



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 284th meeting held on 29th November 2010 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Tom Ballantine, Archie Burns, Diana Cairns, Dawson Currie, Caroline Hosking, Peter McColl, Joe Madden (Portobello Open Door), Margaret Munro (Portobello History Society), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), John Stewart (PAS), Nick Stroud, Ros Sutherland (PPAG), Leon Thompson, William Wilson, Frances Wraith (Brightons & Rosefield Residents).

Apologies: Sandra Blake, Celia Butterworth, Cathy Cherizard (CEC), Maria Devoy, Sheila Gilmore M.P., Lilian Graham, David Hamilton, Matthew Higson (Portobello Police), Nelson Johnstone, Kenny MacAskill MSP, Lawrence Marshall (Portobello Older People's Project), Brenda Molony (*Portobello Reporter*), Andrew Patterson (Portobello Council of Churches), Anne Ward (PCATS), Sean Watters (Towerbank Parents Council).

In attendance: Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Robert Gatliff (Joppa Tennis Club), Cllr Stephen Hawkins.

284.1 Chair's welcome

John Stewart welcomed everyone to the meeting, congratulating them on overcoming the snow and hoping that the Christmas refreshments at the end of the meeting would be sufficient reward.

284.2 Police report

There was no report as all police officers were fully committed to dealing with the consequences of the heavy snowfall.

284.3 Environment Update

There was no report as Cathy Cherizard was unable to attend the meeting.

284.4 EDI presentation

There was no presentation as the EDI representatives were unable to attend the meeting.

284.5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Diana Cairns pointed out that Robert Gatliff was not yet formally a member of the Community Council and should therefore not be included amongst those in attendance. With this correction the minutes were accepted: proposed by Joe Madden, seconded by Peter McColl.

284.6 Matters arising

284.6a Letter to City Council about solar panels (283.3d). Diana Cairns had written the letter as requested.

284.6b Community Council Constitution (283.5). Two sticking points in the model constitution and standing orders respectively as proposed by the City Council were to reduce the number of public signatures required to force a special Community Council meeting from 50 to 20, and to have minutes of meetings distributed within seven days. Diana Cairns agreed to bring revised constitution and standing orders to the next meeting, retaining the requirement of 50 signatures, and proposing that minutes be circulated within 14 days.

* **Action: Diana Cairns to produce a new constitution and standing orders for the next meeting.**

284.6c Domain name for the new Community Council website (283.6). Joe Madden has registered this; it is www.portobelloc.org (not to be confused with the Community Centre at www.portobelloc.org.uk). The sub-group's members are now developing content for the site at a temporary holding address; they

emphasised that there is no commitment yet to any particular content, but that they are collecting together a range of options so that the full Community Council can choose what it wants to include.

284.6d Funding options for communicating (283.6). Diana Cairns had discussed this with Mary Dunbar of the City Council's East Edinburgh Office, and would shortly be applying for a grant of up to £500.

284.6e Response to the plan for a new High School (283.7). A letter had been drafted, circulated, amended and sent to the City Council by the deadline. The group which achieved this – Archie Burns, Celia Butterworth, David Hamilton, Brenda Molony, Ros Sutherland and Sean Watters – was warmly thanked for its hard work.

* **284.6f** Dog-free area on the beach (283.8). Ongoing.

284.6g Plans for new development at Fort Kinnaird (283.10f). An exhibition of the proposals had been postponed until the New Year because of the recent bad weather, and no further action was needed meantime. The City Councillors had attended a meeting and learned that the aim is to redevelop the site of the former cinema, to add extra floor space to existing outlets, and to provide more places to get something to eat.

284.6h Blindcraft (283.11a). Diana Cairns had duly written to the City Council to request that Blindcraft not be closed. It has since been reprieved.

* **284.6i** Joppa Tennis Club constitution (283.11b). John Stewart had spoken to Robert Gatliff, who agreed to circulate the proposed constitution in time to be discussed at the next meeting.

284.6j City Council's free uplift service (283.11c). Nick Stroud had informed Pilton Residents' Association that we support their campaign for the City Council to reinstate their free uplift service for bulky rubbish.

284.6k ASCC elections (283.11d). Diana Cairns had submitted our votes as discussed at the last meeting.

284.6l Bus link between proposed hovercraft terminal and Portobello (283.3e). David Scott asked John Stewart if there was any further information about this, but so far there is not.

284.7 Agree Agenda and AOB

Several items were identified for discussion under AOB.

284.8 Reports

284.8a Police: No report this time.

284.8b Treasurer: Leon Thompson reported that there had been no outgoings in the previous month, so the account still stood at £3,418.82, of which £1,662 is ring-fenced for the Gilberstoun noticeboard. Anticipated bills include £194 to ASCC for insurance, and £11.74 to register the new website domain name.

