

Finance and Resources Committee

10am, Thursday 27 November 2014

Development of Neighbourhood Partnership Local Community Plans – Community Engagement - referral from the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

Item number	7.9
Report number	
Wards	All

Executive summary

The Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee on 23 September 2014 considered a report providing details on engagement activity involving the communities of Edinburgh to inform the development of new local community plans for 2014-2017.

Links

Coalition pledges	See attached report
Council outcomes	See attached report
Single Outcome Agreement	See attached report
Appendices	See attached report

Terms of Referral

Development of Neighbourhood Partnership Local Community Plans – Community Engagement

Terms of referral

- 1.1 On 23 September 2014 the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee considered a report providing details of engagement activity involving the communities of Edinburgh to inform development of new local community plans for 2014-2017.
- 1.2 The local community plans set out the ambitions for each neighbourhood, identifying outcomes, measures and multi-agency action needed to make change happen.
- 1.3 The Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee agreed:
 - 1.3.1 To note the engagement activity of Neighbourhood Partnerships in developing new local community plans for 2014-2017.
 - 1.3.2 To agree to receive further reports on the Neighbourhood Partnership local community plans and the new public performance framework at the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee on 25 November 2014.
 - 1.3.3 To refer the report to other Executive Committees of the Council for information.

For Decision/Action

- 2.1 The Finance and Resources Committee is asked to note the information.

Background reading / external references

Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee 23 September 2014

Carol Campbell

Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance

Contact: Lesley Birrell, Committee Services

E-mail: lesley.birrell@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4240

Links

Coalition pledges	See attached report
Council outcomes	See attached report
Single Outcome Agreement	See attached report
Appendices	See attached report

Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

10am, Tuesday, 23 September 2014

Development of Neighbourhood Partnership Local Community Plans – Community Engagement

Item number	7.2
Report number	
Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All

Executive summary

Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) are the local expression of community planning in Edinburgh, and enable citizens and service providers to work collaboratively to achieve better, more efficient and targeted outcomes for communities.

Over recent months the NPs have been developing new local community plans for 2014-2017. The plans set out the ambitions for each neighbourhood, identifying the outcomes, measures and multi-agency action needed to make change happen.

The purpose of this report is to provide details on engagement activity involving the communities of Edinburgh which informs the local plans. The aggregate of available intelligence and information across City of Edinburgh Council and partner engagement and research allows the plans to be informed by over 31,000 contributions. This is supplemented by a dedicated neighbourhood engagement programme in 2013-14 which realised a further 7,663 contributions. This programme focused on face to face contact and dialogue to gather a deeper understanding of community aspirations and targeted people that traditionally do not contribute. NPs therefore have the opportunity to have a rich understanding of the priorities and aspirations of their local communities. Information on the next stages of the local community plan development process is also provided.

Links

Coalition pledges	P33
Council outcomes	CO23 , CO24
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 , SO2 , SO3 , SO4

Development of Neighbourhood Partnership Local Community Plans – Community Engagement

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee:

- 1.1 notes the engagement activity of NPs in developing new local community plans for 2014-17; and
- 1.2 agrees to receive further reports on the NP local community plans and the new public performance framework at the meeting on 25 November 2014.
- 1.3 refers this report to other Executive Committees of the Council for information.

Background

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) enable communities and agencies to work together to transform neighbourhoods, they help to ensure the aspirations of all citizens, whether they live, work or visit an area, are realised.
- 2.2 This is achieved through the development and delivery of local community plans, which set out the outcomes, priorities and actions needed to make measurable change happen in each of the neighbourhoods across the city.
- 2.3 Work on developing the new local community plans for 2014-17 has been underway since 2013, with the focus during the period October 2013 to June 2014 on the development and delivery of engagement plans. This work augments the already extensive understanding of place drawn from the ongoing community dialogue and partner research and engagement across the areas such as the responses to the consultation by Police Scotland Edinburgh for the Local Policing Plan.

