

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 15 JANUARY 2026
held at Williamston Primary School
web: <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Mark Robbie, Ian Brown, Carol Bartholomew, Margaret Prior, Davidson McQuarrie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Apologies: Councillor Moira McKee Shemilt

Residents: Linda Halliday, Roger Harper, Ken Kirk, Sandro Roscilli, Monica Roscilli, John Sharp, Isabel Taggart

2. Declaration of Interests:

As prescribed in the Standing Orders, community councillors should declare to the Secretary any relevant interests applicable to business of the meeting before or at the start of the meeting, or during the course of the meeting in the event that such pertinent business occurs.

No declarations of interest from community councillors were made before or at tonight's meeting.

3. Community Council Scheme and Code of Conduct:

The following was summarised at tonight's meeting.

An issue arose in relation to the Community Council meeting on 20 November 2025 at which Councillor Shemilt, an ex-officio member, by way of her submitted update report, suggested that the Community Council could contravene the requirement for the Community Council to be non-political. The contravention is by virtue of the Community Council's inclusion, appended with the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2025, of the information provided on the future of community centres contained in the update report by Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick.

The Chair and Secretary have sought advice from West Lothian Council on the role of community councils in regulating the content of update reports submitted by ex-officio members.

The Governance Manager has advised that whilst, as set out in the Code of Conduct, Community Councils should represent the interests of their community and not the interests of a particular political party or other group, the Secretary does not require to police the content of reports submitted to the Community Council for inclusion on the agenda, and in, and appended with, the minutes of meetings.

All Members of Murieston Community Council are bound by the [2025 Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian](#) and the [Community Council Code of Conduct](#), with regard to requirements on integrity and impartiality.

Arthur Marris placed on record at tonight's meeting that community councillors thank ex-officio members for submitting their monthly reports at meetings for discussion and inclusion appended with the minutes. Murieston Community Council has always observed impartiality in exercise of its business.

4. Minutes of the Meetings on 20 November 2025:

There was no meeting in December. Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 20 November 2025 was proposed by Arthur Marris and seconded by Ian Brown. Carried nem con.

5. Matters Arising:

None

6. Matters Arising:

Councillors' Reports:

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Councillor Fitzpatrick summarised his report at the meeting, covering these issues :-

Defibrillators in schools; Reports from Cedarbank School and James Young High School;

Response to the Scottish Government on the future of Council Tax; Decriminalised Parking and Power/Parking Enforcement; Review of the LDP2.

Councillor Fitzpatrick's written report is available at this link [here](#).*

7. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance remains at £2,666.46.

8. Livingston South Local Area Committee:

There has been no recent LAC meeting.

9. Murieston Environmental Group (MEG) - <https://muriestonenvironmentalgroup.org.uk> :

Nothing to report tonight.

10. Murieston Community Garden (MCG) - <https://murieston-cg.org.uk>:

Isabel Taggart reported.

Fruit trees have now been planted.

Some mini-sleepers are now surplus as there are no current plans to build more raised beds.

The volunteers will be resuming their weekly sessions at the Garden at the start of March.

The Garden is advertising for more volunteers to help.

11. Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT) – SCIO Scottish Charity No. SC052716

<https://murieston-cdt.org.uk> :

Mark Robbie reported.

The Trust has had an offer of help which will involve volunteers from HSBC Bank to work with the Trust in developing the programme to plan and build a new community centre on another site in Murieston. The Trust has produced a project summary / brief with objectives and skills requirements which will form the basis to advertise in the HSBC Edinburgh centre and across the organisation for volunteers with suitable skillsets to assist in the project.

12. Murieston Village Hall

Mark Robbie reported.

After final negotiations, Murieston Initiative has not accepted any of the management options proposed by West Lothian Council and, as of 1 April, will hand over the management of the Hall to the Council for operation by council staff. Murieston Initiative will be liaising with the Council on the transition to the new management and operational arrangements.

Murieston Initiative will continue operating in a reduced community role.

13. Communications, including website - <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk> :

Nothing to report.

14. Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2):

West Lothian Council's Development Plan Scheme (DPS) 2025 has been approved by elected members. The DPS can be found through the following website link -

<https://westlothian.gov.uk/article/33809/Development-Plan-Scheme-DPS>

The DPS sets out the timetable for preparing the next Local Development Plan for West Lothian and how to get involved in the plan preparation.

The next stage of the plan preparation process was a 'call for ideas' which allows individuals, community bodies, developers etc. to submit ideas, proposals and sites to be considered for inclusion in the LDP2.

The LDP2 has now been reviewed and rejected by the Scottish Government Reporter.

The current status of LDP2 is available [here](#).

15. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

Change of use of open space to private garden at Tarbert Drive (ref. 0406/FUL/25)

The application for retrospective consent for change of use and erection of a 1.8m fence at plots 12 and 13 has been refused under delegated powers on the grounds this would have encroached on the SUDS area and an area proposed for the children's play area.

Residents of Tarbert Drive have attended tonight's meeting and have given the background and their view on the application for retrospective consent.

There is an unresolved question over land title involving the land subject to the planning application, which may require reference to Land Registry title deeds.

Ian Brown noted that some 75 trees are to be planted in the SUDS area, according to the planning conditions for the Tarbert Drive estate.

Proposal for a barber shop at the Bankton Centre (ref. 0063/FUL/25)

This planning application was disallowed as the proposal is not suitable for this location and would constitute overdevelopment within the local neighbourhood centre.

Proposal for two single-storey storage units with associated security gate (ref. 1004/FUL/25)

The proposal is for two storage units to serve existing commercial units at Bankton Centre. The units would replace temporary storage containers and improve site layout and security.

The planning application is currently awaiting decision.

Christmas Tree

A suitable tree is now available, and arrangements will be made to move it to the approved site at the station. The Woodland Trust has provided Ian with a list of arborists who can transport and re-site the tree.

Renewable Energy Strategy

The strategic plan for Scotland's renewable energy sector leading into 2028 focuses on accelerating infrastructure development, transitioning to a "net-zero" power system, and driving industrial decarbonisation.

Ian notes that the current strategy is not dealing with new issues affecting communities in the interim.

16. Correspondence and Publications Received:

None.

17. Any Other Business:

Margaret Prior gave an update on action to restore the woodland on the west side of Easter Bankton. In the storm of 21 January 2024, a sycamore and beech tree had fallen. Council staff then assessed that other trees were in danger of falling and removed a further 17 trees. The area was then devoid of trees and became waterlogged.

Delays in restoring the site have occurred due to council staff being diverted to deal with storm damage from other major storms.

The Council has now planted 40 saplings. Rhododendrons have been cut down, though roots remain. More work is required to clear up the site properly.

The Meeting closed at 8.05pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 19 February in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.

*** Disclaimer**

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