



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 242nd meeting held on 25th September 2006 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Jackie Brock, Celia Butterworth, Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Robert Gatliff, Kathleen Hart, Peter McColl, Stephen McIntyre, Karen MacLean, Brenda Molony, John Stewart, Nick Stroud, David Turner, William Wilson, Betty Young.

Apologies: Diana Cairns, Zoe Dunn, Alix Gaffney, Stephen Hawkins, Bob Jefferson, Margaret Munro, Sheila Scott, John Smart, Margaret Smith, Tom Smith, Sandy Smith.

In attendance: Carla van Blunden, John Butterworth, Cllr Maureen Child, David Davidson, Caroline Hosking, Rory Kellett (The Morrison Partnership), Lon Leask, Liz McMahon, Cllr Lawrence Marshall, George Morrison (The Morrison Partnership), Kenny Owen, Melvin Strand, Ros Sutherland, Shemish Teague (Teague Homes Ltd), Mike Towers (McLaren, Murdoch & Hamilton), C. Wall, Aileen Ward, Ian Wilson.

242.1 Chairman's welcome

Robert Gatliff welcomed everyone to the meeting and praised the turnout on a dreich night. He announced that Avril Scott had moved out of the Community Council's catchment area and had therefore resigned.

* **Action: Secretary to find out how vacancies are filled.**

He then introduced architect George Morrison to explain plans for developing the Funfair site for housing.

242.2 Presentation by The Morrison Partnership

George Morrison summarised plans for developing the Funfair site next to the Kilns and close to where Portobello's harbour had been, and explained the background to the proposals. The City Council had granted outline planning permission for a housing development, allowing a design brief to be prepared ready for architects to draw up detailed plans; these would all take account of the Council's impending development strategy for West Portobello. The design brief was intended to take the fullest possible account of the defining features of the area – notably the beach, Promenade and Kilns – and included the widening of the Promenade by 2 metres as requested by the Council.

The proposal was for a roughly horseshoe-shaped development making a south-facing open space around the Kilns and establishing a strong building line along the Promenade similar to the other tenements there. The highest part of the building would be 18 metres, which would be comparable to the existing tenements along the Promenade although incorporating more storeys. At each end the overall height of the building would be less and incorporate roof terraces and roof gardens. Elsewhere, balconies and terraces would further break up the appearance. There would be adequate underground car-parking and at least two options for minimising traffic problems and enhancing pedestrian access.

Several people were concerned at the height of the building. Mr Morrison observed that the Council was keen to make more of the waterfront, and a strong building line would help to achieve this. Sun path studies indicated that the impact of the building's shadow would not be too bad for much of the year. All elevations of the building – north, east, west and south – would be treated as important frontages. It would only be economic to create an attractive development if it contained enough flats; the precise number and size of the flats to be included would be determined in the detailed architectural plans that would be drawn up in the next phase, and it was felt that the proposal achieved the best balance between economic feasibility and the City Council's aspirations for the area, especially as Mr Strand and Mr Teague were prepared to provide a 2 metre wide strip of the site for widening the Promenade along the entire north side. Melvin Strand pointed

out that the site was not large enough to sustain a modern funfair. Mr Morrison promised to give full support to the campaign to have the damaged kiln fully repaired.

A copy of the Design Brief Document containing the outline plans for the development had been produced and a copy given to John Stewart. This was available for anyone who wanted to look at it, and comments and questions about the proposals were welcomed.

- * **Action: anyone with a question or comment on the proposals should send it to George Morrison at The Morrison Partnership, 242 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 2BP.**

242.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chairman thanked Jackie Brock for taking the minutes. The Secretary had not circulated them to all members, so it was agreed to defer their acceptance to the October meeting.

- * **Action: Secretary to circulate minutes of August meeting to all members.**

242.4 Matters arising from August meeting

242.4a ‘desirable graffiti’ (minute 241.4b): ongoing.

- * **Action: Secretary to follow up contact provided by Maureen Child.**

242.4b charity shops (minute 241.4c): Robert Gatliff circulated a draft letter to the City Council and requested comments before he sent it.

- * **Action: Chairman to write to City Council and the Scotsman about problems caused by charity shops.**

242.4c jet skis (minute 241.e): Diana Cairns had heard from Susan Deacon that the Parliament’s Petitions Committee had been generally positive about the aims of the petition, and had asked for reports from the Forth Ports Authority and the City Council.

242.4d Community Development Planning (minute 241.4i): ongoing.

- * **Action: Secretary to arrange meeting of this sub-group.**
- * **Action: all, to suggest priorities for local developments.**

242.4e notes of June visit to High School (minute 241.4i): ongoing.

