



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 286th meeting held on 28th February 2011 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Tom Ballantine, Sandra Blake, Archie Burns, Celia Butterworth, Diana Cairns, Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, David Hamilton, Caroline Hosking, Nelson Johnstone, Joe Madden (Portobello Open Door), Brenda Molony (*Portobello Reporter*), Andrew Patterson (Portobello Council of Churches), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), John Stewart (PAS), Nick Stroud, Ros Sutherland (PPAG), Leon Thompson, Anne Ward (PCATS), William Wilson, Frances Wraith (Brightons & Rosefield Residents).

Apologies: Lilian Graham, Peter McColl, Lawrence Marshall (Portobello Older People's Project), Margaret Munro (Portobello History Society), Sean Watters (Towerbank Parents Council), Margaret Williamson (Portobello High School).

In attendance: Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cathy Cherizard (CEC), Cllr Maureen Child, Sheila Gilmore M.P., Cllr Stephen Hawkins, John Young (Portobello Police).

286.1 Chair's welcome

John Stewart welcomed everyone to the meeting.

286.2 Police report

John Young summarised local crime statistics. In the previous year there had been 624 recorded crimes for the Portobello/Joppa beat area, of which 310 were cleared up (a solvency rate of 49.7%. 44 crimes had been recorded in January (with 19 cleared up so far, a solvency rate of 43.2%), and to date 29 crimes recorded in February, mainly involving the theft of pedal cycles and vandalism. The police were doing all they could to prevent cycle theft with education and crime prevention advice to owners. Other proactive work by the police has been to reduce the reports of antisocial behaviour in the High Street, identified as a local priority, resulting in just seven youth-related complaints in this area in February. Further work is being undertaken with visits to local licensed premises and off-sales to prevent and deter sales of alcohol to young people. The overall picture was one of a relatively low crime rate in Portobello.

286.3 Environment Update

Cathy Cherizard summarised the main points of local interest:

- detailed planning to repair drainage along the High Street is now under way;
- 'Neighbourhood Pride' is a pilot scheme to clean streets, for example to remove the grit left over from the snow and ice, and it requires all vehicles to be removed from the street. This would shortly be happening in Portobello, with the intention of giving at least three days' notice to remove parked cars;
- April is National Spring Cleaning Month; any group wanting to do a local cleanup could borrow equipment from the City Council, and request this via Cathy;
- Portobello Library would be open from 5pm to 8pm on Saturday evening, 5th March, for World Book Day, with music, refreshments, and giving away free books;
- the East Edinburgh Team is now on twitter, as 'east_team';

Celia Butterworth asked that the new 'Welcome to Portobello' sign at the West end of the High Street be moved closer to the King's Road junction than currently planned, and agreed to work with Cathy to identify the best location. Dawson Currie asked about the missing seat beside the Town Hall bus stops; it was generally agreed that we would like to see this reinstated, so Cathy agreed to see what could be done. She also agreed to find out when the new sign to the Bridge Street car park was to be installed.

- * **Action: Cathy Cherizard and Celia Butterworth to agree where to put the 'welcome' sign.**
- * **Action: Cathy Cherizard to investigate the reinstatement of the seat near the Town Hall.**
- * **Action: Cathy Cherizard to check that the Bridge Street car park sign will be installed soon.**

286.4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were accepted: proposed by Diana Cairns, seconded by Caroline Hosking.

286.5 Matters arising

286.5a Litter around recycling bins (285.3); Cathy Cherizard reported after the meeting that the City Council had made it a priority to give Waste Services access to clear recycling bins, but that some litter had been created by the time this was fully accomplished and the Task Force hadn't been able to clear this up until it was safe to do so. She hoped that everything was back to normal now, but asked that any further problems be notified to the East Edinburgh Team (email eastteam@edinburgh.gov.uk, tel 0131 529 3111).

286.5b Bus shelter in Milton Road East (285.3). Nick Stroud had written to the City Council as requested, asking that the bus shelter in Sir Harry Lauder Road be moved to Milton Road East.

