

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2014
held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm
web: <http://www.muriestoncommunity.com>

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Ron Skirving, Davidson McQuarrie, Tania Armstrong, Ian Brown, David Cooper, Carol Hallesy, June Keddie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick; Superintendent Kevin Kerr

Apologies: Arthur Marris, Kim Vance, Frank Mustard, Lorna Cooper, Alex Hendry, Nick Lansdell

Guests: Mrs. Dawn Davis, Mrs. Simone Gupta, Matthew Hallesy

Chris Dryden assumed Chair tonight in the absence of Arthur Marris

2. Minutes of the Regular Meeting on 12 June 2014:

Acceptance of the minutes of the regular meeting on 12 June was proposed by Ian Brown and seconded by David Cooper. Carried.

3. Matters Arising:

A minor change was agreed and will be made for publication.

4. Finances:

Ron Skirving reported that the bank account now stands at £1,912.53, including £520 from West Lothian Council representing the annual administration grant for 2014/2015.

Ron is arranging online banking for the MCC account.

5. Community Policing:

No report is available tonight.

6. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Fitzpatrick made a report :-

The A71 repair work has now been completed.

Councillor Fitzpatrick had a recent meeting with the Council's Head of Operational Services, Jim Jack and the ScotRail Operations Director. An extra carriage is now provided on the 07.44 Edinburgh-bound train. The Shotts line is to be electrified which will entail the upgrade of the rail infrastructure from Kirknewton westwards.

The major renewal of the play park at Bankton Mains by a Livingston company, The Play Practice has now been completed and it is already very popular and well used.

The Harburnhead wind farm has been approved. Fauchs Hill was not approved.

The new glass recycling bins for Murieston Valley have been installed at the Cricket Club car park.

A beech tree has been taken down beside the path at the viaduct. A branch had broken off and, after inspection, the Council's arborist decided to cut down the tree as the branch had broken due to sudden branch drop / summer limb drop syndrome which can be a tree's response to drought conditions when there is an imbalance between water entering and leaving the tree through transpiration. The branch fell on top of the fence bordering the path and has now been restored by the Council.

The roof at Bellsquarry Primary School has been replaced over the summer holidays as part of the general schools estate upgrade programme. The bell tower will be taken down as it is non-functional and is not economic to maintain it.

The SQA examination results have been the best ever in West Lothian.

Adaptive testing is being introduced in primary schools.

The Council has adopted the Wood Commission for developing Scotland's young workforce to provide a high quality intermediate vocational education and training system and is providing an HNC programme to develop skills for young people.

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

June Keddie reported.

The most recent meeting was two weeks ago.

The Communities in Bloom Award is due for re-assessment.
MEG intends to extend their work beyond Campridge Pond next year.

8. Windfarms:

Ian Brown reported.

Pearie Law windfarm has also been approved on appeal. An additional turbine has been approved at Pates Hill.

Ian attended a presentation about Section 36 consent covering planning proposals for installation of 50 MW and above. There has been a lack of consultation on these proposals. There are conflicting interests between energy and planning and it is unclear if the respective Ministers work together on proposals.

West Calder and Harburn Community Council have expressed an interest to work with us on windfarm and community benefits issues of mutual interest. The meeting agreed we should work with them.

The West Lothian Development Trust AGM is being held on 24 September at the Fauldhouse Partnership Centre. Ian will go to represent Murieston Community Council.

9. Community Website - www.muriestoncommunity.com :

Copies of minutes for all meetings and the current agenda are being posted there.

10. Community Allotments:

Ian Brown reported to the meeting.

Funding is being sought to pay for soil testing of the meadow land beside Murieston House.

The allotments are Killandean are progressing. Huts are now being erected.

11. Single Outcome Agreement:

Ron Skirving reported.

A workshop was held in May. GetOnLine Week is being held next month to encourage digital inclusion. West Lothian Money Week is taking place next week.

Ron asked for details from anyone who has had any experiences and problems with transport facilities for the disabled and in relation to dementia support.

Tania Armstrong and June Keddie intimated there can be problems coordinating between support agencies.

12. SESplan Strategic Development Plan and Local Development Plan:

Ian Brown reported.

Ian attended one of the four SESplan presentations held recently at the City Chambers covering the Housing Needs and Demand Model.

The Local Development Plan is now being prepared by the Council to provide an updated development strategy and planning policy framework for the period up to 2024.

The Council has published their Main Issues Report for public consultation (closing date 17 October).

The MIR is the main engagement stage in preparing the Local Development Plan and is primarily a discussion document designed to highlight a series of key issues and stimulate debate about where future development should and should not go. The Council has set out a *preferred* development strategy for the area as well as an *alternative* strategy. These include the identification of preferred development sites together with alternative options.

We have contracted a planning consultant to prepare a submission on our behalf. This will be provided around the date of October meeting.

The Secretary will ask for an extension of time to enable a consultation with the residents of Murieston and also request a public meeting at which the Council planners can set out the options affecting Murieston. A further public meeting had been promised at a previous meeting where the presentation could not be made due to technical problems.

Ian circulated details of the plan affecting the Murieston area. The plan zones 100 houses at Wellhead Farm and 250 houses at Linhouse. Murieston Castle Farm is a preferred alternative site for 375 houses.

As agreed at the last meeting, the Secretary has invited Bellsquarry Community Council to work jointly with us. The officers of Bellsquarry CC are unable to commit until they have their monthly meeting and have indicated they are likely to attend our October meeting.

13. Planning Applications:

There was an update on the planning application to build one house in Murieston Valley beside Moriston Drive (0264/FUL/14). The residents of Moriston Drive and Murieston Community Council have separately written letters of complaint to the Chief Executive of West Lothian Council concerning the circumstances and determination of this planning application. The Chief Executive's response intimated the Council would not act on any of the material questions raised in the letters of complaint. The residents of Moriston Drive have also complained to the Public Services Ombudsman who advised that the Council have complied with their procedures.

14. Correspondence:

None.

15. Any Other Business:

Tania Armstrong suggested we set up a coffee fund. This was agreed. Arrangements to be decided.

June Keddie handed out copies of questionnaire for residents in Murieston Valley re. the factoring service provided by the Scottish Greenbelt Co. Carol Hallesy noted that some trees on the border of the properties within the responsibility of the Scottish Greenbelt Co. have been reported by a tree surgeon as damaged. Carol has asked for a copy of the report which has not yet been provided.

David Cooper noted that the rail line will be closed for one week from 22 September.

The Meeting closed at 9.00 pm

The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 9 October 2014 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School