284.8c Neighbourhood Partnership: Peter McColl reported that the next meeting would be on 8th December, at 6:30pm in the High School, where the topic under discussion would be the Craigmillar initiative INSTEP. Dawson Currie would be attending on our behalf.

284.8d Joppa Tennis Courts: No report this time.

284.8e Environmental Update: No report this time.

284.8f Planning: John Stewart circulated drawings of the plans for a block of 14 one-bedroom and nine two-bedroom flats at 21-23 Windsor Place. The proposal included six car-parking spaces, in line with the requirements for housing association accommodation, though there is no firm guarantee that the flats will be adopted by a housing association. The plans indicate stone and slate construction to the front, with aluminium window frames. William Wilson reported on his research into the proposals. Stephen Hawkins explained the constraints on housing associations and their funding. It was observed that the architects are well thought of and that housing associations tend to require developments of above-average quality. It was agreed that a suitable development would be welcome on this site, and that we should write to the City Council to support the principle of development on the site but objecting to the low level of parking provision that is proposed with this particular application. The letter is also to request that the height and density of the development be reduced, that the frontage be aligned with the Georgian terrace, and that the North elevation be of stone.

* **Action: Diana Cairns to write to the City Council Planning Department along the lines agreed.**

284.8g Signs, Plaques and coade-stone: Celia Butterworth had obtained a high-resolution version of our coat-of-arms from the Lord Lyon, which would complete the map of a 'stroll round Portobello'.

284.8h Portobello Community Centre: David Scott reported that management meetings take place on the second Tuesday of each month. Improvements to the stage were about to be made, and new stage lighting would be installed over the coming month.

284.8i Councillors:

Maureen Child circulated her regular written report, and drew particular attention to the item on Credit Unions. The future of our local one, based in Craigmillar, is assured, but it wants to double its membership so that it can achieve more. Applications forms are available from Cllr Child or at the Credit Union (2 Niddrie Mains Road, Edinburgh EH16 4BG, 0131 661 9942). Our local MP and MSP are both members. It was agreed that it would be useful to have this on the agenda for the January meeting. The plans for the beach involve shifting sand along it, but not reclaiming any.

Stephen Hawkins circulated a written report, mentioning in particular the City Council Transport Committee's plans to deal with traffic problems in Regent Street and Marlborough Street. Local councillors are trying to find out why it is proposed to make Elcho Terrace a one-way street.

284.9 Any Other Business

284.9a Planters at the Town Hall

John Stewart reported that the City Council had replanted all the window boxes at the Town Hall and now wanted to shift two large, empty planters from there. These were donated to the Community Council by Patricia and Jimmy Ralph. It was agreed that John would ask them if they would be happy to have the planters moved to the Library.

- * **Action: John Stewart to explore the possibility of moving two planters from the Town Hall to the Library.**

284.9b City Council planning meetings

Stephen Hawkins reported that the City Council was proposing to restrict ward councillor and community group presentations at Planning Committee meetings to just three minutes. This would be of particular concern in cases where a community council has been denied a hearing by the Council and has had to rely on ward councillors to make a case on its behalf. This is apparently in the interests of fairness, though there were no plans to restrict contributions from developers. There was widespread condemnation of this plan, with Peter McColl observing that Edinburgh is far more draconian against community input than other planning authorities. Maureen Child pointed out that a succinct and well-argued case has more impact than a long unfocused one, though agreed that three minutes was too short. Dawson Currie wondered if Planning Aid Scotland might help, but John Stewart had previously found them ineffective.

It was agreed that Diana Cairns should write to the City Council to oppose this proposal, and contact other individuals and community councils to urge them to do likewise. It was also agreed to endorse Stephen Hawkins to speak on our behalf at the meeting on 2nd December where this proposal would be discussed.

- * **Action: Diana Cairns to write to the City Council and other community councils to oppose this proposal.**
- * **Action: Stephen Hawkins to represent our point of view at the Planning Committee meeting.**

284.9c Funfair next Summer

A member of the public expressed concern at the possibility of there being a funfair in Portobello next Summer. John Stewart responded that we would have to examine the proposal when application was made for a licence, probably next Spring.

284.9d Fruit trees

Diana Cairns reported that PEDAL had bought a large number of fruit trees and could offer some for sale; apple and cherry were available for just £8 each (0131 258 4483, or info@pedal-porty.org.uk).

284.9e Portobello Through Time

Margaret Munro showed her new book *Portobello and District Through Time* as an ideal Christmas present, and John Stewart showed two new postcards of old Portobello. Both items are available locally, in the Library, the Just World shop and Artisan picture-framers.

284.9f Thanks and sympathies

The meeting recorded its appreciation of Diana Cairns, Stephen Hawkins and Leon Thompson in organising the Christmas refreshments when Maria Devoy was stranded away from home by the snow; and extended its condolences to Sean Watters for his bereavement.

284.12 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 31st January 2011 (no meeting in December)

Subsequent dates are: 28th February 2011
28th March 2011
25th April 2011