

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 14 JUNE 2018
held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

An Ordinary meeting of Murieston Community Council continued after the 2018 AGM was concluded.

1. Present:

Carol Hallesy, Arthur Marris, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, Tania Armstrong, David Cooper, Lorna Cooper, Kevin Kerr, Nick Lansdell, Frank Mustard, Ron Skirving; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Councillor Moira Shemilt

Apologies Chris Dryden; Councillor Peter Heggie

Residents: Residents of Bankton Park East and Bankton Park West -

Jackie Martucci, Stephen Grimshaw, Alma Bennie, Bob Campbell, Vicky Roberts, Yvonne Galloway, Sarah Hague

Roger Harper, John Sharp

Carol Hallesy, as Vice-Chair, assumed Chair tonight as Chris Dryden was unable to attend

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 10 May 2018:

Acceptance of the minutes of the regular meeting on 10 May was proposed by Tania Armstrong and seconded by Frank Mustard. Carried.

3. Matters Arising:

None.

4. Bankton Park East and Bankton Park West Traffic Management:

Jackie Martucci has asked to speak to the Community Council about problems experienced with speeding vehicles on Bankton Park East and Bankton Park West, and to discuss possible traffic calming solutions.

Jackie is asking for speed bumps to curb speeding, though it is acknowledged there may be some issues.

Traffic calming was installed retrospectively at the head of the streets in the form of a platform several years ago, but this of itself has not stopped speeding.

The 20 Plenty signs have made no difference in calming speeding vehicles. Delivery vans and boy-racers are worst at speeding. Pets have been run over by speeding vehicles. Children have to be kept in back gardens.

A letter drop of the street did not make a difference. Residents have also spoken directly to drivers.

A petition has been circulated in the two streets which was concluded when it reached one hundred signatures.

Incidents have been reported to the Police but no action has been taken. The Police advise that their own speed detection equipment cannot be used by third parties.

The Council officers say they cannot use a standard radar speed detector on the street.

Kevin Kerr said that the Police Traffic Management Department can provide a detector which will measure traffic flow.

Jackie said she had attended the West Lothian Council Executive meeting last October to raise the issue and request traffic calming measures in the two streets.

The Council conducted a traffic survey recently, carried out by a senior Road Safety and Traffic Management engineer, but at a time of day when there was not much traffic and this did not identify speeding.

Tania Armstrong suggested asking the Council to arrange for the engineer to do another traffic survey at an appropriate time of day.

Jackie has spoken to Councillor Fitzpatrick who has walked the two streets to get an understanding of the issues and concerns.

Roger Harper said that a traffic radar check was carried out two years ago in Murieston Road. There were 22 vehicles stopped, with 20 drivers warned of speeding. It is necessary to persuade the Council and Police; and communications should be put in writing so there is evidence of accountability.

Ron Skirving said social media can be used to report speeding vans.

Councillor Shemilt noted that the 6 months rule for re-raising an issue within the Council has now expired, and the matter could be put before the Local Area Committee.

5. Finances:

The bank balance now stands at £1,803.82 as of June 2018.

6. Community Policing:

No response.

Arthur Marris made the case for Police being involved with community councils. The dialogue between the Police and community council is missed and there is a need for a forum to provide community engagement.

7. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Moira Shemilt:

Councillor Shemilt gave a report.

The proposal for the footway linking Murieston Road and Murieston East Road has now been approved at the Council Executive. The cost of £85,000 for building the footway and the associated road changes will be paid by the developers of the Wellhead Farm site, which was approved on appeal recently. As funds have already been allocated in the Council budget, equivalent funds will be freed up for other pedestrian programmes elsewhere in West Lothian.

Councillor Shemilt considered the new chicane under the bridge would introduce a road hazard.

Councillor Shemilt noted dissatisfaction about the process in which the new pathway was approved.

The Council's questionnaire survey to residents had been flawed,

The proposal was initially considered by the LAC and then referred to the Council Executive, where officers were asked to consider and report back on safety concerns to the Council Executive. Officers then changed little in the original proposal, which was then approved without due consideration of alternatives.

The footway is 2 metres wide under the bridge, yet 1.5 metres wide on the pavement leading to it. A safety barrier is planned round the footway. West Lothian Disability have endorsed the provision of the new footway. There is a safety issue at Robin's Lane as the footpaths are poorly lit and the Council has agreed to improve lighting at that junction of the paths.

In Councillor Shemilt's opinion, the money released from the Wellhead Farm development for community benefits should go specifically to projects for the Murieston community.

Frank Mustard made a case for the new footway as an appropriate pedestrian route on Murieston Road.

