



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the 318th meeting held on 28th April 2014.

Present: Max Blinkhorn, Peter Bradley (Brighton and Rosefield Residents' Association), Mark Cameron, Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Maria Devoy, Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, Lawrence Marshall (POPP), David Medcalf, Ben McLeish, Marjorie Thomas (Joppa Tennis Courts), Sean Watters, Stephen Dishon (Towerbank Parent Council), Gillian Eunson, Clare Slifer.

Apologies: Thea McMillan, Terry Dobson (Gilberstoun Residents' Association), Bob Jefferson, Saul Kenrick (Woodcraft), Eva Schonfeld (PEDAL), Cllr David Walker

In attendance: Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr Michael Bridgman, Sgt John Young (Police), Graham Rowan (COEC) and members of the public.

318.1 Chair's Welcome

Geoff Lynn welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the Wilson Memorial Church were operating a food-bank and would welcome donations of food or money. People could contact Rev Dunn on 0141 669 6636 or by email: lawrence212@sky.com. The Portobello Timebank was up and running and looking for people to join: more information at <http://www.edinburghtimebank.org.uk/timebanks/portobello>. And responses to the Community Local Plan consultation indicated that people's priorities were a "safe, clean, green" place to live.

318.2 Police Report

Sgt Young outlined the main points from the Police Report, in particular an ongoing problem with theft of high value items left in vehicles, and urged people to take sensible precautions. In response to questions he confirmed that the Police had no particular concerns with cycling on the Prom but that they would be undertaking occasional spot checks to encourage safe cycling during the busier summer months. A question was raised about the tent on the beach but he confirmed that was a civil matter and he understood that COEC had started an eviction process. He also noted the appointment of a new temporary Chief Inspector, Inspector Murray Starkey.

318.3 Environment Report

No Environment Report.

318.4 Amalgamation of Churches

Gill Anderson (St. Philip's), Ella Lynch (St. James') and Pat Young (Old Parish) were in attendance to explain more about the proposed amalgamation of the three churches. The union had been agreed by the congregations but there was an ongoing process to decide on the place of worship. It was intended that a final decision on what would happen to the surplus buildings could take up to a year, but there was the possibility of disposal sooner should an offer be made. The decision would be one for the combined church, who were themselves gathering together the information on how much the halls were used. Whilst the halls provided a huge community benefit, that was being subsidised by the churches, a situation that was not sustainable. As the PCC was already looking into the level of use of all amenity spaces within the area it was suggested the church information could be incorporated into that. It was agreed to publicise the issue of the amalgamation and how it might impact on the availability of community spaces.

✿ **Action: Publicise the issue of the amalgamation**

318.5 Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes were agreed.

318.5a Prom Markings (317:4): Awaiting response from COEC regarding queries.

✿ **Action: Awaiting a response from COEC**

318.5b Richard Demarco (317.5c): ideas on a possible event were being developed.

✿ **Action: Proposal to be developed**

318.5c Cycling on the Prom (317.5e): Police response received but difficulty contacting CEC Access Officer.

✿ **Action: Attempt to contact Access Officer again**

318.5d Referendum Event (317.5i): SW to contact Scottish Community Alliance.

✿ **Action: Contact Scottish Community Alliance regarding possible event**

318.5e Parking problems and accessibility (317.6): SW had contacted Andy Matheson and Andrew MacLeod.

✿ **Action: Awaiting a response from COEC**

318.5f Brunstane Station (317.10): Work was on-going to adopt the station, improve it and use it to promote the local area more.

318.6 Beach Consultation

David Medcalf reported on the consultation regarding dogs on the beach. There had been a large response with over 660 individuals commenting so far, although there were lessons to be learned. Not setting a closing date had been a mistake and the coverage in the Edinburgh Evening News had perhaps coloured the debate, with some people responding to the front page headline rather than what was actually being suggested. Opinion on the options suggested varied considerably. Overall, the majority leaned against any change, although responses from within the PCC area were slightly in favour. It was clear that many people did think there was an underlying issue with a minority of irresponsible dog owners, but there was an absence of a consensus on what could be done about that. However, it was important to look at more than just numbers and the comments still had to be analysed. It was agreed to set the closing date for the consultation as Friday 2 May and try to collate a report analysing responses for the May meeting, to be made public.

There was also differences of opinion on the consultation itself, with some people upset that it might stigmatise dog owners and cause division, whereas some welcomed the opportunity to express an opinion. It was agreed that how information was presented was very important, and that would have to be considered carefully in future consultations. The PCC was in the process of trying to build up the capacity to consult the local community and there were bound to be lessons learned on the way.

✿ **Action: Publicise closing date and collate report for May meeting**

3.18.7 Consultation Sub-Committee

Various items were reported on: minutes from the last meeting would be available soon: there had been some difficulty keeping track of various items so a new consultation folder was being put on the PCC web-site: a consultation blog was a work in progress: Max Blinkhorn had keys for the noticeboards and was finalising the format for a bulletin: Gillian Eunson was in discussion with the library about how to make best

use of the PCC area: on-going use of the Library for consultation group meetings was being looked into: the possibility of training for consultation was being looked into: Gillian Eunson and Thea MacMillan would be attending the next session at Scot-Mid, asking what 2 things would improve the Beach/Prom: the e-mail distribution list stood at 489 people: the group would look to develop protocols when engaging on social media: and people were encouraged to like the PCC Facebook posts to raise their profile.

The PCC were also encouraged to feed into the sub-committee issues that they'd like them to look at. It was suggested they might look at ways of gathering opinion from a more random or 'neutral' sub-set of people, as a control when also receiving self-selected responses.

318.8 Reports

318.8a Treasurer's Report: Current balance stood at £2,276.62, but would come down to £2152.63 once cheques had cleared. It was confirmed that insurance for the signs was in place.

318.8b Neighbourhood Partnership: The next business meeting was the next day, 10am Tuesday 29 May. Marjorie Thomas agreed to attend.

318.8c Planning: No report, but noted that the Baileyfield site was being sold with a combined housing and retail development likely to be proposed in due course.

318.8d Councillors: Cllr Child noted that further training session for Community Councils regarding planning were to be run in May and June.

318.9 AOB

- a) Marjorie Thomas gave details of the Joppa Tennis Courts Open Day.
- b) The Signs and Plaques group would be inspecting the signs and plaques shortly and invited interested parties to join them. Gillian Eunson expressed an interest in attending.
- c) Big Things on the Beach were planning a celebration of their 10 years existence in October. It was agreed to invite them to a future meeting to hear more about their plans.

318.10 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 26th May 2014 (319)

Subsequent dates are: 30th June 2014 (320)

25th August 2014 (321)

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