

**MURIELSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 13 FEBRUARY 2020**  
**held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm**  
**web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>**

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**1. Present:**

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, Tania Armstrong, David Cooper, Kevin Kerr; Councillor Moira Shemilt

**Apologies:**

Carol Hallesy, Lorna Cooper, Nick Lansdell; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

**Residents:** Roger Harper, Ken Kirk

**Guest Speaker:** Jane McColl of the Cyrenians OPAL Service

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 9 January 2020:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 9 January 2020 was proposed by Kevin Kerr and seconded by David Cooper. Carried.

**3. Matters Arising:**

None.

**4. Finances:**

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance is currently £31,276.22. This includes publicly funded grants for community projects.

**5. Cyrenians Older People, Active Lives (OPAL) Service:**

Jane McColl, Senior Service Co-ordinator for the OPAL One-to-One Service attended tonight to talk to the community council about the OPAL Service provided by the Cyrenians in West Lothian.

Jane outlined the history of the Cyrenians. The Cyrenians was formed 50 years ago with the mission to support people excluded from family, home, work or community on their life journey. The name Cyrenians comes from the biblical story of Simon the Cyrene, but Cyrenians was founded as and remains a secular organisation. The Cyrenians now provide 44 support services.

The OPAL (Older People, Active Lives) service, based at Bathgate Precinct, aims to maintain or increase older people's independence and well-being across West Lothian. This free service is funded through a collaboration with West Lothian Council, West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership, and NHS Lothian and is available for those typically aged 60+ who are often experiencing loneliness or isolation.

The OPAL service is delivered in three ways :-

- One to One and Phone Befriending: This service is provided short term for up to 9 months, either on a one to one basis or by telephone. Fifty volunteers provide a wide variety of support including connecting with local community activities, companionship after bereavement, hospitalisation or a fall, or to just chat and share experiences. All volunteers are vetted and trained.
- Introduction to local groups or social activities – A volunteer will help to identify groups or activities in the local area. They may also initially accompany a client to a group, until the client feels ready to attend alone. There are 14 regular social and activity groups, currently supporting 261 older people across West Lothian, which provide a welcoming and relaxed way of getting to know people.

There is no referral process as such and anyone can drop in and attend a group.

**6. Councillor's Report:**

**Councillor Moira Shemilt**

There has been an increase of 36% in requests for grounds maintenance for overhanging shrubs, grass cutting etc.

Fly tipping has increased by 61% from 48 to 112 in the last quarter. The reason for this sudden increase is unclear and could be in part due to more reporting of incidences following a public awareness campaign. Items recovered from fly tipping always go to landfill.

Queueing frequently occurred at the entrance to the Oakbank Recycling Centre over the Christmas period. Weekends are also similarly very busy. The introduction of a charge for bulky uplifts may be exacerbating this problem.

An anti-poverty conference, Food with Dignity, is being held by Better Off West Lothian at Howden Park Centre on 12 March on the issue of food insecurity and how we can work together in West Lothian to take action for change.

The Council is holding a budget meeting next Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> to set the housing budget for the next three years. One third of tenants are currently in some form of arrears.

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

No report tonight.

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

Davidson McQuarrie provided an update.

Our consultants, Community Enterprise (CE) are continuing engaging with the Murieston community preparatory to producing the Community Action Plan for Murieston.

The project was promoted in the January edition of the Community Council newsletter which was emailed to 500 subscribers on 27 January. A further newsletter will be emailed later in February 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 over some 3 months has been completed by some 290 separate individuals, and has represented the views of about 900 people.

CE has also consulted another 100 people directly by street conversations and at a Burns Supper at the Cricket Club.

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 children at Williamston Primary and James Young High School, 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 20 national datasets referencing government statistical data, to identify the specific nature of the community.

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

A drop-in event with the community has been arranged for the afternoon of Saturday 29 February at Murieston Village Hall. Members of CE and MDT Steering Group will be present to lead discussion, answer questions and record feedback.

CE will then draft the Community Action Plan, taking account of the feedback.

The final version of the Community Action Plan will be ready by the end of March.

We have met with Ron Skirving to discuss our media strategy going forward for promoting the Community Action Plan and formation of the Murieston Development Trust.

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

Ian Brown reported on the applications submitted for funding local community projects under the Town Centre Fund.

The main project, amounting to £29,470, will create Murieston Community Gardens which will be three productive spaces along the Murieston Trail, comprising an organic vegetable garden behind the station, a managed wildflower meadow and a forest garden.

The second project, amounting to £3,375, will provide a community noticeboard with co-location of the defibrillator at the station carpark.

We have commissioned an architect and met with him on Tuesday to review the initial design for the vegetable garden.

We have a meeting next Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> with the Council and The Centre Management Team to agree and plan signage at the station.

Discussion is still ongoing with Network Rail on providing a basic power supply for the defibrillator.

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

**11. 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.

Network Rail have been carrying out underpinning work on the platform embankments.

**12. Planning Applications:**

Ian Brown reported.

## **Wellhead Farm**

The developers have applied to have planning condition no. 11 changed to postpone the planting of the tree screen on Murieston Road, which should be underway during this year's growing season.

The Community Council will be objecting to this proposed delay.

There have been three non-conformities with the planning conditions granted as part of the planning consent.

The work to connect the new estate to the main sewer system will require roadworks on Murieston Road for 15 weeks. Traffic on Murieston Road at the roadworks will be one way, controlled by temporary traffic lights.

Bellway Homes are now operating the wheel washing facility, ensuring that wheels of vehicles are washed down to remove dust and soil before leaving the site.

Roger Harper reported that soil had been deposited on the roadway by lorries parking at Murieston Grove, which had not been removed by street sweepers. On a positive note, the contractors did stop activities to observe the passing of a funeral cortege.

## **Tarbert Drive (ref. 0927/FUL/18)**

Cruden Homes has made a further submission to the Reporter regarding their appeal. Our response will be made soon. Over 30 of the original objectors have made further submissions.

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.

### **13. Correspondence:**

None.

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

Tania Armstrong noted that grass verges generally needed cutting.

Ken Kirk advised that the Horsburgh circular bus service was suspended, apparently as driver was absent due to sickness. Councillor Shemilt said she would check with the Council Transport Manager

Davidson McQuarrie reported that a sign at the junction of Bankton Lane has been removed, probably stolen.

**The Meeting closed at 8.40pm**

**The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 12 March 2020 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.**