

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 8 DECEMBER 2016**  
held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm  
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

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**1. Present:**

Chris Dryden, Arthur Marris, Kevin Kerr, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, David Cooper, Nick Lansdell, Frank Mustard; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick; PC Alan Hodge, PC Alan James

**Apologies:** Ron Skirving, Tania Armstrong, Lorna Cooper, Carol Hallesy, Alex Hendry

**Residents:** Michael Grieve, Professor Dabir Tehrani

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 10 November 2016:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 10 November was proposed by Kevin Kerr and seconded by Ian Brown. Carried.

**3. Matters Arising:**

None.

**4. Finances:**

The bank balance remains at £1,850.

**5. Councillor's Report:**

Councillor Fitzpatrick gave a short report.

The A71 will be closed at Polbeth from the beginning of January for four months due to extensive work on the bridge at West Calder station required for the electrification of the Shotts line. Councillor Fitzpatrick circulated a map showing planned road closure details.

Councillor Fitzpatrick is opening the new extension at Toronto Primary School tomorrow.

Lawrence has attended several nativity festivals and winter fairs at local schools.

Traffic lights are again controlling traffic while works continue on the rail bridge at Newpark.

Lawrence has asked the Roads Service to confirm how long the traffic lights will be in place.

**6. Community Policing:**

PC Alan James gave a report.

Break-ins have occurred in a car at Bankton Park West and house in Crathes Gardens.

Residents are reminded to leave houselights on in the evening.

The Community Policing Team will be engaging with Murieston United Community Football Club regarding the issues raised by MUCFC when their officers attended the November meeting of the Community Council.

The monthly crime stats for Livingston South ward were outlined.

<u>Calls</u>	<u>November 16</u>	<u>November 15</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Change</u>			
Youth	21	29	-28%
Anti-Social Behaviour	96	109	-12%
Hate Crime	5	3	67%
Vandalism	19	12	58%
Fire-raising	2	2	0%
Public Space Assaults	23	16	44%

Chris Dryden stated that cars were frequently being parked at the roundabout on Murieston Valley, blocking the footpath to the station. Councillor Fitzpatrick will check with the Roads Service whether parking restrictions by yellow lines will be appropriate.

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

Nothing to report this month.

**8. Broadband Rollout:**

Michael Grieve and Professor Dabir Tehrani attended tonight to discuss the problems the residents of Skivo and other areas of south Murieston had with broadband connectivity and to ask the Community Council if it could help securing better broadband provision.

Professor Tehrani noted that houses in Skivo can only get 1.5Mb/s broadband. Councillor Fitzpatrick explained that the Scottish Government, via Digital Scotland, had invested £410 million in a national scheme to provide broadband as a means of facilitating social and digital inclusion. BT Openreach won the contract to provide Superfast broadband (defined as 24 Mb/s) to 80% of premises in West Lothian, which was then topped up by £2.5 million by the Council to reach over 95% of premises (now projected at over 99%). The BT contract ends in 2018 and a new contract will be tendered which is likely to be more prescriptive.

Ian Brown outlined details of the meeting held with Digital Scotland in August and subsequent communications. Digital Scotland is aware of the houses in Murieston which are on Exchange Only connections.

Chris Dryden said BT cabinet 55 was now installed in Murieston Valley. The large green boxes are BT and the smaller boxes are Virgin Media. Fibre-optic cable connect from the network exchange to the street cabinet (FTTC) then delivery to households is via standard copper cable, so bandwidth performance to premises will diminish with distance and uptake. No plans have been announced for provision of direct fibre to the premises (FTTP).

Virgin Media have cabled Murieston Valley recently and plan to cable to Murieston Green.

Virgin Media have also been provided with details of the streets that need upgrading.

Michael Grieve asked if the Community Council could letter the streets currently with minimal broadband to ascertain their views and to press the authorities to provide sufficient broadband coverage across Murieston.

**9. Murieston Local History Group :**

Nothing to report.

**10. Windfarms:**

Nothing to report.

**11. Community Website - [murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk](http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk)**

Nothing to report.

**12. Community Noticeboard:**

Chris Dryden will investigate whether a grant can be sought to fund the noticeboard.

**13. Community Development Trust:**

Chris Dryden outlined the current status and indicated that the next steps would be considered at the next meeting of the executive officers.

**14. Community Garden and Allotments:**

Ian Brown reported on a meeting he and Chris Dryden had attended with Council officers.

Testing of the soil will be required at the proposed site for the community garden beside Murieston House to confirm whether contamination is present. Funding of soil sampling may be available but this would only be considered when the community garden has a constituted organising group.

**15. Planning Applications:**

Councillor Fitzpatrick left the meeting while this planning item was discussed.

Ian Brown reported on the current position on planning appeals by developers.

The decision supporting the appeal on the Brotherton Farm planning application has been confirmed by the second Reporter.

The Reporter has held a pre-examination hearing today at Bellsquarry Village Hall to decide the appeal against the refusal of the planning application for Murieston Castle (0355/P/15). The examination hearing will be on 15 and 16 February. The Reporter will be making attended and unattended site visits. Ian attended the pre-examination hearing and has asked that the Community Council participate on housing and land supply, and planning conditions and obligations.

A Reporter has now been appointed to determine the appeal against the Council's decision to refuse the Wellhead Farm planning application (0918/P/15).

Chris Dryden and Ian Brown met with Andy Wightman, MSP at the Scottish Parliament last Monday regarding housing development behind Murieston. Andy Wightman agreed he will confirm with Ministers regarding powers they can exercise to determine planning matters.

**16. Local Development Plan:**

Ian Brown reported.

Ian has submitted a letter to the SESPlan group expressing our concern that the prescribed green networks do not include south Livingston in the proposed Plan. .

**17. Correspondence:**

The Secretary has received an email from the office of Angela Constance, MSP to inform us that Network Rail has advised that the work required to upgrade Livingston South station for the line electrification will be significant and will require the station to be rebuilt. It was agreed we will ascertain more details about the plans and timetable.

**18. Any Other Business:**

No further business.

**The Meeting closed at 8.45 pm**

**The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 12 January 2017 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School**