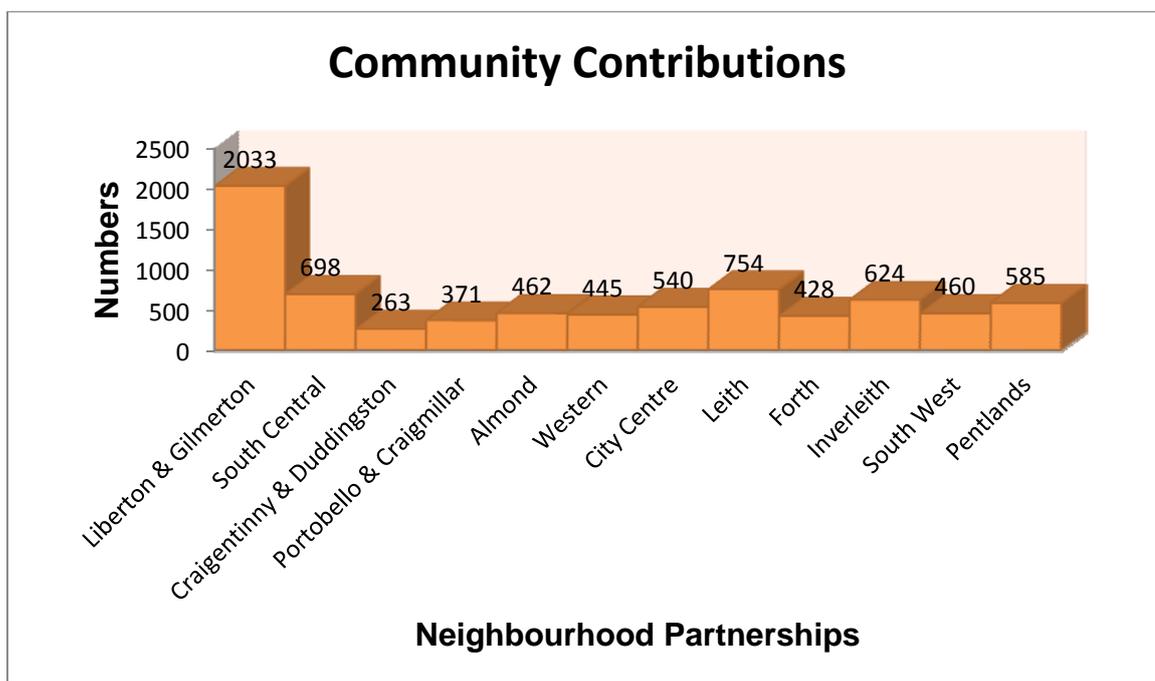
Main report

Engagement Approach

- 3.1 Meaningful community engagement is core to the NP approach, enabling all members of the community to influence and shape work across the NPs on a day to day basis. This happens at different levels and in ways tailored to their needs. A snapshot of community engagement activity across the NPs in 2013 for example, showed in excess of 20,000 contacts were made using a variety of channels. Case study information is provided in Appendix 1. Through this active

dialogue and involvement, the NP's have an established understanding of the issues and priorities in their communities.

- 3.2 The new community plans were developed drawing on this understanding. In addition ongoing dialogue combined with contributions through sub groups, practitioners and partner engagement and research processes, provided a wealth of intelligence to inform the new plans. Key pieces of work included the consultation for the Police Scotland Edinburgh Local Policing Plan and the findings from the City of Edinburgh Council People's survey. Taken together, these combine the views of over 11,000 citizens from across the neighbourhoods.
- 3.3 The development process provided a mechanism for testing this understanding widely across partners and the community. Through a dedicated engagement process, the NPs sought to enable all stakeholders, whether residents, visitors, community groups, voluntary organisations or local workers, to contribute their view in identifying the priorities for transforming their neighbourhood. A critical aspect of the engagement process was face to face contact and dialogue with groups and individuals that might otherwise find it difficult to engage or feel they have no part to play in helping shape future plans.
- 3.4 Across the NPs, a total of 7,663 community contributions were made, broken down by area as shown below in Table 1.



