

MURIELSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 15 FEBRUARY 2024
held at Williamston Primary School
web: <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>

1. Present:

Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Janey Cringean, Davidson McQuarrie, Mark Robbie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick,

Apologies: Chris Dryden; Councillor Peter Heggie, Councillor Moira Shemilt; Gillian de Felice, Clare O'Lone, Irene Whitelaw

Residents: Roger Harper, Ken Kirk, John Sharp

Also attending: Morag Pendry from Bellsquarry and Adambrae Community Council

Arthur Marris acted as Chair tonight as Chris Dryden was unable to attend.

2. Councillors' Reports:

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Councillor Fitzpatrick gave his report.

The budget settlement from the Scottish Government, although providing a Council Tax freeze, has not been fully funded and has resulted in cuts in the Council budget.

£62m has been promised by Westminster with Barnett consequential to Scottish local authorities. COSLA are asking for this money.

Howden West Road will be closed at the entrance to St John's Hospital from 16 to 23 March while a mini roundabout is built. The alternative route is via Alderstone Road.

A programme of works is taking place in Oakbank footpaths over a period of three weeks.

The timetable for the X40 bus between St John's Hospital and the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary has changed.

Asda Livingston are providing a free bowl of Quaker Oats porridge and free hot drink from 8 to 12pm at the Asda Café, with a parallel donation of ten packs of porridge to the West Lothian Foodbank.

James Young High School and St Margaret's Academy have a very high rating in the national numeracy and literacy assessments, which are well ahead of comparators.

At last Thursday's Local Area Committee, a minute's silence was held for John Hughes, Chair of Bellsquarry and Adambrae Community Council who died recently.

Livingston Skatepark has now been officially designated by Historic Environment Scotland as a Category B listed structure, meaning it is a historically important site.

Police Scotland are running an operation to stop motorbikes and quad bikes using footpaths. Any photo evidence should be sent to Police Scotland.

There is an increasing problem of cars with keyless entry cards being stolen. Thieves use a wireless relay system to intercept the signal from the keyless card. This can be prevented by keeping the key in a Faraday pouch which blocks the signal when the key is not being used. These pouches are available at Livingston police station.

Supported accommodation for 48 homeless people is being built beside Livingston FC stadium.

Repairs are being carried out at Dedridge Wood and on the Froggy Pond bridge by the NETs team.

Council rangers are preparing a report which will identify paths in the Core Paths Network for upgrades.

Funding will be available to provide artwork in the underpass network and communities can bid.

Arthur Marris noted that there was a problem with the number of commuters boarding the 3 carriage train during the recent four day closure of the Bathgate rail line between Bathgate and Edinburgh which had resulted in passengers driving to Livingston South station to commute into Edinburgh. The car park was full and cars were then parked in neighbouring streets.

Councillor Fitzpatrick left the meeting following this item of business.

3. Minutes of the Meeting on 18 January 2024:

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 18 January 2024 was proposed by Mark Robbie and seconded by Ian Brown. Carried nem con.

4. Matters Arising:

None.

5. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank account stands at £2,544.94 as reported at the November meeting.

6. Livingston South Local Area Committee:

Nothing to report.

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

Nothing to report.

8. Murieston Community Garden (MCG) - <https://murieston-cg.org.uk> :

Janey Cringean reported.

A tree has fallen from the station embankment onto the fence. It is unclear whether West Lothian Council or Network Rail have responsibility for this part of the embankment. This has been taken up with the Council and no response so far.

Work will start on building the front garden in April/May as £40,000 funding is now in place.

9. Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT) – SCIO Scottish Charity No. SC052716

<https://murieston-cdt.org.uk> :

Janey Cringean reported.

A planting plan for planting on the embankment besides the stairs has been submitted to the ScotRail 'Adopt a Station' programme. Several volunteers have agreed to help with the station greening. Scotrail are supplying volunteer hi-vis vests. The embankment has an aggregate foundation so planting will be in the form of an alpine rockery.

The community café at Murieston Village Hall will open soon. There are now 14 volunteers who will help with the running of the café and are taking the appropriate hygiene and safety training.

Funding is available now to purchase audio-visual equipment to be used for cinema showings at the Hall.

10. Local Place Plan for Murieston

Murieston Community Development Trust is working with Murieston Community Council to produce the Local Place Plan (LPP) for Murieston which we will jointly submit by the end of March to feed into the Council's forthcoming Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) which will be a 10 year plan for West Lothian from 2026.

Topics which will be covered include Murieston and Linhouse Trails, future of Murieston Village Hall, transport mobility hub at the station and a community café.

As a central part of preparing the LPP, we are consulting the community of Murieston about what they consider important and what they would like within Murieston going forward. We have leafletted all households in Murieston to invite every resident (from age 12 onwards) to complete an online survey to express their views -

<https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk/survey>

A paper version of the survey is also available for anyone who cannot access the online survey.

We have held three drop-in sessions at Murieston Village Hall on 20 and 27 January and on 4 February when members of the Trust were at the Hall to provide more information and discuss issues with residents.

11. Community Council Boundaries

The boundary between Murieston and Bellsquarry Community Councils had been raised by two residents of Crathes Gardens at one of the recent drop-in sessions for the Local Place Plan. Davidson McQuarrie confirmed that the streets bordering Bellsquarry Road South had formerly been within Murieston Community Council's boundary but, some 20 years ago, Bellsquarry Community Council had requested a change of boundary as the community council only covered

the small area of the village. Soon after the agreed boundary change, the bulk of Adambrae was developed and was included as part of Bellsquarry Community Council's area. The two community councils have been of comparable size, although further major development to the south of Murieston Road has recently increased the population in Murieston.

The Secretary has emailed the two residents in Crathes Gardens regarding issues raised and will contact the Secretary of Bellsquarry Community Council to communicate the issues raised by the residents regarding representation.

12. Communications, including website - <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk> :

Nothing to report.

13. COVID Issues:

Vaccinations are now all being done centrally, rather than through medical practices. Advice on getting vaccinations can be viewed at :-

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/the-vaccines/coronavirus-covid-19-booster-vaccination/>

Phone: 0800 030 8013.

14. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

There are no new significant planning applications affecting Murieston.

Tarbert Drive (ref. 1151/FUL/22)

A complaint has been made about the proliferation of signs advertising the new housing estate which have been placed on the grass verges in Murieston Valley and Tarbert Drive. Adverts for housing sales require planning consent which was submitted by the developer, Perella Homes retrospectively. Planning consent has been refused by planning officers under delegated powers and Perella Homes have the right to appeal.

Installation of Three Tennis Courts and MUGA Pitch at Livingston Cricket Club

Livingston South Community Sport and Wellbeing Hub has applied for planning permission to build a sports complex of three tennis courts and a MUGA pitch at Livingston Cricket Club.

The land was never decontaminated by LDC when topsoil was removed throughout Murieston Valley in 1994 as the land was reserved for recreational purposes.

The Development Management Committee is waiting for a dust management plan from the developer before considering the planning application.

Other

The work on the traffic island at Skivo Wynd should be completed soon.

15. Correspondence:

None.

16. Any Other Business:

Morag Pendry introduced herself. Morag is a community councillor of the Bellsquarry and Adambrae Community Council. Morag advised that Bellsquarry Community Council intends leafletting the community about planning issues affecting them and to affirm their representation of all areas of the community. Bellsquarry Community Council are preparing their response to a pre-planning proposal from Cruden Homes for a residential development at Brucefield. Ian Brown confirmed that we have not been consulted and he can liaise with Bellsquarry Community Council on their response.

The Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 21 March in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.