



# PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## **DRAFT Minutes of the 252nd meeting held on 24th September 2007 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall**

**Present:** Margaret Munro (Vice Chair), Nick Stroud (Secretary), Kathleen Hart (Treasurer) Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Caroline Hosking, Bob Jefferson (Porty Online), Peter McColl (PEDAL), Stephen McIntyre, Brenda Molony (Porty Reporter), Margaret Smith (Portobello Labour Party), Tom Smith, John Stewart (PAS), Sean Watters (PFANS), William Wilson.

**Apologies:** Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns (PCATS), Robert Gatliff, Cllr Stephen Hawkins, James Hunter (CEC), Lawrence Marshall, Sheila Scott (Merchants & Hoteliers), David Turner (Portobello Amnesty Group).

**In attendance:** Cllr Maureen Child, Linda Kelly (CEC), Anne Ward.

### **252.1 Vice Chair's welcome**

The Vice Chair shocked members with the announcement of the sudden death two days previously of fellow Community Councillor Betty Young. Betty had been a member of Portobello Community Council for several years, and participated actively in several aspects of Portobello life. The meeting sent its deepest sympathies to Betty's family.

### **252.2 Training for community councillors**

Linda Kelly, of the City Council's Community Learning and Development department, spoke about the support provided for community councillors by her department, including training. She recognised that several people had been involved with Portobello Community Council for many years, but there were also new members, and there was a lot of new work for community councils to do: for example, we needed to find new ways to engage with our community, and to work with the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The formal vision for community councils is that they represent community views to public authorities, through a process of "community engagement" which gathers all shades of opinion into a single point of view if possible, dealing as necessary with conflicts of interest. City Council training is available for this task, and for developing and sustaining relevant relationships.

It was agreed that Portobello Community Council would hold two training sessions to begin with, while recognising that training would be an ongoing process and might involve changing the way we operate: for example we have usually reacted to events, but might now have to become more proactive. The dates selected for the initial training sessions were 22nd October and 12th November, at 7:30pm.

- \* **Action: Tom Smith to check availability of Baptist Church Hall on the chosen dates.**
- \* **Action: Secretary to circulate further information to all community councillors.**

### **252.3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

John Stewart corrected two mistakes in item 251.8e: the Blue Bean's permission was for the plans as amended; and permission for the mews houses in St Mary's Place had been refused but the applicant has appealed the decision. The minutes were then accepted: proposed by Tom Smith, seconded by Maria Devoy.

### **252.4 Matters arising from August meeting**

#### **252.4a Request for more recycling facilities (minute 251.4a)**

The Secretary had written to CEC WasteAware.

#### **252.4b Updated membership list and constitution (minute 251.4b)**

The Secretary circulated these at meeting, and invited corrections. A new version containing telephone and email contact details for members was requested.

- \* **Action: Secretary to produce new contact list.**

#### **252.4c Community development plans (minute 251.4d)**

Meeting to be arranged in October.

- \* **Action: Secretary to arrange meeting of Community Development sub-committee.**

#### **252.4d Removing through traffic from Portobello (minute 251.4e)**

- \* Awaiting feedback from Robert Gatliff.

#### **252.4e Viridor proposals (minute 251.4f)**

- \* Awaiting confirmation from Robert Gatliff that he has written to the City Council expressing our concerns.

#### **252.4f Plans for housing at Newcraighall (minute 251.4g)**

- \* Awaiting confirmation from Robert Gatliff that he has written to the City Council requesting more information.

#### **252.4g Affordable housing in Edinburgh (minute 251.4h)**

- \* Awaiting confirmation from Robert Gatliff that he has written to the City Council asking for more affordable housing to be provided.

#### **252.4h Open spaces in Portobello (minute 251.4i)**

- \* Awaiting confirmation from Robert Gatliff that he has written to the City Council to report that the Community Council was split on this issue.

#### **252.4i Support for South Suburban Railway (minute 251.6)**

The Secretary had written to the petitioners offering the Community Council's support, and to the City Council's Transport and Planning department requesting that a site for Portobello's train station be safeguarded in the consideration of any plans to develop the area.

#### **252.4j Public meeting on the North West Portobello Development plans (251.7)**

Diana Cairns had drafted a letter to Cllr Jim Lowrie requesting the promised public meeting, and Margaret Munro had checked and sent it.

#### **252.4k Location of Library and Community Centre (251.7)**

Maureen Child had confirmed with the Library and Community Centre that they want to stay where they are.

#### **252.4l Community development planning (251.8i)**

The Secretary had circulated a raw list, and invited feedback for sub-group meeting in October.

#### **252.4m Protection for Portobello's shop fronts (251.9a)**

- \* John Stewart and Margaret Munro had written to the City Council's Planning Department requesting adequate support. A meeting was to take place between City Council officials and PAS to discuss the issue.

### **252.5 Association of Scottish Community Councils survey**

The Community Council discussed the ASCC National Member Survey point by point.

- \* **Action: Secretary to complete the survey and return it to the ASCC.**

### **252.6 Viridor**

Viridor had just submitted its application to build a waste transfer site to the City Council, and made a copy available in the Library; it is very big, with a great amount of detail in its environmental impact assessment. John Stewart pointed out a number of contradictions in the application and highlighted several causes for concern. The promised information about the company's facility in London had not yet been provided, nor had information been circulated in the neighbourhood.

The main grounds for opposing the development would be on planning terms, for its impact on traffic and the environment. The action group Portobello Opposes New Garbage Site would be pursuing this; anyone interested was invited to contact John Stewart.

