



Minutes of the 322nd Meeting of the Portobello Community Council held on 29th September 2014.

Present: Max Blinkhorn, Peter Bradley (Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association), Mark Cameron, Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Maria Devoy, Terry Dobson (Gilberstoun Residents' Association), Stephen Dishon (Towerbank Parent Council), Gillian Eunson, Bob Jefferson, Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, Lawrence Marshall (POPP), Thea MacMillan, Ben McLeish, Sean Watters.

Apologies: David Medcalf, Clare Slifer, Marjorie Thomas (Joppa Tennis Courts), Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr David Walker.

In Attendance: Sheila Gilmour MP, Cllr Maureen Child, and members of the public.

322.1 Chair's Welcome

Geoff Lynn welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the last month had been particularly busy in Portobello, with another highly successful Big Beach Busk, a very well attended Village Show, the Richard Demarco event, and the recent volleyball competition on the beach amongst other things.

322.2 Portobello High School update

Depute Head Boy Hugh Brown and Depute Head Girl Alex Lauder gave an update on activities at the High School. The school roll was around 1300 and the S1 intake were settling in well, helped by the Key Adult Programme introduced the year previously. The school had exceeded their charity targets last session of £1,500 by Christmas and £4,000 by the end of the year, and fundraising was already underway this session. The school had achieved good results in the new national exams and had also celebrated the award of a 6th Green Flag. They also reported excitement that construction of the new school was due to start shortly, with a number of staff and pupils at the High School and cluster primaries being consulted on finalising aspects of the design. Although the more senior pupils wouldn't experience the new school they hoped future pupils and the wider community would benefit greatly.

322.3 Police Report

Sgt Kevin Smith summarised the Police report (see appended). Amongst other items he noted the drop in recorded crime over the same period last year. However, there was an ongoing problem of crime associated with valuables being left in vehicles. He also noted that their Public Consultation Survey 2014 was still open for responses.

322.4 Environmental Report

No Environment report apart from the Sir Harry Lauder closure starting from the 29th September. The Environment Forum had noted several items of interest: work on the Prom distance markers and the Abercorn crossing was expected in November: power to Brighton Park and Straiton Park/cakestand were expected October/November: work on footpath repairs at James St and Pittville Street had started: works to the Milton Link roundabout were awaiting additional funding.

322.5 Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

With minor corrections the minutes were agreed.

322.5a Hall usage (321.4a): Peter Bradley again expressed concern about the possible changes to community spaces available and the impact on local groups, not just in relation to the Church merger but also the proposed development



at Baileyfield. It was noted that Callum MacDonald of the Wash House had also been looking into the issue. It was agreed to try and pull together more information for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: Agenda item for next meeting

322.5b Prom Markings (321.4ea): awaiting a response from COEC regarding queries.

Action: Awaiting a response from COEC

322.5c Cycling on the Prom (321.4f): Lee Kindness expressed doubt that further discussion with the Access Officer would serve much purpose at this stage. Some data on cycling speeds had been obtained which would be useful in monitoring the situation.

322.5d Parking and accessibility (321.4h): SW had contacted Andy Matheson and Andrew MacLeod.

Action: Awaiting a response from COEC

322.6 Local Development Plan

The PCC had received around 130 responses to their consultation regarding the housing allocation at Brunstane. Whilst there was some support for the proposals, there was a significantly greater number of objections. Amongst reasons in support of the proposals the most commonly cited were the need for more housing and affordable housing locally, as well as improvements to the local footpath/cyclepath network. The desirability of more housing and affordable housing were also often cited by people who objected to the proposals, but the prevailing view seemed to be that potentially benefits were outweighed by negative aspects, the most commonly cited objections being: loss of Greenbelt, traffic impact, over-development, and the strain on local services.

Although the survey had to be treated with some caution, given the limited numbers and the self-selecting nature of the respondents, it was generally felt that response did reflect local concerns and that the PCC should object to the proposal in light of that. It was agreed to also acknowledge the support for the proposals and potential positive aspects in our response.

