

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 10 MARCH 2022**  
*held online via Zoom at 7 pm*  
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

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**This meeting was held on Thursday 10 March 2022 by community councillors online using the Zoom video app.**

**Meetings at Williamston Primary are not taking place until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**1. Present:**

Carol Hallesy, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Nick Lansdell, Kevin Kerr, Davidson McQuarrie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

**Apologies:**

Chris Dryden; Councillor Peter Heggie, Councillor Maria MacAulay, Councillor Moira Shemilt

**Carol Hallesy assumed Chair at tonight's online meeting**

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 20 January 2022:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 20 January 2022 was proposed by Davidson McQuarrie and seconded by Ian Brown. Carried nem con.

**3. Matters Arising:**

Councillor Fitzpatrick confirmed that the new pedestrian refuge will be built at the same time as the resurfacing of Murieston Road.

**4. Finances:**

Arthur Marris reported.

We have paid the annual fee of £35 to the Information Commissioner's Office for continued registration under the Data Protection Act.

The current bank balance is £3,210.84.

**5. Councillors' Reports:**

**Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick**

In response to the invasion of Ukraine, the Council is flying the Ukraine flag on one of the flagpoles at the Civic Centre, and Linlithgow County Buildings is lit up in the colours of the Ukraine flag.

The Council website has a list of community appeals supporting Ukraine which have been vetted.

Councillor Fitzpatrick attended the Ash Wednesday Polish Mass in Broxburn last Wednesday.

As reported at recent community council meetings, there are 12 houses in Wellhead Farm housing estate fronting onto Murieston Road which have had an issue with refuse collection. Their front road is a private monoblock roadway which would be damaged by the heavy refuse lorries. The Council Refuse and Waste service has written to the householders to advise the arrangements and collection point which is at the midpoint of the two branches of the roadway.

It is noted that strobe alarms for the deaf have not been included in the new smoke alarm legislation. No account of age and disability is being taken into account for alarms provided to households under the Scottish Government discretionary fund.

Rubbish has been fly-tipped on footpath at Teviot Drive.

Chief Superintendent Catriona Paton has been appointed the new Divisional Commander for Lothians and Scottish Borders 'J' Division.

Whitelining at road junctions in Murieston and throughout Livingston South is being carried out in the next two months.

The new Scottish Government Draft Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) raises some issues for the Council. A paper will go to the Council Executive on Tuesday week.

Almondvale Road has been closed recently due to flooding at the new flats beside Marks and Spencers. The work on repairing the road and drains will be completed shortly.

The new Calderwood Primary School in East Calder was opened last Friday.

Patients hospitalised for COVID are now 41 years old on average. 75% of over-18s have now received the booster vaccination.

A letter has been sent last week to local householders informing them of the plan for resurfacing a stretch of Murieston Road.

Councillor Fitzpatrick has walked Murieston Trail with three council officers to identify issues with the pathway and boardwalk. £60k will be provided for necessary repairs.

Westminster has made the biggest settlement for local government to Scotland. After meeting with the First Minister, £120m was added from Barnett Formula consequentials.

There is an overall local government budgetary shortfall of £371m in Scotland. West Lothian has received an extra £3.9m. £1m is being allocated on essential road repairs; £0.5m on drugs response; £0.55m for the jobs fund; £0.425m to respond to women's safety and abuse prevention. Council Tax is being increased by 3% from April.

Nick Lansdell asked for confirmation that the three pedestrian refuges will all go ahead when the resurfacing takes place. Councillor Fitzpatrick said he will confirm with the Roads Service. Kevin Kerr asked who will be paying for the resurfacing. Councillor Fitzpatrick said it would predominantly be paid by the developer of the Wellhead Farm estate. The Council will pay the proportion relating to normal traffic wear and tear.

Arthur Marris noted that the programme of repairs on the Murieston Trail are welcome. Arthur has also visited Murieston Trail with council officers who confirm the boardwalk needs to be replaced with a durable path in due course. The boardwalk wood when removed could be used in the community garden.

