

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 19 MARCH 2026**  
**held at Williamston Primary School**  
**web: <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>**

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**1. Present:**

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

**Apologies:** Mark Robbie, Carol Bartholomew, Margaret Prior; Councillor Moira McKee Shemilt; Gillian de Felice

**Residents:** Linda Halliday, Roger Harper, Ken Kirk, 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. Minutes of the Meetings on 19 February 2026:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 19 February 2026 was proposed by Arthur Marris and seconded by Ian Brown. Carried nem con.

**4. Matters Arising:**

None.

**5. Matters Arising:**

**Councillors' Reports:**

**Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick**

Councillor Fitzpatrick summarised his written report at the meeting, covering a number of issues :- The new budget provides for a 7.4% increase in Council Tax and 3.5% increase in Council House rents; await confirmation of £15m contribution from the Scottish Government for RAAC remediation costs at St. Kentigern's Academy; Woodland Trust have plans to improve entrance to Williamston Wood; Council has agreed to implement weekly reduction in Teacher/Pupil Contact time from 22.5 to 21 hours from August 2027 in primaries and from August 2029 in secondaries, which will require extra teachers.

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

Councillor Fitzpatrick passed round details of the planned road closure on Murieston Road West at the nursery from 27 April to 3 May.

**Councillor Moira Shemilt**

Councillor Shemilt is unable to attend tonight and has submitted a written report, which is summarised below :-

Remedial resurfacing on Murieston West Road; Incident at Almondvale Centre on 17 March; James Young High School; Electric motorbikes; Shoplifting - Police Scotland; Crime Statistics in Livingston South ward; Parking near the station; Community Centres update.

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

**6. Finances:**

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance is now £2,619.46.

The annual payment of the data protection fee (£47) has been paid by direct debit to the Information Commissioner's Office.

**7. Livingston South Local Area Committee:**

The secretary has not attended a LAC meeting recently.

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

The Secretary read out a written report (below) from Gillian de Felice who is unable to attend :-

1. We teamed up with CSWG and Ecologists from WLC to tackle invasive rhododendron and snowberry around Campbridge. Much more still to do!!!

2. We also put up 15 bat boxes, 6 small bird boxes and a tawny owl box, and we will be monitoring them.
  3. We will be doing gully cleaning along the trail (concrete stairs to wooden walkway) next month.
  4. We are going to be launching a small online survey to ask locals their thoughts on Cambridge, in preparation to apply for grants to upgrade the pathways.
- 9. Murieston Community Garden (MCG) - <https://murieston-cg.org.uk>:**  
Isabel Taggart reported.  
Volunteers have started gardening sessions after the winter break. There will be six sessions each month. A new volunteer has joined.  
Another raised bed has been built. Fruit trees planted in December are doing well. Seeds are being germinated in the new greenhouses.  
The Garden has received a donation of £1,000. There are no plans for spending the donation yet.
- 10. Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT) – SCIO Scottish Charity No. SC052716 <https://murieston-cdt.org.uk> :**  
Davidson McQuarrie reported.  
The 2026 AGM will be held on Monday 23 March at 7pm in Murieston Village Hall.  
A presentation will outline what the Trust has done over the past year and plans for the forthcoming year, as well as approval of the financial report and the election of trustees.  
The formal notification of the AGM has been sent to Members by email and also has been publicised on the Trust website, Facebook page and community noticeboards at the Hall and station.  
All current trustees are standing down as required in the Constitution.  
Janey Cringean is resigning and Paula Shaw has resigned.  
Gillian de Felice, Alex McDonald, Graham MacIver, Davidson McQuarrie, Mark Robbie, John Sharp, Moira Shemilt have nominated for re-election. Graeme McNaughton has nominated for election.  
If all nominees are re-/elected, there will be four vacancies to be filled on the Board of Trustees.
- 11. Murieston Village Hall**  
Davidson McQuarrie reported.  
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 is liaising with the Council on the transition to the new management and operational arrangements.  
Letting rates will change in line with rates charged in Council premises, which will apply to existing user groups, including Simply Play.  
An addendum to the Murieston Community Council and Murieston Community Development Trust joint Local Place Plan (LPP) has been prepared which changes the locus of the proposed new community centre from the station to the site at the junction of Murieston East Road and Murieston Road at the rail bridge. This joint addendum was submitted to the Council in order that it will be fed into the new Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) being prepared by the Planning Service.  
We have since been advised by Kate Hopper, Development Planning and Environment Manager and Steve Lovell of the Planning Service that we cannot provide an addendum but need to submit and register a new version 2 of the LPP to replace the original version. This will have to go through the same legal validation steps in terms of public consultation, including with neighbouring community councils. Accordingly, the addendum will be incorporated into version 2 of the LPP which will then be circulated to stakeholders for comment and, when agreed, submitted to the Planning Service.
- 12. Communications, including website - <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk> :**  
Nothing to report.
- 13. Local Development Plan 2 (LDP 2):**  
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 LDP 2. This stage has completed but the responses to the 'call for ideas' have not been published yet.

The LDP 2 has now been reviewed and currently rejected by the Scottish Government Reporter.

The current status of LDP 2 is available [here](#).

#### **14. Planning Applications:**

Ian Brown reported.

There are no new significant planning applications affecting Murieston.

##### **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.

An appeal was lodged by the developer but has been rejected by the Local Review Body.

##### **Christmas Tree**

Ian has asked Ross Contractors for a price to move the established tree which is available to the plot at the station, but the cost is prohibitive. Ian will check on arrangements when the Council is involved in other communities.

##### **General**

Chris Dryden, Ian Brown and Davidson McQuarrie attended a drop-in session at the Lanthorn Centre on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February to view and discuss proposals for the long-term management of woods across Livingston with Jane Begg of the Council's tree and woodland team. We spoke about the loss of trees at Tarbert Drive which are due to be replaced and about the environmental aspects of our Local Place Plan.

#### **15. Correspondence and Publications Received:**

Ian Brown and Davidson McQuarrie attended an online webinar for community councils about the Local Governance Review on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February. This review is considering changes to the powers and authority which is currently vested in community councils. The general consensus of community councillors attending was that currently powers and authority of community councils are very limited and of no real tangible effect.

#### **16. Any Other Business:**

None.

**The Meeting closed at 7.55pm.**

**The next meeting will be on Thursday 16 April in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.**

#### **\* Disclaimer**

**All documents and reports which are provided and referenced in addition to these minutes are not the responsibility of Murieston Community Council and are owned by, and the responsibility of, their authors.**