Note: Liberton and Gilmerton NP figure includes 1,500 contributions through YouthTalk 13.

Table 1: Numbers of community contributions to NP engagement programme

Publicity

- 3.5 Opportunities to contribute were extensively publicised using a variety of communication channels including articles in local newsletters and papers, the NP and partner websites and via social media channels. Across the NPs, all areas were explored to ensure the widest distribution. In Craightinny and Duddingston NP the consultation was promoted using the front page of 'The Speaker', a local newspaper normally circulated within Craightinny. However, extra print and distribution was arranged to enable the paper to be delivered to all homes across the NP area.



Table 2: Snapshot of tweets from City Centre and Leith Teams

- 3.6 Engagement activity was actively promoted through neighbourhood social media channels with individual tweets reaching in excess of 28,000 accounts. As shown in Table 2, the City Centre and Leith NPs used their newly established twitter account to promote the consultation. Retweets from local organisations helped to generate interest, drive traffic to the NP website, and led directly to a number of survey responses.

Engagement Activities

- 3.7 A similarly wide range of engagement activities were carried out across the NPs, taking a partnership approach to ensure that the resources available within the neighbourhood were used to the maximum effect. The range of these activities included traditional methods, such as surveys, events and themed meetings, to new approaches designed to encourage participation. Examples of this activity included:
- In Liberton and Gilmerton NP voting boxes were placed in Moredun and Gilmerton Libraries and the South Neighbourhood Office and Library for three days. Each box provided details of suggested priorities and allowed individuals to use tokens to vote for their top three.

- In Pentlands NP local schools were used to engage with young people at both primary and secondary levels. Two classes covering P6 and 7 from Pentlands Primary were invited to Oxfords Library to take part in an hour long session on the local community plan. A total of 61 young people participated. The classes were split into two or three groups and over an hour were asked to think about topics appropriate to their age group, environment, health and community safety. Their views were recorded by facilitators. Similarly as part of the S3 business placement at Firrhill High School, nine pupils were assigned to Oxfords Library. Staff developed a research brief with pupils assuming the role of research consultants. The young people designed a questionnaire and surveyed local people about what was most important to them about the area. A total of 76 responses were obtained through this process, with the pupils presenting their findings to staff and fellow pupils.

- In City Centre NP staff attended the Royal Mile Primary School. At the session pupils drew a picture of their favourite thing in the area, which was displayed on a big map. This process was used as a starting point for conversations with all age groups, removing the need to read or write.



- South Central and Liberton and Gilmerton NPs held a 'This Day – Your Say' event. The event provided a focused 12 hour period of engagement where front line staff in libraries, community centres and the Neighbourhood Office prompted people to complete a questionnaire to obtain their views on priorities for each of the areas.
- In Leith NP staff attended a Foodbank Breakfast Club on a Sunday morning. Through this process staff were able to obtain the views of 40 people that traditionally may not have the opportunity to express their views.
- The City Centre NP had a stall in the St James Centre during the school holidays and spoke to a number of families, young people and carers. The activity, putting sticky dots on a number of priorities, was fun and engaging. It encouraged groups of all ages and abilities to take part.
- Portobello and Craigmillar NP sited the Get on Bus on four occasions at different locations known for high footfall across the NP, including Portobello High Street. This enabled staff to get out and about across the area to talk to people about their views.

