



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the 267th meeting held on 30th March 2009 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Celia Butterworth, Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Caroline Hosking, Lawrence Marshall, Tom Smith, William Wilson, Archie Burns (PPAG), Diana Cairns (PCATS), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer), Peter McColl (PEDAL), Brenda Molony (Porty Reporter), Margaret Munro (PHS), David Scott (Community Centre), Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), John Stewart (PAS), David Turner (Amnesty Group), Sean Watters (PFANS).

Apologies: Robert Gatliff (Chair), Kenny MacAskill MSP, James Hunter (CEC), Margaret Williamson

In attendance: Cllr Stephen Hawkins, Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr Mike Bridgman, Sarah Potter (Portobello Police), Shaeron Averbuch (JUMP), Damian Killeen (BTOTB), Jonathan Bendit (Portobello Sailing Club), Susan Carr (Minutes).

267.1 Chair's welcome

The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that Susan Carr would be taking the minute as previously agreed.

267.2 Minutes of February meeting

The minute of the previous meeting was proposed as correct record by Diana Cairns and seconded by Margaret Smith with the following amendment; 'Dawson Currie was present'.

267.3 Matters Arising

263.7 Skills Audit – Archie will have it ready to send to Diana later this week.

264.8c Neighbourhood Partnership Sub Groups - At the 2nd meeting of the Community Health and Well-being sub group John Palmer indicated that he will report on outcomes as they progress. Any community representatives are welcome to attend and the report will be emailed out in due course.

266.4 Planning Application for the former Fun Park site, Portobello Promenade – Diana wrote the letter as agreed at the last meeting.

Kilns Repairs – Mike Bridgman and Margaret have dealt with this matter and are awaiting a further report. Margaret did meet with the architects and the planners and was shown a revised plan with bigger space offered. The next step is waiting to see what is progressed.

266.6d EACC – Diana sent a copy to Dawson as agreed.

266.6f Bridge Street Car Park – This has been nominated to James.

266.6g Marlborough Street Planning Application - A letter of objection was written and we have been advised that it was refused.

266.6g Viridor – They have been written to as agreed.

266.6n Portobello Reporter – Bob agreed to write a report for the Portobello Reporter last month and we need a volunteer to prepare a report for the September issue.

266.7 AOCB – a) Haywired -A volunteer was not found to join their Board. b) Save Meadowbank Campaign – A letter was written and a response received.

267.4 Agree AOCB

The Edinburgh Half Marathon and Maternity Services Strategy were agreed as items under AOCB.

267.5 JUMP Presentation

Shaeron Averbuch introduced herself as an artist who works with her partner looking at planning applications and paying particular attention to the built environment. They have formed an action group whose main interest is the Waterfront development – she has had previous relevant experience in Port Talbot. JUMP is a voluntary group who have an interest in the built form with a view to incorporate art and green space into the plans for urban living. They are an open group which meets fortnightly and are always keen to have new people attend. They have a vision of Edinburgh being a waterfront city and have prepared a contra plan for the Waterfront which shows alternative plans/options which gives best quality and standards.

They have already approached Unesco and raised issues that they feel relevant to Edinburgh being a World heritage site and Unesco have already made points to the City of Edinburgh Council.

They have met with Edinburgh's architect champion Ricardo Marini and the head of Planning, and also Jason Sayers of the Princes Foundation for Built Environment (PFBE). They want to look at the quality and sustainability of infrastructure as well. The PFBE appear to be interested and want to get more people involved including Portobello, with a view to opening up the whole waterfront. There is scope to be another exemplary form and future city.

They believe that communities can make a difference if they get involved and JUMP is a resource that can be used to help people get engaged in plans. Shaeron thanked everyone for their interest and asked if there were any questions which she would do her best to answer.

Damian (BTOTB) noted that he could see where links could be made especially with green space and social enterprise developments. He has already spoken to Kenny MacAskill about setting up a Trust. He noted that with the economic downturn that landowners are looking at options other than housing. Failure to find alternatives often results in poor quality housing being built. There were possibilities that the Princes Foundation would be interested but that they need £200-300K (not for profit).

Dawson asked if they (JUMP) were a funded body. Shaeron explained that they have received no funding but are a group of people who have become involved because they have a personal interest and an expertise in this area of activity. They have fairly recently applied for the Big Ideas Lottery fund which can fund up to £10K if successful.

John gave support to the JUMP ethos and in particular the Boardwalk proposal that was being looked at within the CEC proposals and can see at least two projects that could benefit from this.

Damian agreed there was a common interest in the Board walk/Promenade and that the core idea was good but thought it unlikely that the community could influence the plans. He wants the Portobello/Craigmillar Partnership to devise a public art opportunity for this community and was currently in a delicate phase of negotiation but feels that there is 75% agreement from the people who need to agree this. He wondered whether there was a model which could be looked at with other communities that could be visited over the summertime to look at the whole of the waterfront of the city.

