

**MURIELSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 20 FEBRUARY 2025**  
**held at Williamston Primary School**  
**web: <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>**

---

**1. Present:**

Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Janey Cringean, Davidson McQuarrie, Mark Robbie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Councillor Moira Shemilt

**Apologies:** Chris Dryden, Carol Bartholomew, Margaret Prior; Carol Hallesy, Clare O'Lone, Irene Whitelaw

**Residents:** Gillian de Felice, Roger Harper, Ken Kirk, John Sharp

**Arthur Marris acted as Chair tonight as Chris Dryden was unavailable.**

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 16 January 2025:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 16 January 2025 was proposed by Ian Brown and seconded by Mark Robbie. Carried nem con.

**3. Matters Arising:**

The meeting with the Council's Chief Arborist, Craig Sinclair and Jane Begg from the Tree & Woodland Team arranged for 30<sup>th</sup> January was cancelled due to the officers' excessive workload following January's Storm Eowyn. Gillian de Felice will liaise with the council officers to arrange a later date for the public meeting.

The CPR awareness session was held by St John Scotland at Murieston Village Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. Some 15 people attended and received practical advice and training on resuscitation techniques with a defibrillator, using demonstration mannequins.

A question was previously raised about the developer contribution in respect of the Tarbert Drive housing development. The Council confirms an Affordable Housing Developer contribution of £48,750 has been paid by the developer.

**4. Finances:**

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance remains at £2,970.94.

Arthur is investigating alternative banking which does not incur administrative and service charges as our current bank will start charging a monthly fee from this month.

It was agreed by the community councillors that there will be three signatories for the bank account: the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, of which any two will act as co-signatories for transactions.

**5. Councillors' Reports:**

**Councillor Fitzpatrick**

Councillor Fitzpatrick gave his report.

Councillor Fitzpatrick attended a commemoration for Holocaust Memorial Day at Howden Park Centre on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January. Pupils from Armadale Academy, Broxburn Academy, St Margaret's Academy and West Calder High School made readings and presentations.

The Shakespeare for Schools programme has been held recently at the Howden Park Centre, including a performance of Macbeth

A short service in honour of those lost during the COVID pandemic to mark the national Covid Day of reflection in West Lothian will take place on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March at 10am at the West Lothian Covid Memorial Garden in Almondvale Park, outside West Lothian Civic Centre. All are welcome to attend.

Andrew Kenna is the new Area Commander for Scottish Fire and Rescue Service covering West Lothian.

Over 1,000 trees were destroyed in the recent red alert Storm Eowyn.

Council house rents are being increased by 3.5%. The average rent is £89 a week, which is at the lower end for council house rents across Scotland.

The Council Capital Budget for 2025/26 will be decided at the full Council meeting next Tuesday. Councillor Fitzpatrick pointed out that the Block Grant from the Scottish Government has been reduced over a period of years and there have been council tax freezes covering 10 years. Revised proposals for the future management of the community centres are being discussed at the PDSP tomorrow and council officers will continue to talk to management committees on achieving the best option.

Councillor Fitzpatrick recently attended a public consultation in Whitburn Partnership Centre on the Boundary Commission's review of the constituency boundaries for Scottish Parliament. The current proposal is to remove Polbeth from the Livingston constituency and add to Bathgate constituency. The two constituencies should have about 73,000 population.

Numeracy and attainment Primary schools are 1.8%

Council officers have presented a consultation paper recommending introduction of decriminalised parking measures in West Lothian. This includes a recommendation to charge for parking at the three council-owned rail station car parks. The car park at Livingston South station is wholly owned by West Lothian Council and has 120 bays which could attract a daily charge of £5, or £2.50 for part day. The consultation paper will be before the Council Executive later in the Spring and the proposal, if adopted by Council, would be a matter for implementation in 18 months time. Ian Brown asked for details on the carparking strategy and noted a petition containing some 2,000 petitioners is currently circulating.

Ian Brown asked about whether the yellow boxing could be extended in the station car park to stop inconsiderate parking. Councillor Fitzpatrick advised that there are no plans to change this.

A national Speed Management Review consultation is currently underway and due to close on 5 March. A review of local 20mph speed limits will be considered by the Council soon.

Ken Kirk asked about the enforcement of speed limits on local roads. It is understood the police have been carrying out speed checks in the area.

