that towns on the fringes of cities also need better connections and David Higgins recognises this. Raj recognised that LENDF has had meetings/discussions with Transport for Leigh and offered to join any future meetings to help investigate the option.
Question	What date will HS2 be sold to private operators?
Answer	Difficult to answer due to politics but the franchises will be discussed 5 years before the line is running. It will also be up for consultation.
Question	Has HS2 bought Lightshaw Hall?
	The owners of Lightshaw Hall may have submitted an application to the Exceptional Hardship Scheme. This is dealt with by the Property Team which is a separate department from Raj's. If a property has been purchased by HS2 is <u>does not</u> mean that that is where the line is going to go.
Question	Would HS2 resell property?
	In the case of Lightshaw Hall it's possible that National Trust may buy it.
Question	What will be the disruption whilst the line is being built i.e. how many years?
	A detailed plan needs to be done first and then a timetable programmed.
Question	The building of Phase One did create a timetable – will it be the same?
	There are many factors to be considered as an Environmental Assessment needs to be done i.e. geology, protected areas like SSSI, and of course

	consultation with local communities. Residents will be asked for their input regarding infrastructure, diversions, hours of work, etc.
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With no further questions coming forward EdT thanked Raj and Charlotte for their attendance at tonight's meeting. Some of the answers they had given were very encouraging and we look forward to their future updates (possibly end of November). EdT promised to post an information pack regarding Kenyon Junction to Raj.

### **3. Senior Citizens' Day (aka Pensioners' Party)**

Free Tickets now available for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October. The 'Party' will be held at Lowton Social Club from 1pm till 4pm. Entertainer, Buffet, Raffle and Bingo. Contact either Ed or Irene on [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com)

### **4. Last Night of the Proms**

Tickets now available - £3 each. Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October. If you wish to reserve tickets, to be paid for on the night, please contact either Ed or Irene on [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com) We shall be having a raffle during the interval and would welcome any donations of items or if you have a local business maybe you could offer a 'special treat' to be included in the raffle.

### **5. Lowton Social Club**

The members of the Social Club attended a meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September to discuss the future of the Club in relation to the option of selling off the large hall and car park in order to clear the Club's debt. A vote was taken and the result was that the hall and car park will be put onto the market.

LENDF's meetings have traditionally been held on a Monday night each month. The Club has now taken a regular booking for Mondays so it was put to the meeting that a different night of the week needs to be selected. The general consensus was that Thursday nights would be suitable. Therefore the **next LENDF meeting will be on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October.**

### **6. Any Other Business**

Litter Pick – The next litter pick will be a re-visit to the area around the Civic Hall (Rose Centre). As the vegetation is starting to reduce more litter has become visible. Previously litter picks have been organised for a Saturday morning – it was suggested we try a weekday instead as possible more people can attend. Alternatively a Saturday afternoon – Irene to check with the Council if the rubbish bags can be picked up on Saturday afternoons.

Pavement tarmacking – the recent tarmacking on Church Lane does not appear high quality! Cllr Grundy stated that it was merely a 'surface-layer' in order to protect the original pavement.

Oaklands Park – Incidents of youths making fires at night have been witnessed. Also scooters being rode around the streets of the estate at speed. Please call 101 and report anything deemed as ASB so that the police force can build up records of these. At the moment Lowton only has one PCSO on duty for the area – though the team will be back up to 3 by December.

### **7. Next LENDF Monthly Meeting**

**THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014 @ 7.30pm (Lowton Social Club)**

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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