

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 12 MARCH 2020
held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, David Cooper, Kevin Kerr; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Apologies:

Carol Hallesy, Tania Armstrong, Lorna Cooper, Nick Lansdell; Councillor Moira Shemilt

Residents: Roger Harper, Ken Kirk, Clare O'Lone, John Sharp

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 13 February 2020:

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 13 February 2020 was proposed by Ian Brown and seconded by Kevin Kerr. Carried.

3. Matters Arising:

Cyrenians Older People, Active Lives (OPAL) Service has advised that from today 12 March, with the exception of telephone befriending, their services cease to operate for the time-being in order to protect their vulnerable client group, volunteers and staff during the current Coronavirus outbreak. They will widen telephone support to existing clients and volunteers during this time to maintain that life-line and to stay informed around their well-being.

The unreliability of the Murieston Circular buses (9A and 9C) was raised at the February meeting. Councillor Shemilt has spoken to Nicola Gill, Manager of Public Transport about the fact that the buses were, seemingly, not turning up on a regular basis.

Nicola Gill agreed about the unreliability of these buses and said that she had received numerous complaints about this issue. She has appointed an Inspector to investigate the route.

The no. 9 bus service is wholly subsidised by West Lothian Council. Nicola Gill stated that the Council's Transport Strategy is currently under review. Opportunities to maximise transport stock and to be creative in meeting community needs is the aim. Therefore, all subsidised transport services will be under review.

4. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance is currently £31,127.22. This includes publicly funded grants for community projects.

The annual fee of £35 was paid recently to the Information Commissioner's Office and £114 for signs to advertise the community consultation for producing the Community Action Plan for Murieston.

5. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

The Council has now passed the three year budget for fiscal years 2020/21 to 2022/23.

A projected shortfall of £153 million has been addressed by various financial measures, including renegotiating the terms of existing long-term loans, which has recovered £3.3 million.

Council Tax will increase by 4.84% from April.

The Oakbank CRC and all other Community Recycling Centres will return to their former opening hours from April.

Three new street cleaning vehicles are being purchased.

£800,000 is being allocated to dealing with the consequences of global warming.

A new Health and Safety framework within the Council has been agreed with the Trade Unions.

New head teachers are being appointed at Williamston, Bellsquarry and St Ninian's Primaries.

Officers have been involved in enforcing traffic measures on Murieston Road during the current roadworks.

The recent incidence of vandalism in the building site at Wellhead Farm is being investigated by the Police.

The mechanism to calculate land supply for housing provision in West Lothian is an issue as the Reporter, in his decision regarding the Wellhead Farm housing development has stated that the current land supply for 23,000 houses in the Local Development Plan, is inadequate. A meeting with the Minister with planning responsibility is needed in view of recent incompatible planning decisions.

Local primary schools are participating in West Lothian heats of the Scottish European Educational Trust Euroquiz 2020. This provides pupils with the opportunity to learn about Europe.

All jobs at API Foils have been saved following the company going into administration and acquisition by Aldus Ltd. More staff are expected to be taken on following its acquisition by this Australian company.

Beech trees are being affected in the area by the excessive rainfall which particularly affects the stability of beeches as they put down shallow roots.

Arthur Marris asked about the measures the Council is taking on the COVID-19 crisis. Councillor Fitzpatrick said the Council was planning regarding schools etc. and liaising with NHS Lothian and the Scottish Government. .

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

Arthur Marris confirmed that the recent drainage work on the Murieston Trail had not been carried out by MEG volunteers.

7. Murieston Development Trust (MDT) :

Davidson McQuarrie provided an update.

Our consultants, Community Enterprise (CE) are currently preparing the Community Action Plan for Murieston.

The project was promoted in the February edition of the Community Council newsletter which was emailed to 500 subscribers on 24 February. A further newsletter will be emailed later in March which will include a progress report of the project. Regular updates are being posted on the Murieston Community Facebook page.

The online community survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MuriestonCAP>) was closed at the start of February. The online and paper survey was completed by 290 separate individuals, which represented the views of 915 people. CE also consulted another 100 people at street conversation at a Burns Supper and drop-in at Murieston Village Hall.

CE has also consulted 13 key local stakeholders, including facilities managers and elected members, at events, one to ones and at a specific stakeholder meeting.