- \* **Action: Secretary to write to the City Council requesting an extension of the time limit for comments on Viridor's application.**

## 252.7 North West Development Plan

Margaret Munro circulated copies of an email message she had received from David Leslie of the City Council's Planning and Development department, in which he said "We have discussed the issue of a public meeting today with Councillor Hawkins and we will be exploring this with the consultants. You will note from the attached programme that the normal procedure of Planning Committee is to consider planning guidance, such as a masterplan, in draft and then to allow a period for public consultation before considering a final version for approval. This is consistent with the quote you included in your letter from that which we sent to your chairman on 17 August."

It is expected that the draft report will be given to the Planning Committee in December, to the full Council in January or February, and finalised in April. Stephen Hawkins was hoping to organise a public meeting at the end of October. A Masterplan Action Group had been set up, and was organising a questionnaire; anyone wishing to join the Group's mailing list should contact Caroline Hosking.

## 252.8 Meadowbank

Caroline Hosking reported that it looked as though the preferred option was now to redevelop Meadowbank, not to create a new facility at Sighthill. City Council officials were due to meet the campaign group.

## 252.8 Portobello Beach Coordinating Group

Brenda Molony reported that City Council official James Hunter was setting up a new group to coordinate management and maintenance of the beach and Promenade. Its membership included cultural and sporting representatives such as the boat club, roads, coastguard, Forth Ports and environmental agencies, but no one from the Community Council. Peter McColl would be eligible to attend as a Neighbourhood Partnership representative. The group's agenda would include water craft and cycling, but it was not clear if it would have a remit to *improve* the area, or just to maintain it.

It was agreed to invite James Hunter to join the Community Council as one of its co-opted experts. Maureen Child reported that she had asked Peter McColl to raise the issue of the neglected seafront railings at the Neighbourhood Partnership.

- \* **Action: Secretary to ask James Hunter if he could be co-opted on to the Community Council.**

## 252.9 Reports

**252.9a Police:** no report this time.

**252.9b Treasurer:** The Treasurer reported that the City Council's grant had been received, so the current balances were:

Treasurer's Account: £3,442.60; Joppa Tennis Courts: £7,603.29.

**252.9c Joppa Tennis Courts:** no report this time.

**252.9d Task Force:** no report this time.

**252.9e Planning:** John Stewart reported on various issues. He had objected to a retrospective application to cover the installation of roller-shutters on a shopfront, and the application had been rejected. He had also objected on the Community Council's behalf to an application from Gregor Homes to convert Hamilton Lodge into four flats, and to an application for a development at Eastfield. He asked that as many people as possible study the Viridor application in the Library. Sean Watters agreed to examine the traffic analysis in the Viridor application, and Peter McColl agreed to check the environmental impact assessments. John Stewart would then write a draft letter of objection and circulate it to the Community Council for comments. (John's email address is [johnmacgregorstewart@talktalk.net](mailto:johnmacgregorstewart@talktalk.net))

- \* **Action: Sean Watters to study the traffic analysis in the Viridor application.**
- \* **Action: Peter McColl to study the environmental impact analysis in the Viridor application.**
- \* **Action: John Stewart to draft a letter of objection and circulate it to the Community Council.**
- \* **Action: all, to comment on the draft letter.**

**252.9f Signs, Plaques and coadestone:** no report this time.

**252.9g Portobello Traders:** no report this time.

**252.9h Portobello Online:** Bob Jefferson reported that the online business directory was still very popular and doing well, though was time-consuming to organise. He had updated the Community Council's pages and asked for copies of missing minutes. Several projects were in hand which would enhance the *Porty Telly* section. The *Porty Reporter* section was growing steadily. More news was always wanted for the *What's On* section (email [events@porty.org.uk](mailto:events@porty.org.uk)). Thousands of images were available for the new *Gallery* section. Other ideas were always welcome, as were offers of help.

\* **Action: Secretary to provide copies of missing minutes.**

**252.9i Community development planning:** no report this time.

**252.9j Community Centre:** no report this time.

**252.9k Councillors:**

Stephen Hawkins sent a newsletter to be circulated at the meeting, asking that it be noted that all local City Councillors had objected to any unnecessary transfer of land around the kilns, with as much as possible to be retained in public ownership.

Maureen Child circulated her usual monthly newsletter. She reported that the City Council's investigations had revealed that Network Rail owned Christian Path and SESTRANS was responsible for its maintenance, though it was recollected that Robert Davidson had agreed that the City Council could take on its maintenance if it were first brought up to an acceptable standard.

## **252.10 Any Other Business**

### **252.10a Portobello's neglected civic square**

Caroline Hosking reported on the campaign to find a name for the small pedestrianised area just south-west of the Kilns.

### **252.10b City grants**

Dawson Currie noted that grants to certain areas of the City were being cut, and wondered why they had been receiving grants in the first place, when we had not. Linda Kelly suggested it would be because these were areas where social inclusion had to be encouraged, and Portobello and Joppa would not qualify.

### **252.10c Community Communicating**

Dawson Currie proposed the creation of a project called 'Community Communicating' through which local organisations such as the Community Council, PAS, History Society and Scouts would buy photo frames to put up in the Library and use these to display and promote their activities. As the frames cost around £50 it was agreed to consider this further at the next meeting.

### **252.10d Portobello Noticeboard**

John Stewart noted the reinstallation of the Community Council's noticeboard outside the bank; it was agreed to consider what to display in this at the next meeting.

## **252.10 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 29th October 2007.

Subsequent dates are: 26th November 2007  
(no meeting in December)  
28th January 2008  
25th February 2008  
31st March 2008