Partner Contributions

- 3.8 Community Councils (CCs) played an active role in the engagement process, promoting and encouraging participation from their members, networks and local people. For example, Portobello CC carried out its own consultation which provided over 100 contributions to the Portobello and Craigmillar NP engagement process. Targeting local shoppers, CC members asked people what two things they liked about living in Portobello and what two things they would improve or change (see Appendix 2). In South Central NP, Merchiston CC arranged for a full page article in the Morningside News which reaches 5,000 households across the Morningside and Southside areas.
- 3.9 Other partners and Council services similarly supported the engagement process through carrying out the NP survey and assisting their service users to contribute their views. In Portobello and Craigmillar NP, voluntary sector organisations such as the Jack Kane Centre Lunch Club and Caring in Craigmillar involved their service users, and young people were specifically targeted across both NPs via Cafe K, the Buzz and Ripple Project. A youth gathering supported by the Community Learning and Development Service and Library Service staff, linked to Total Neighbourhood, also identified issues for young people. Working with partners in this way was particularly successful in securing the involvement of traditionally under-represented groups, with other examples including:
- In Liberton and Gilmerton NP staff at Prestonfield Neighbourhood Centre supported discussions with their client groups of older people, many of whom are suffering from degrees of dementia and/or social isolation.
 - In Pentlands and South West NPs, Score Scotland and the Dove Centre supported the participation of their client groups which included minority ethnic residents and people with disabilities, with 50 contributions being obtained.
 - The South West and Pentlands NPs Youth Forum organised a young people friendly version of the survey and actively encouraged their peer group to contribute by attending local youth clubs and gatherings. The Forum also used a referendum debate event to promote the local community plan, encouraging participants to complete the questionnaire.
- 3.10 Tenants were also actively encouraged to contribute. In March 2014, as part of the Council's survey of registered tenants' organisations, groups were asked what their key priorities were for improving the local area and what they would like to see the NP focus on. A total of 20 responses were received and fed back to the relevant NP. In South West and Pentlands NPs, Housing Service staff helped to engage tenants by posting surveys to all households in the high rise blocks in the Calders and Wester Hailes areas. The Concierge Team posted the surveys and provided a collection box in the foyer for completed forms. In

Liberton and Gilmerton NP, Community Safety Team staff carried out a similar engagement with residents and tenants in the high rise flats in Moredun.

- 3.11 As well as assisting in promoting the engagement to the community, staff from across all of the areas were actively encouraged to contribute their own views on local priorities, based on their knowledge of service requests and community concerns. The involvement of staff in this way not only helped in increasing levels of participation by local people but increased the awareness of staff of their role within the partnership process, a key improvement identified as part of the NP review.

Targeted Activities

- 3.12 Targeted efforts were made across the NPs to ensure people with protected characteristics were given an opportunity to participate, with activity targeted on people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, young people, parents and families and carers. Examples of this activity include:
- In Western Edinburgh NP, older people and older people with disabilities were targeted at a Live Well in Later Life Event, a joint initiative with NHS Lothian and Health and Social Care. Around 180 people attended the event, with 40 contributing views for the local community plan.
 - In South Central NP discussions were held with users of the Life Church cafe. Cafe users include people who are recovering from alcohol and/or substance misuse or suffering from mental health difficulties.
 - Portobello and Craigmillar, Craigminty and Duddingston NPs undertook outreach work in local sheltered housing complexes.
 - In Almond and Western Edinburgh NPs the Community Learning and Development Service ran focused youth group sessions. Through this process a total of 123 contributions were made.
 - In South Central NP, the Southside Elderly Club whose members are primarily from the Asian community was visited by staff, including a translator, to obtain their views.

Next Steps

- 3.13 With the engagement phase of the work now completed, NPs are in the process of agreeing their priorities and developing the supporting action plans and performance indicators which will be used to measure success. This work is being taken forward through the NP sub groups. All of the NPs aim to launch their new local community plans by October 2014.
- 3.14 Supporting this activity is the production of a new performance framework. This will provide a consistent and planned approach to performance management across the NPs, increasing the accountability, demonstrate the value of the

approach and provide a mechanism for monitoring delivery of the outcomes in the local community plans.

