

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2023
held at Williamston Primary School
web: <https://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Ian Brown, Janey Cringean, Davidson McQuarrie, Mark Robbie; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Apologies: Arthur Marris, Kevin Kerr, Nick Lansdell; Councillor Peter Heggie, Councillor Moira Shemilt; Ken Kirk, Roger Harper, Irene Whitelaw

Residents: John Sharp

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 15 June 2023:

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous Ordinary meeting on 15 June 2023 was proposed by Chris Dryden and seconded by Ian Brown, subject to a minor change. Carried nem con.

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Councillors' Reports:

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

West Lothian schools remain ahead of their virtual competitors and the national average for schools. St Ninian's Primary received two Excellent awards and six Very Good awards from Education Scotland who state the leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Williamston Primary was a winner at the ScotEdAwards.

The Council has been working with SEPA to investigate a contamination incident in Murieston Water. The cause was possibly a discharge from a septic tank.

An electric scooter recently had a serious battery fire in the area. Electric scooters are not permitted to be charged on council premises.

Congratulations to Bathgate and Boghall Caledonia Pipe Band for winning the World Pipe Band Championship and to the West Lothian Schools Pipe Band for their excellent second place finish in their grade. A civic reception is being arranged.

Paediatric Services are now back to normal at St John's Hospital. The NHS now uses their own bank / pool to draw on extra staff when required.

Homelessness is increasing rapidly. The Council has a £2.4m overspend in providing accommodation for homeless people.

There are now 1,245 LED lighting columns which are saving 9,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

Roads infrastructure has a budget of £11.2m with a budget of £2.2m for the winter maintenance programme.

The Council maintains 1,600 km roads, 590 bridges and 48,000 lighting columns.

£4.2m is being spent on ecology and diversity.

The ecology and biodiversity team are working with developers at the planning stage.

A project to map veteran trees throughout West Lothian is underway.

The option of re-banding of Council Tax has been rejected by the Council Executive.

The annual accounts of West Lothian Development Trust have been published, a copy of which Councillor Fitzpatrick circulated at the meeting.

Abandoned shopping trolleys can be reported to the Council's Customer Services. The Centre uses Trolleywise to uplift abandoned trolleys.

Chris Dryden asked about when the appointment system for recycling centres would start. Councillor Fitzpatrick advised that the contact system is not operational yet and appointments would begin soon when the system is ready.

Councillor Fitzpatrick left the meeting following this item of business.

Councillor Peter Heggie

Councillor Heggie has provided the report [here](#)

5. Finances:

The bank account stands at £6,658.73, with further money to be disbursed under the Town Centre Capital Fund 2022-23. The annual administration grant of £473 has been received.

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-cdt.org.uk> :

Janey Cringean reported.

The Garden has been awarded £10,000 by the National Lottery Awards for All scheme.

MCG has applied to the Levensat Trust for a significant grant.

Simply Play and Bright Horizons Early Learning and Childcare are participating with the Garden.

9. Murieston Community Development Trust (MCDT - <https://murieston-cg.org.uk> :

Janey Cringean reported.

Murieston Community Development Trust has now been registered by OSCR as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), Charity No. SC052716.

MCDT has applied unsuccessfully for significant funding under the Placed Based Investment Programme.

The charity launch of the Trust will be held on Saturday 28th October, starting at 2pm in Murieston Village Hall. Invitations are being sent out to local businesses, elected politicians, community groups and residents who have expressed an interest in furthering the aims of the Trust.

10. Town Centre Fund:

Nothing to report.

11. Formation of a Scottish Forum of Community Councils:

The Joint Forum of Community Councils in West Lothian are inviting Community Councils to formally join a new Scottish Forum. The JF of CC in WL believe that by working together, we can have a greater impact for Community Councils in Scotland. Once a majority of Community Councils have signed up, it may be possible to secure funding to take the Scottish Forum forward. It was agreed at tonight's meeting that Murieston Community Council will support the formation of a new Scottish Forum. The Secretary will respond in the affirmative to the proposal by the Joint Forum of Community Councils in West Lothian.

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

Janey Cringean reported.

Data and content have been migrated across to the new website which is now operational -

<http://muriestoncommunitycouncil.org.uk>

The former website will be switched off next month.

The Secretary will inform the Joint Forum of Community Councils in West Lothian, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian and Lorraine McGrorty, Community Council Liaison Officer of the new website address.

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.

Tarbert Drive (ref. 1151/FUL/22)

Two enforcement notices have been served on the developer for failing to comply with the planning conditions. Working has continued on Saturdays outside the times mandated in the planning

conditions.

Murieston Medical Practice Pharmacy (ref. 0722/CLU/23)

The operator of the new pharmacy, Wellbeing Pharmacies Ltd, has applied for permission to install a prescription collection machine.

Land at Murieston Castle Farm (ref. 0445/FUL/23)

A retrospective application has been made for change of use of agricultural land to a dog exercise area.

Proposed Housing Development at Brucefield / Polbeth

Cruden Homes are proposing a residential development at Brucefield Park West.

Cruden Homes have held a pre-application public consultation event for this proposed development at Polbeth Community Hub on 14 September and will hold a second event on Thursday 26 October, between 4pm and 7pm.

Consultation on the next West Lothian Local Development Plan

A 'drop-in' event is being hosted by the Council's Development Planning and Environment team on Monday 2 October at the Civic Centre as part of the initial engagement with local communities on the forthcoming West Lothian Local Development Plan, LDP 2. The format will be informal round table conversations between planning officers and the public.

Other

Ian has a provisional estimate of £1,800 from the Council to install a power line from a lighting column to the centre circle at the station car park. This would facilitate lighting on a Christmas tree in the centre circle. Other costs to be considered are purchasing a semi-mature Korean Fir tree at £800 and a steel bench at £2,000.

15. Correspondence:

None.

16. Any Other Business:

Chris Dryden reported that the Murieston circular bus service can take 50 minutes to reach the Centre as it now goes via Howden.

Janey Cringean advised that she and Ian Brown had met Tracy Stevenson, who runs the ScotRail Adopt a Station Volunteering Programme, at the station on 7 September to discuss the greening of the station embankments by the Murieston Community Garden group. Potential solutions were considered.

There has been no maintenance of the Dyke Swarm public art on the Newpark Roundabout which is now deteriorating.

Ian Brown referred to the temporary traffic restrictions on the A71 at Wilkieston. These have been in place fall of this year and have exceeded the original duration of the traffic order. It is unclear if there has been enforcement action taken against the housing developer / contractor. The Secretary will contact East Calder and District Community Council to confirm whether action has been taken.

The Meeting closed at 8.05pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 19 October in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.