



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 301st meeting held on 27th August 2012 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Archie Burns, Tom Ballantine, Sandra Blake, Diana Cairns, Dawson Currie, Maria Devoy, Robert Gatliff (Joppa Tennis Courts), Caroline Hosking, Mandy Lawson (PEDAL), Peter McColl, Ben McLeish (Gilberstoun Residents), Joe Madden (Portobello Open Door), David Scott (Portobello Community Centre), John Stewart (Portobello Amenity Society), Nick Stroud, Ros Sutherland (PPAG), Anne Ward (PCATS), Sean Watters (Towerbank School Council).

Apologies: Celia Butterworth, Kenny MacAskill MSP, Lawrence Marshall (Portobello Older Peoples' Project), Brenda Molony (Portobello Reporter), Leon Thompson, Frances Wraith (Brightons & Rosefields Residents' Association), Katie Quinn.

In attendance: Clive Andrew, Cllr Michael Bridgman, Geoff Brocklehurst, Cllr Maureen Child, Sheila Gilmore MP, M. Javid, Barry Mercer (Safer Neighbourhood Team), Lee Kindness, April McIntosh, Stephen Hawkins, and other members of the public.

301.1 Chair's welcome

John Stewart welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded PCC that comments about agenda items should be made at the meeting itself and not afterwards by means of email.

301.2 Police Report

Barry Mercer presented his report (see appended).

301.3 Environment update

There was no Environmental Report but Katie Quinn had confirmed the following by e-mail:

- Bridge Street bins - The Roads Team had experienced delays with their line marking squad but the new road markings should now be in place and the bins moved away from the junction.
- Joppa Plaza trees - those requiring removal had already been removed. The remaining trees are healthy and will stay where they are; the (now empty) planting areas are to be paved over as part of the maintenance plan for the Plaza/ Pumping Station area.
- The Task Force had advised that the weeds in the vicinity of the Town Hall had been removed.
- The Roads Team have agreed that further repairs to the pavements in James Street are needed and will shortly be making arrangements for these to be carried out. A more definite date for this will follow in due course.

In addition, John Stewart had raised a problem with some remaining weeds at the Town Hall with Scott Thomson. Caroline Hosking also raised concerns about non-food waste in food recycling bins and potholes in the vicinity of the bus stop at the Pitz.

✿ **Action: Caroline Hosking to raise points with Katie Quinn.**

301.4 Sainsbury's

A number of local traders were in attendance to express their concerns over the proposed closure of Woodwares and the opening of a Sainsbury's Local. There were fears that the loss of such a specialist shop would adversely affect all the other shops on the High Street, concerns about increased traffic and deliveries, and worries that independent traders could be forced to close with resulting empty shops. A view was expressed that the proposal could bring some benefits, and it was noted that whilst there was widespread unhappiness at the prospect of losing Woodwares, there was some evidence that attitudes to a new Sainsbury's Local were more mixed. It was agreed that it was an issue of concern but that more information was needed regarding the situation and what options might still be available. It was agreed that more initiatives to support local traders would also be welcome, and to approach Sarah Woodford regarding this and the possibility of asking Sainsbury's about their plans. Caroline Hosking suggested a poster campaign supporting local shops.

- ◆ **Action: Tom Ballantine to ask Woodwares if they could provide clarification on the situation.**
- ◆ **Action: John Stewart to ask Sarah Woodford about further initiatives to support local traders and contacting Sainsbury's.**

301.5 Fingerposts

Nick Stroud presented a report on the condition of the fingerposts, many of which were dilapidated, damaged or redundant. CoEC's East Team had suggested a meeting at 10am on 26th or 27th September to discuss the matter further, and input from the traders would be welcome. Clive Andrew indicated he would be happy to attend if the date of the meeting could be confirmed soon.

- ◆ **Action: John Stewart to confirm the meeting details with Nick Stroud and Clive Andrew.**

301.6 Minutes of Previous Meetings

There were differing perceptions as to what had been discussed and agreed regarding item 300.10 (Open Letter to the PCC), in particular whether John Stewart's reply to the Open Letter had been adopted as the PCC's official response. It was agreed to note this. The minutes of the meeting were approved unchanged: proposed by Nick Stroud, seconded by Maria Devoy.

301.7 Matters arising

301.7a Consulting 'Hard to Reach' groups (300.2). Sean Watters had met with Lesley Carus and Irene Beautyman of the planning department to discuss consultation with 'hard to reach' groups. The benefits of using electronic and social media to engage some 'hard to reach' groups (under 35's, those in full-time work) had been raised. The Council would be keen to assist and advise further on effective engagement and consultation, as well as helping with pilot projects if the opportunity arose.

301.7b Planting in Rosefield Park (300.6a) Peter McColl had yet to receive a response from CoEC.

301.7c Noise from football pitches (300.6b). No reply from the manager at Powerleague as yet. Robert Gatliff agreed to contact the neighbours to see if the problem was ongoing.

- ◆ **Action: Robert Gatliff to contact the neighbours regarding the noise problem.**

301.7d Minutes of the Special Meeting (300.6f). Nick Stroud had amended minutes as agreed.

301.7e Community Council Survey group (300.8). Various actions had been taken regarding the recommendations of the Survey group, including electronic copies of correspondence having been prepared for hosting on the PCC web-site. It was noted that there were now effectively two PCC Twitter feeds and there was discussion on how to resolve this possible source of confusion. It was agreed to leave things as

they stood for now and discuss the matter more fully at the October meeting. It was also agreed to circulate details of both Twitter feeds so people could view them.

- **Action: Sean Watters to circulate details of the Twitter feeds.**
- **Action: Twitter accounts to be discussed at the October meeting.**

301.7f Fort Kinnaird (300.11c). A supportive comment on the planning application had been submitted.