- 3.15 Reports on the local community plans and the new performance framework will be presented to Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee at its meeting on 25 November 2014.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Key indicators of the overall success of the NP approach across the city as measured in the Edinburgh People's survey are:
- People feel they are able to have a say on things happening or how services are run in their local area.
 - Satisfaction that people from different backgrounds can get on well together.
 - Improved satisfaction with neighbourhoods as a place to live.
 - Satisfaction with specific services e.g. community safety, environment and facilities.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The costs associated with the initiatives are contained within existing budgets.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no adverse risks or policy impacts associated with this report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Local community planning activity and the work of NPs contributes to the delivery of the Equality Act 2010 general duties of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. This is evidenced through the engagement strategies and plans which involve working with all partners and members of the community, detailing how barriers to engagement will be removed and seeking to promote buy in across communities to common goals.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There are no adverse environmental impacts associated with this report. The engagement with the wider community will have a positive impact on social justice and well being.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 This report provides summary details of the extensive engagement carried out by the NPs in developing their new local community plans. The approach focused on providing opportunities for the whole community to participate, with

specific recognition given of the need to ensure people with protected characteristics were provided with opportunities to contribute.

9.2 The recently approved '[Consulting Edinburgh](#)' framework informed the approach.

Background reading/external references

N/A

John Bury

Acting Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Michele Mulvaney, Community Engagement Manager

E-mail: michele.mulvaney@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3541

Links

Coalition pledges	P33 – Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used
Council outcomes	CO23 – Well engaged and well informed – Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community CO24 – The Council communicates effectively internally and externally and has an excellent reputation for customer care
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 – Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all SO2 – Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health SO3 – Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential SO4 – Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Strength in Partnership Appendix 2 – Portobello Community Council Consultation

Strength in Partnership

What is more important than people?

Getting the people of Edinburgh involved via Community Engagement is at the core of the Neighbourhood Partnership (NP's) approach and in the last year over 148 community activities have taken place, with over 20,000 attendances recorded across the city. NP's are vital to improving the quality of people's lives through the delivery of more effective, responsive and joined-up services, whilst additionally having an important role acting as Advisory Committees of the Council. NP's provide communities with an opportunity to influence policy and service development, forming the community planning framework in the City and enabling community priorities and needs.

In their advisory role, NPs form an integral part of the Council governance framework, contributing significantly towards the Council's co-operative approach by bringing together councillors, the public, partners from Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and the voluntary sector.

The importance of NP's in achieving improved outcomes is recognised nationally with Edinburgh's approach being considered progressive. Recent quality assurance feedback from the Scottish Government specifically referenced the opportunity this place-based approach has, in providing a focus for tackling poverty and inequality.

NPs have been specifically designed and developed to provide the following:

- Achievement of better outcomes for communities via local community plans
- An integrated approach to service planning and delivery
- Improved partner relationships that support and encourage shared ownership
- Better local intelligence which informs strategic priorities
- Involvement of local people
- Influence of budgets by communities through capacity building
- Increased accountability and transparency

NPs have a pivotal role, particularly in these times of helping communities to meet and overcome new challenges, such as difficult choices around use of resources and providing the strength for communities to work with public sector and other partners to respond.

Delivering

The primary purpose of NPs is to provide a democratic platform for local people to voice their opinions on local matters and to be engaged in the process that helps shape policy, planning and development across the Council. A review of delivery of the first local plans covering 2007 to 2011 demonstrated the effectiveness of the approach both for public services and local communities and provided clear evidence of improved levels of performance and resident satisfaction, maximisation of resources and increased efficiencies being achieved.

Projects and activities driven by NP priorities and partnership working, where good practice was acknowledged include:

- 1500 young people participated in the Liberton & Gilmerton youth facilities review culminating in a YouthTalk13 event involving 120 local people
- Moredun Week of Action reached 1400 households engaging with local residents on anti-social behaviour concerns
- 150 local residents were involved in decisions on the future management and ownership of Easter Craiglockhart Hill Local nature Reserve
- A wide range of initiatives have been delivered in the Pentlands and South West NPs including parks improvements, community gardens set up, Improvement to the public realm and increased numbers of events in local libraries
- In response to local concerns, Inverleith NP held a transport conference enabling local people to have their say on road safety, cycling, walking and roads maintenance
- Both NPs in the East of the City have introduced the use of Living Street Audits. These audits have led to increased local participation and informed specific local action plans
- The Extended School Holiday Programme piloted in the Portobello and Craigmillar NP, delivered a sustained reduction in youth calls, this has now been mainstreamed
- Following the introduction of a new multi partner Hub facility, a local service provision awareness raising campaign with a monthly average of around 15 000 visitors.
- Operation Cipher 2, in Almond NP tackled dog fouling in the area in response to local complaints and identified priorities

What Makes the Edinburgh Approach So Different?

