

The City of Edinburgh Council

22 September 2011

✖ The full council meets on Thursday morning.

We have provided you with a copy of the agenda below but items of note include the new Portobello High School, alleged fraud in the Property department, the decision by Lothian and Borders Police not to investigate the murder of Simon San as racially motivated, an encouragement to look at the cooperative model in the UN International year of Cooperatives, the planned march in Edinburgh for 22 October against the Welfare Reform Bill, Scotland's victory in the Homeless World Cup.

Portobello High School is the thorny subject on the agenda tomorrow. The council want to appoint a contractor and get the next steps approved, but [the local action group PPAG](#) have lodged a petition for judicial review which will be heard in the Court of Session on 9 December, and it is hard to see what can be done before then. Planning permission was granted in February 2011 to build a new school in Portobello Park. External consultants Turner and Townsend (who have been appointed in the tram project too) have a role in this project to review the way the team works and the design of the school. The difficulty is that the council cannot really award the contract unless it has the right to build the school in the park, so while the council has declared that Balfour Beatty are the preferred contractor they will only be formally awarded the contract at a later date.

Local councillor Maureen Child said:-“Portobello Park Action Group (PPAG) who oppose the use of this site for the new school, are seeking to test the matter in the Court of Session and have lodged a Petition for Judicial Review which is due to be heard on Friday 9 December. PPAG claim that the Common

Good designation of the Park precludes its use for building the new school and associated playing fields. The Council is sure that its legal advice from their Counsel is sound and that the school can be built. Until the Court has deliberated, the project is stalled. The new school was on track to open ahead of schedule in August 2013. That expected opening date has now been put back again to the original opening date of January 2014.”

PPAG said:-“Proposing to spend £200,000 on preparatory work on a site that may not go ahead – is this really what taxpayers want their money to be spent on? How many school books could be bought with £200,000?”

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Council Leader Jenny Dawe has produced her Leader’s Report which is available for you here. It is with some obvious relief that the council have announced the agreement of a new contract with the consortium which is to build the tram system in the capital. the leader reminds us that the work on Princes Street which will close it for ten months is being carried out at the contractors’ expense, but also points out that the closure of our main shopping and tourist thoroughfare does not mean that Edinburgh is closed. Councillor Dawe also mentions the George V Park which we reported to you about [here.](#), the Jungle City animals which we told you about [here](#) and the David Mach Exhibition at the City Art Centre which we told you about [here...](#) and the use of the City Chambers in a new film starring Halle Berry and Tom Hanks called Cloud Atlas which we have told you about [here...](#)

[7.1 Leader s Report](#)