

**MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING ON 10 DECEMBER 2015**  
**held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm**  
**web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>**

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**1. Present:**

Chris Dryden, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, Tania Armstrong, David Cooper, Lorna Cooper, June Keddie, Frank Mustard; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick; Superintendent Kevin Kerr; Sergeant Iain Wells

**Apologies:** Arthur Marris, Ron Skirving, Carol Hallesy, Alex Hendry, Nick Lansdell

**Residents and Guests:** Roger Harper, Dr. Ed. Russell-Smith, Mrs. Sue Brown

**2. Minutes of the Meeting on 12 November 2015:**

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 12 November was proposed by Frank Mustard and seconded by June Keddie, subject to two minor changes. Carried.

**3. Matters Arising:**

Councillor Fitzpatrick advised two minor changes regarding Cala Homes requirement to provide the new street name plate for West Cairn View and the review of the children's ward at St. John's Hospital will be published after next May.

**4. Finances:**

Ron Skirving has confirmed there has been no recent expenditure. The bank balance remains at £1,389.03.

**5. Dr. Ed. Russell Smith, Managing GP and Mrs. Sue Brown, Practice Manager of Murieston Medical Practice:**

Dr. Russell-Smith is attending tonight with Mrs. Sue Brown to outline the plans for the new Practice currently being built.

The Practice has now nearly 5,000 patients. There are six GPs with several working part-time. Appointments are fulfilled within a week.

The Practice received the prestigious Scottish RCGP Practice Team Award 2013 which acknowledges good practice. The submission for the award centred around the care provided by the practice team, community pharmacists and care home staff in the Peacock Nursing Home which the Practice took over in 2011.

From a national perspective, GPs are now retiring early with fewer younger doctors. More than 50% are now women GPs.

The new building is now progressing on schedule for completion in the Spring. The original plan was redesigned to avoid siting the building over an infrastructure services duct.

The new building will have twice the floor space of the current modular building. There will be six consulting and two treatment rooms, with the waiting room in the atrium.

The building has been designed to be functional and patient and staff friendly, with environmental features including a high level of insulation, underfloor heating, LED lighting and 30m<sup>2</sup> of solar panels.

The Lloyds Pharmacy was originally planned as being integrated with the Practice but is now standalone.

The handover from the builders is scheduled for 11 March with the opening of the new Practice in April or possibly the May Day Bank Holiday to facilitate the switch from the old to the new building. The official opening will be on a later date to be decided.

There is an online community initiative to raise funds for items which are not covered by NHS funding.

Dr. Russell-Smith indicated, if possible, he would like to commission a front gate which would be ascribed to the Murieston community. Mrs. Brown will ensure such community funding is managed separately from the Practice administration accounts.

**6. Traffic Calming on Murieston Road:**

Sergeant Iain Wells reported on the actions the Police have been taking recently.

Police have been carrying out speed checks on Murieston Road and Alderstone Road. A covert police car is sometimes used.

Roger Harper asked for more details on how often traffic police have carried out speed checks.

Roger Harper said he had phoned the Police on 4 November to report speeding on Murieston Road and had arranged a meeting on 10 November. He was phoned just beforehand by PC Bell who agreed to phone back after investigating, but he has had no further communication since. Sergeant Wells will check and report at the next meeting in January.

**7. Community Policing:**

Sergeant Iain Wells gave a report on the reported incidents this month.

There has been at least one bogus phone call allegedly from Talk Talk received by a local resident.

Two incidents of public indecency on the Murieston Trail paths have been reported.

There has been a noise complaint in Murieston Valley.

David Cooper noted that the station carpark was normally full on weekdays and cars were now being parked at Wester Bankton and the approach to the Bankton House Hotel.

**8. Councillor's Report:**

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick gave a report.

Councillor Fitzpatrick has had a reply from the Chair of Cala Homes. Cala have placed an order for the street nameplate, West Cairn View and the sign will be installed in the next three weeks.

The street nameplates at the road entrances have been cleaned.

The footpaths in the Bankton area will be repaired by April.

The petition of some 650 petitioners against the proposal to develop the woodland behind Adambrae has been noted by the Council Executive Committee. The full report on the Development Plan will be produced in the Spring.

A new dentist is starting at the Bankton Dental Practice following the retirement of the long-standing dentist.

Street lights are being repaired within four days on average.

The Board of Murieston Village Hall is buying a defibrillator. Lawrence will be speaking to the Co-op and the new hairdresser so that they are aware of the new facility. Fire Scotland has agreed to provide free training in its use.