- * **Action: Secretary to circulate notes from visit.**

242.4f Community Planning (minute 241.4k): Margaret Munro had been to a meeting about this and written a brief report on it (*appended to these minutes*). She was particularly concerned that the new local planning arrangements would require much more voluntary effort from community councils, and was dubious about councillors’ assurances that the intention was not to get volunteers to do more work, but for them to steer and coordinate local Council activities. The next Community Planning meeting would be on 12th October; anyone interested in attending could get the details from Clare Duchart (tel 469 3971, email clare.duchart@edinburgh.gov.uk). This was also to be a main topic at the Local Development Committee meeting on 14th November, after which we could consider inviting speakers to one of our meetings for a detailed discussion.

242.4g Portobello ties and scarves (minute 241.4l): Aileen Ward said that High School pupils could not be asked to produce possible designs as part of their course work, but it might be possible to make this the subject of a competition. Ongoing.

- * **Action: Community Council to offer a prize for a design competition (see 242.5b).**

242.4h Realising the Rooftop Revolution (minute 241.7e): Stephen Hawkins circulated his report from this conference; further details are available from him.

242.5 Reports

242.5a Police: the police had dealt with 1,300 calls in the month, 230 relating to the High Street and Joppa. The Summer had been busy on the Prom and new wristbands were now required as part of the child protection measures. The Police had investigated several types of wristband and were looking for sponsorship of £150 per thousand; a decision is needed on this at the October or November meetings.

* **Agreed: to contribute to cost of children's wristbands (see 242.5b).**

242.5b Treasurer: The current balances were:

Treasurer's Account: £3,838.19; Joppa Tennis Courts: £6,916.28.

The Treasurer reported that the amount of ring-fenced money in the account (for the coade-stone installation, Christmas lights, Harry Lauder Garden, Helen Hopekirk events, Festival Society and 'Golden Days') exceeded the amount in the Treasurer's account. It was therefore agreed to transfer all of the Festival Society money (£1,810) into the ordinary account, and to use this to fund half the Police bill for wristbands and a £50 prize for a tie and scarf design competition at the High School.

242.5c Joppa Tennis Courts: Robert Gatliff reported the successful tournament that had rounded off a very good season. He thanked the City Council for upgrading the pavilion and for their general support.

242.5d Task Force: no report this time.

242.5e Planning: John Stewart reported on the application to open a boat club at the old Granny's Attic site, with boats – dinghies, rowing boats and kayaks – stored in a fenced area alongside. The Community Council had previously supported this initiative in principle and continued to do so, though was anxious to minimise traffic impact and the visual impact of the fence around the storage area. There was to be a site visit on 4th October to consider the application to build six houses on the Promenade at Bath Place; John Stewart would represent the Community Council and Amenity Society at this.

242.5f Signs, Plaques and coadestone: Celia Butterworth reported that the coadestone pillars were being erected in the community garden, though it might still be several months before the installation was completed with the enclosing railing and commemorative plaque.

242.5g Portobello Traders: no report this time.

242.5h Portobello Online: Maria Devoy read the minutes of a sub-committee meeting that had been held in the previous week (*appended to these minutes*). A new section had been added to the website to assist the campaign to get better access to the beach and sea for wheelchair users.

The Chairman emphasised his determination that there should be no unpleasant confrontations at Community Council meetings arising from disputes in *Porty Online*, and that the correct channel for such disputes was to the sub-committee. The Community Council accepted no responsibility for anything that was said in the website's forum. Maria Devoy added that the sub-group was checking certain matters with a solicitor.

242.5i Community development planning: Robert Gatliff was keen to get this group going again, and to think in more detail about its aims. One of the reasons that the Re-a-pier application had been unsuccessful was that there was no local organisation that could manage such a project, and he wanted to get one set up as soon as possible.

242.5j Community Centre: no report this time.

242.5k Councillors:

Maureen Child circulated her usual monthly report.

Lawrence Marshall raised several issues. He was still investigating the prospects for the old town clock. He suggested that we invite a speaker to talk about the proposed hovercraft service to Fife once the plans were more definite. He reported that the City Council had appointed an architect to investigate the state of the collapsed Kiln, and was intending to weatherproof it shortly, with Historic Scotland's backing. He had enjoyed the recent barbecue at the Telferton allotments, and pointed out that the Scottish Parliament was considering legislation to prevent house-building on allotments; he encouraged anyone interested in this to ask MSPs to support this. He was also pursuing the problem of the broken Adshel toilets.

* **Action: anyone interested in keeping allotments to write to MSPs in support of legislation to prevent house-building on them.**

242.6 PCATS

Stephen McIntyre reported that he had been unable to discover the future plans for this group and its funds. He had previously supported its aim of opposing the creation of a local superstore, but was concerned that the group might now move on to other issues when vigilance was still required to prevent unwanted retail developments such as a possible Tesco Metro in the old Red Giant shop. It was agreed to discuss this issue at the October meeting when PCATS representatives would be present.

