



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 313th meeting held on 4th November 2013 in Portobello Baptist Church Hall

Present: Max Blinkhorn, Mark Cameron, Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Stephen Dishon (Towerbank Parent Council) Terry Dobson (Gilberstoun Residents' Association), Maria Devoy, Gillian Eunson, Bob Jefferson, Saul Kenrick (Woodcraft), Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, David Medcalf, Ben McLeish, Thea McMillan, Eva Schonfeld (PEDAL), Clare Slifer, Marjorie Thomas (Joppa Tennis Courts), Sean Watters.

Apologies: Peter Bradley (Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association), Lawrence Marshall (Portobello Older Peoples' Project).

In attendance: Cllr Michael Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Sgt John Young (Police), Avril Scott, John Stewart, Gillian Dunn, Brenda Molony, Libby Torrie, Dan Reynolds, Malcolm Bett, Stephen Hawkins, Geoff Brocklehurst, David Scott, Diana Cairns, Archie Burns, Margaret Munro, and other members of the public.

313.1 Returning Officers' Welcome

Ross Murray and Gavin King from COEC welcomed everyone to the meeting.

313.2 Apologies

Peter Bradley (nominated group representative for Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association), and Lawrence Marshall (nominated group representative for Portobello Older Peoples' Project) could not attend, so Diana Cairns and Brenda Molony would act on their behalf for the election of Local Interest groups.

313.3 PCC Election Results

The elections results were confirmed. With an electorate of 9,098, 1,276 votes were cast representing a 14.03% turnout. The following candidates had been elected: Max Blinkhorn, Mark Cameron, Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Maria Devoy, Gillian Eunson, Bob Jefferson, Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, Ben McLeish, Thea McMillan, David Medcalf, Clare Slifer, Sean Watters.

313.4 Election of Local Interest Groups

The Returning Officers explained that the election was to be conducted by secret ballot and distributed voting papers to all elected members and Local Interest Group representatives. The results of the voting were as follows: Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association 17, Gilberstoun Residents' Association 19, Joppa Tennis Courts 17, PEDAL 19, Portobello Amenity Society 11, Portobello Older Peoples' Project 21, Woodcraft 19, Towerbank Parent Council 20. The nominated groups were duly elected, excepting Portobello Amenity Society.

313.5 Appointment of Office Bearers

Geoff Lynn was appointed Chair, Lee Kindness Vice-Chair, Mark Cameron Treasurer, and Sean Watters Secretary.

Geoff Lynn thanked the Returning Officers and officials involved in conducting the election. He thanked all candidates who had put themselves forward and all PCC members past and present who had contributed to

vibrant and healthy community that is Portobello. Everyone shared a desire to see improvements to the community and he hoped PCC would continue to play an important role in that. Community Councils faced challenges as there were increasing demands and expectations placed upon them, as well as difficulties in consulting with people. However it was important to consult with the local community and raise awareness of local issues so that PCC would hopefully be better able to represent local views and make relevant representations. PCC had limited resources but it was hoped that working with other bodies and groups, whether or not represented on the Community Council, would help bring positive change.

313.6 Police Report

Sergeant John Young gave a detailed Police Report. Whilst crime overall was down over the same period as last year, with less violent crime, there had been a big increase in thefts in Portobello and Musselburgh, targeting high value bikes in particular. He asked people to be vigilant, take steps to secure property, and report any incidents or concerns.

He encouraged people to respond to the consultation on the next Edinburgh Local Police Plan, via events and an online survey and gave a reassurance that whilst the opening times of the public counters at police stations was being reviewed, there were no proposals to close the Portobello Police Station itself. He also indicated that the Police would undertake patrols with Fire Officers on Bonfire Night, to assess potential fire problems, leaving the Fire Brigade more able to respond to major incidents.

Geoff Lynn raised the issue of Social Media and the considerable local discussion of recent crimes and asked whether such reports of crime on-line were helpful. Sgt Young responded that Social Media was a double-edged sword. On the one hand it was a very useful means of gathering and disseminating information, but it could also propagate misleading information and exaggerate problems, generating a fear of crime out of proportion that it is generally at a low level in Portobello.

Stephen Hawkins raised a concern about the positioning of CCTV cameras in Rosefield Park. Sgt Young explained that whilst COEC controlled the cameras, the police did influence their use, so if there were any concerns they should be reported directly to the Community Policing Team.

313.7 Environment Report

No Environment Report. Sean Watters to follow up on items outstanding from previous meetings.