286.5c Joppa Tennis Club constitution (285.5c). *See item 286.9d.*

286.5d Community Council Website (285.7). Joe Madden had implemented the contact page as requested, and John Stewart and Diana Cairns had discussed site maintenance with the website sub-group.

286.5e Credit Union (285.8). Community councillors had been provided with all the necessary information about joining our local Credit Union.

* **286.5f** Community Council constitution (285.9). Diana Cairns had written to the City Council as requested, asking that we retain the requirement of 50 people to get a special meeting; this negotiation was still ongoing.

286.5g Proposed restriction on community input to planning decisions (285.10). John Stewart had written to the City Council about this as requested; the issue was due to be considered by the Planning Committee on 19th May.

286.5h Newcraighall North and East (285.11e). David Hamilton had written as requested to object to the current proposals.

286.5i New High School (285.11e). John Stewart thanked everyone who had contributed to the development of the presentation he made to the Planning Committee on the Community Council's behalf on 23rd February.

286.5j EACC meeting on poverty (285.12d). John Stewart reminded the meeting of this event, for which Diana Cairns had circulated details by email.

286.5k Double yellow lines in conservation areas (285.12e). Diana Cairns had written to the City Council as requested.

286.6 Agree Agenda and AOB

Several items were identified for discussion under AOB.

286.7 PCC website

Joe Madden reported progress with the pilot site, and mentioned several suggestions he had received from Sean Watters, most of which had been considered previously and either decided against or felt to be better achieved in other ways. He emphasised that it was up to the Community Council, not himself, to make key decisions about the site.

It was generally agreed that photographs could be used in a gallery to brighten up the site, and Joe asked all community councillors to send him photos of Portobello for this. It was also agreed to add the minutes of meetings of sub-groups where these were available. After much discussion it was agreed not to include links to local groups where these were available already in *Porty Online*, but simply to point to that site. Maria Devoy agreed to write suitable introductory text to go alongside this link.

Dawson Currie and Brenda Molony requested that an 'FAQ' section be developed to collect questions and answers that might be of general interest, reducing the chance that members of the public would ask questions or offer comments that had already been dealt with. Anyone with suggestions for this FAQ should send them to Joe. Tom Ballantine pointed out that the best way for the public to engage with the Community Council would always be to attend its meetings.

Other agreements were that the time, date and exact venue of the next meeting should be displayed prominently; that draft minutes should be published on the site as soon as available; that consideration be given to including a calendar of forthcoming events; and that the FAQ section include the most commonly asked questions and answers, to show that the Community Council is actively listening to its community.

- * **Action: All, to send photos of Portobello to Joe for use on the website.**
- * **Action: All, to send entries for the ‘FAQ’ section to Joe.**
- * **Action: Maria Devoy to send text to Joe to accompany the link to *Porty Online*.**

286.8 Reports

286.8a Police: *See item 286.2.*

286.8b Treasurer: Leon Thompson reported spending of £15 for the high-resolution digital version of our coat of arms and £1,662 for the Gilberstoun noticeboard, leaving us with £1,637.09 in the account.

286.8c Neighbourhood Partnership: John Stewart reported that the Partnership had granted £1,364 towards the cost of republishing the Portobello Heritage Trail leaflet; PAS would be contributing £500, with the overall target being £3,000. The next meeting of the Partnership was scheduled for 8th June, at Portobello High School.

286.8d Environmental Update: *See item 286.3.*

286.8e Planning: John Stewart reported that the City Council had approved the application to build the new High School on Portobello Park. The procurement process was already under way, with the expectation that the contractor would be appointed in the Autumn and the new School open early in 2014.

286.8f Signs, Plaques and coade-stone: Celia Butterworth reported that the map of a ‘stroll round Portobello’ had been mounted in all three community noticeboards, after a delay while leaks in two of the boards were fixed. The next target would be to renew the interpretation board beside the cakestand.

286.8g Portobello Community Centre: David Scott reported that the next Community Centre meeting would be on 8th March, following the usual plan of the second Tuesday of the month. He asked if the Community Council receives minutes of the Community Centre meetings; Caroline Hosking receives them, but it was generally agreed that they should not be circulated to the entire group.

