

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 11 OCTOBER 2018**  
**held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm**  
**web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>**

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**1. Present:**

Chris Dryden, Carol Hallesy, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, David Cooper, Nick Lansdell, Frank Mustard; Councillor Moira Shemilt

**Apologies:** Tania Armstrong, Lorna Cooper, Kevin Kerr, Ron Skirving; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

**Residents:** Stuart Brown, Ken Kirk, Robert Lemmer, Helen Mackie, Claire O'Lone, Diane O'Lone, John Sharp, Robert Stevenson, Callum Whitelaw, Irene Whitelaw

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 13 September 2018:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 13 September was proposed by Carol Hallesy and seconded by David Cooper. Carried.

**3. Matters Arising:**

None.

**4. Finances:**

Arthur Marris reported that bank balance remains at £2,277.82.

**5. Councillors' Reports:**

**Councillor Moira Shemilt:**

Councillor Shemilt gave a report.

Councillor Shemilt advised that she has taken on extra casework and surgeries on behalf of Councillor Johnston following his recent incapacity.

Councillor Shemilt attended the recent public meeting on bus provision in south Livingston. Some 120 residents attended. A particular issue raised was that First Bus no longer operate a service through Dedridge West. The X27 and X28 routes for Edinburgh are now being provided by Lothian Country buses.

Councillor Shemilt reported that she had attended a public meeting on 1 October at Williamston School regarding traffic safety measures in residential streets, particularly Bankton Park East and West, and Easter and Wester Bankton. No other councillors had attended. One suggestion was setting up a "pop-up Bob" i.e. a life-sized cardboard cutout of a police officer holding a speed camera; an approach which has been successfully used as a speeding deterrent in Edinburgh.

Eileen Campbell, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government will be visiting The School Bank West Lothian soon. This charity provides families experiencing financial hardship with a new school uniform and other clothing required for the school day. West Lothian provide the highest rate of school clothing grants of any Scottish local authority, at £125 for a primary school-aged pupil and £135 for a pupil of secondary school age. Public economic statistics indicate 20% of families are in relative poverty in Livingston South ward. A priority as part of an anti-poverty strategy should be maximising their benefit provision.

Ladywell Community Council have organised community artists to paint murals on underpasses in their locality.

Councillor Shemilt advised she recently met with Fraser Lynes, Land and Development Director of Cruden Homes regarding the planning application for the proposed development of 18 houses on the site behind Tarbert Drive.

**Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick:**

No report is available from Councillor Fitzpatrick as he is away on business representing the Council at the annual COSLA conference.

**6. Community Policing:**

There were no community police officers present at tonight's meeting. No report is available.

We have been advised that officers can only attend when they are on duty working on a back shift.

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

Arthur Marris reported.

The bat walk held on 18 September at Campbridge Pond was well attended and a success.

It was agreed we would hold a joint Community Council and MEG litter pick at the end of the month.

Murieston Village Hall is not available and Carol Hallesy agreed to contact Livingston Cricket Club to confirm if they could host the event this year.

The Secretary said that as usual he would provide a letter for the Co-op store asking for their

support with providing items for the refreshments after the litter pick.

#### **8. Murieston Development Trust (MDT):**

Helen Mackie has been invited to attend tonight's meeting as representative of the Trust steering group to gain and give clarification, and obtain the advice of the Community Council, on the current position on setting up the Murieston Development Trust.

Helen explained that the MDT steering group had invited Alan Tufts of the West Calder and Harburn Development Trust (WC&HDT) to the recent steering group meeting to outline the process the WC&HDT had followed in setting up their Trust. They had consulted the community of West Calder and Harburn on what they wanted from the community benefits which would be available to the WC&HDT. The experience of WC&HDT was that it was important to develop a community action plan in consultation with the community to identify needs and, in particular, engage with the hard to reach.

The MDT steering group is strongly of the view a professional fact-finding feasibility study is needed for Murieston. This would form the basis for applying for funding. The MDT cannot apply for funding directly as they are currently a steering group which is not formally constituted. The WC&HDT approach had been to work closely with the West Calder and Harburn Community Council initially until their community action plan was adopted and they had the support of the community. This provided a more organic approach to the development and establishment of their Trust.

Helen Mackie outlined her knowledge of the process for obtaining community funding and posed the question whether the MDT steering group could initially be formed as a formal sub-group/sub-committee of the Community Council. This would allow them to use the support infrastructure of the Community Council which would assist in developing the business case for funding.

