



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 266th meeting held on 23rd February 2009 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns (Acting Joint Secretary, PCATS), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer), Caroline Hosking (Acting Joint Secretary), Peter McColl (PEDAL), Margaret Munro (Vice Chair), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), Tom Smith, John Stewart (PAS), David Turner (Amnesty Group), Maria Devoy, Robert Gatliff (Chair), William Wilson.

Apologies: Lawrence Marshall, Archie Burns (PPAG), Margaret Williamson (Portobello High School), Brenda Molony (Portobello Reporter), James Hunter (CEC, Environmental Manager).

In attendance: Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr Stephen Hawkins, Kenny MacAskill MSP, WPC Sarah Potter, Anne Ward, A. Jeffery, C. Alexander, Ian Wilson, A. Robinson.

266.1 Chair's welcome.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including members of the public, not all recorded above.

266.2 Minutes of the previous meeting

One correction was made to the Minutes of the previous meeting: to add Dawson Currie to those who had attended. With this correction, the minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true record by Kathleen Hart and seconded by Celia Butterworth.

266.3 Matters arising from the Minutes

265.2 Update on plans for Baileyfield (ex S Power) site from Broadway Malyan and BL Developments Diana has asked BL Developments to place a model in Portobello Library, which they have agreed to do, once it is updated, along with paper copies of the most significant drawings from their Application when submitted.

263.7 Skills Audit Diana has amended this and sent to Archie Burns to put into Survey Monkey form. Hopefully this should be ready by next meeting.

Action: Diana/Archie to report on progress at the next meeting.

264.6 Minutes Susan Carr of the Neighbourhood Alliance will be able to write the minutes for Portobello Community Council from our March meeting. She has decided to donate the honorarium of £25 per meeting to the Neighbourhood Alliance. The Community Council commended her on this and her support to Portobello Community Council. There was a brief discussion of the Neighbourhood Alliance's role including in consultation and regeneration of Craigmillar, and that they are keen to extend help/advice to the Portobello area.

264.8c Neighbourhood Partnership Draft Local Community Plan - a copy of this is now in the library. Peter McColl has written a piece about the Neighbourhood Partnership's activities for the March edition of the Portobello Reporter.

265.6 Review of Community Council Scheme

Diana Cairns has sent the Community Council's response to Eileen Hewitt, following discussion at the January meeting.

265.8c Neighbourhood Partnership Sub Groups

Peter confirmed he circulates details of the NP Sub-Committees to members via the Acting Secretaries, Diana and Caroline. These are emailed to Members and a written copy is put in the Library. Diana has emailed the NP to find out how the meetings and the outcomes of their projects are publicised to the general public.

Action: Diana to report on the response to her email.

265.8f Environmental update

The question of who should keep the new keys to noticeboards was raised.

Action: It was agreed to place this on the Agenda for the next meeting.

265.8d Edinburgh Association of Community Councils

Dawson reported that EACC is to discuss the Review of the Community Council Scheme at its next meeting.

266.4 Planning Application for the former Funpark Site, Portobello Promenade

This item was introduced by John Stewart, who circulated copies of some parts of the Application. Members of the public had attended for this specific item, and raised a number of points of concern.

This Application appears to differ little from the plans discussed previously by the Community Council, following a presentation by the Architects. The Application is for 73 flats, a Café and a two storey Amusement Arcade on ground and basement levels, with underground car parking. It was noted that the proposed two L-shaped blocks would be five times as long as, and two metres higher than, the new building on the site of Grannie's Attic, at the bottom of Bath Street. There have been two concessions to our comments: 1) The height of the corner blocks has been lowered by 1 storey, from 6 to 5 storeys, losing only 4 flats on the original proposal 2) The proposal has widened the view to the Kilns from the front a little.

Concerns agreed by the meeting included:

-The ground floor is raised by 4 feet, to allow for half the underground car parking and so effectively the building heights are mainly 4.5 storeys, with 5.5 storeys at

each of the corner blocks on the Promenade, and 3.5 storeys on Pipe Lane. This is not in keeping with NW Portobello Development Brief.

-Significant concerns about privacy and daylight issues for residents in neighbouring properties.