CE has held focus groups with key beneficiary groups to gather more detailed feedback on their needs, ideas and views for the future. This included primary and secondary school aged children, older residents in the 50+ Network and specific interest groups.

CE has produced a map of the main community assets in Murieston to understand the current level of provision.

CE has used the Community Insight platform to interrogate 20 national datasets referencing government statistical data, to identify the specific nature of the community.

A final drop-in event was held at Murieston Village Hall on Saturday 29 February when residents could speak to members of CE and MDT steering group, view the findings and have their say on issues, priorities etc. for the Community Action Plan.

The results of the consultations etc. have been collated, analysed and interpreted by CE, with the findings now set out in a comprehensive research report which will be published soon.

The Community Action Plan will be made available on various platforms when it is completed later this month. We will then work with the residents of Murieston to set up Murieston Development Trust and move forward with adopting the Community Action Plan as a blueprint for making changes which will benefit all in Murieston.

8. Town Centre Fund for 2019/20:

Ian Brown reported on the applications granted under the Town Centre Fund for funding local community projects to create Murieston Community Gardens and a community noticeboard with co-location of the defibrillator at the station carpark. We have just been advised by the Council that the time limit for arranging contracts has now been extended by 12 months to March 2021, and project completion to September 2021.

The architect we have commissioned is preparing the planning application for consent to create the three community gardens and the noticeboard which will be submitted to the Council next week.

Ian and Davidson McQuarrie had a meeting on 4 March with the Council and The Centre Management Team to plan signage at the station. We have agreed to work closely with the Council and be project lead in providing signage providing route information to the Centre, Hospital, College etc. A separate programme of work is also required to rationalise and upgrade the signs on paths leading to the Centre which is under consideration by the Council officers.

Ian has met with a ScotRail manager to ask if they can provide the basic power supply required for

the defibrillator when it is relocated to the station. No feedback yet.

9. Communications, including website - murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk

Davidson McQuarrie confirmed that another newsletter would be sent out later in February. This will include a progress report on the consultation work for the Community Action Plan.

10. Livingston South Station:

Ian Brown reported.

West Lothian Council has sent an enforcement letter to Network Rail to require the platform embankments to be landscaped as prescribed in the planning consent.

It was agreed that we would invite the Council's Transportation Manager to our next meeting for an update.

There is a need for a rubbish bin at the bottle bank. Plastic bags etc. are frequently discarded after bottles are deposited in the bins. Roger Harper noted that bin doors are often unlocked and open.

11. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

Wellhead Farm

The developers have lodged two new applications for planning consent to change the flat types on 8 plots (0186/FUL/20) and to modify condition 11 by delaying the start of the tree belt on Murieston Road to planting season 2020/21 (0065/FUL/20). The Community Council considers this proposed delay in planting is unnecessary and has objected.

Bellway have been poor in communicating with the neighbourhood on their activities on and off site. Craig McCorrison, Head of Planning has provided a report on issues occurring on the building site with generator noise and water drainage. There have been a number of breaches in the planning conditions.

Roger Harper reported that a contractor's van was parked on his street at 7.20 this morning. He was advised to report this to the Council's Development Enforcement Officer.

Roadworks are continuing on Murieston Road to connect the new estate to the main sewer system. Kevin Kerr noted that the surface of Murieston Road is starting to break up due to the heavy site traffic.

Tarbert Drive (ref. 0927/FUL/18)

The Reporter has been asking for further submissions on certain points regarding the appeal from the developer and West Lothian Council.

The developer has stated that 53 truck movements over 4 days would be required to remove the contaminated soil, contradicting their own submitted documentation which indicates truck movements over at least 30 days.

The Reporter has the discretion to determine the appeal at a hearing or inquiry in public. Otherwise the Reporter will decide the appeal based on the written submissions and documentation. No decision on the format has been announced yet.

12. Correspondence:

A letter has been received from Generation Arts at Howden Park Centre, addressed to all community councils, asking for a donation to support delivery of their Core and Community Programmes. This letter has been circulated.

13. Any Other Business:

Chris Dryden noted that work has started on building the hot food take away beside the Co-op (planning ref. 0564/FUL/17).

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm

The date of the next Community Council meeting will held *online* on Thursday 9 April