Councillor Fitzpatrick has attended various events recently :-

- World War 1 and 2 remembrance commemorations
- School Stellar Awards
- A training course on the new Universal Credit benefit system,
- A classical concert for the Friends of Chernobyl's Children charity in West Lothian
- Business Breakfasts which showcase funding options and training opportunities for local companies who may be in a position to recruit a young person on a wage subsidy

The base school forecast for future school numbers has determined the three local primary schools will cope, unless there is further housing development in the area then a catchment review would be necessary.

Bellsquarry Primary took part recently in a quality assurance check. The Council was the first to run these checks in Scotland and runs these between the HMIE inspections which occur every seven years.

The Quality Assurance team comprised the Headteacher, other headteachers, Chair of the Parent Council and the Council Education Officer.

West Lothian schools have shown the most significant improvement in attainment in Scotland.

Where a pupil fails an accredited examination unexpectedly, an appeal can be made by the school for a fee using the SQA Post-Results Services. There have been 12,077 appeals this year which is a 43% increase.

The pass mark for Mathematics this year was reduced to 33.8% to reflect its level of difficulty.

A team from Deans Community High School were successful in the British round of the F1 Challenge and have competed recently in the final in Singapore.

The West Lothian Schools Brass Band won the Scottish Championship for 2015 and will be going to Lille in May to compete in the European Brass Band Championships.

The Woodlands Trust is looking for persons to participate in a survey of ancient trees. Lawrence will be pleased to collate and advise the Trust of the names of volunteers.

Lawrence showed a map of the Murieston area dated 1965 with details of the TPOs set by the then responsible local authority, Midlothian County Council.

- 9. Murieston Environmental Group (MEG) - <http://meg.btck.co.uk> :**  
Nothing to report.
- 10. Murieston Local History Group :**  
Nothing to report.
- 11. Windfarms:**  
Ian Brown gave a report.  
Preparation of the windfarm sites at Peary Law and Harburnhead has started. Murieston is within the grant catchment area.  
Corners are being cut back on the Harburn Road to enable the transport of the turbine blades etc. for the Peary Law scheme.  
The planning application for the Camilty scheme has gone to the Reporter on appeal.  
Ian attended the AGM of the West Lothian Development Trust held in Longridge. Murieston is within the catchment boundary of the three windfarm schemes which, according to the Trust constitution, enables us to appoint a director to the Trust.
- 12. Community Website - [murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk](http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk)**  
Nothing to report.
- 13. Community Allotments:**  
Ian Brown reported.  
Ian has secured a grant of £1,200 from the West Lothian Development Trust for the habitat survey.  
The contractor will be starting the survey shortly.  
Ian has contacted the Scottish co-ordinator for Kew Gardens who can make awards up to £4,000 regarding a grant for a habitat survey.
- 14. Local Development Plan:**  
Ian Brown reported.  
Our comments on the draft Local Development Plan have been submitted. The finalised Plan will be published in the Spring.  
Ian and Chris Dryden attended the planning presentation by the Council last night. Developers' reluctance to fulfil their development contribution remains an issue. Developers can object then go to the Reporter to have the contribution reduced.  
There was a discussion of the issues which should be addressed in our planning response.  
Ian has emailed out a list of issues and will be submitting our response by 22 November.
- 15. Planning Applications:**  
Ian Brown reported.  
Network Rail intend to re-open the bridge on Murieston Road before the end of January. The temporary bridge has been removed.  
Network Rail have written to residents to advise work will be taking place soon to clear the trackside embankments. Ian has confirmed with Network Rail that the service vehicles will be accessing the tracks at Brucefield.  
The bicycle shed at the station is being replaced.  
Ian reported on the reception organised by the Planning Aid for Scotland at the Scottish Parliament on 26 November which he had attended with the Chair and Secretary. The theme on planning was Inclusive places: Creating a fairer Scotland.
- 16. Correspondence:**  
The chairperson of the PCS Union Lothians branch has contacted community councils in West Lothian regarding the HMRC plans to close its offices in Livingston and Bathgate which will result in the loss of approximately 1300 jobs in the area by 2020. He would appreciate the opportunity to attend a community council meeting to provide further information on the HMRC plans and the implications for our community.  
This request was discussed and it was concluded that this impinged on political issues which were outside the remit of the community council and, therefore, we will not follow up on the request.
- 17. Any Other Business:**  
We have booked the Terrace Restaurant at West Lothian College for Christmas Dinner on Thursday 17 December at personal expense.

**The Meeting closed at 8.30 pm**

**The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 14 January 2016 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School**