Cllr Hawkins noted that he had already put forward the idea of art in the masterplan but this has been lost and forgotten. It was also noted that often the 'art' was usually a statue or something that was tagged on at the end of the development when it should really be consulted on at the start of the consultation with artists

engaged at the earliest opportunity. It was usually a section 75 agreement or section 106 agreement where the developers contribute to for this kind of initiative, although there is a suggestion that CEC may relax the section 75 contribution as a result of the 'credit crunch'. If this is the case it is unlikely to be reinstated very readily.

There were further discussions on the fact that plans are not judged on aesthetic qualities but are often just to meet the barest of planning regulations. So far the plans for the waterfront 'Platinum Point' were not impressive and there are concerns that it will not last 30 years as it is expected to, as well as not being a pleasant place to live. There is a possibility that if agreement is reached that the waterfront could be extended to East Lothian right through to the John Muir Park with opportunities for walking/cycling on the promenade, although there are concerns if cycling is permitted.

It was also noted that there will be changes to give community councils a far stronger role in deliberating planning applications, increasing the influence that they should have in the future.

267.6 Community Council Election

Information has been received from Eileen Hewitt of the Council on proposals for the new election in October. It is advised that the AGM should take place as normal in May but that the election of office bearers does not need to take place until after the main election in October. The most pressing issue is the appointment of the returning officer to oversee the election. It was agreed that Joyce Campbell at Portobello library has carried out this role in the past will be invited again. CEC has indicated that they will cover all costs and that it is hoped that a high profile campaign will encourage more people to stand. It was also noted that interest groups can register now if they wish but will have to re-register in September.

ACTION – Diana to speak to Joyce Campbell.

267.7 Funding including Feedback from a recent event.

Celia and Margaret had both attended the funding event on 23rd March which proved to be both informative and helpful. Each agency was given 5 minutes to give a presentation and then people were able to go around the stalls to talk to potential funders. There were numerous funding agencies including WREN, Scotland Unlimited and Scottish Community Foundation to name a few.

It was noted that the Community Grants of circa £30K ran out very early last year because the first projects were allocated funding at the start of the year and it has been acknowledged that this was not necessarily the best or most deserving projects. There was a brief discussion on whether there was potential to split the fund so that allocations are made each time the NP Board meets and/or to seek funding through any under-spend from other partnerships.

267.8 Topics for future meetings

267.8a Gilbertstoun and Newcraighall Against Development of Greenbelt - David Hamilton is keen to attend a meeting to seek support for his campaign and had hoped to attend this meeting but has sent his apologies. It was agreed to invite him to the next meeting.

267.8b Towerbank School – Sean Watters reported that the school has been awarded full funding of £4million+ for the project put forward which includes road realignment, refurbishment and extension. He will bring more information as it becomes available and will be able to present plans at a future meeting. It is anticipated that the project will take around 2 1/2 years.

267.8c Portobello Sailing Club – Jonathan Bendit reported that they have taken a commission to build a fence which will have a front and two sides after CEC has cleared the land at the end of May. It is hoped that they will have the Royal Yachting Association to run taster sessions for 8-14year olds on 24th or 31st May at around £20/session. A rescue boat and small boats are needed and they are currently looking for small pots of money to do this.

267.8d P/C Neighbourhood Partnership – Peter McColl suggested that a more proactive approach could be taken towards the Community Plan where we could have more feedback to influence how it is achieved. It was suggested that this could be done in April and that Peter could lead on ‘Proactive Involvement’.

267.9 Reports

267.9a Police – WPC Sarah Potter reported that this month has been fairly quiet although there has been an increase in vandalism to cars and also an increase in complaints about youths on motorbikes and quad-bikes. There are plans under the Safer Scotland Initiative to have motorbike (off road) with traffic police and plain clothes police around the area in the next few weeks. There have also been some opportunistic crimes e.g. the theft of cycles and a car (keys were left in the car).

267.9b Treasurer - Kathleen Hart reported that there have been no claims this month. The Treasurers Account balance is £2601.20p and the Joppa Tennis Courts account is £8834.30p.

267.9c P/C Neighbourhood Partnership – Peter McColl reported that the next meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday in Portobello High School at 7pm. PEDAL is on the agenda and a presentation will be given. He also asked that more people become involved in the new sub groups that are being established.

267.9d Edinburgh Association of Community Councils – Dawson reported that Robert had attended the last meeting and as he is not present there is no report.

267.9e Party Online – It was reported that there is a new music gallery which is showcasing local talent has been added. There are 200 images/sound added to the site and there is a facility to leave comments for anyone keen to do so.

267.9f Environmental Update – Green Flag Application - An email has been received from James Hunter to update the PCC which includes a proposal to go for a Green Flag Application for Portobello Community Garden. The independent assessment will be carried out in early summer to determine whether it will qualify.

Notice boards Keys - He confirms that CEC Community Parks Officer, Scott Thomson has provided keys to John Stewart and has also indicated that CEC is happy to assist with managing of the notice boards at the Town Hall, Bridge Street bowling centre and the Joppa Pumping Station. There was a lengthy discussion on who should hold these keys and how effective they were to operate. It appears that the Town Hall notice board is particularly awkward and sometime doesn't work without a struggle. It was also suggested that a key should be held in the Library for Joyce to be able to update the Board.