301.7g X26 Bus service (300.12a). Diana Cairns had written to Lothian Buses requesting the restoration of a stop in Joppa, but the request had been declined.

301.7h Shops on the Prom (300.12d). John Stewart had replied to Sarah Woodford but she was now investigating the possibility of the work being undertaken through Capital Skills and the Community Service Department, and would report back.

301.8 Agree AOB

Various items were agreed for discussion. It was agreed that one item, regarding an FOI request on the Portobello High School project, be discussed at the next meeting.

- **Action: Archie Burns to provide electronic copy of the relevant document for circulation.**

301.9 Community Engagement and Renewal Bill

Sandra Blake reported on the event she had attended regarding the proposed bill. It was clear that the bill was intended to be far reaching, giving local communities much greater say in issues that affected them. The intention was to present the bill in late 2013 or early 2014, and there would be a long process of consultation as it was developed. It was also expected that groups responding to the consultation should demonstrate who and how they had consulted in determining their response. Sandra emphasised that, given the implications of the proposals, it was very important for PCC to be aware of the National Standards for Community Engagement.

Given the considerable scope of the proposals it was suggested that focusing on particular areas of the bill might make it easier to undertake more detailed consultation and discussion as the bill developed, but it was felt that PCC was not in a position to give a response on behalf of the community at this time. However, it was agreed that a response on behalf of PCC to the consultation in general would be appropriate, in particular regarding the possible effects on Community Councils.

The issue of consultation with certain 'hard to reach' groups (e.g. socially disadvantaged, people with disabilities) was also raised. Sean Watters said he would seek further advice from the Council on this issue.

- **Action: National Standards for Community Engagement to be discussed at a future meeting.**
- **Action: CERB sub-group to draft a response for circulation.**
- **Action: Sean Watters to seek further advice from COEC regarding 'hard to reach' groups.**

301.10 Straiton Park

There was a discussion on the proposed upgrade of Straiton Park play area, with the following points raised.

- If it could be relocated, the play area would be better on the sunnier eastern portion of the park.
- There were concerns about removing the entrance grid as a self-closing gate might not be sufficient to stop dogs entering the area.
- It would be preferable if the money could be spent on additional rather than replacement facilities, with the existing play equipment retained.

- The edgings to the sand pit would be unnecessary as the soft edges are actually better for small children.
- The swings would be particularly welcome.
- Whilst younger children were relatively well catered for, there was a lack of facilities for older children/teens in the area.

It was agreed to forward comments on to James Galloway at CoEC.

- **Action: Sean Watters to circulate draft comments.**

301.11 Village Show

A rota for the Village Show was agreed.

301.12 Donation to Portobello Older Peoples Project

To be discussed at the next meeting.

- **Action: To be on the agenda for the next meeting.**

301.13 Reports

301.13a Treasurer: John Stewart presented the following report from Leon Thompson:

The latest bank statement (30th July) shows a balance of £1,379.80 in the PCC account. All cheques written have now been presented so there are no outstanding commitments at this time. The next scheduled payment is for the renewal of the public liability insurance for the JTC. This is for £159 (incl. tax) and is due on 14 September.

301.13b Neighbourhood Partnership: Peter McColl reported that the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Partnership would be at the White House, Wednesday September 12th, 6:30pm.

301.13c Planning: John Stewart reported that the application for partial demolition of 1 High Street had been granted. A new application for 11 Rosefield Street had been submitted. It was agreed that it would be preferable for the existing building to be retained, but that if it were necessary to demolish it the latest design was better than previous submissions. There were also concerns about disruption and access during the construction phase should the proposal go ahead. It was agreed to comment on the application to the above effect.

- **Action: Diana Cairns to circulate a draft response.**

301.13d Signs & plaques: The signs and plaques account had been closed and the moneys transferred to the main account. John Stewart reported problems with rainwater at the Potteries board, although this board may be replaced anyway when the redevelopment at the kilns takes place. The horizon board at John Street is also in need of replacement.

301.13e Community Centre: David Scott reported that the next management meeting would be on Tuesday 11th September.

301.13f Joppa Tennis Courts: No report.

301.13g Councillors: In addition to her report, Cllr Child circulated information on an innovative alcohol awareness programme developed at PHS that may be rolled out in schools across Scotland. Cllr Bridgeman noted the traffic accident that had occurred at the bottom of Bath Street and advised that the possibility of restricting vehicle access was being investigated.

301.14 AOB

301.14a Total Neighbourhood Project: John Stewart had circulated a letter about the new Total Neighbourhood Project which aims to improve the design and delivery of services across the East Neighbourhood. There had been a meeting about the project but nobody from PCC was able to attend. Sandra Blake indicated that she'd be willing to attend the next meeting if available.

301.14b East Coast Main Line: There had been a meeting organised by ECML but very little notice had been given, to only a small number of local residents. ECML were investing in an acoustic barrier and looking at additional noise reduction strategies, but residents also had concerns about vibration, light pollution and diesel particulates. It was agreed that ECML needed to do more to address concerns and should consult more widely with the local community.

✿ **Action: Sean Watters to write to ECML regarding the above.**

301.14c Older Person's Information Event: John Stewart said he would circulate information regarding an Older Person's Information Event due to be held in the library.

✿ **Action: John Stewart to circulate information.**

301.14d Public meeting on cuts: Caroline Hosking circulated information regarding a public meeting in opposition to the Welfare Reform Act: Portobello Town Hall, Friday 7th September, 7:30pm.

301.15 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 24th September 2012 (302)

Subsequent dates are: 29th October 2012 (303)
26th November 2012 (304)
28th January 2013 (305: no meeting in December)

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