



# PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## **DRAFT Minutes of the 251st meeting held on 27th August 2007 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall**

**Present:** Margaret Munro (Vice Chair), Nick Stroud (Secretary), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer) Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns (PCATS), Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Caroline Hosking, Peter McColl (PEDAL), Brenda Molony (Porty Reporter), David Scott, Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), Tom Smith, John Stewart (PAS), David Turner (Amnesty), Sean Watters (PFANS), Betty Young.

**Apologies:** Robert Gatliff, James Hunter (CEC), Bob Jefferson (Porty Online), Stephen McIntyre, Karen MacLean (PPAG), Lawrence Marshall, Tom Nimmo (Brighton Residents), Sheila Scott (Merchants & Hoteliers), Sandy Smith.

**In attendance:** Clive Barbour (Viridor), David Brignall (Waddell Armstrong), Cllr Maureen Child, Mark Cummings (PPS), Cllr Stephen Hawkins, Della Morris, Kenny Owen,

### **251.1 Vice Chair's welcome**

The Vice Chair welcomed members back after the Summer break. She noted the death of Community Council member Alix Gaffney (Robert Gatliff represented the Community Council at Alix's funeral).

She reported that Robert Gatliff would be unavailable at this meeting and the September meeting, so she would be chairing both.

### **251.2 Viridor presentation**

Mark Cummings of PPS, Viridor's 'community engagement' company, reported that Viridor would be submitting a planning application for the waste transfer site in around one month's time, and would circulate a newsletter describing the proposals at the time. A 'comparator pack' was also in preparation, illustrating the operation of the similar installation in London. He explained that, due to feedback from the stakeholder workshop and public exhibition, they had decided to reduce the hours of operation applied for from 24 hours to ten hours per day, from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. The responses to the consultation would be put on deposit in public places in Portobello.

David Brignall of Wardle Armstrong planning consultants said they had made several changes to the plans following feedback from the public, including improvements in access to the site to minimise congestion. He pointed out that the site might occasionally have to be open for 24 hours a day to accommodate the City Council's extra street cleaning at Hogmanay and Festival time; otherwise there would be no night-time noise from the site. They had assessed the baseline noise environment in the area to help monitor their own impact. In response to the final main issue raised in the public consultation, he pointed out that all work would take place inside the building, to prevent any smells reaching the surrounding area.

Several further points were made in response to questions:

Odours from refuse vehicles going to and from the site should not be intrusive, since most such smells were due to biodegradable waste which would not be brought to this site. It was up to the City Council to exploit existing technology such as composters to deal with biodegradable waste. There was bound to be a 'NIMBY' effect whatever site was used, but waste must be dealt with somewhere, and the Portobello site was ideal. The local consultation had not been to ballot local opinion, but to help develop the most robust and acceptable business case. Recent criticisms of Viridor were being dealt with through the courts and other appropriate channels, and the company was not attempting to cover up any facts; its health and safety record was good for its size and scope of operation. Nuclear waste would definitely not be handled in Portobello since it was not allowed at Dunbar. There was room for expansion within the planned building, so if more compactors were required at the site to handle more refuse, the building would not have to be extended; the maximum capacity of the site would not exceed two trains per day, with just one to start with.

### **251.3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Margaret Munro pointed out that the roundabout to which she was referring in item 250.5 was the King's Road one, not the Milton Road one. With this correction the minutes were accepted: proposed by Celia Butterworth, seconded by Kathleen Hart.

### **251.4 Matters arising from June meeting**

#### **251.4a Request for more recycling facilities (minute 250.3a)**

- \* The Secretary has yet to do this: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4b Updated membership list and constitution (minute 250.3d)**

- \* The Secretary has yet to circulate these: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4c Ownership of Christian Path (minute 250.3e)**

James Hunter had discovered that the Path is owned by Network Rail, but it was proving difficult to get anyone to take responsibility for cleaning it.

#### **251.4d Community development plans (minute 250.3g)**

- \* Secretary to circulate further details: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4e Removing through traffic from Portobello (minute 250.3i)**

- \* This is with Robert Gatliff: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4f Viridor proposals (minute 250.5)**

- \* Robert Gatliff was due to have written to the City Council summarising concerns: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4g Plans for housing at Newcraighall (minute 250.6a)**

- \* Robert Gatliff was due to have written to the City Council asking for more information: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4h Affordable housing in Edinburgh (minute 250.6a)**

- \* Robert Gatliff was due to have written to the City Council requesting more affordable housing: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4i Open spaces in Portobello (minute 250.6b)**

- \* Robert Gatliff was due to have written to the City Council pointing out that the Community Council was split on this issue: *ongoing*.

#### **251.4j Portobello High School (minute 250.6d)**

Robert Gatliff had written to the City Council to outline the diversity of local opinion on the issue of a new High School.

### **251.5 Meadowbank**

Caroline Hosking reported that the leader of the City Council seemed to want Meadowbank to be refurbished or redeveloped on its present site, but there was no information about the Council's actual intentions. She mentioned that the Save Meadowbank Campaign had organised a very successful public meeting, with 400 people wanting to retain a major sports facility in East Edinburgh. Stephen Hawkins said that the City Council was exploring several options but would have a funding gap even if it sold some of the land, so it had approached the Scottish Executive for its support to develop an national facility.

### **251.6 South Suburban Railway**

Lawrence Marshall had asked if the Community Council would support his petition to the Scottish Parliament to get the 'South Sub' reopened. There was immediate universal agreement to this, and the Secretary was asked to write in support of it.