Action: It was agreed that John would try each of the keys before distributing them.

There was a further discussion on what the policy is for what can be placed on the notice boards and what they have been used for in the past.

Action: It was agreed that this should be on the agenda for discussion to clarify this.

Environmental Forum – The notes from the last meeting will be circulated shortly. There was a presentation on recycling and the local issues around this. The Forum has prioritised grounds maintenance as an issue they want to look at in more detail and information will be presented at the next meeting. It was agreed to have a bus tour on Saturday 30th May to look at projects for the next year to be funded from the roads and pavements allocation.

It was reported that planting works recently carried out at Bridge Street has already had some of the plants stolen and bins have been set on fire. There was a discussion about whether CCTV would improve the situation and whether it is feasible to re-site some of the existing cameras to achieve this. It was explained that the cameras are monitored centrally at City in View and often there is not the funding or the capacity to monitor new cameras.

267.9g Planning – 9a Joppa Park - An objection was lodged for the development at the bottom of Morton Street on the basis of over development.

The Fun City – This application had caused some confusion because it was thought that it was 4 bedroom housing but has since been advised that it is a 4 bedded property. Gordon Gray the architect had been surprised that this had been misinterpreted by people looking at the plans as it is considered common practice to use this terminology. Cllr Hawkins confirmed that it is usual to mention the number of bedrooms and the number of bed spaces. It was also thought that the plans were difficult to understand and do not meet the masterplan. The CEC Planning Portal includes letters and comments which include one from Historic Scotland which has serious concerns over a site of national importance (The Kilns). There are still some environmental questions and SEPA has an objection because of the significant (Med-High) risk of flooding. CEC also requires an affordable element (18 units) and Transport has said that it is a bad layout and that ramps are not allowed on public footways. There was discussion on a potential land swap with CEC Estates who have yet to decide what action if any it will take although it was noted that there has been a discussion on swapping land to give more land for the promenade which could result in less land around the Kilns which would give cause for concern. It will have to go to Policy and Strategy committee for a decision.

Eastfield – There is a proposal for the sale of open space to allow an extension of a garden. It was thought that this may have already gone ahead and it was agreed that Cllr Hawkins will chase this up.

Action: Cllr Hawkins will clarify whether this has happened yet.

267.9h Signs & Plaques - A replacement sign for the Horizon Board is being manufactured.

267.9i Portobello High School – There was no report.

267.9j Joppa Tennis Courts – The AGM took place and it was agreed that the Courts are to be cleaned at a cost of £1500.

267.9k Portobello Traders – There was no report.

267.9l Community Centre – There is a meeting next week.

267.9m Community development planning – Town Hall Clock – It was reported that it has been repaired and cleaned and that it is expected that the small roof will also be repaired as well because the stonework was tested and considered strong enough. There is still no further information on who owns it although it was thought that the Baptist Church once had a document which showed that it was owned by CEC.

Calor Gas Awards - There was a discussion on when the Calor Awards application has to be sent in and what the criteria will be this time. It was thought that the application process is usually around April/May with a prize giving in June and that the criteria has been ‘changes made to bring improvements to the area’ for the last 2 years. PCC have not been contacted as yet and so far no one has volunteered to complete the application.

Action: It was agreed that Diana would contact Eileen Hewitt to seek clarity.

267.9n Communicating with communities – It was agreed that the PCC election should be included with the June issue of the Reporter and that Robert would do the necessary piece for that. It was noted that there is still someone needed to do the September issue which should also cover the election.

267.9o Councillors – Cllr Hawkins stated that he had not had time to prepare a written report as he had last month. He wanted to make clear that in terms of the Towerbank funding, it had taken a lot of work by coalition councillors to get agreement on this and noted the new intake will still have to use the annexe whilst ongoing issues are resolved.

Cllr Child tabled a written report on her activities over the last month and explained that she has had a promise from the Transport dept. that the work will be completed by 13th April but that the work still has to have agreement from traffic engineers. She also reported that CEC has no power to ban jet-skis from having access to the beach at Kings Road and management is by secure gates which can be unlocked by getting keys from the P/C Neighbourhood Office.

Cllr Bridgman stated that he is delighted to be part of the Kilns working group and as always is available to any constituent at his regular surgeries and by telephone to his office.

267.10 Any Other Competent Business

267.10a Harry Lauder Memorial Garden– It was reported that the two volunteer gardeners are now getting access as required.

267.10b Edinburgh Half Marathon – There is a list of road closures available to anyone interested.

267.10 Maternity Services Strategy – As part of the NHS consultation, PCC has received notification in a 12 page document, of their strategy for the next 5-10years.

267.7 Future meetings

The next meeting is on 27th April 2009. 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.

Subsequent dates are: 24th May 2009 and 29th June 2009