-The Kilns will not be visible (at 11.8metres) behind the 4.5 storey (13.6 metres) or 5.5 storey (16.6 metres) buildings. The only views from the Promenade of the kilns will be through an opening, and looking over a 4 foot polished concrete wall. The variety of design materials is concerning, and the Kilns will not stand out well against some of these. The loss of land around the Kilns means there will not be room for a free standing interpretative building which explains the history of the kilns.

-The flat aluminium and sedum roofs, are not in keeping with adjacent pitched roofs or with the Conservation Area, and there are concerns about the practicality of sedum on roofs, in the windy salty microclimate of Portobello.

-Shadowing on the Promenade, beach and adjacent houses was felt likely to be greater than shown and there were concerns that sunpath modelling had not included late evening in summer, or any times in winter when the sun is low. Experience shows that there are very long shadows cast onto the Promenade and beach from the new building on the Grannie's Attic site.

-This Application does not meet the recommendations of the NWPortobello Development Brief in many aspects and these should be pointed out in the Community Council response eg re heights of buildings; the mass and scale should derive from existing adjacent buildings; that the Kilns should have an improved setting, with increased visibility; that building on the Promenade should minimise overshadowing.

-The application appears to contravene NE Edinburgh Local Plan especially Policy E25, as it is not carefully integrated with its surroundings as regards scale, form, siting, alignment and materials.

-There is a loss of public land, and the land to be 'exchanged' for this on the Promenade does not make up for this, not least because the development intrudes on this exchanged land with steps and ramps to the development. The loss of part of 'Bridge Street' Square to the development is very concerning. This is despite the Application stating in one part it will not be affected, but showing it to be in the development on the Survey Plan.

-The Promenade frontage is not an active one with leisure facilities, but private terraces attached to ground floor flats, raised four foot on polished concrete.

-Increased traffic and car parking problems in the narrow streets are major concerns as this is a cul de sac with only one main road exit way, with poor visibility at the junction with Portobello High Street. Residents are opposed to the opening up of the dividing walls at Pipe Street or Tower Street, due to possible rat runs and the narrow roads.

-The appearance of such massive blocks was considered detrimental and not an attractive addition to promote the Promenade and Edinburgh's seaside.

-The absence of affordable housing is unacceptable.

-The 5.5 storey corner blocks are described as landmark buildings but they will be hiding Portobello's historic landmarks of the Kilns, and detrimental to the landmark of the Promenade.

-Vistas/views of the sea will be lost because of this building, adding to previously lost views from Portobello's streets due to development. This takes away from the character of the area.

-Section 75 Planning Gain – a question was raised as to how much the Council would receive under this, but this was not known.

Kilns Developments – This was a separate item on the Agenda but because of its relevance to the Planning Application, it was taken as part of this discussion. Margaret Munro reported that Portobello History Society have met with the Applicants/representatives. They have been offered the store on the building nearest the Kilns, and exhibition space in the café, but are asking for bigger areas for both, with daylight, as those offered are not sufficiently large and do not have adequate daylight. There is also concern there is not enough public space left around the Kilns. They are in the process of setting up Portobello Heritage Trust to ensure the conservation and preservation of the kilns. Space within the development is being sought as recompense for the loss of the public green space where any future interpretation centre could be sited.

Action: It was agreed that John Stewart and Diana Cairns would write a letter of objection from Portobello Community Council based on these and objections as raised in previous Minutes which still apply. Individuals were urged to write in also. Mike Bridgman will look into timescale for repair of Kilns and response to Margaret's request.

Kilns Repairs – Margaret finished her report above by adding that the Council is keen to use the money set aside for the repair of the Kilns as soon as possible. Tenders have been invited, and the repairs will go ahead, although she is unsure of when this will happen. Mike Bridgman will look into where Margaret's request has got to.

Action: Cllr Mike Bridgman to follow up.

266.5 Topics for future meetings

Dawson suggested the following outstanding items:

- Town Hall clock (still missing)
- Christian Path (who owns? Still not cleaned, lit etc)
- Calor Award (When? Will we go in for it?)
- Heather Valley site re-development (eg traffic lights for bridge)

266.6 Reports

266.6a Police WPC Sarah Potter reported it had been a relatively quiet month. The male mentioned at the previous meeting, who had been targeting people's houses saying he had fallen on hard times, has left the area. They are still trying to trace and arrest him. There has been a small spate of break-ins to, and thefts of, vehicles and the Police have increased their foot patrols. There has been an increase in vandalism and graffiti which is being analysed for patterns in an attempt to track the people responsible, with the help of the Police YATeam in Craigmillar.

