

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 9 APRIL 2020
held online via Zoom at 7 pm
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

This meeting was held on Thursday 9 April by community councillors online using the Zoom video app.

Meetings at Williamston Primary have been cancelled by West Lothian Council until after the school summer holidays due to COVID-19.

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Carol Hallesy, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, Nick Lansdell; Councillor Moira Shemilt

Apologies: Tania Armstrong, David Cooper, Lorna Cooper, Kevin Kerr; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 12 March 2020:

Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 12 March 2020 was proposed by Ian Brown and seconded by Arthur Marris. Carried.

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Finances:

Arthur Marris reported.

The bank balance as of 31 March 2020 is £30,042.22. This includes publicly funded grants for community projects.

Payments have been made in respect of the Town Centre Fund project as follows :-

£702 Architect's fee

£101 x 2 Fees for the two planning applications

£80 Advert in Courier to notify the planning application

The last two instalments of £3,000 and £3,912 have been paid to Community Enterprise Limited for producing the Community Action Plan. The instalments were paid following the payment of equivalent amounts into our account by Local Energy Scotland as the second and final instalments of the CARES grant totalling £9,912. Community Enterprise has now completed the project as contracted and has been reimbursed in full.

5. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Moira Shemilt

During the current COVID-19 lockdown, elected members are getting online updates daily on changes to Council services and support being provided to the community. A minimum number of staff are attending Council offices, with a high proportion working from home.

No decision has been made yet on a temporary council rent freeze.

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

Nothing to report.

7. Murieston Development Trust (MDT) :

Davidson McQuarrie provided an update.

The Community Action Plan was produced by our consultants, Community Enterprise at the end of March as planned. Full payment for this work has been made as outlined in the Finances report above.

We are not able to promote the Community Action Plan as we had intended just now during the current COVID-19 lockdown. Until we can, we are publishing the Plan on digital media outlets, along with the comprehensive research report which sets out the background to the consultation.

We will be actively promoting the Community Action Plan, and also progressing actions to set up the Murieston Development Trust at public meetings and events etc., and move forward with adopting the Community Action Plan as a blueprint for making changes which will benefit all in Murieston when circumstances permit. Meanwhile we want to give everyone the opportunity on digital media to read the Community Action Plan and background information, and give some initial feedback.

8. Town Centre Fund for 2019/20:

Ian Brown reported.

The architect we have commissioned has prepared and submitted the planning applications for

consent to create the three community gardens and the community noticeboard.

No update has been provided yet from the Council on the signage providing route information to the Centre, Hospital, College etc. This will also require a separate programme of work to rationalise and upgrade the signs on paths leading to the Centre.

Still no response from ScotRail on whether they can provide the basic power supply required for the defibrillator when it is relocated to the station.

9. Communications, including website - murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk

Carol Hallesy confirmed that the Murieston community Facebook page was being heavily used now. Murieston Trail has an increased number of walkers and there have been some issues which are being addressed on Facebook.

10. Livingston South Station:

Nothing to report.

11. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

Wellhead Farm

The developers have lodged two new applications for planning consent to change the flat types on 8 plots (0186/FUL/20) and to modify condition 11 by delaying the start of the tree belt on Murieston Road to planting season 2020/21 (0065/FUL/20). The Community Council considers this proposed delay in planting is unnecessary and has objected. It will be the autumn at the earliest before the work on the tree belt can proceed, given the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

The developer has been given permission by the Council Planning Service to install a connecting road from Murieston Road to the show house. This was originally to be for a temporary duration of 12 months, but the Planning Service has now permitted this relaxation to remain until the housing development is completed.

No work is taking place on the site now.

Ian suggested we arrange a site visit to see the wheel washing facility, when circumstances permit.

Tarbert Drive (ref. 0927/FUL/18; DPEA case re. PPA-400-2107)

The Reporter has been asking for further submissions on certain points regarding the appeal from the developer and West Lothian Council. Further submissions are on the DPEA web portal, including documents establishing that ancient woodland forms part of the site.

Ian recommended a recently broadcast BBC Horizon documentary *Toxic Town: The Corby Poisonings* about the human consequences of contaminated land at Corby, Northamptonshire.

Takeaway at the Co-op (ref. 0564/FUL/17)

Building work is continuing despite instructions from the First Minister that only essential building work should continue during the current lockdown measures. It was agreed that the Secretary would refer this potential breach in observance of the lockdown requirements to the Police.

It has been suggested that the takeaway will also be fitted out as a café. This is not covered by the existing planning permission and would require a change of use consent.

Camilty Wind Farm

EDF Renewables has applied for planning permission to increase the turbine blade size by 12m, to increase generating capacity for the wind farm. Ian has asked EDF for wireline drawings to visualise the impact of the proposed turbines on the Murieston vista. The wind farm is currently planned to be operational in 2021.

12. Correspondence:

None.

13. Any Other Business:

Davidson McQuarrie advised that we had been asked by the Council about volunteering in the community during the COVID-19 crisis. We are unable to provide such support as our community councillors are almost all in the vulnerable age group or working in frontline public services.

The Meeting closed at 8.20pm

The date of the next Community Council meeting will held *online* on Thursday 7 May