John Sharp said the way the decision had been made was dispiriting. The decision had been made at a high level within the Council, instead of at a lower community level. It was unclear if his alternative option, outlined at the March meeting of the community council, had been considered.

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

Arthur Marris reported.

The pond dipping event on Sunday 27 May had been well attended and enjoyed by everyone. Another volunteers day has been held recently to clear up Cambridge Pond. Bottles and other detritus were removed from the Pond.

MEG are looking for more volunteers to assist with their programme of activities.

9. Murieston Development Trust:

Councillor Shemilt gave a report regarding the Trust.

A meeting of the Trust board has been held recently. The board intend having a steering group to set up the Trust framework etc. It was agreed we would like to invite trustees to one of our community council meetings soon.

Ian Brown advised that the Scottish Government rejected Fauch Hill Windfarm Appeal; consequently, there will be no community benefit from this project. The estate is now up for sale.

Camilty Windfarm development has changed hands from Partnerships for Renewables (PFR) to EDF.

Development is now planned for 2019.

Arthur Marris noted that Murieston Development Trust will doubtless want to be ready to participate in negotiating disbursement of community funds.

10. Windfarms:

Nothing to report.

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

Ron Skirving reported.

Ron has added privacy and cookie policies to the website. There have been several posts on the website.

Ron outlined a suggestion to publish minutes from Bellsquarry Community Council.

The meeting agreed the Bellsquarry CC minutes can be published on our website should this be appropriate.

Ron will be sending out the next edition of the community council newsletter shortly.

12. Community Garden and Allotments:

Nothing to report.

13. Livingston South Station:

Network Rail state they are on schedule to install the stairs and lifts in the autumn.

Network Rail have indicated that they are willing to provide a representative to attend the next Community Council meeting.

Ian Brown noted there are gaps in the temporary fencing on the platforms which could result in bottles etc.

being dropped through the gaps onto pedestrians below. Ian wrote to Network Rail on 18th May to ask for this to be dealt with. To date there has been no response.

Regular updates on the Shotts Line Electrification project are provided on Twitter at @shottslineelec.

14. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

A planning application has been made for tree management works, including selective thinning and branch removal at the woodland at Bankton House Hotel (0481/TPO/18).

The new planning bill was debated in Scottish Parliament on 29 May.

As from 12th September, the Planning (Scotland) Bill will move to stage two. Third party right of appeal still remains a challenge as the Scottish Government has refused to accept it into the Bill.

No money has been identified to fund communities in adopting the new Local Place Plan provision.

No other significant planning applications other than Bankton Wood tree felling.

15. Correspondence:

None.

16. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Fitzpatrick arrived at the end of tonight's meeting after attending another community event.

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick gave a report.

Councillor Fitzpatrick explained that he was late for tonight's meeting as he had been attending the West Lothian Young Writer of the Year Awards at Howden Park Centre.

Councillor Fitzpatrick has recently attended AGMs of the local Scouts and Guides groups, and a music evening at Williamston Primary School.

A community safety strategic assessment has set five safety priorities for 2018-21, which are community wellbeing, anti-social behaviour, violence, serious organised crime and counter-terrorism.

The Council has set up a Jobs Taskforce which will have representatives from various public agencies.

The Anti-Poverty Strategy to tackle poverty is reviewed every year and the current annual action plan is linked to seven key priority areas reflecting poverty concerns.

The Council has agreed with the Audit Commission report for better involvement with the community.

The Council is now starting to charge for music tuition. Parents were surveyed and asked to consider several options. 36% of families responded, with 56% choosing option 4 which entailed a charge for pupil tuition. This will provide a funding level of 50% (£500,000 pa) for the Instrumental Music Service.

West Lothian College has been participating in an Erasmus+ funded project with Houchsauerlandkreis province in Germany which focuses on young people who are of risk of not securing sustainable employment, or a positive destination, after completing their time at school.

The new West Calder High School will open in August.

The City Deal for West Lothian will fund new primary and secondary schools in Winchburgh. An upgrade to the Sheriffhall roundabout on the City Bypass will also be funded.

The extreme cold weather affected the refuse fleet, which has led to delays in collection. The fleet is being upgraded and the normal waste uplift programme will be resumed by October.

The Council subsidy for bus services in West Lothian is now £1.8million a year.

Ian Brown noted that the First Bus timetable display system was not functioning at the entrance to the Centre.

17. Any Other Business:

The Secretary confirmed meetings are booked for the forthcoming 2018/2019 session on the second Thursday of each month from September to June 2019 at the Staff Room in Williamston Primary.

The Meeting closed at 8.45pm

The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 13 September 2018 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School.