The current surveying work at Linhouse Glen has attracted interest in the community to ascertain its purpose and future intentions. Councillor Fitzpatrick will ask officers to brief him.

**Councillor Fitzpatrick left at this juncture after presenting his report.**

### **Councillor Shemilt**

Councillor Shemilt gave her report.

The Council Capital Budget for 2025/26 will be decided next Tuesday at the full Council. Budget papers have just been received from council officers today, which does not give enough time to scrutinise the proposals before Tuesday's Council meeting.

The proposal to close nine early-learning nurseries which are under-utilised to reduce costs is a particular issue and closures will affect communities adversely.

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

Nothing to report.

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

Gillian de Felice reported on behalf of MEG.

An environmental survey of the area was submitted to the Wildlife Trust last August. A new survey is being considered for Linhouse.

A living willow den has been purchased which will be planted at Livingston Cricket Club this Sunday.

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

Janey Cringean reported.

A birch and three cherry trees have been planted in the public garden and a crab apple tree will be planted soon. The bases for the two new greenhouses will be finished when weather improves.

A planting plan for the south embankment of the station, budgeted at £3,000 has been submitted to the ScotRail 'Adopt-a-Station' programme for this year.

**9. Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT) – SCIO Scottish Charity No. SC052716 <https://murieston-cdt.org.uk> :**

Janey Cringean reported.

The 2025 AGM was held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January in Murieston Village Hall.

19 Ordinary Members and another 8 non-voting residents attended.

12 Member Trustees were elected to the Board.

David Meldrum has now been elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees. Janey Cringean and Gillian de Felice have been elected as Vice-Chairs. Janey Cringean will be involved in fundraising. The community cinema's film programme at the Hall for the start of 2025 will include *The Critic* on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and *Conclave* on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

The community café on Saturdays has now introduced a lunch menu of soups and sandwiches.

**10. Murieston Village Hall**

Janey Cringean reported.

Members of the Murieston Initiative Board have a meeting with council officers next Monday to progress discussions on the future management of the Hall, including lease of the Hall and possible subsequent asset transfer.

Murieston Initiative has currently signified it will take a two year lease when the current support from West Lothian Council is withdrawn in 2026.

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

Nothing to report.

**12. COVID Issues:**

Vaccinations are now all being done centrally, rather than through medical practices. Advice on getting vaccinations can be viewed at :-

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/the-vaccines/coronavirus-covid-19-booster-vaccination/>

Phone: 0800 030 8013.

**13. Planning Applications:**

Ian Brown reported.

There are no new significant planning applications affecting Murieston.

**Oakbank Industrial Estate**

A planning application has been made for an open vehicle storage area for commercial vehicle auctions beside Valneva.

**Creation of a soil bund for Murieston Tennis & Sports Club at Cricket Club (ref. 0934/FUL/24)**

The developer of the new tennis courts has submitted a planning application in retrospect to create a soil bund beyond the perimeter of the cricket pitch from soil excavated during the building of the new tennis courts. The Planning Service has required sampling of the soil which has now been completed and Fairburns consultants are analysing the results.

**New Cycle Shed at Livingston South Station**

A new cycle shed has been erected on the north side of the station by Network Rail as part of their active travel plan.

**Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)**

The Planning Service has written to invite evidence engagement from stakeholders as the first stage of preparing the new LDP2 to set out the evidence base in an Evidence Report. We are invited to make submissions to the engagement on the draft topic schedules. Responses to the engagement on the draft topic schedules are required by 28<sup>th</sup> February. The Call for Ideas for development proposals will then follow soon afterwards.

**Linhouse Glen**

Ian has written to the Council under a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to ask about the zoning of Linhouse Glen. It is unclear if this was rezoned several years ago for 'dual zoning' purposes of either industrial or housing development. Recently, the primary school catchment area has been re-aligned to include the Linhouse loop and there has been a similar re-alignment in community council boundaries. Ian will enquire on these matters with the Council via the recent FOI request.

**14. Correspondence:**

The Scottish Civic Trust are promoting the My Place Awards for 2025. This celebrates excellence in community-led placemaking in community projects and community champions. Entries to the My Place Awards 2025 should be made by 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**15. Any Other Business:**

None.

**The Meeting closed at 8.50pm.**

**The next meeting will be on Thursday 20 March 25 in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.**