**Portobello Town Hall Vision – Peter Schaufuss**

I have a vision for Portobello Town Hall; one that I hope will cement its future for many generations to come by fully utilising the phenomenal potential that this building offers.

Since it was built in 1912-14 to the City Architect James A Williamson’s design, the 3-storey, 5-bay classical town hall has played an important local role, also as a community and artistic centre. It is my wish to continue the evolution to the public and community on a daily basis for a variety of purposes. I plan to make the Town Hall a world-class centre, one that would attract productions and music events from leading companies, as well as community productions and many other exciting uses both cultural and community based.

We plan to allow the community to utilise the space through hire arrangements (both recurring and ad hoc), as per what has been happening with both the Rose and St Stephens which has seen dance school shows, karate classes, film festivals, church services, rehearsal space, community gatherings all take place.

As part of my bid, is to enshrine the minimum of 200 hours of free community usage as part of the legal terms attaching to my bid.

My vision very much encourages the building being full of life, noise, colour and laughter – ideally every day and night of the week.

Of course at the heart will be my core plans for my Ballet school and Ballet company, as well as the various exciting  productions I would want to bring, but that leaves plenty space and opportunity for community engagement. In fact that will be actively a goal at the heart of my whole plans for PTH.

**Background and track record**

Peter Schaufuss's background is in the theatre first as an International star ballet dancer and director and later adding re-designing and renovation of listed buildings into theatres and multi-purpose spaces, for performances, rehearsals, educational and community use and activities.

**Latest projects:**

**Rose Theatre** in Rose Street in the center of Edinburgh. Rose Theatre is a grade 2-listed building and a former chapel. The building was purchased saving it from being a super pub or bar/hotel and planning permission was achieved for change of use and a total renovation including putting in an extra floor to enhancing the usability. Rose Theatre is now a multi-purpose use building hosting 3 performing venues, an award-winning Cafe, rehearsal rooms and is in great demand daily embraced by the community as well as professional users. Since Rose Theatre opened it’s doors more than 2000 performances and events have taken place with hundred of thousands of happy users and clients alike.

**Saint Stephens** in Stockbridge in Edinburgh is a grade 1 listed Landmark building by renowned architect William Playfair. The former church and art centre was purchased saving it from further decay and the renovation has just recently been completed.

Today Saint Stephens with it’s many incredible different spaces over three floor levels, including the largest single space in Edinburgh ‘Ashton Hall’, with it’s inserted floor, are used happily for weddings, performing, community use (scouts, pupping lessons, dance lessons, jujitsu, choir practice, indoor markets) and educational work equally right across the layers of the population.

Both buildings were bought and renovated by private funding and are operating successfully without any public funding.

We have now given a virtual tour for both buildings to members of the Community Council.

**Renovation**

The building would be opened up to the public shortly after take over, this would involve only the front foyer with services, an information desk and a cafe. It would be our priority to keep (the building) the foyer only open as much as possible during the renovation works.