(Anyone who would like the minutes of Centre meetings can email admin@portobelloc.org.uk to be added to the mailing list; minutes are available from the Centre’s website at <http://www.portobelloc.org.uk/>)

286.8h Councillors and MP:

Mike Bridgman focused on the Scottish Government’s current public consultations on the future of the Fire & Rescue and Police services in Scotland, options being considered including the status quo of separate authorities answerable to local councils, an intermediate state of three regional authorities, or a single Scotland-wide authority answerable to a Government Minister. Mike’s particular area of expertise is the Fire Service, which cost a mere £286m last year for Scotland, and just £55m for Lothian & Borders. He believed that all possible efficiency savings had already been made, and that further rationalisation would risk harming services while making negligible savings. Responses are due by 5th May. David Hamilton and Stephen Hawkins agreed to look at the consultation documents with a view to proposing a Community Council response at the March meeting. John Stewart asked that all community councillors have a look at the documents on the Scottish Government website before the next meeting.

- * **Action: All, to review the Scottish Government’s proposals for the future of the Fire & Rescue and Police Services.**
- * **Action: David Hamilton and Stephen Hawkins to propose a Community Council response at the March meeting.**

(Fire & Rescue proposal: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/02/10120752/0>)

(Police proposal: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/02/10120102/0>)

Maureen Child circulated her regular written report, drawing particular attention to Caring in Craigmillar’s attempt to win a free public service to help older people online. This depends on getting as many people as possible to vote for iQare in the ‘Care’ section at <http://www.because.philips.com/livable-cities-award/>

Stephen Hawkins circulated a written report. He stated that he had asked for the report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee to be postponed to the August committee meeting to allow time for adequate community consultation to take place. Dawson Currie asked him if there had been any progress towards restoring the old Town Hall clock on the Baptist Church, and was informed that Sandra Blake, Margaret Munro and John Stewart are on a sub-group specifically to deal with this; they are currently in touch with the City Council about it.

Sheila Gilmore apologised for not having managed to attend many meetings, due to the requirements of the Parliamentary timetable, and said that she was always pleased to have matters of concern brought to her attention by constituents.

286.9 Any Other Business

286.9a Traffic problems

John Stewart reported that he had asked Peter McColl to arrange the promised public meeting to discuss local traffic problems.

- * **Action: Peter McColl to organise public meeting about local traffic problems.**

286.9b Solar panel in Pittville Street

Archie Burns reported that he had reapplied for planning permission to put a solar panel on the roof of his house. It was agreed to be inappropriate for the Community Council to endorse an application made by one of its members, but individual community councillors would be welcome to support the application.

286.9c Holyrood hustings

Andrew Patterson reported that he had been asked if the Community Council would be organising a hustings for the May election. It was agreed that we want to do this, and a sub-group was set up to arrange it.

- * **Action: Tom Ballantine, Andrew Patterson and Leon Thompson to organise a hustings event for the May election.**

286.9d Joppa Tennis Courts

Robert Gatliff had submitted a draft constitution for the Joppa Tennis Courts Club and asked for the Community Council to ratify it. Leon Thompson was pleased that the Club had taken over the management of all the financial aspects apart from insurance, which was appropriate to leave with the Community Council. There was general concern that the draft constitution seemed to make the Community Council liable for matters beyond its control, and it was agreed that clarification was needed. Maureen Child pointed out that it had been one of the great achievements of the early Community Council to take on the courts, and that they enjoyed a greatly reduced rent for having done so. John Stewart stressed that the Community Council was keen that the courts continue as a prized local facility. It was agreed to hold over further discussion until a representative of the Club could be present.

- * **Action: Leon Thompson to report back to Joppa Tennis Courts Club and invite a representative to our next meeting to progress the constitution.**

286.10 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, Edinburgh EH15 1EU.

The next meeting is on 28th March 2011

Subsequent dates are: 25th April 2011
30th May 2011
27th June 2011