313.8 Minutes of Previous Meeting

With minor amendments the minutes were agreed.

313.9 Matters arising from the Minutes

313.9a Alcohol Consultation (312.7a): Sean Watters explained that a possible alcohol consultation had been discussed but that the new membership of PCC might want to consider the issue of consultation in general before deciding priorities.

313.9b Waste and Recycling (312.7b): Sean Watters said he would contact Waste Services again to arrange a presentation at a future meeting.

✿ **Action: Sean Watters to arrange a presentation on waste and recycling.**

313.9c Planning (312.7g): A letter of support on the High School application had been submitted.

313.9d Fire Control Service (312.9g): Nick Stroud had drafted a letter on the proposed reduction of Fire Control Centres in Scotland from 7 to 3. Sean Watters to circulate the draft to the new PCC members.

✿ **Action: Sean Watters to circulate the draft letter on Fire Control Centres.**

313.9e PCC Elections (312.10): it had been suggested to COEC that they run a public consultation on Local Interest Groups to be appointed alongside the election of individual members, but it had not been taken up. The elections had been publicised by PCC by a variety of means.

313.10 Agree AOB

It was agreed to discuss the issue of consultation in general.

313.11 Reports

313.11a Treasurer: No report. Sean Watters and Mark Cameron to liaise with Leon Thompson regarding handover of Treasurer duties.

- ◆ **Action: Sean Watters and Mark Cameron to contact Leon Thompson.**

313.11b Neighbourhood Partnership: No report. PCC could appoint two representatives to the Neighbourhood Partnership, a principal and a deputy. The next meetings were December 4th, February 26th and May 28th, at the East Centre/Craigmillar Library. Cllr Bridgman asked if anyone could attend the Agenda Planning Meeting the next day but nobody was available. The importance of engaging with the Neighbourhood Partnership and working more with Craigmillar Community Council was discussed. It was agreed to look further into who could participate in the Neighbourhood Partnership.

- ◆ **Action: Involvement with the Neighbourhood partnership to be discussed at the next meeting.**

313.11c Planning: A revision to the Newcraighall north housing proposal had been submitted. PCC had objected to previous applications on the basis of strong local objections from the immediate area. As some new members of the PCC were unfamiliar with the proposals it was agreed to circulate the relevant information and invite further views although the timescale for a response was tight.

- ◆ **Action: Sean Watters and Ben McLeish to circulate more information, with the intention of submitting a response by the November 18th deadline.**

313.11d Signs & plaques: Celia Butterworth explained the work of the Signs and Plaques Committee as a joint collaboration between PAS and PCC. As no current members of the Committee were PCC members she suggested co-opting a member of the Committee onto PCC or have new members of PCC join the Committee. It was agreed to consider this.

- ◆ **Action: To consider the Signs and Plaques Committee at the next meeting.**

313.11e Joppa Tennis Courts: Marjorie Thomas gave a brief update.

313.11f Councillors:

Cllr Bridgman congratulated everyone elected to PCC. He reported that there has been a recent meeting of the Police and Fire Committee and encouraged people to respond to the Local Police Plan. He also said there were encouraging indications from recent discussion regarding the reduction of Fire Control centres although the outcome was still uncertain. He reminded people of his surgeries and encouraged people to contact it at any time if they had issues of concern. Cllr Child congratulated everyone elected to PCC and emphasised the importance of Community Councils as the most local level of democratic representation. She also explained that as a member of the Planning Committee she was required to not express opinions on applications being processed, but that she always welcomed people's views on such matters.

313.12 AOB

The issue of consultation was discussed. There was agreement that PCC should look at ways to engage with and consult the community, although difficulties and limitations to that were acknowledged. Brenda Molony reminded everyone that the Portobello Reporter was a useful means of getting information out to the local community. After discussion it was agreed to set up a sub-group to look at the issue of consultation in more detail, that Sean Watters would contact Jane Milne at COEC for advice, and that Lee Kindness would contact Joe Madden regarding access to the PCC website and e-mail accounts.

- ◆ **Action: To set up a Consultation Sub-group, Sean Watters to contact Jane Milne, Lee Kindness to contact Joe Madden.**

It was also noted that local traders had organised a Xmas Crawl on Thursday 28th November, with late night shopping on the High Street from 5-8pm.

313.13 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 25th November 2013 (314)

Subsequent dates are: 27th January 2014 (315)
24th February 2014 (316)

Portobello Community Council on the Web: <http://www.portobellocc.org/>