

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 13 DECEMBER 2018
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, Lorna Cooper, Kevin Kerr, Frank Mustard

Apologies: Carol Hallesy, Tania Armstrong, Nick Lansdell, Ron Skirving; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Councillor Moira Shemilt

Residents: Roger Harper, John Sharp

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 8 November 2018:

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 8 November was proposed by Kevin Kerr and seconded by Lorna Cooper, subject to minor amendment. Carried.

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank account now stands at £2,253.59.

Travelling expenses of £8 paid to the Planning Secretary for recent visit to EDF Energy Renewables regarding the planned Camilty Windfarm.

£16.23 paid for promotion of the litter pick on Facebook.

£20 to be paid to Livingston Cricket Club for hosting the litter pick.

5. Councillors' Reports:

No reports this month as Councillors Fitzpatrick and Shemilt are currently attending the annual COSLA Conference.

6. Community Policing:

No report this month.

As advised at the recent bi-annual conference of community councils, policing reports are provided to the Livingston South Local Area Committee (LAC), though are not broken down to individual ward areas.

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

Arthur Marris will contact the Woodland Trust for an update on the analysis reports due for samples of the trees in Williamston Wood, as indicated at the September meeting.

8. Murieston Development Trust (MDT):

Chris Dryden reported.

Members of the Community Council and Murieston Development Trust steering committee met with Rachel Searle-Mbullu, Head of Communities at Foundation Scotland last Thursday at Livingston Cricket Club.

Foundation Scotland supports community initiatives and can provide a range of core services to community trusts. Services include full legal and financial management and governance, and facilitating due diligence checks on project sponsors.

Options on organising and running Murieston Development Trust were discussed, including setting up a Panel to adjudicate on grant applications for projects.

The role of the Panel would be to meet periodically with the developer to decide on the provision of grants. The Panel would adjudicate and disburse funds for community projects, but not run projects per se.

Foundation Scotland would work with EDF Energy Renewables to meet with local community groups acting as stakeholders and verify due diligence. The share of the community benefits fund for each qualifying community would then be negotiated with the community stakeholders.

Arthur Marris asked how the Panel would be appointed, and noted that terms of reference and its scope would need to be established. While mindful of the continuing cuts in Council budget, the community benefits funding cannot be used as a substitute for Council-funded services.

The Scottish Government Communities and Renewables Scheme (CARES) can provide a loan to fund the pre-planning consent stage of renewable energy projects. This could fund the production of a Community Action Plan for Murieston, which was the approach initially taken when setting up the West Calder and Harburn Development Trust.

9. Windfarms:

Ian Brown reported.

Ian Brown and Chris Dryden met with EDF Energy Renewables on 3 December regarding their plans for Camilty Windfarm, which should be ready in 2021 – 2022. Fewer turbines will now be installed but turbine blades will now be larger than originally planned, so projected power output will remain similar.

Community benefits are estimated to be £154,000 annually for communities in this part of West Lothian.

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

Ron Skirving has intimated he will be standing down as editor of the newsletter and website webmaster as he is unable to devote sufficient time due to other commitments. Davidson McQuarrie offered to take over as webmaster as he is currently an administrator of the website, and also manage the newsletter, although contributions will be needed from community councillors for the newsletter articles.

11. Community Garden and Allotments:

Nothing to report.

12. Livingston South Station:

Chris Dryden reported.

The lift towers are now being erected, with work taking place at the weekends. Parking issues continue and are not improving. Chris will contact Network Rail again to ask if a representative can attend one of our meetings.

John Sharp asked if we can obtain details of expansion and capacity on the trains after electrification.

Lorna Cooper asked whether the bus service to and from the station would be improved when the revised train service is in operation.

13. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

The planning application to build 12 lodges and 4 bedroom annexe at Bankton House Hotel (ref. 0955/FUL/18) now has 33 objections.

The planning application by Cruden Homes to build 18 houses on the land behind Tarbert Drive (0927/FUL/18) has now attracted 156 objections. The Planning Service has asked for more details on parking and tree management before the application is presented for adjudication.

The Matters Specified in Conditions application by Walker and Bellway Homes to build 280 houses at Wellhead Farm (922/MS/18) now has 212 objections. The development plan provides for affordable housing at the back of the estate, comprising one bed flats to meet the planning obligation for 70 dwellings.

The Woodland Trust are requesting that their TPO planning application (0575/TPO/18) is expanded to include the felling of an additional 7 diseased trees.

14. Correspondence:

None.

15. Any Other Business:

Ian Brown reported that the timetable information terminals at the bus station are still not working. They have been out of order for an unacceptable period of months.

Roger Harper pointed out that there have been are traffic cones at the damaged traffic island at Skivo for some time. This issue needs to be raised with the Council Roads Services.

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm

The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday 10 January 2019 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.