266.6b Treasurer Kathleen reported that we have now paid back the money to the Council that was wrongly credited to our account instead of Portobello Community Centre. She thanked all three Councillors for their help in sorting this out.

The Treasurer's Account balance is £2876.20 and the Joppa Tennis Courts account balance is £8661.30. She asked for any outstanding balance claims to be sent to her as soon as possible for the end of the financial year.

266.6c Neighbourhood Partnership Peter McColl reported that the next meeting is on 1st April 09. The Funding Panel met on 24th February. The NP Sub Groups are moving on and details are being circulated via the Acting Secretaries. He encouraged at least one Member to attend each if possible and that it is preferable for continuity for it to be the same person attending each Sub Group. It was noted that as most are during the day this is very difficult, as many Members work during the daytime. Meetings are open to members of the public. It was suggested they should be advertised in Portobello Library.

Action: Peter to continue to circulate details of the sub-committees to Members via the Secretaries.

266.6d Edinburgh Association of Community Councils Dawson Currie reported that they are discussing the Review of the Community Council Scheme at their next meeting. Dawson asked for the Community Council's view on an objection from a number of other Community Councils, namely the new requirement to declare interests. The view of this Community Council is that this is to be welcomed, due to the need to be transparent.

Action: Diana to send a copy of Portobello Community Council response to the Review to Dawson.

266.6e Portobello Online – Maria reported there have been a couple of additions to the Gallery Section and mentioned Paper Memorabilia and a link to the People's Journal.

266.6f Environmental update James Hunter, Environmental Manager for East Edinburgh, had sent his apologies and a written report which was read out:

1. He confirmed that a copy of the Community Plan is available in the library. He understands that a summarised version of this document is also to be made available shortly.

2. The Portobello & Craigmillar Environment Forum met on 11th February to update on the local roads and pavements projects and to discuss the Environment Action Plan. The date of the next meeting is Wed 4th March, The Hays at 7.15pm.

3. Finger Post Signs – he has referred this matter to relevant colleagues to carry out remedial works here and understands that these have now been corrected.

4. Recycling Containers (Bowls Centre) - this matter has been picked up by their Waste Team who have been liaising with the Bowls Centre and the Police. He understands that the damaged containers were repaired / replaced.

5. The local Roads Team through the Environment Forum are inviting nominations for next years roads & pavement projects. A £100k fund is available to the Portobello & Craigmillar Environment Forum. (This year's projects are the Milton

Road pedestrian crossing & upgraded seating area at Coillesdene Avenue). He encouraged nominations.

6. National Spring Clean - the national Spring Clean Campaign takes place in April. The East Neighbourhood team is hoping to raise the profile of East during the last week of April by profiling a range of clean up initiatives carried out by the Council and by the great support they receive from community groups, Friends of Parks groups etc. They can provide gloves & litter pickers etc if any local group wants to get involved in an activity. A grant programme (up to £2000) is available to local groups for local projects that encourage reduction, reuse and recycling of waste.

7. For information, he understands that Portobello Library is soon have some refurbishment works carried out which will include the introduction of a self - service facility. Consultation is expected to be carried out in April / May on this. Further information available from Jane Milne 529 3202

Re Item 5 above, it was agreed to nominate Bridge Street Square and Car park for next years roads & pavement projects.

Action: Caroline to write to James with this nomination.

266.6g Planning John Stewart introduced two items (in addition to the Planning Application for the Funpark Site already discussed above):

1. Waste Transfer Site Viridor have lodged an appeal against the Council's decision to refuse this Planning Application, and they wish it to go to a Public Local Inquiry. PONGS, (Portobello Opposes New Garbage Site), the Campaign against the WTS, has met again, and have agreed to fight this. PONGS will need to raise a significant sum of money to do this, so if anyone has any fundraising ideas, please let PONGS know. The letter from Viridor says they have had difficulty contacting PONGS, which the meeting found difficult to understand, as PONGS' details are publicly available from their response to the Planning Application. PONGS is replying to this.

