

MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 9 FEBRUARY 2017
held at Williamston Primary School at 7 pm
web: <http://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk>

1. Present:

Chris Dryden, Kevin Kerr, Ron Skirving, Ian Brown, Davidson McQuarrie, Nick Lansdell, Frank Mustard; Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick; PC Alan James;

John Easson, Safer Neighbourhood Officer from West Lothian Community Safety Unit

Apologies: Arthur Marris, Tania Armstrong, David Cooper, Lorna Cooper, Carol Hallesy, Alex Hendry

Residents: Andrew White

Minutes of the Meeting on 12 January 2017:

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 12 January was proposed by Ron Skirving and seconded by Kevin Kerr. Carried.

2. Matters Arising:

None.

3. Finances:

Ron Skirving confirmed the bank balance remains at £1,850.

Kevin Kerr has drafted an expenses form which it was agreed we will use for claiming and paying expenses to community councillors to reimburse payments made in respect of community council business.

It was agreed that Ian Brown as Planning Secretary will attend a Planning Aid for Scotland seminar in Edinburgh about the new Planning Bill with a focus on mediation and consultation.

4. Community Policing:

PC Alan James gave a report.

The monthly crime stats for Livingston South ward were outlined.

<u>Calls</u>	<u>January 17</u>	<u>January 16</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
Youth	17	18	-6%
Anti-Social Behaviour	120	113	6%
Hate Crime	6	2	200%
Vandalism	20	23	-13%
Fire-raising	3	0	-
Public Space Assaults	16	13	23%

Two bogus workmen had made cold calls to houses in the Bankton area. Arrests were made following reports by residents.

PC James reminded that we should always be alert to workmen cold calling doorsteps to offer to do work inside or outside a house. They may then gain access and steal from the home. Residents are asked to phone 101 when they have an unknown doorstep caller.

5. Community Safety Unit:

John Easson of the West Lothian Community Safety Unit has attended tonight's meeting to advise us of the work of the Community Safety Unit.

There are now separate East and West Teams. The teams operate throughout the day until midnight. Calls re. noise nuisance go to the Police initially. The Unit staff will then go to the house where the complaint relates and assess noise from the neighbouring property by measuring decibels. The Unit can only act if the readings exceed a threshold of 37 decibels by day and 32 dB by night. They may speak to the neighbours to reduce the noise.

The Unit works as part of the Safer Neighbourhood Team with the community policing team and also covers youth disorder issues. The Unit may make joint visits with the Police to parents of children causing disorder.

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

Nothing to report this month.

7. Broadband Rollout:

Chris Dryden reported that Virgin Media have now made their new broadband cabinet live in Murieston valley and are accepting orders for connected services.

The BT Openreach Chief Executive has confirmed a broadband cabinet will be installed in Murieston South near to Skivo in September, which will serve the area currently on Exchange Only lines.

8. Murieston Local History Group :

Nothing to report.

9. Windfarms:

Ian Brown reported.

A revised planning application for the Fauch Hill windfarm has been submitted.

Ian attended a public information event at West Calder last Friday and spoke to the developer regarding community benefits. West Lothian Development Trust will receive £1,500 per megawatt hour.

10. Community Website - murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk

Ron Skirving advised he can develop the website further to enable postings by the public. This facility would be an effective method to gauge the views of the community on the formation of a community development trust for Murieston.

11. Community Noticeboard:

Chris Dryden is investigating whether a grant can be sought to fund the noticeboard.

12. Community Development Trust (CDT):

Ian Brown explained how the Harburn and West Calder CDT had been set up after a consultation of the community of Harburn and West Calder.

We have previously agreed that we will engage more actively with the community to confirm their views on whether to set up a CDT for Murieston. This can be done via our community website, Facebook page and a letter drop. Our newsletter will also be used as it is emailed to over 400 subscribers.

The executive officers will prepare an article etc. on establishing a CDT for Murieston, which will be sent out to residents to obtain their views.

13. Community Garden and Allotments:

Ian Brown reported.

A contractor has been taking soil samples on the proposed site earlier this week.

14. Planning Applications:

Ian Brown reported.

It was agreed that Ian Brown will attend as our Planning Secretary a conference organised by Planning Aid for Scotland and Scottish Mediation about a mediation approach offering a more collaborative planning system.

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). Ian will ask to be heard as community council representative, though there is no confirmation yet that there will be a public hearing.

Ian, Chris Dryden and Kevin Kerr will be formally representing the Community Council at the Inquiry hearing next Wednesday and Thursday at the Cricket Club to decide the appeal against the refusal of the planning application for Murieston Castle (0355/P/15). Ian and Chris will also attend the accompanied site visit scheduled for the next day.

15. Local Development Plan:

Ian Brown reported.

Ian has responded to the recent SESPlan consultation, expressing our concern that the prescribed green networks do not include south Livingston in the proposed Plan. He has not received a reply yet.

16. Factoring Services:

A discussion followed on the factoring arrangements and cost provided by Greenbelt in the area.

Costs have risen by 21% recently for factoring.

Where a factoring contract is prescribed in the Deeds of Covenant for a property there are two ways to formally leave the scheme.

Some residents have collectively bought out the factoring contract for their street and our now less than £5 per household annually.

17. Councillor's Report:

Councillor Fitzpatrick arrived at the meeting at 8.20, following discussion of previous items of business, due to attending a prior engagement.

Councillor Fitzpatrick explained that signage will be erected to advise on restrictions on parking at the roundabout in Murieston Valley to ensure that secondary access is enforced as required by emergency services.

The digital signage displaying bus arrival information is now operational at the bus station.

The Council has agreed cost sharing with Tennis Scotland for the repair of the six tennis courts at James Young High School.

This year's educational attainment results will be published very soon.

Issues regarding the toilets at James Young School were referred to the Deputy Chief Executive and are now resolved.

Work to replace the existing five-span timber footbridge over Dedridge Pond, next to the Dragon Fly, is being replaced with work to start next Monday, for completion in four weeks. The new footbridge will be constructed from hardwood timber and should be more durable than the existing bridge.

Nick Lansdell asked when the work on the footpath under the rail bridge would start. Lawrence said the project had been postponed until the power cabling work was completed and is likely to now go ahead by April.

Network Rail have confirmed that work to reconstruct the station will start in the Autumn. This will include lengthening the platforms and improving disabled access to the platforms. The station will remain open during the programme of works.

Lawrence attended the commemoration service in West Lothian for Holocaust Memorial Day.

He also attended 40th anniversary celebration of St. Ninians Primary and was a judge for the poetry competition at Williamston Primary.

Lawrence attended a recent Career Ready exhibition at Howden Park Centre. Career Ready is a programme of study for 16-19 year olds, delivered by employer volunteers who can provide masterclasses, mentoring, workplace visits and internships.

A free weekly Pop/Rock choir experience, Voice Rocks, is being held for young people at Howden Park Centre from 18 February to 3 June on Saturdays at 10am. Classes will be taught in an easy-to-learn style.

Participants will listen to and discuss songs in the rock/pop genre and decide as a group which ones to rehearse. This project is being delivered by the Council's Community Arts team.

18. Correspondence:

None.

19. Any Other Business:

Chris Dryden advised that the Murieston United Under 14s team is playing Hutchison Vale in the semi-final of the Scottish League SE Region Cup this Saturday at Bankton Mains.

The Meeting closed at 8.40 pm

The next Community Council meeting will be on Thursday, 9 March 2017 at 7 pm in the Staff Room at Williamston Primary School