242.7 Any Other Business

242.7a New High School: The Chairman reported on three public meetings to be held in October on the City Council's plans for new local schools, at the High School on the 3rd, at St John's on the 4th, and in the Town Hall on the 11th. The initial City Council report was available in the Library and through *Porty Online*, and he had three detailed background reports. Members were invited to send their comments to the Council before 30th October, although no decision was likely before next May's elections.

242.7b Scottish Rights of Way Society: Kathleen Hart queried our subscription to this organisation, and it was agreed to discontinue it.

242.7c Bus changes: Dawson Currie drew attention to the fairly major reorganisation of local bus services to take place on 1st October, with the 42 becoming an hourly service in the evening and changes to the 12, 21 and 32. Robert Gatliff had written to object to the changes but had not yet received a response.

242.7d High School calendar: Aileen Ward showed a sample of this year's High School calendar, which would be on sale shortly in local shops.

242.7e Eastfield railings: Nick Stroud asked if the railings along the sea wall at Eastfield were to be repaired; Maureen Child reported that a new person in the City Council had taken over responsibility for this type of maintenance, and she was confident that proper repairs would be instigated.

242.8 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 October 2006.

Subsequent dates are: 27th November 2006
29th January 2007
26th February 2007
26th March 2007

City Council and Community Councils Joint Meeting
Thursday 14 September 2006

This meeting was to inform those present about “Services for Communities – the new service grouping and the development of local community planning”.

I raised 2 issues:

That one of the communities in our “Neighbourhood Partnership” received SIP and Regeneration funding and that we were diverse communities with different needs. I was informed that regeneration funding was coming to an end and we would all be treated equally.

That community councillors were volunteers and may not be able to give the time required for involvement in the planning and enactment of partnership groups. What would be the situation if community councillors did not become involved? No comment was made.

Geographical boundaries caused concerns for many communities.

Main points from presentations:

One manager will be appointed locally to oversee all the devolved services and provide a central point for making contact in each area

Success will depend on changes in council staff attitudes requiring more flexibility regarding roles

Structures need to be in place by April 2007 before local government changes

Still very much a work in progress

Services devolved:

- a) Environmental Health
- b) Trading Standards
- c) Anti-Social Behaviour
- d) Roads – local roads and roadworks
- e) Parks
- f) Waste
- g) Building Services
- h) Housing and Regeneration
- i) Libraries

Planning is not, and is not foreseen to be, included in the devolved services.

It is crucial that we participate and are proactive in the establishment and running of these partnerships. It is going to happen whether or not we are involved.

Mark Turley and Alan Howie are prepared to give presentations to individual community councils. They are giving presentations at LDC meetings. (LDCs also finish by the end of April 2007).

There is another Local Community Planning event on Thursday 12 October 2.15-5pm in Easter Road Stadium. As I don't work on Thursday's I have put forward my name to attend. If anyone else would like to attend please contact: Clare Duchart on 469 3971 or email on clare.duchart@edinburgh.gov.uk. I will be taking the car, so can offer a lift if required.

Notes on a meeting of the Portobello Community Council sub-committee for the Portobello Online community website. Monday 18th September, 2006.

Present: Maria Devoy, Paula Williams, Bob Jefferson, John Stewart, Brenda Molony, Maureen Child, Lawrence Marshall.
(Apologies from Nick Stroud).

The meeting had been arranged "to try and resolve outstanding complaints through the complaints procedure. This group was also invited to consider any additional measures that could improve the forum". (From Minutes of CC meeting of 29th August).

- 1) The moderators reported that, as far as they were aware, all outstanding complaints had been resolved.
- 2) It was agreed to set up an email group for sub-committee members so that complaints that were not resolved at administrator level could be considered and resolved without undue delay, ideally within one week. Decisions taken at this level would be final and no further correspondence would be entered into.
- 3) The Posting Guidelines and Complaints Procedure would stress that any complaints should be in writing (by email) and not by telephone or personal contact with the moderators, administrators or sub-committee members.
- 4) Forum users would be asked not to be so combative in their responses to others, and to avoid remarks of a personal nature.
- 5) The moderators will not tolerate online personal feuds or attacks and will take any steps they consider necessary to prevent this from happening.
- 6) The moderators undertake to enforce the Posting Guidelines fairly and to the best of their ability and welcome the support of the Community Council in this difficult task.
- 7) Both Maria and Bob had been subjected to personal attacks by visitors at recent CC meetings, and it was agreed that greater effort should be made to prevent this.