Through working with communities, NPs provide the means for collaborative and inclusive partnership working across the city with community priorities and needs at the centre. As community representatives sit on the NP Boards this provides a real opportunity for local communities to have a greater role in determining how services are developed and delivered but also supported to take their own action to address local goals. This focus on community involvement has shown real results and promotes excellence in engagement practice.

All of this activity has led to improved quality of life demonstrated via Neighbourhood Surveys:

- 94% of residents stating that they are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, and increased community cohesion and inclusion
- 90% of residents agreeing that their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together

Community action is supported through the provision of devolved funds. This involves schemes such as the Community Grants Funds, with a city wide budget of over £400k,

and the Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP), a city wide budget of over £3m top-sliced from the Council Housing and Roads capital budgets. With the NEP, local people are involved in identifying and deciding on local projects which are designed to improve the physical environment. Since 2008 over 600 projects have been delivered, with feedback from residents including “this makes me feel better about the area”, “this project has helped get neighbours talking to each other” and “this is a great asset for the area”.

This approach also contributes to the national aspiration for community planning and public sector reform and through working with communities, the aspirations of the forthcoming Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill.

The role of NPs in informing resource decisions and as vehicles for partners to engage with communities is growing, with current activity including involvement in the Council budget engagement and the Police Scotland local policing plan.

Improved Outcomes for the People of Edinburgh

A key element of NPs is to act as incubators for new community based approaches, which is delivering real results and proving to be a model of best practice in engagement with communities. The activities include:

- Surveys on street and in mobile facilities such as with the Children’s Library Bus.
- ‘Roadshow’ programmes including attendance at local events and gala days.
- ‘Weeks of Action’ focusing on local priorities.
- It’s Good to Talk... About Alcohol - South Central NP consulted with over 1,600 residents, by a variety of methods, in an effort to discover what was important to their community.
- Youth Engagement Event - The Liberton/Gilmerton NP hosted a ‘Youth Engagement Event’ involving 120 people, of which 48 were local young people from the local high school.
- Community Conference – The Inverleith NP used this event as a vehicle to consult with local residents, workers and service providers.
- Workforce development programme, in partnership with the Consultation Institute.
- Establishment of participatory budgeting as an approach to allocating devolved funds, such as ‘£eith Decides’ which has increased local democratic decision-making.
- Piloting of Total Neighbourhood Initiatives, Total Craigroyston and Total East designed to provide an integrated and targeted partner response to specific community needs.

The ethos of NPs is based on collaborative working with communities, and in developing new plans for the period 2014 to 2017, refreshed community engagement plans will evolve to ensure all residents participate in setting the NPs outcomes. Significant work is also planned to develop and strengthen community involvement in NPs, including e-engagement, plans to develop further the use of social media and action to increase participation from people with protected characteristics.

To support this, new performance indicators are being identified, which alongside the existing community engagement outcome measures, will provide a comprehensive framework to track progress ensuring we are fit for the future, to match ever-evolving community needs and aspirations.

Continuous Improvement

In order to build on success, the approach has been subject to continuous development and improvement.

In 2013 a strategic review of NPs was commissioned by the new political administration as part of phase two of the review of Council governance arrangements. The remit of the review was to strengthen the role of NPs. The review identified key themes for improvement:

- Community engagement
- Accountability and governance
- Partner involvement
- Influence
- Good practice

The Strategic Improvement Plan provides a reference framework for common aims across the network and complements the development of individual NP improvement plans, to ensure a consistency of approach across the city. Feedback from the NP Board and network consideration of the review findings will be used to inform the development of a more detailed plan setting out the outputs, timescales and resource requirements. More importantly, goals and tactics will be further commonly agreed and measurements of success to demonstrate progress will be clearly identified.



