

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 135th meeting, held on 29th January 1996 in
Portobello Baptist Church Hall.

PRESENT:

Sandy Smith (Chairman), Tom Smith (Secretary), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer)
Harold Alexander-Bowen, Gillian Anderson, Joan Beattie, Sandy Begg, Celia Butterworth,
Cllr Maureen Child, Shand Hutchison, Keith Jeffrey, Osbert Lancaster, Julie Lodge, PC John Kerr
(Portobello Police), Sheila McIvor, Cllr Lawrence Marshall, Inspector Keith Marwick (Portobello Police),
John Maule, Anne Millan, George Murray, Lesley Reid, Margaret Smith, Gordon Stirling, Nick Stroud,
Keith Veitch.

Plus 80 members of the public.

APOLOGIES:

Isobel Allan, Sgt Peter Boni, Beryl Neill, Gavin Strang.

Note: people who wish to submit apologies at the last minute should notify Sandy Smith on 669 6534.

135.1 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed the very large audience to our first meeting of 1996 and in order to accommodate all those who came only to take part in the Promenade Cycleway discussion he called on Philip Noble of the Regional Council's Transportation Department to make his presentation. This is covered in a separate report (see Appendix).

135.2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes were accepted (proposed by George Murray, seconded by Shand Hutchison).

135.3 MATTERS ARISING

135.3a Joppa Tennis Courts:

- 1) Lesley Reid produced a first draft of a document for discussion with the Tennis Club Committee. This discussion needs to take place soon in order to reach agreement before the start of the new season.
- 2) A reply has been received from the Gracemount Workshop supervisor, in response to the Secretary's letter to Roger Jones of the District Council's Recreation Department asking for the fence to be made safe. We are informed that the fence is our responsibility but that the Workshops would repair it for about £900. He also said that the fence is safe enough as it is, and he could advise us on how to stabilise it ourselves. This will be discussed with the Club Committee.
- 3) We have now arranged block insurance cover, but there will be a 4 to 5 week gap between our old and new policies. The Treasurer will speak to Neta Sinclair about this.

135.3b Christmas decorations: £500 worth of lights and associated equipment were purchased. We received a £100 donation from Scottish Power and have reason to believe that we will receive further donations from other sponsors. We were also given a Christmas tree for the Town Hall entrance hall by Porto Shed Company of Bath Street. This was put up and decorated by

Andrew, the Hallkeeper, who also erected all the other lights and decorations at the Town Hall. We thank all parties very much for their efforts and contributions.

- 135.3c Litter around the Town Hall: the situation is being closely monitored. Lawrence Marshall was asked to try once more to have extra litter bins provided near the benches to the east of the Bank of Scotland. It was also suggested that the existing bins need to be cleaned on the outside.
- 135.3d “Towerbank Playground” (on Prom by Toddlers’ Hut): Shand reported that the rear wall is being rebuilt but so far no action has been taken about the shelter.
- 135.3e Signposting and plaques: work continues. Detailed designs requiring some skills are required before realistic cost estimates can be obtained. “Welcome to Portobello” signs will cost about £250 each, and it was agreed that we could manage to contribute say one third of this, with the Amenity Society and the District Council paying the rest. A new information board has been gifted by the Scottish Tourist Board and erected to the east of the Town Hall, outside the Bank of Scotland.
- 135.3f Universal Markets: no further information.
- 135.3g Proposed waiting restrictions in Brighton Place: a reply has been received from the Transportation Department saying that double yellow lines will be introduced between the existing restrictions on the east side of Brighton Place between numbers 7 and 19. This is approximately 20 metres between Lee Crescent and the High Street.
- 135.3h Bus route maps and timetables: a reply has been received from the Planning Department saying that they do not have the resources to create and update line drawings of bus routes, as information is constantly changing. No alteration to the present system is likely until after April 1996.
- 135.3i Allotments at Craigentenny: a reply has been received from the Director of Recreation saying that the Council has agreed to enter into negotiations with Caledonian Land, with a view to retaining the site for allotment use.
- 135.3j Portobello Audit: it seems that a good way forward will be to adopt what was originally an American idea called Community Vision. This was first adopted locally as Edinburgh Vision, out of which came Edinburgh Business Initiative on Aids and Child Friendly Edinburgh Campaign. The item continues.
- 135.3k Millennium Fund: after consultation and discussion in our Sub Committee it seems more realistic to try for a Seaside Award rather than Blue Flag status. To this end, Steven Walker from the District Council’s Environmental Services Department will be asked to make a presentation to our next meeting to give us some ideas about improvements to the area from the beach to the south side of the High Street.
- 135.3l Eastern General Hospital: a reply has been received from Edinburgh Health Care Trust saying that we will have a copy of the cost/benefit analysis when it is available.
- 135.3m Portobello Baths: the refurbishment has received a contribution of nearly £1 million from the Sports Lottery Fund, but despite this the high cost of extra work – some £500,000 – means that it will not be possible to install a salt water system. Major work will start in the middle of April.