Action: Robert Gatcliff to write to Viridor on behalf of the Community Council to raise this issue.

2. Planning Application 09/00236/FUL, Land N.W. of 5 Marlborough Street

John reported that he had been approached for The Community Council by neighbours of the site in question, who had a range of concerns about the application. The application is for a single storey, L shaped dwelling house, with a felt roof, accessed via 3-7 Marlborough Street. An application to build a house on the same site was refused in the recent past. Concerns expressed at the meeting included that there would be problems of daylight, privacy, building in green/backyard space, design materials, impact on conservation area, access, traffic and parking issues. The proposal appears to be contrary to N.E. Edinburgh Local Plan Policies.

Action: It was agreed to object to this Application and for John to write on behalf of the Community Council.

266.6h Signs and Plaques Celia reported that Zurich Insurance have approved the claim for damage to the Horizon Board at the foot of Kings Rd Portobello Community Council and PAS to share the costs of the claim excess of £100.

266.6i Portobello High School - no report.

266.6j Tennis courts – It was reported that the Club is holding Sunday afternoon sessions on the first Sunday of each month from 1pm – 5pm. The only other news is that there has been some vandalism.

266.6k Portobello Merchants' and Hoteliers' Association - no report

266.6l Community centre David Scott reminded the meeting that the management committee meet on the second Tuesday of every month. The meeting suggested and asked David to raise with the Community Centre, that it would help if they could refer to themselves as Portobello Community Centre, and not PCC, as the recent mixup over funding from the Council had pointed out the possible difficulties from this. Community Councils refer to themselves as CCs.

Action: David to raise this with Portobello Community Centre Management Committee.

266.6m Community development planning - no report.

266.6n Communicating with communities – no report. Robert Gatcliff offered to write an article on Community Council activities for the June edition of The Porty Reporter.

Action: Robert Gatcliff to write an article for June Porty Reporter. A volunteer is required for September and subsequent quarterly editions.

266.6o Councillors Cllrs Child and Hawkins had circulated paper reports. Cllr Bridgman gave a verbal report. Cllr Child added that she had attended a recent Fairtrade event at the City Chambers at which The Lord Provost's Fairtrade Award was given to the Just World Shop in Portobello. The Shop is in its 18th Year, and does a lot of work talking to Schools about Fairtrade. She commended Jim Baird and the other volunteers for their work in promoting Fairtrade.

Cllr Bridgman reported that he is active in the same areas of work as the other two Councillors. He has been invited to be part of the Kilns Working Group. He had pushed for an apology from the Council, now received, regarding the funding wrongly sent to the Community Council instead of the Community Centre. He is also a member of the Fire and Safety Board, and recommended people take up the free fire prevention safety checks and advice.

Cllr Hawkins referred to his written report, saying he had been particularly concerned about the Application for the Funpark Site, and had made a model for the Library, which was brought to the meeting, to show the likely impact on the local area.

MSP – Kenny KacAskill was present to hear current issues and concerns and was happy to take up any issues raised, but had no further report for this meeting.

266.7 AOCB

1. Haywired Robert Gatcliff read information on this IT Training service in Craigmillar, and a request for a volunteer from the Community Council to go on their Board. It was agreed to do this if a Community Councillor is able to volunteer.

Action: Community Councillor volunteers to contact Robert Gatcliff if they can take this on.

2. Save Meadowbank Campaign Caroline read out a recent News Email from Save Meadowbank Campaign, to the effect that the Council has had to put on hold its plan to demolish Meadowbank sports complex until at least 2014, due to the economic downturn's impact on the site value. The meeting agreed to send a message of congratulations to Save Meadowbank Campaign on its continued efforts to save and refurbish the sports complex in its entirety.

Action: Caroline to write to Save Meadowbank Campaign

3. The Cockburn Assn It was reported that their AGM is on 17th March at 4.30pm in the City Chambers.

4. Future topics: Dawson raised a list of outstanding items (referred to above at 266.5 Topics for future meetings)

266.8 Date of next meeting: Monday 30 March.

Meetings are held on the final Monday of each month, except July and December, at 7.30 pm in Portobello Baptist Church hall, 185 Portobello High Street. Subsequent meetings will take place on:

Monday 27 April 2009

Monday 25 May 2009

Monday 29 June 2009