PCC Community Consultation

1st February 2014, Scotmid, Portobello.

Portobello Community Council hosted a consultation exercise at Scotmid, Portobello on Saturday 1st of February 2014. The consultation ran from 10:30am until 12:30pm, traditionally a busy time in the store when local people do their shopping. During the two hours over 100 local residents were consulted.

The vast majority of participants lived in the area, while four people had travelled from elsewhere (three from Leith and one from further afield).

The aim of the morning was to gain some insight into what people valued about living in the PCC area and what would they hope to change or improve if they could.

People entering the store were asked to think about two things they liked about living in the Portobello area and what two things they would change or improve. Answers were collected on post it notes and later arranged into themes.

A fairly even spread of men and women were engaged and provided responses. A variety of ages took part in the consultation, from a small number (7) of young children to adults aged over 65 (approx. 20).

When asked what they liked about living in the area four main themes participants identified were:

Community Spirit

Almost everyone who took part spoke about the community spirit that they believe to be present in Portobello. This included friendly and supportive neighbours and social groups, a diverse population, and a feeling of “being in the country” or a “small village”. Portobello residents liked the fact that the community seemed interested in local issues and were passionate /enthusiastic about where they lived, with a number of local initiatives.

Parks / Prom and Open Spaces

People recognised that the PCC area has plenty of outdoor spaces that on the whole are well looked after and provide great assets for the local community. Parks were mentioned as well as the Promenade and other open spaces. People stated that they enjoy using these areas all year round.

Location

Respondents spoke about the pleasure of coastal living and the proximity to the sea. They liked that Portobello was near enough to the city for an easy visit, for example to leisure and cultural opportunities (e.g. the Theatre), or active travel but also close enough to East Lothian to “get away” in a short time.

Local Shops / High Street

Having a local high street / town centre and market were mentioned frequently, as people appreciated being able to shop locally and not having to go elsewhere. Alongside this local services (leisure centre, pools) and local primary schools were also mentioned, as well as “lots to do with children” generally.

It was noted that in general people were very positive about living in the PCC area and were glad to engage with the consultation. As part of the research local residents were then asked to think about what could be changed to improve living in the area.

Again four main themes were identified, as follows:

Outdoors

Local residents would like to see tidier streets in general. This includes less dog mess and less litter.

Alongside this people would like to see improvements in what is available outdoors. For example more to do at the beach / Promenade area, including more shops/ cafes etc. More infrastructure to encourage activity and play for all ages and specifically teenagers. The need for environmental improvements such as planting and better street lighting were also mentioned, as was an upgrade to the park in front of Towerbank (locally known as the Fish Park) and improved public toilets. One person complained about begging.

Traffic

Many people spoke about traffic problems in the area. This included slow moving traffic at peak times and generally too much traffic on Portobello High Street. Specific reference was made to Brighton Place as being particularly busy (and the cobbles being an issue for both noise and cyclists) and also there was support for a pedestrian crossing at Abercorn Terrace by St Philips Church. Better parking was also suggested as something that would improve the area.

Some commented that Portobello was not pedestrian friendly enough and not cycle friendly. Suggestions included a cycle lane on the Prom and a Portobello cycle map. Others wanted to see the train station re-opened and a bus service from the Christians to the High Street.

High School

The need for a new High School for Portobello was also raised with some supporting it to be built on Portobello Park and some saying that it should not be built there and the park should be left as it is. Others stated that they believed the community had become split over this issue and it would be good to see this improved.

Local Shops

It was recognised that although Portobello has its own high street, which is a positive thing, the shops could be improved. Many mentioned the demise of Woodwares as a loss to the community and the fact there are less specialist shops than there were before. Respondents claimed that there are too many charity shops in the area and too many empty shops. Some suggested doing more with the empty shops e.g. low rental for community use etc. A Portobello music festival and Portobello beer festival were also mentioned as things that people would like to see happen.

Three people said they wanted no change to how Portobello is currently.