



## **PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the 265<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 26 January 2009 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall**

**Present:** Archie Burns (PPAG), Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns (Acting Joint Secretary, PCATS), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer), Caroline Hosking (Acting Joint Secretary), Peter McColl (PEDAL), Brenda Molony (Portobello Reporter), Lawrence Marshall, Margaret Munro (Vice Chair), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), Sheila Scott (Merchants and Hoteliers), Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), Tom Smith, John Stewart (PAS), David Turner (Amnesty Group), Sean Watters (PFANS).

**Apologies:** Maria Devoy, Robert Gatliff (Chair)

**In attendance:** Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr Stephen Hawkins, Ian Campbell, Clive Andrew, Anne Ward, Mr and Mrs Singh, Lucy Wiltshire, A Dignan. I Abbott, A Jeffrey, J Hunter, A Robinson, P Byrne, WPC Sarah Potter.

#### **265.1 Chair's welcome.**

The Vice-chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The new community police officer, WPC Sarah Potter, introduced herself. She has replaced PC Kenny Owen, following his retirement. WPC Potter said she would like guidance from us on what we would like her to do and report on. She mentioned that a man had been targeting people's houses saying he had fallen on hard times and that he had been sent by the minister of a local church. The police are trying to trace the man. WPC Potter will attend future community council meetings.

#### **265.2 Update on plans for Baileyfield (ex S Power) site from Broadway Malyan and BL Developments**

Broadway Malyan had displayed boards with plans showing their latest proposals for the site, as well as some visual representations of parts of the site. BL Developments are aiming to lodge the application by late February.

After viewing the materials, there were several questions/comments posed.

**Key points:**

The highest number of stories will be six.

The British Legion has agreed in principle that it will move to premises on the site, although no formal contract has been entered into due to financial uncertainty.

It is proposed that the development will be built in brick as the architects believe this will create an historical link back to the clay pits which used to be on this site and this has been discussed with the council's planning dept. The architects said it was difficult to show what the material would look like on a computer generated image and that they would introduce a variety of colour and texture in the brick work and there would be a much more "finished" look to the brick in reality.

John Stewart pointed out that although brick had been made in Portobello, there were no buildings with external brickwork in Portobello apart from the Ramsay Annexe and that was built out of a type of industrial brick not made in Portobello.

The housing mix of the development is proposed to be one third starter homes, one third family homes and one third community use. There will be some live/work units (number not specified); Out of the Blue arts organisation and health and well-being uses at street level on Portobello High Street; family accommodation on two storeys; a small proportion of two-bedroom flats and flats for first time buyers.

In response to a question about views to Arthur's Seat from the High Street, the architects said the buildings would be perpendicular to the High Street to allow views through the site but that the main view would be up Fishwives' Causeway.

There will be around 25% affordable housing on the site, much of it above the British Legion building at middle bracket or social rent or shared equity. The developers have had discussions with Dunedin Canmore housing association about a partnership. The remainder will be scattered throughout the site but is unlikely to be situated in the "block within a block" building in the SE corner of the site.

The developers could not say how many people would be living on the site and how that might affect school numbers, nor whether they would be making a contribution to any local schools and said they would need to discuss contributions with the council. They said they had been asked to make a contribution to both trams and schools in relation to the Shrubhill development. BL Developments have still to decide the exact mix of housing types but think that there will be over 500 units built.

The developers have employed a traffic engineer to assess the impact of additional traffic in the area and have had discussions with the council about access to and from Portobello High Street. The developers are confident that the area will be able to cope with the traffic but will have to demonstrate it. Each unit will have only one parking space and there will be additional visitor parking. The residents' parking will be "undercroft" parking and will vary according to the topography of the site. There will be two-way access in and out of the site.

There will be access for delivery vehicles which will be able to use "shared surface" to get access to properties. The shared surface will also be used by emergency services and will be adopted by the council but its use will be generally discouraged.

Concerns were raised about the block at the SE of the site, which would have narrow, gated access lanes or vennels, in terms of wind tunnels and shadowing. The properties accessed from the vennel will open out to courtyards, Fishwives' Causeway or Arthur's Seat. They will also have access to balconies and gardens. In some of these properties the second or third bedrooms will be below the light standards but the developers say this will be balanced by adequate lighting in the living rooms.

The developers will display enhanced plans in the library before they are formally lodged. The plans will also be available to view on the council's planning portal. In the meantime people can e-mail any comments or questions to BL Developments.

Phil Myerscough thanked the Community Council for the interest shown and our comments on the plans.

Following the departure of the developers and architects, there was a discussion about the plans. John Stewart said that we would need to put in a response to the plans once they are lodged, objecting to the parts of the plans we are not happy with but also identifying what we do like.

Concerns are as follows: density; heights (uniformity vs variation); conformity or otherwise with the design brief; the vennels; the materials; the potential loss of vistas.