**6. Murieston Environmental Group (MEG) - <http://meg.btck.co.uk> :**

Nothing to report.

**7. Murieston Development Trust (MDT) :**

Davidson McQuarrie reported.

The Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT) steering group is following the Development Trust Association of Scotland (DTAS) advice on setting up the Trust as we move out of COVID-19 lockdown. We have finalised Articles of Association to set up a limited company by guarantee to form the Trust which we will register with Companies House. We then intend to run events when the ongoing COVID pandemic permits to publicise what we are doing and invite residents to participate in the newly formed Trust. The ongoing COVID surge has made this impractical for the time being.

Meanwhile we want to give everyone the opportunity on digital media to read the Community Action Plan and background information, and give some initial feedback.

<https://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk/news/consultation-community-action-plan-for-murieston/>

**8. Town Centre Fund for 2019/20:**

Our projects ref. MUR02 and phase 1 of MUR03 with their contingent funding are now completed. The new information map (commissioned as project MUR01) is now installed beside the Murieston Community noticeboard.

100 fruit trees have been donated by the Woodland Trust to be planted in the community forest area. Wildflower seeds will be sown in the community meadow area.

**9. Communications, including website - [murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk](http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk)**

Community advice concerning Coronavirus continues to be posted on the community website.

<https://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk/news/assistance-during-coronavirus-crisis/> .

**10. Livingston South Local Area Committee**

Nothing to report.

**11. COVID Issues**

Davidson suggested that the current level of COVID mitigated against returning to face-to-face meetings in the Staff Room at Williamston School for the time being. He proposed that we consider returning after the summer break.

Kevin Kerr noted that the majority of COVID patients in St John's ICU had not had vaccinations. The Omicron variant generally causes minor symptoms in the vaccinated.

The over-75s and the vulnerable will receive the 4<sup>th</sup> vaccination soon.

The epidemiological opinion is that COVID-19 will remain within the population for the foreseeable future.

**Councillor Fitzpatrick left the meeting at the end of this item of business as he is a member of the Development Management Committee.**

**12. Planning Applications:**

Ian Brown reported.

The Council is now holding meetings online via Microsoft Teams, including statutory planning meetings.

**Tarbert Drive**

The Tarbert Drive site is now being advertised online for sale.

### **Wellhead Farm**

Nick Lansdell reminded that infrastructure work is still required to lay paths etc. and install the traffic refuge. Ian Brown said he will confirm if the number of houses occupied now at the Wellhead Farm estate has reached the threshold imposed by the planning condition for the developer to complete the necessary infrastructure.

### **Longhill Burn Windfarm (ref. 0359/FUL/19)**

Ian reported that Energiekontor have confirmed that the tests of soil samples for contamination under the road in Murieston Valley have been negative. Work on installing the power cabling has now been completed in Robin's Lane, though some restitution work is still required. Cabling work on the Bankton Lane footpath between Murieston West Road and Williamston Primary is underway. Roadworks on Bankton Lane will be done during the school Easter holidays.

### **Bankton Retail Centre**

The new convenience store beside the station has now opened.

### **Other**

The application for temporary access to the site between Balmoral Gardens and the railway line is being referred to the Development Committee for decision.

An application has been submitted for the felling of trees at Rothes Drive.

A new petrol filling station is planned for Almondvale.

The Forth River Trust is conducting an outfall survey for the River Almond. This will record all outflows for a 2km stretch through Livingston. Ian attended the roadshow and has volunteered to be one of the group surveying the riverbanks.

Ian attended the online workshop for the Draft Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4). Ian noted that the prescriptive language used tended to be 'should' rather than 'will'.

### **13. Correspondence:**

None.

### **14. Any Other Business:**

The Secretary will confirm with everyone whether they can attend meeting in April. As the council election is taking place at the start of May, elected members may have campaign commitments instead.

**The Meeting closed at 8.30pm**

**Community Council meetings will be held online until we can resume public meetings at Williamston Primary.**

**The next meeting will be held *online* via Zoom.**