

Meeting Name:	Leigh Business Forum	Date & Time:	11/12/15 2pm - 4pm.
Location:	Turnpike Art Gallery, Leigh, WN7 1EB		
Agenda Item	Notes		
1 Introduction	<p>Andy Burnham MP introduced himself and Trevor Barton MBE, and welcomed all in attendance to the Leigh Business Forum.</p> <p>A brief overview of the main items of discussion was then made, outlining guest speakers and the key points they would be going over.</p>		
2 Guided Busway (Presentation)	<p><a href="#">Martin Shier</a> and <a href="#">Anthony Murden</a> from Transport for Greater Manchester (TFGM), and Brandon Jones from First Manchester, gave a presentation on the Guided Busway.</p> <p>The presentation explained where the busway would take passengers between, and the facilities that would be available at stops along the route.</p> <p>These included shelters, CCTV, real time passenger info, and cycle parking.</p> <p>The key selling points made during the presentation were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Traffic</b> – The busway would be in it’s own lane with no other traffic to slow it down, apart from having to stop at intersections and bus stops.</li> <li>• <b>Shorter Journey Time</b> – With the above, and the new route for the bus, journeys between locations along the guided busway will be significantly shorter than current bus journeys.</li> <li>• <b>Single Trip (No Interchange)</b> – The busway directly connects the locations along its path, meaning that passengers can go directly from one location to another in a single trip.</li> <li>• <b>Improved Hospital and University Access</b> – It was mentioned that hospitals and universities are some of the key reasons that people currently use buses between the Leigh and Manchester areas. More direct routes, and quicker travel times will help to increase access to these areas.</li> <li>• <b>Other Improvements</b> – The Guided Busway project is not just limited to the busway itself. Improvements will also be made to pedestrian and cycle crossings, as well as helping to improve residential appeal.</li> </ul> <p>The presentation also gave a preview as to what the interior of the bus would look like. The key points made about the bus experience were that it would include CCTV, free Wi-Fi, climate control, e-leather seating, tables in the upstairs compartment, USB charging ports, “Next Stop” Audio Visual Technology, as well as new low emission engine technology.</p>		

<p>2.5 Guided Busway (Q&amp;A)</p>	<p>Andy Burnham then thanked <a href="#">Dwayne, Brandon &amp; Martin TfGM and First</a> for the presentation, and asked the attendees if there were any questions.</p> <p><b>Q: How would the cost of a ticket on the guided busway differ to that of a regular bus?</b></p> <p>A: The cost of the ticket would remain the same as a standard bus journey.</p> <p><b>Q: How would the busway improve the appeal of Leigh?</b> <i>(As opposed to just increasing the appeal of going to Manchester)</i></p> <p>A: The answer to this would be to market Leigh more, by investing in the area, and improving local services and facilities. <a href="#">The busway was a means of moving people effectively and efficiently to attractive destinations where people wanted to visit.</a></p> <p><b>Q: How would this help the community of Leigh itself?</b></p> <p>A: Community projects, advertising space, etc...</p> <p>Trevor Barton gave a brief talk about the ActiveLinX project and how the guided busway would fit into local public footpaths, and the canal, to help improve Health and Connectivity.</p>
<p>3 PSPO (Presentation)</p>	<p>Emma Catlow from Wigan Council, was introduced by Andy Burnham.</p> <p>Emma then went on to explain what the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was, what it involved, and how it would work.</p> <p>A similar project had recently been run in Wigan, and was proving to be successful.</p> <p>The key things the council are looking to tackle with the PSPO are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressive Begging.</li> <li>• Unscheduled Trading.</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour.</li> <li>• Legal High / Drug Use.</li> </ul> <p>The main areas the PSPO will focus on are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leigh Town Hall (and car park area)</li> <li>• Lord Street (and car park)</li> <li>• Spinninggate Shopping Centre</li> <li>• Bradshawgate</li> </ul> <p>A consultation period for the project will be held in January 2016. This will include an online survey, and will aim to gather the opinions and feedback of everyone.</p>
<p>3.5 PSPO (Q&amp;A and Queries)</p>	<p><b><u>Issues</u></b></p> <p>Issues were raised with the current state of drug use and alcoholism in the local area.</p> <p>One problem in particular was that the patients receiving drug treatments (methadone), in the pharmacy on Bradshawgate, were taking their treatments in public and walking around the area intoxicated, and engaging in anti-social/criminal behaviour.</p>

	<p>Two PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) stepped forward and stated that the PSPO would ban the sale of legal highs, and that they would work with the council to enforce it.</p> <p>Another issue raised was the number of hostels in the local area.</p> <p><u>Q&amp;A</u></p> <p><b>Q: Will the PSPO be enforceable?</b> A: Yes.</p> <p><b>Q: What kind of positive work is being done to help, and educate those in hostel situations?</b> A: Hostels have strict policies on drug use, etc. Some individuals can be “blocked” from a hostel, although this isn’t something that can be done often.</p> <p><u>Suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ a PCSO to cover the specific areas identified by the PSPO.</li> <li>• A direct report mechanism (such as a radio link) for shop/business owners to report anti-social behaviour directly to the council/police.</li> </ul>
<p>4 Town Centre Improvements</p>	<p>Steve Thompson from Wigan Council was introduced.</p> <p>He outlined what plans the council had in terms of what investments would be made to the local area.</p> <p>Images were passed around the group that gave an idea as to what the areas would look like after developments took place.</p> <p>Key points from the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for houses &amp; apartments, and developments to Mather Lane Mill</li> <li>• Relocating outdoor market onto Bradshawgate</li> <li>• New streets leading to indoor market.</li> <li>• New Paving, lighting, etc. in the area.</li> </ul> <p>These plans are open to consultation, and more detailed designs will be available in early 2016.</p>
<p>4.5 Town Centre Improvements (Q&amp;A)</p>	<p><b>Q: Will the consultation be open to market traders specifically in Leigh?</b> A: Yes</p> <p>An issue was raised with the lights in the car park on Lord Street. Steve said he would raise the issue with the council and work on getting it sorted out.</p>
<p>5 Business Rates</p>	<p>Andy Burnham then introduced Penny Higgins from Wigan MBC.</p> <p>Penny explained that business rates are governed by national legislation, and that they are waiting to hear from the government about changes to the rates in the upcoming years.</p> <p>A re-evaluation of local business rates will happen in 2017. These evaluations usually happen every 5 years; however the 2015 evaluation has been stalled).</p> <p>Providing the proper and correct information in the evaluation is important as the results gathered will affect local rates.</p>

	<p>Reliefs are available to Retailers &amp; Small Businesses. If you believe you are entitled to these, contact the council for more information.</p>
<p>6 A.O.B</p>	<p>The following points were suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The forum should reconvene in March 2016.</li> <li>• TFGM, and First Manchester to be invited to next forum meeting, to give updates on the guided busway.</li> <li>• A Facebook group to be created for the forum. – Lynn Leech from Mischief Kids is working on this and is collecting names of attendees so she can add people to the group.</li> <li>• A different layout for the next meeting was proposed, rather than just a few rows of chairs.</li> </ul>