

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 13 MARCH 2014**  
**held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm**  
**web: <http://www.muriestoncommunity.com>**

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**1. Present:**

Arthur Marris, Kim Vance, Ron Skirving, Davidson McQuarrie, Ian Brown, David Cooper, Lorna Cooper, Chris Dryden, Alex Hendry; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick; Chief Inspector Kevin Kerr

**Other Attendees:** PC Stuart McKissock

**Apologies:** Frank Mustard, Tania Armstrong, Carol Hallesy, June Keddie, Nick Lansdell; Councillor John Muir; PC Alan James

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 13 February 2014:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 13 February 2014 was proposed by Chris Dryden and seconded by Kim Vance. Carried.

**3. Matters Arising:**

Minor changes were agreed.

**4. Finances:**

The bank account now stands at £1,427.53. Ron Skirving has obtained the mandate form from the Bank to change the authorised cheque signatories as agreed at the December meeting. Ron will arrange for the co-signatories to complete a new mandate.

The annual fee of £35 for renewing our registration with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act has been paid.

**5. Clare Summers, Regeneration and Employability Co-ordinator, West Lothian Council:**

Clare Summers had been invited to attend to outline the structure and process of the West Lothian Development Trust (WLDT).

WLDT was set up by West Lothian Council to provide the central framework for communities to engage with developers to voluntarily provide environmental and community benefits from sustainable energy developments. Developers do not have to provide a contribution but invariably do to engender goodwill with the local communities over the lifetime of the generating scheme which may be in excess of 25 years.

WLDT negotiates with developers to get the best deal for the residents of West Lothian. Developers have generally considered it to be in their interests to participate with WLDT as they then only need to negotiate and work with one body representing all communities.

WLDT has confidentiality agreements with developers which restrict the financial information which is publicly available.

WLDT does not use community council boundaries to determine eligibility for community benefit funding. These are based on where the communities lie in relation to the development.

Several communities have set up their own Community Development Trusts to disburse funds to their local projects. The community council, while welcoming this approach where the trusts managed the funding of local projects, do not see any role for local trusts negotiating directly and independently with developers.

WLDT started negotiating two years ago with the potential developers of Fauch Hill wind farm.

Murieston is some 5km from the Pates Hill wind farm and we are encouraged to submit projects for funding. Applications are considered by the Trust on a two month rolling period.

Applications for wind farms with a generating capacity above 50MW go to the Scottish Government for decision under the Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.

The provision and extent of community benefits are non-material considerations of

planning.

Councillor Fitzpatrick pointed out the clear separations in political and planning terms.

A major review of WLDT was carried out in 2013 and the Trust are now deciding and implementing short-term and long-term actions based on the recommendations of the Review. More information should be available shortly.

**6. Community Policing:**

A report was given by PC Stuart McKissock who was attending the meeting as PC Alan James is unavailable.

Anti-Social Behaviour calls have reduced from 16 to 5. Youth disorder calls have reduced from 3 to 1.

There have been 10 calls about motorcycle misuse. There has been a rash of break-ins to cars in the area.

New shift patterns have been introduced which provide more police on duty between hours of 6pm and 3am.

**7. Councillor's Report:**

Councillor Fitzpatrick made a report :-

Exam results in West Lothian schools are now the best ever.

The roof at Bellsquarry Primary is being replaced.

The Bankton Mains Park upgrade is going ahead.

The play park at Bankton Way will be removed as the condition of the play surface is now unsatisfactory. Other play parks are close by.

The Council has dealt with 31 fly tipping complaints and 7 dog fouling complaints.

Drains and gutters have been cleared in the underpasses.

Murieston Trail has been patched where there has been path erosion.

The A71 will be closed between Crofthead and New Park Roundabouts from 30 June to 24 August for major road repairs. Local diversions will be in place.

The new skate park at Almondvale Park will be officially opened later in the Spring. Two design consultants had given their services free.

The High Hedges (Scotland) Act will come into effect on 1 April. This will provide a solution when problems are caused by hedges which grow over two metres tall and block out light in an adjacent property. The Council has the power to cut the hedge and re-charge the owner of the hedge for the cost of the work. The Act makes it an offence for the hedge owner to prevent access to the Council to carry out necessary works (punishable by a fine of up to £1,000).

The update to the West Lothian Development Plan and the review of the developers' responses to the Calls for Sites are both running late.

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

Kim Vance reported.

The trout in a classroom project has been completed and the trout fry have been released into Murieston Water.

The Livingston South Blue Green Network group are presenting a display at the Scout Hall on Saturday 15 March from 12 to 3pm to provide information about Phase 1 of the community environmental project, funded from an award of £150,000 from the Central Scotland Green Network Development Fund.

Volunteer days are being held on Saturday 22 March and Sunday 13 April at Cambridge Pond.

A Gala Fun Day is being held at Livingston Cricket Club on Sunday 8 June.

**9. Litter Pick and Cleanup:**

It was agreed we will hold our next Litter Pick and Cleanup in May.

**10. Windfarms:**

Nothing to report.

**11. Community Website - [www.muriestoncommunity.com](http://www.muriestoncommunity.com) :**

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

**12. Community Allotments:**

Ian Brown reported to the meeting.

Killandean Allotments Group have now got funding for the allotment site.

The wildlife survey will be conducted shortly.

Only 8 plots remain to be let from the 32 plots which are planned.

**13. Single Outcome Agreement:**

There is no report this month.

**14. SESplan Strategic Development Plan:**

The SESplan is running late.

**15. Planning Applications:**

The Council's Planning Service is holding a series of training sessions for community councillors. We have suggested topics to be covered at future sessions. The first workshop was held yesterday.

Arthur Marris and Ian Brown attended. The main topic for the first workshop was planning enforcement. There are currently 500 planning breaches in West Lothian with some six in Murieston.

An email has been received by the Secretary from the unsuccessful applicant for planning permission to build houses beside Moriston Drive in which an offer was made for providing land for community purposes. It is noted that the TPO covering this land has now been approved.

The local residents have been consulted and do not support the offer made.

**16. Correspondence:**

The latest edition of the Spokes cycling newsletter was circulated.

**17. Any Other Business:**

Kim Vance noted that Scotrail had been carrying out track repairs overnight recently. It was acknowledged that from time to time this will occur as there is now a seven day service in operation.

Livingston Cricket Club is holding a beer festival with Livingston Round Table from 18 to 21 April. Annual membership fee for the Cricket Club is now £5.

**The Meeting closed at 9.00 pm**

**The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 10 April 2014 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School**