135.4 REPORTS

135.4a Police

There was no formal Police report as Sgt Boni was not well. Inspector Keith Marwick has recently arrived as Station Inspector at Portobello and took the opportunity to introduce himself.

135.4b Treasurer's Report

The accounts as at 29th January 1996 are:

Treasurer's Account: £1381.89

Joppa Tennis Courts: £ 372.36

Julia Cormack (Librarian) and Andrew Craig (Hallkeeper at the Town Hall) have each been given a gift of £20 in recognition of their help to the Community Council.

135.5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 135.5a Community Council Reception: this will be held on 13th March, and we have been asked to nominate three representatives. The Secretary will deal with this.
- 135.5b Figgate Park upgrading: work will start soon on upgrading the existing hard surfaces and making safe the banks of the burn, as well as reconstructing and enlarging the island. This is a training unit for the Council's Constructional Skills Unit, funded by LEEL (£74,500) and the Capital Development Trust (£40,000).
- 135.5c Meadows Yard: approval is being sought to have this area declared a Local Nature Reserve. It is hoped to have an official opening day in the Spring.
- 135.5d East Edinburgh Local Plan: proposed changes to the Local Plan (*not* the Lothian Region Structure Plan as intimated by the Secretary, although modifications to that have also been received) are soon to be published, and in order to help us understand the implications and procedures for lodging objections it was agreed to invite David Leslie from the Department of Planning to speak at our next meeting.
- 135.5e Funding for services: it was suggested that the new Council should be asked what their policy will be with regard to funding for education, sport, social services, recreation and all the other local government services on which our community depends. It seems likely that spending in all areas will be cut, and any successful campaign to protect funding in one area will inevitably lead to greater cuts in other areas. Nick Stroud and Lawrence Marshall to find out what areas are likely to be most affected.

135.8 FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meetings will be held on the following dates in Portobello Baptist Church Hall in the High Street (enter by the door to the right of the Portobello Bar), starting at 7:30pm:

Monday 26th February

Monday 25th March

APPENDIX

Proposed Promenade Cycleway:

Presentation by Philip Noble, LRC Transportation Dept

At present 52% of journeys to work are under 5 km, but only 1.9% are made by bicycle. It is hoped to increase this to 4% by the year 2000 and to 10% by 2010, by making better and safer cycle routes and facilities.

Statistics for traffic accidents involving cyclists show a black spot in the Portobello High Street area, and for this reason it was decided to propose to permit cycling along the full length of the Prom. Opening up the eastern section would also fill a gap in the proposed Cramond-Fisherrow cyclepath.

The proposal is to allow cycling on the Prom with no segregation or lane markings, but with prominent notices asking cyclists to give way to pedestrians, and bollards or some other devices placed at entrances to the Prom which are obscured by high walls to prevent cyclists staying close to the wall and being unable to see or be seen by people coming on to the Prom.

The public now had their say, and nearly all the speakers were against the proposal on grounds of safety, some of them admitting to being cyclists. Among the few who were in favour, one said that he would at least like to see children under 12 being allowed to ride on the Prom, even if the full proposal is withdrawn. Questions were asked about alternative routes, but no satisfactory solution was offered.

It was suggested that the proposal had already been accepted as a *fait accompli* by the Council, but it was pointed out that all the due process would have to be gone through and this included an opportunity to lodge objections.

Philip was thanked for his presentation and it was hoped that he had noted the very strong feeling of the meeting against the proposal.

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MEETING

The 136th meeting of Portobello Community Council
will be held
on Monday 26th February 1996 at 7:30pm,
in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 High Street.

No business will be discussed at the February meeting as we will have two guest speakers:

Mr David Leslie, Department of Planning, on the East Edinburgh Local Plan

Mr Steven Walker, Environmental Services, on improving the environment between and including the beach and the High Street.