



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the 259th meeting held on 26th May 2008 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Robert Gatliff (Chair), Nick Stroud (Secretary), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer)
Dawson Currie, Diana Cairns (PCATS), Maria Devoy, Caroline Hosking, Bob Jefferson (*Party Online*),
Peter McColl (PEDAL), Brenda Molony (*Party Reporter*), Margaret Munro (Portobello History Society),
David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), Tom Smith,
John Stewart (PAS), David Turner (Portobello Amnesty Group), Sean Watters (PFANS).

Apologies: Cllr Michael Bridgman, Celia Butterworth, Jet Cameron (PPAG), Lawrence Marshall,
Tom Nimmo (Brighton Residents), Kenneth Owen (Police), Sheila Scott (Merchants & Hoteliers),
Margaret Williamson (High School), William Wilson.

In attendance: Cllr Maureen Child, Mary Dunbar (CEC), Andrew Easson (CEC), Nick Farrell (Barr),
Cllr Stephen Hawkins, James Hunter (CEC), Linda Kelly, John Lau, Bob McCafferty (CEC),
John MacKenzie (Barr), Rosemary Smith, Anne Ward.

259.1 Chair's welcome

Robert Gatliff welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Sandy Smith's widow Rosemary as a special guest. He then introduced Andrew Easson and Bob McCafferty of the City Council and Nick Farrell and John MacKenzie of contractors Barr to describe plans for removing the King's Road roundabout.

259.2 King's Road roundabout replacement

Andrew Easson summarised the plans to replace the King's Road roundabout with a signal-controlled junction incorporating pedestrian crossings at each of the five exits; he left detailed drawings with the Chairman. The incentive for the replacement was the roundabout's poor accident record: there had been one death, three serious injuries and 16 other injuries in 18 accidents over the previous five years.

The aim throughout the 20 weeks of the work would be to keep traffic moving as smoothly as possible through the works. The existing pedestrian crossing in the High Street would be moved further east. Bus priority measures would only operate during peak periods, but it was hoped that there would be noticeable improvements for bus passengers, as reported by Lothian Buses following the Milton Road change. The new system would be able to detect the length of traffic queues and react accordingly.

Work was due to start on 16th June and continue until 2nd November. The permitted working hours would be 7am to 10pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 7pm on Saturdays; any extension of these hours would have to be negotiated with police and neighbours. Traffic management plans were being drawn up by the City Council, the police and Lothian Buses, and there would be extensive advertising to direct commuters on to other routes. Considerable disruption was however inevitable. The contractor would monitor this and produce travel updates through local information points. Local control of temporary traffic lights would ensure maximum sensitivity to traffic build-ups.

Several other points were made in response to questions. It was unlikely that local traders would be compensated for possible loss of earnings, but signs will be erected to emphasise that shops are open as usual. It would be illegal and unenforceable to ban through-traffic. Most bus services would not be rerouted, Lothian Buses being satisfied with the proposals. There would be no planting to compensate for the considerable loss of vegetation at the roundabout. There were no plans to change the turning restrictions on Sir Harry Lauder Road, so it would be difficult for motorists who currently use the roundabout to turn round.

The officials were thanked for their very comprehensive presentation and planning.

259.3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were accepted: proposed Dawson Currie; seconded Kathleen Hart.

259.4 Matters arising from previous meeting

Held over to the June meeting.

259.5 Reports

259.5a Police: no report this time.

259.5b Treasurer: Treasurer's Account: £3,415.32; Joppa Tennis Courts: £7,251.30.

259.5c Neighbourhood Partnership: Mary Dunbar reported that the City Council was conducting an extensive consultation along with awareness-raising, including an event at Portobello Town Hall on the morning of Saturday 21st June. One aim was to engage with people who don't usually take much interest in local government. The next Neighbourhood Partnership meeting would be at Portobello High School on 25th June, which would be open to all, and would focus on the local community plan.

Robert Gatliff suggested that the Neighbourhood Partnership should be a major agenda item for the June meeting.

- * **Action:** Secretary to include Neighbourhood Partnership on the agenda for the June meeting.

259.5d Joppa Tennis Courts: there was to be an Open Day with barbecue on 31st May.

259.5e Environmental Update: James Hunter reported that one of the community noticeboards was in good condition but that the other two needed to be repaired. He hoped that it would be possible to find one person from the City Council and one from the Community Council who would work together to keep the boards updated with useful and relevant material. Mary Dunbar pointed out that grants were available to promote communication with the community. Tom Smith pointed out that the old Community Council noticeboard outside the Town Hall was obstructed by a bench that had been installed in front of it, and needed to be repaired or scrapped.

Several other matters were in hand: new bedding plants would be put in shortly at the Town Hall; new bollards had been ordered for the junction between the Prom and King's Road and should be installed in July; consultations about new planting at Eastfield were in hand; all the marker buoys had been washed away and there was no funding to replace them, but possibilities would be investigated (Stephen Hawkins asked to be involved with this); and the new railings at Eastfield were almost finished, with just the ones down the steps to be added. Caroline Hosking thanked the City Council for its work in smartening up the 'unnamed square'.

- * **Action:** James Hunter to evaluate possibilities for the noticeboard outside the Town Hall.

- * **Action:** James Hunter to inform Stephen Hawkins of plans to replace marker buoys.

259.5f Planning: John Stewart reported that there were no new local planning applications. He took the opportunity to invite all present to the PAS AGM on 11th June at St Mark's church, with a guest speaker from the Cockburn Association.

259.5g Signs, Plaques and coadestone: John Stewart reported that several of the tourist boards had been smartened up, and that Alison Robinson had made a new top for the central coade-stone pillar in the Community Garden. The Heritage Lottery grant would not cover its installation however, and a further £1,000 had to be found; the sub-committee was therefore requesting £300 from the Community Council. Kathleen Hart pointed out that the Community Council had already given £2,400 to this project, including all the Festival Society money that had been un-ring-fenced specifically for this; £300 represented a third of our current disposable funds. Maureen Child suggested asking for a Neighbourhood Partnership grant, but Mary Dunbar thought that the latest round of funding was already committed. Robert Gatliff suggested that the Community Council should underwrite this sum so that the work could go ahead, but that we should try and find other sources of funding for it; this was agreed.

259.5h Portobello Traders: no report this time.

259.5i Party Online: no report this time.

259.5j Portobello High School: no report this time.

259.5k Community development planning: no report this time.

259.5l Community Centre: no report this time.

259.5m Communicating with communities: no report this time. David Turner pointed out that we had agreed to try and engage with new sections of the community, but there had been no progress on this yet.

259.5n Councillors:

Stephen Hawkins asked about the flood at the High School. Maureen Child was reasonably confident that this had not been caused by vandalism but by a burst hot water pipe and a simultaneous blockage of a sink, which had gone unnoticed over a long holiday weekend.

Maureen Child circulated her regular report, and drew particular attention to the impending application for a five-day funfair licence on the Promenade near the bus station; the promoter wanted to gauge public opinion before deciding what to do. There was some feeling against the proposal and a little in favour.

259.6 Any Other Business

259.6a North West Portobello Masterplan

Caroline Hosking reported back from the recent meeting. Several controversial proposals in the original plan had been removed, such as the highest of the high-rise buildings, a metro-style shop on the High Street, and moving the Library and Community Centre. New developments would be required to match existing ones, and the kilns should be enhanced. Caroline thanked everyone who had commented on the plans to the City Council, and she was in turn thanked for all her work on this.

259.7 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 30th June 2008.

Subsequent dates are: 25th August 2008 (no meeting in July)
29th September 2008
27th October 2008
24th November 2008 (no meeting in December)