



## Minutes of the 325<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Portobello Community Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

**Present:** Max Blinkhorn, Peter Bradley (Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association), Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Stephen Dishon (Towerbank Parent Council), Clare Slifer, Bob Jefferson, Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, Thea MacMillan, David Medcalf, Ben McLeish, Marjorie Thomas (Joppa Tennis Courts), Sean Watters.

**Apologies:** Maria Devoy, Terry Dobson (Gilberstoun Residents' Association), Justin Kenrick (PEDAL), Lawrence Marshall (POPP), Gillian Eunson, Sgt John Young (Police).

**In Attendance:** Cllr Mike Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr David Walker, Sgt Keith Murray (Police), Juliana Muir, Carah Johnson, Irvine Allen, Celia Butterworth, Damian Killeen, Diana Cairns, Stephen Hawkins, Colin Cuthbert, and other members of the public.

### 325.1 Chair's Welcome

Geoff Lynn welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the PCC continued to publicise community events through various channels and encouraged local groups to forward information. He also encouraged people speak up during the meeting, as the acoustics in the hall were not ideal, and it was important that everyone could follow what was said.

### 325.2 Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes were agreed.

**325.2a** Brighton Place setts (324.5): Follow up information had been received.

**325.2b** Volleyball Courts (324.8): The consultation was in progress and was due to finish the following Friday.

**325.2c** Neighbourhood Partnership (324.9b): Marjorie Thomas reported on the last business planning meeting. The 'You Decides' participatory budget event was being planned for May 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the deadline for grant applications was April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Among the final grants approved for the outgoing financial year were ones to East Edinburgh Older Peoples Forum and the Festival of Ireland event. It had also been reported that plans were being progressed for the consultation on the design for the new park on the Portobello High School/St John's site.

### 325.3 Police Report

Sgt Keith Murray gave a summary of the Police Report (see appended).

### 325.4 Environment Report



## Portobello Community Council

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Sean Watters summarised the Environment Report (see appended). A concern was raised about the condition of a wall in Beach Lane. Cllr Child advised that it had been brought to the attention of Building Control previously and they had assessed it as being safe.



## **325.5 Coastal Regeneration Alliance**

Gareth Jones introduced the Coastal Regeneration Alliance, a community campaign group set up initially in response to proposals for an “Energy Park” on the site of the former Cockenzie power station. There were particular concerns about: the scale and industrial nature of the proposals; the loss of open space; the impact on tourism, fishing, and the cohesion of local communities; the effect of a large quay development; the impact on the remaining Prestonpans Battlefield site; the proposed re-routing of the coast road and the John Muir Way; a lack of consultation and how the proposals had come about; a lack of detail on the proposals. It was noted that a Pre-application Consultation had been undertaken and a planning application in principle was expected to follow, although that could take some time as the required Environmental Impact Assessment was likely to be onerous. The PCC agreed to publicise the issue locally.

**Action: to publicise the issue when more information was available**

## **325.6 Our Forth**

Juliana Muir, Carah Johnson and Irvine Allan from Our Forth spoke about the community group and their concerns about unconventional gas exploitation. There were a variety of proposals being put forward for Fracking and Coal Bed Methane extraction, as well as licences granted for possible Underground Coal Gasification in the Forth in close proximity. The group had serious concerns about adverse public health and environmental impacts, a lack of information and consultation on the issues, and inadequate regulation and monitoring for what were novel practices. They were keen to raise public awareness and had arranged a meeting in the Town Hall for Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2-4pm, with guest speakers. They were also interested in developing a Community Charter, identifying what people valued about their community and priorities for the future.

## **325.7 Brighton Place setts**

An update had been received from COEC regarding the setts: the Council were liaising with utilities companies on work they intended to carry out, the Planning Department and Edinburgh World Heritage preferred sett renewal, a consultation with local businesses would start shortly, and no start date for any works had yet been identified. After discussion it was agreed that Sean Watters would contact COEC to see if there were any further updates, and that PCC would proceed with a consultation on the basis of the information available. It was also agreed to run the consultation in conjunction with Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council, and invite COEC officers to the February meeting to discuss the matter further.

**Action: to contact COEC for any updates and to undertake a consultation**

## **325.8 Prom/Marlborough Street plaque**

Celia Butterworth explained that the seaside board near the ‘cakestand’ was in need of replacement, at a cost between



£500 to £1,000 depending on the type of replacement. It was proposed that the PCC, as owners of the board, put in a grant application to the Neighbourhood Partnership in advance of the 'You Decide' event. A discussion followed as to replicating the current design of the board, or whether it might be an opportunity to revamp the design, possibly using the original images. It was suggested that a design competition of some sort might attract interest, but how that might work required consideration. It was finally agreed that the PCC would look to put in a grant application in two parts; firstly, for replacing the board and secondly, for a consultation/design process on the design of the board, including the option of a like-for-like replacement. Claire, Emma and Lee agreed to develop the idea further in conjunction with the Sign & Plaques group.

**Action: to develop ideas for a consultation/design process for the replacement board**

### **325.9 Consultation Sub-committee**

The January Scot-mid session had been cancelled due to illness, but the next was scheduled for February 14<sup>th</sup> and would focus on the Brighton Place setts.



The consultation on the proposals to close public toilets had ended and had received a good response, overwhelmingly opposed. An interim report on the consultation had already been forwarded to COEC but a finalised report would now be submitted.

**Action: finalised report to be submitted to**

**COEC**

The volleyball consultation was ongoing and had received around 250 responses to date.

The Consultation Sub-committee were also considering how to evaluate the PCC's own performance, and record that.

It was also noted that COEC were currently consulting on school street closures (affecting Towerbank and St John's) and on community access to school facilities.

### **325.10 Other reports**

- a. Treasurer – the current balance stood at £1,647.47. The Cruden/Aldi contribution to cover the cost of the leaflet printing and distribution was still due.
- b. Neighbourhood Partnership – the next meeting was on May 13<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Planning – The planning application for the conversion of the former Towerbank annexe in Bath Street proposed the removal of the narrowed crossing point and the creation of dedicated parking spaces for the development on the public highway. It was agreed to submit a comment on the application raising concerns about these aspects of the proposals.

**Action: submit a comment regarding the parking proposals for the Bath Street annexe**

It was noted that the proposed Second Development Plan would go to committee on 26<sup>th</sup> February. It was unclear how the committee would deal with representations given the possible scope, and it had been indicated that delegations may be limited to Community Councils. The PCC may wish to send a delegation regarding the Brunstane/Newcraighall proposals.

There was a brief discussion about the Cruden/Aldi approval and a concern expressed about the status of the North West Portobello Development Brief. It was suggested Planning officials be invited to a future meeting for clarification on the issue.

- d. Councillors – Nothing further to add.

### **325.11 Any Other Business**

**325.11a** Nothing additional business.

### **325.12 Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting (326) of the Portobello Community Council will be held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 7:30pm in



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Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 High Street, Portobello, Edinburgh, EH15 1EU.

Subsequent Dates are: Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March (327)  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April (328)

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*325th PCC meeting closed.*