

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

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Janey Cringean, Davidson McQuarrie, Margaret Prior; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick,

Apologies: Carol Bartholomew, Mark Robbie; Councillor Moira Shemilt; Gillian de Felice, Carol Hallesy, Roger Harper, Ken Kirk

Residents: Linda Halliday, Clare O'Lone, John Sharp, Irene Whitelaw

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 20 February 2025:

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 20 February 2025 was proposed by Arthur Marris and seconded by Ian Brown, subject to a minor change. Carried nem con.

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance is £2,919.69.

The annual accounts will be prepared by the end of March.

Arthur confirmed that the new bank account is now being set up. Co-signatories have also completed their applications. Arthur will make a test transaction later this month and start using the new bank account in April.

5. Councillors' Reports:

Councillor Fitzpatrick

Councillor Fitzpatrick gave his report.

Covid-19 booster injections are being provided this year from March to June to persons aged 75 years and over, in a care home for older adults or have a weakened immune system.

A case of avian/bird 'flu has been discovered near the Linhouse Circular. Walkers are advised to remain on footpaths, keep their dogs on a lead and do not feed waterfowl.

The official re-opening of the Lanthorn Centre will be on Sunday at 3pm,

Councillor Fitzpatrick met the Cabinet Secretary for Education at Boghall Primary School recently and pressed the need for RAAC grant support.

Eight council nurseries will be closing. This is to address the falling numbers of children and the high number of surplus spaces. This year, the Council has over 2,000 more nursery places within council-run nurseries than is required, which is nearly 30% more than is needed to meet demand. The Glenvue Nursery in Dedridge will remain open.

Councillor Fitzpatrick recently attended a public consultation in Whitburn Partnership Centre on the Boundary Commission's review of the constituency boundaries for the Scottish Parliament. The current proposal is to remove Polbeth from the Livingston constituency and add to the Bathgate constituency. The Council takes the view that Polbeth should remain in the Livingston constituency and there should be two West Lothian constituencies, not three as proposed, both having about 73,000 population. The final report of the Boundary Commission will be considered soon by the Scottish Parliament which will need to make an affirmative determination.

The Council is using a jet patching system to repair potholes which costs £4.67 per square metre compared to £100 per square metre for resurfacing of the roadway. £441m has been provided from Westminster via the Barnett consequential formula to Scotland for pothole repairs and has been requested from the Scottish Government.

The teachers' pay award has not been paid in the March payroll run. The Chief Executive, Graham Hope has written to HMRC to ask for mitigation in event of tax issues resulting from the delayed award.

Following the review of councillors' pay by the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee

(SLARC), councillors will be receiving a pay increase ranging between 17% to 21%. This increase follows several years in which there has been a freeze on councillors' pay. Councillor Fitzpatrick forecast that, in order to meet the Scottish Government's commitment to reduce teachers' class contact time by 1.5 hours to 21 hours a week by 2028, an additional 132 teachers would be required in West Lothian schools at an annual cost of £7.2 million. Over 1,000 trees were destroyed in Storm Eowyn and council staff are still dealing with over 200 outstanding work orders.

Councillor Fitzpatrick left at this juncture after presenting his report.

Councillor Shemilt

Councillor Shemilt is unable to attend tonight and submits her apologies.

Councillor Shemilt has provided a written report which can be viewed [here](#)

6. Livingston South Local Area Committee:

Nothing to report.

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

Gillian de Felice is unable to attend this meeting and sends her apologies. Gillan has provided a written report on the recent work of MEG :-

1. We split the bulbs that Morrison Energy Services gave us between ourselves, the community garden and the cricket club.
2. We have installed a willow den at the cricket club.
3. We have had our first meeting of the year to discuss what we plan to do but we need to plan a bit more.
4. We have the on-going biodiversity study at Linhouse which we will promote more once the trees are cleared.

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

Janey Cringean reported.

Bulbs are being planted now. The greenhouses will be erected soon

Volunteers are working at the community garden from 2 to 4pm on Sundays, and on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

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

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

Janey Cringean reported.

Preliminary planning has started on options to build a new community centre. Guidance is being given by a Trustee has an appropriate professional background. Different scenarios and locations are being considered.

10. Murieston Village Hall

Janey Cringean reported.

The Council has agreed to waive the current conditions for redecorating the Hall and will be organising the painting of the Hall free of charge by a contract team.

The Council currently pays £24k annually for the running costs of the Hall, including bills for power, staffing costs etc. Room let charges will have to be increased to make up the shortfall in income when the new leasing agreement with the Council starts 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.

Bankton Centre

Planning applications have been submitted to build a barber shop and an extension to the Day to Day store in the area behind the shops.

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 in discussion with the developer on further action required.

Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)

The joint Forum for Community Councils organised a planning forum at the Civic Centre on Monday 17th March with Kate Hopper, the Development, Planning and Environment Manager who gave a detailed presentation on the LDP2 and its progress.

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.

The Call for Ideas to request ideas, proposals for development etc. will start on Monday 24th March and close on Friday 30th May. An update will be sent to community councils to explain the process for submitting proposals to the call for ideas.

Tarbert Drive

Irene Whitelaw noted that there has been a problem with water drainage from the new estate which has been affecting lower level neighbouring properties.

Linhouse Glen

Surveying work has continued but no further information on purpose and intention.

14. Correspondence:

As below.

15. Consultation on stricter regulations on sale and use of fireworks

Gregor Poynton MP has written to the Community Council to ask if we can arrange a meeting with him to explore how we can work together to promote responsible firework use and ensure the safety and well-being of all residents in Livingston.

The secretary will contact Gregor's constituency office and aim to arrange a meeting.

16. Any Other Business:

Janey Cringean said that Murieston Community Garden has had a donation of a 3-4m Korean Fir which will be available for planting beside the station as a Christmas tree. Ian Brown confirmed he will apply for outline planning permission to provision an electrical power supply for lighting and to install a bench. It was agreed that the Community Council will pay for the planning application.

Davidson McQuarrie advised that the pads for the defibrillator at the station have reached their expiry date. He has placed an order online but main suppliers are out of stock. It was agreed that the Community Council will reimburse £47.99 when the order is fulfilled. The defibrillator will need replacing as end of life when the battery expires next year.

Ian Brown reported that there is no history of a need for blood trauma emergency kits in West Lothian and, given the additional issues tying in with the 999 services as reported by the secretary, it was agreed that we will not pursue the purchase of a blood trauma kit and cabinet.

The Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 17 April 25 in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.