- \* **Action: Secretary to relay Portobello's support to the South Sub petitioners.**
- \* **Action: Secretary to write to the City Council urging that a site for Portobello's train station be safeguarded in the consideration of Viridor's or any other plans to develop the area.**

## 251.7 North West Development Plan

Several anxieties were expressed, in particular that the consultants didn't seem to have taken much notice of local opinion before drawing up their recommendations. They had largely put forward their own ideas for the area without making enough effort to knit it back into Portobello.

There was particular concern that the promised public meeting had not yet taken place, only a workshop with invited local representatives and interested parties. Stephen Hawkins said that it was probably up to the Planning Department to organise the public meeting since they should be running the whole exercise, though he was concerned that they probably felt they had done enough; he was also concerned that this process had cost two years already, and still wasn't complete. Maureen Child thought the report would probably go to the Planning Committee in October, giving time for the Community Council to call for the public meeting, but Stephen Hawkins was worried that this could lead to another six months' delay. It was agreed to write to Cllr Jim Lowrie, Convenor of Planning, pointing out that several hundred local people had so far been denied the opportunity to voice their concerns about the proposals; John Stewart advised that the letter be copied to Andrew Holmes and Alan Henderson.

Caroline Hosking reported that a group of local residents had been set up and had written to express their concerns, including the suggestion that the community centre should be moved to the Prom; she backed the call for a public meeting. A member of the public feared that the houses in Baileyfield Road could be swept away and the area turned into a concrete jungle; not enough local people had been aware that the proposals were on view in the Library.

Stephen Hawkins agreed that the preliminary outline proposals had been submitted to the City Council, but included nothing that wasn't already public, and it would not be a final proposal until all comments had been analysed. Maureen Child had found widespread local agreement that the Library and community centre should be developed together on one site, but in their present location, not on the Prom; she would check that this was still the case.

- \* **Action: Diana Cairns to draft a letter to Cllr Jim Lowrie requesting the promised public meeting, and Margaret Munro to check and send it.**
- \* **Action: Maureen Child to find out if the Library's and community centre's views of the proposals have changed.**

## 251.8 Reports

**251.8a Police:** (Kenny Owen presented his report even though he was on a day off.) Portobello police station received almost 1,300 calls in July; the increase was due to the school holidays, and the total of 1,100 received so far in August was closer to the normal level. The police had run a Summer initiative. Two or three children had been reported missing but fortunately had been found within an hour. There would be similar initiatives at weekends during September and October. New Chief Inspector Denise Mulvaney had been appointed to Portobello.

There had been a trial of additional CCTV cameras in the area over the Summer. Nobles amusement arcade had found the ones on the Promenade helpful, and the police would bid to have some additional CCTV cameras installed permanently.

**251.8b Treasurer:** The current balances were:

Treasurer's Account: £2,633.40; Joppa Tennis Courts: £7,060.28.

The City Council's annual grant was expected shortly, but three months later than in previous years which had caused some difficulty. £55 would be deducted for public liability insurance, and an extra £65.50 was required to insure the notice boards and plaques.

**251.8c Joppa Tennis Courts:** no report this time.

**251.8d Task Force:** no report this time.

**251.8e Planning:** John Stewart reported on various issues. He had objected to some details of a proposal to build flats in Windsor Place, but not to the principle of the development, and to a retrospective application for permission to have roller shutters on a shop front which had recently been restored with a Town Grant. Permissions had been granted for the Blue Bean cafe to have its full-length windows; for two mews houses in St Mary's Place; for a cafe in Brighton Place to be extended; and for a telecommunications mast to be

erected at Milton Road East. There was due to be a public meeting on 3rd September about the HMO application in Duddingston Crescent.

**251.8f Signs, Plaques and coadestone:** Celia Butterworth reported that the plaque for the coade-stone pillars had been installed, and the top for the big pillar was being manufactured. The information board at Marlborough had been replaced.

**251.8g Portobello Traders:** no report this time.

**251.8h Portobello Online:** no report this time.

**251.8i Community development planning:** no report this time.

\* **Action: Secretary to circulate community development plans.**

**251.8j Community Centre:** David Scott reported that the Centre was operating at full capacity, and needed more space to accommodate new groups.

**251.8k Councillors:**

Maureen Child circulated her usual monthly newsletter.

Stephen Hawkins circulated forms for feedback about the hovercraft trial; comments could be sent to Hyder Consulting Ltd, Brooklands, 680 Budshead Road, Plymouth, Cornwall PL6 5XR. 'No cycling' signs had been installed along the Promenade but the City Council was still working on aspects of this. He was also following up issues of under-age alcohol sales. The kilns had been capped and made safe, and would hopefully be restored in a couple of years' time when there was a budget for it.

## **251.9 Any Other Business**

### **251.9a Shopfronts**

John Stewart regretted that the high standards demanded for shop fronts in central Edinburgh were not required in other key areas of the city, such as Portobello's conservation area, with the result that the character of our streets was being destroyed. He asked that the Community Council protest to the City Council about this, and agreed to draft a suitable letter.

\* **Action: John Stewart to draft a letter to the City Planning Department requesting adequate protection for Portobello's shop fronts, and Margaret Munro to check and send it.**

### **251.9b Secretary's communications**

It was agreed to deal with the ASCC survey at the September meeting. Details of Partnership training and a review of the City's polling stations were circulated. Proposals to close local schools might affect community centres in our Partnership area; a public consultation about this was getting under way.

## **251.10 Future meetings**

Meetings are held on the final Monday of each month, except July and December, at 7:30pm, in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 Portobello High Street.

The next meeting is on 24th September 2007.

Subsequent dates are: 29th October 2007  
26th November 2007  
(no meeting in December)  
28th January 2008  
25th February 2008