Cllr Hawkins suggested a team approach to the response. John Stewart, Ian Campbell, Celia Butterworth and Diana Cairns will help pull together the response. John Stewart felt we also needed some help with the traffic study.

It was noted that BL had been good at consulting the community.

We agreed to ask for a model to be placed in the library as it would be easier to understand than two-dimensional drawings.

**Action:** Diana Cairns to ask BL Developments to place a model in the library and to put the plans on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **265.3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true record by Brenda Molony and seconded by Peter McColl.

### **265.4 Agree AOCB**

David Turner had one item for AOCB.

### **265.5 Matters arising from the minutes**

**2641c Project funding by Neighbourhood Partnership (minute 260.7c)** This letter had not been sent and the item is now removed.

**263.7 Skills Audit** The skills audit has been tested out on a few people and it is felt it will deliver what it is intended to. Archie Burns has done a sample Survey Monkey form. The questions will be fitted into this format and circulated for completion before the next meeting. Paper copies will be made available to those who are not on the internet.

**Action:** Archie Burns and Diana Cairns to co-ordinate.

**262.6b Lothian buses - bus changes/service cuts** Robert Gatliff had written to Lothian Buses about service cuts. They had replied with comments about lack of passengers, the need to cover costs and the need for a subsidy for the No 42 bus, etc. He had followed up by writing to Cllr Child asking her to support Council efforts to get an improved and extended 42 service, which has since been highlighted in Council Transport committee.

One piece of good news was that a member of Craigmillar Community Council had written to Lothian Buses about the lack of disabled access on the No 21 service. The service is now operating with low-floor buses.

**263.8 Portobello Reporter and Community Engagement** Peter McColl is to write the summary of the Community Council's activities for the March edition of the Portobello Reporter. We shall be asking for a volunteer to write the summary of the June edition at the next meeting.

**264.5 Plans for the former Funpark Site, Portobello Promenade** Caroline Hosking had sent the minutes of the October meeting (at which they had done a presentation) to the architects for Kilns Developments. No plans for this site have yet been lodged.

**264.6 Secretary's role** Susan Carr of the Neighbourhood Alliance has agreed to write the minutes for Portobello Community Council to allow the Secretaries to participate fully in the discussions. We agreed to pay her an honorarium of £25 per meeting.

**Action:** Diana Cairns to e-mail Susan about the payment.

**264.8c Neighbourhood Partnership** Draft Local Community Plan **Action:** Cllr Hawkins to place a copy of this in the library.

**Action:** Peter McColl to write a piece about the Neighbourhood Partnership's activities for the next edition of the Portobello Reporter.

### **265.6 Review of Community Council Scheme**

The review of the scheme has been circulated to all members for comment and the consultation closes on 28 February. Caroline Hosking read out Robert Gatliff's comments.

Margaret Munro pointed out that groups must register with the council before an election; registration can happen at any time as long as it is before the election. Forms are available from the library. Brenda Molony said she would place a reminder in the Portobello Reporter.

Tom Smith referred to paragraph 11 and suggested that we should take up the offer of support services. We can use the library facilities to do photocopying, sending faxes and e-mails pertaining to community council business. Our grant includes £100 towards the hire of the hall.

Diana Cairns suggested that we should propose an addition to the Schedule 3 (Respect and General Conduct), paragraph 4. After "It is unacceptable for community councillors to make personal remarks, make personal attacks or otherwise humiliate the other members", we agreed to add: "either at meetings or in other situations such as internet forums".

**Action:** Diana Cairns to prepare a response and circulate for comment to other members before the deadline.

### **256.7 Topics for future meetings**

The only topic we agreed for the next meeting was discussion of the BL Developments planning application.

### **256.8 Reports**

#### **265.8a Police** - no report

**265.8b Treasurer** The Treasurer said that she had been sent a bill for around £5,000 by the council, then it transpired that the council thought they owed it to us and sent a cheque. Kathleen Hart has been trying to return this money but needs a letter from the council acknowledging the repayment before she returns the cheque. The figure of £5145 had been included on the account for the moment until the matter is resolved.

The account therefore stands at £8,111.08 and Joppa tennis courts at £8,661.30.

Maureen Child said she thought it was money owed to the Community Centre and that she would look into it.

**265.8c Neighbourhood Partnership** Peter McColl reported that there were several sub-committees being set up, for example Safety and Housing and Regeneration, plus Economic Development/Employment. Sean Watters volunteered to attend the Safety sub-committee meeting.

We agreed that we should try to send attendees where we have an interest in the subject matter under discussion. Peter explained that there is money available from the Fairer Scotland fund for helping people who are experiencing poverty. Lawrence Marshall indicated that he would be willing to attend meetings when possible. Peter said that the organisers of the sub-committees were looking for continuity of

attendees at the meetings. The venue for Neighbourhood Partnership meetings alternates between Portobello and Craigmillar .