Arthur Marris explained the background and actions in setting up the framework for initiating the MDT. It was confirmed the Community Council would give its full support to the Trust steering group and could provide funding to cover modest expenses for setting up a bank account etc.

Carol Hallesy noted that we have had a substantial response from the community on suggestions for funding projects. A popular proposal is to have a café in the new Barden House at the Murieston Medical Practice.

Chris Dryden proposed that a separate meeting between Community Council officers and the MDT steering group should be arranged soon to take forward the issues raised.

#### **9. Windfarms:**

Ian Brown reported.

Ownership of the Camilty windfarm is being taken over by EDF. It is estimated that community benefits of £154,000 will be available annually, starting in 2019 – 2020.

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

Ron Skirving will be sending out the next edition of the community council newsletter shortly.

#### **11. Community Garden and Allotments:**

Nothing to report.

#### **12. Livingston South Station:**

Ian Brown reported.

The car park will be closed for three weekends in early November when the lift towers are installed. Some snagging work is required on the stairs before they are opened. The gaps in the balustrade fencing are still to be fixed.

Chris Dryden reminded that we have asked for a representative from Network Rail to attend one of our meetings but this has not been confirmed yet.

#### **13. Planning Applications:**

Ian Brown reported.

Several planning applications have been made in the past month.

A new planning application has been made to build 12 lodges and 4 bedroom annexe at Bankton House Hotel (Ref. 0955/FUL/18). In the new planning application, the barbecue area has been moved and the annexe re-positioned. There will be impact on the environment and clear infrastructure issues.

A Matters Specified in Conditions application has been submitted on behalf of Walker and Bellway Homes to build 280 houses at Wellhead Farm, including roads, parking, SUDS, landscaping and associated works (922/MS/18).

Cruden Homes have lodged a planning application to build 18 houses on the land behind Tarbert Drive (0927/FUL/18). Ian noted the paucity of the toxic land remediation proposals. The Council's Environmental Health Service has objected, citing that a full risk assessment and dust management

plan is required. Ian noted the site had been reinstated for development in the Local Plan under the Call for Sites process.

It was pointed out that the developers had not informed neighbouring households beforehand that they were taking soil samples, or were following a contamination protection procedure.

The closing date for objections is 18 October. The application will go before the Development Management Committee. Ian advised objectors to ask to speak at the planning meeting when it is scheduled.

Chris Dryden pointed out that the planning website has been down repeatedly lately and was unavailable throughout last weekend.

There are already plans for 280 houses at Wellhead Farm, 180 houses at Limefield, 150 houses at Brotherton Farm and 2,500 houses at Gavieside.

There has been no feedback from the Woodland Trust yet on the work required for the TPO application to fell diseased trees in Williamston Wood (0575/TPO/18).

**14. Correspondence:**

None.

**15. Any Other Business:**

Ian Brown reported that the timetable information terminals at the bus station were not working. Councillor Shemilt advised she had met with Nicola Gill, Senior Transport Officer at the Council who is intending to set up a transport forum which will involve community councils.

Arthur Marris noted that there is a bus tracker app on Google for First Bus services, but not for Horsburgh.

John Sharp raised the role of the Murieston Community Facebook page, how it is managed and moderate, and whether it is owned by Murieston Community Council. He cited some posts regarding recent contentious issues that had been made on the Facebook page which were removed without explanation, and asserted that the policy covering the use of the Murieston Community Facebook page by the Community Council was not adequate and needs to be clarified.

Carol Hallesy stated that the [murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk](http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk) website directs users to the Murieston Community Facebook page. The Terms and Conditions are clear for the Facebook page; posts should not be political, abusive, offensive etc. Murieston Community Council does not have an official Facebook page and, although it uses the Murieston Community Facebook page to share information with the community, there is no official or formal link. There are three moderators who independently decide on whether posts meet the criteria set for the webpage content.

Nick Lansdell reiterated that the Murieston Community Facebook page is independently published and managed, and does not necessarily reflect the decisions and viewpoints etc. of Murieston Community Council.

Davidson McQuarrie pointed out that the monthly meeting of Murieston Community Council is the public assembly for debate etc. and, given that community councillors only meet once a month, it would be impractical to also use Facebook as an official, authoritative forum for the Community Council.

It was agreed that the stated policy governing the use of the Facebook page would be reviewed to ensure that the independence of Murieston Community Council from the Murieston Community Facebook page is clearly declared.

**The Meeting closed at 8.50pm**

**The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 8 November 2018 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.**