Action: Lee Kindness and Sean Watters to draft a response

322.7 Baileyfield Development

Lesley Carus of the Planning Department (COEC) gave a brief background to the planning history of the site, the current application and the process involved. The application was for Planning Permission in Principle, although the Aldi design was detailed and largely complete. In contrast, the housing aspect was meant to establish the general principle of the proposals, with the detailed design reserved for later determination. She emphasised that as a Planner what was useful were responses that genuinely reflected how individuals felt about the proposals, what they liked or didn't like, or how the proposals could be improved. Such information could be helpful in negotiating changes or improvements with developers. Geoff Lynn noted that the PCC had commented on the PAC report, highlighting that the level of support claimed by the developers had been overstated, with claims that could not really be justified by responses given. The developers had also declined a request for funding towards the PCC's planned consultation to gather local opinion on the application submitted. Up to £300 was available towards consultation from COEC that the PCC would apply for with the aim of carrying out the consultation anyway, although the scope of the exercise might have to be tailored to funds available. It was agreed that the priority would be to leaflet the PCC area as a whole, residents and businesses. The PCC also requested an extension to the public consultation period given the delay in documents being posted on the portal, and that they be allowed to submit a response after the next meeting on October 27. Lesley Carus agreed to October 24th as the deadline for public comments, and November 1st for the PCC.

Action: To proceed with the PCC's consultation on the Baileyfield application



322.8 Portobello Book Festival

Gillian Eunson circulated Information on the Portobello Book Festival.

322.9 Consultation and Engagement Sub-committee

Emma Dempsey reported on the September meeting where a number of items had been discussed.

Jane Milne (COEC) had reported on a new consultation pilot in the East Neighbourhood. An electronic module would be available on library computers with people to e-mail Emma if interested.

Funding was available for additional bins on the Prom and input was being sought on their design. The possibility of a design competition through schools was being looked into.

Posters with photos of Community Councillors had been produced and would be placed on various noticeboards.

It was noted that COEC were piloting the use of a single survey tool to replace the various formats currently used, and there was the possibility that Community Councils would be able to use it for their own consultation exercises.

The Council's 20mph Consultation ended October 17th, and responses via the PCC had shown considerable support overall, although concerns had been raised that Brunstane Road had been excluded.

The consultation on a new St John's was raised and the PCC's intention to publicise it rather than seek responses and respond was noted.

The final report on the Dog/Beach consultation had been circulated to various COEC officials, and it was felt the exercise had produced valuable feedback and ideas.

The PCC's use of Basecamp as a means of sharing information was discussed and it was generally felt to be useful. It was agreed to take out a subscription once the free trial period had ended.

322.10 Other reports

- a. Treasurer – the current balance stood at £2,674.88.
- b. Neighbourhood Partnership – the next meeting would be at 6:30, November 19th, at the East Neighbourhood Office. Cllr Child also noted that the local Community Plans would be published shortly.
- c. Planning – householder applications and a minor application for flats on the Bath Street site noted.
- d. Councillors – Cllr Child had circulated her report. She also raised the issue of Brighton Place. £1.5 million had been allocated over 3 years in the next financial cycle, with the intention of relaying the setts in three phases. When the issue had been raised previously there had been several suggestions for alternative surfacing, at least in part, particularly from cyclists. The dangers of the road surface at the entrance to the Christian Path was noted in particular. Given the major expenditure and likely disruption it was felt important to consult widely on what options were possible, in surfacing, timing and phasing, to ensure the best result. It was agreed to contact COEC officers about possible options.

Action: Sean Watters to contact COEC officers regarding Brighton Place



322.11 Any Other Business

322.11a Terry Dobson noted a number of issues in the Gilberstoun area: ongoing problems with the collection of foodwaste: overgrown foliage blocking pavements that had been reported to COEC but with no action as yet: no action yet on the yellow box junction at Brunstane Road.

322.11b Christmas crawl: Local Traders were again hoping to run a late night shopping event in the run up to Christmas, and the hope was to coordinate the switching on of the lights with choir singing, with a provisional date of November 27th. The PCC agreed to support and promote the event.

322.11c Towerbank Primary School: Stephen Dishon noted that with the forthcoming introduction of free school meals for P1-P3 the dining facilities could no longer cope with the pressure of pupils. The Scottish Government were providing funds towards capital improvements and COEC were looking at another extension at the school to meet the pressures.

Towerbank had also applied to be a pilot project trialling traffic control measures and restriction around schools at key times and were awaiting to hear if successful.

322.12 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting (323) of the Portobello Community Council will be held on Monday 27th October at 7:30pm in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 High Street, Portobello, Edinburgh, EH15 1EU.

Subsequent Dates are: Monday 24th November (324)
Monday 26th January (325)

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Contact Portobello Community Council at secretary@portobellocc.org

322nd PCC meeting closed.