**Action:** Peter to circulate details of the sub-committees being set up to members.

**i) Sub-groups, eg Health and Wellbeing; Environment** Diana Cairns had attended the Health and Wellbeing sub-group. It is a forum for the exchange of information about health and wellbeing projects in the area and is made up of members of local groups as well as healthcare professionals and project workers. Any local group can send along a representative. Brenda Molony asked how the meetings were publicised to the general public and how the outcomes of the projects publicised.

**Action:** Diana Cairns find out and report back.

The next Environment sub-group meeting will take place on 4 February, 7 pm at the Hays Business Centre.

**ii) Access to library facilities for CCs** This subject was covered under the review of the community council scheme.

**265.8d Edinburgh Association of Community Councils** Dawson Currie had not managed to attend the December meeting.

**265.8e Portobello Online** - no report.

**265.8f Environmental update** James Hunter, Environmental Manager for East Edinburgh, gave a report on his department's activities in the area. £100,000 worth of local improvements are to be carried out on roads and pavements, e.g. a pedestrian crossing at Milton Road East and hard landscaping at Coillesdene Crescent.

The Green Pennant award is an award for outstanding green spaces and, following a local survey, the community garden on the Promenade has scored the highest against the criteria for the award. It is therefore intended to put in an application for a Green Pennant award for the garden.

Under the "Keep Scotland Clean" scheme, Edinburgh East neighbourhood has received a score of 71 points (67 is the acceptable level).

Bridge Street, Joppa and Portobello High Street notice boards are to have new keys issued which will be easier to operate. Keys will be issued to the Community Council and the library.

Caroline Hosking asked about the plans for planting up the Bridge Street Square. James Hunter replied that it is scheduled for the end of February. He also explained that the fencing around Bridge Street car park which has rotted away will not be replaced this year as there is no money in the budget for it, although he has applied for "slippage" money from other budgets to be allocated to it.

Caroline also asked about padlocks for the gates on the Promenade at the foot of King's Road. James reported that the council is looking into installing more robust gates, around the end of March. The council will also bear in mind the jet ski issue when planning how to manage the slipway onto the beach.

Other issues raised included: the fact that the finger posts on the High Street are pointing in the wrong directions; the disposal of shrub prunings on the Fishwives' Causeway, causing a hazard to cyclists; littering on Rosefield Avenue; the purpose of the blue skip at King's Road and fires at the recycling centre at the indoor bowling centre car park.

**Action:** James Hunter to look into these issues and report back.

#### **i) Roundabout**

The latest news is that the work should be completed by the first week in April, subject to amenable weather conditions.

#### **ii) Dog fouling**

Celia Butterworth raised the subject of dog-fouling which she said has become considerably worse recently. This was backed up by other members. James Hunter will liaise the Charlie Holt at the council over this. Cllr Hawkins asked whether the campaign against dog-fouling had been forgotten about. Cllr Child said that there had been fewer environmental wardens in the last 6-8 months but that the council was recruiting new wardens.

#### **iii) Volunteer gardeners**

Lucy Wiltshire explained that she and a group of others were interested in taking on the gardening of some neglected areas in Portobello. She asked for suitable areas to be identified and work to be negotiated with James Hunter, emphasising that the group would need to be realistic in what it took on. Kathleen Hart suggested that the Sir Harry Lauder memorial garden at the Town Hall would be a useful place to start. Alison Robinson pointed out that the community garden needed weeding.

**Action:** Lucy and James to discuss how to go about the work.

**265.8g Planning** John Stewart explained that there were two major planning applications pending: BL Developments on the former Scottish Power site and Kilns Developments on the former Funpark site. The plans have yet to be lodged and the Community Council will be making a response to both sets of plans.

**265.8h Signs and plaques** Celia Butterworth said that there was an application in for compensation for damage to the horizon board at the foot of King's Road.

**265.8i Portobello High School** - no report.

**265.8j Tennis courts** - no report

**265.8k Portobello Merchants' and Hoteliers' Association** Sheila Scott has retired from Findlay's and Clive Andrew of Shapes hairdressers will take over as president of the traders' association. Clive said that he would try to get more input from the traders.

**265.8l Community centre** David Scott reminded the meeting that the management committee meet on the second Tuesday of every month.

**265.8m Community development planning** - no report.

**265.8n Communicating with communities** - no report.

**265.8o Councillors** Cllrs Child and Hawkins had circulated paper reports. Cllr Bridgman offered his help to constituents with any issues they might have.

**265.9 AOCB** David Turner told the meeting about an event on Sunday 1 February at St Phillip's Church when there would be a talk by John Duffy of the Big Issue about homelessness and a film would be shown about the Homeless World Cup

**265.10 Date of next meeting:** Monday 23 February.

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 30 March 2009

Monday 27 April 2009

Monday 25 May 2009