

**CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION STAGE**

**Follow up Points from Promoter to Committee following oral evidence of 23
April 2014**

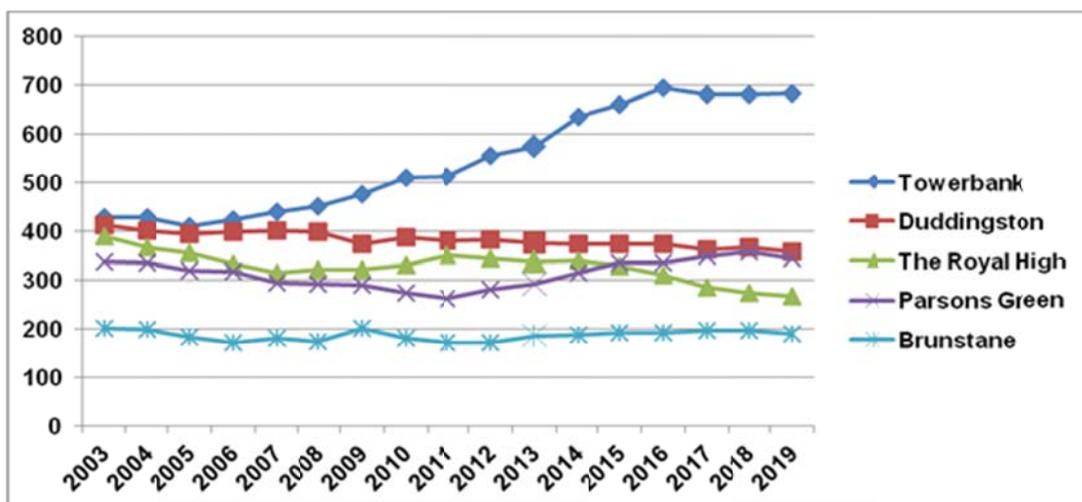
At the evidence session on 23 April 2014, the Council's witnesses undertook to provide further information in writing in respect of certain questions posed by the witnesses during the session with objector Groups 3 & 6. I apologise for not providing this response further in advance of the next Committee meeting on 7 May.

As the points covered in this letter arose in exchanges with Beverley Klein, a copy of this letter has also been sent directly to Ms Klein.

1 Pupil rolls for Portobello High School 'cluster' primary schools

Beverley Klein, lead objector for Group 6, enquired about the five 'cluster' primary schools associated with Portobello High School. She advised that she was aware of one primary school that had a falling pupil roll and asked whether rolls were increasing at the other schools (Cols. 256-7 of the Official Report). Mr MacIntyre for the Council advised that that information could be provided to the Committee.

There are five non-denominational primary schools which are feeder primaries to Portobello High School. The combined catchment areas for those primary schools equate to the catchment area for Portobello High School. The following graph shows the actual roll in each of the five primary schools for the last ten years to 2013 (in each case the roll is taken as at September in each year when the annual school census is undertaken) plus the forecast rolls for each school to 2019. This shows that the roll at each of the five schools has in recent years been either largely flat or has been increasing, with those trends forecast to continue in most cases.



The following points should be noted:

- 1 Future roll projections are very much estimates and are dependent on a variety of factors on which assumptions must be made. The forecasting process is explained in detail in a report to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 10 December 2013, which can be accessed through the following link
- 2 http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/41632/item_75_-_primary_school_roll_projections.
- 3 There is also a denominational primary school (St John's RC Primary School) whose catchment boundary is broadly comparable with the Portobello High School catchment area. Pupils who attend St John's RC Primary School and live within the catchment area for Portobello High School would also be entitled to attend Portobello High School. Every pupil in the city has, at both primary and secondary level, a right to apply for a place at their catchment denominational or non-denominational school.
- 4 Future roll projections are based on the anticipated catchment demand for each school. However, the Royal High Primary School is rather unusual as the roll there is characterised by a relatively high level of out-of-catchment pupils who have made placing requests into that school, mainly from the Craigentenny Primary School catchment area. In the 2013 roll of 338, 84 pupils were from the Craigentenny catchment area. The projections for the Royal High Primary School assume that this level of non-catchment pupils

would not continue in future Primary 1 intakes. However, that may not be the actual outcome. The Council is generally obliged to grant placing requests made in respect of out-of-catchment pupils as long as there is capacity (both teaching capacity and physical capacity) in the relevant school to accommodate them. In practice, therefore, if the high level of placing requests made and accepted from the Craigentenny catchment area in respect of the Royal High Primary School continued, the actual future rolls at the Royal High Primary School would be higher than the forecast rolls shown in the table above.

2 “Bag drop” protocol

The clerk to the Bill Committee emailed the Council on 29 April seeking clarification of an exchange between Ms Klein, Mr MacIntyre and you relating to “bag drops” (Cols. 281-283 of the Official Report). Mr MacIntyre stated that he could detail “the protocols that were in place for schools regarding such documentation during the bill consultation process”. Mr MacIntyre then referred (Col. 283) to the “rules of engagement” and quoted from an email.

I can confirm that the “protocols” and the “rules of engagement” mentioned by Mr MacIntyre are the same thing. These were the rules that schools were instructed to follow during the Private Bill consultation period, and were set out in an email sent by Mr MacIntyre and Mike Rosendale, then the Council’s Head of Schools and Community Services, to the head teachers of the relevant schools on 4 December 2012. A copy of that email was sent to Ms Klein on 17 April 2014 by the Council’s solicitors Brodies, and a copy of Brodies’ email to Ms Klein was in turn provided to the Committee clerk. A copy of Mr MacIntyre and Mr Rosendale’s email nevertheless accompanies this letter for ease of reference.

I trust that this additional information will be of some assistance to the Committee and objectors, but please do let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Tee
Director, Children and Families

cc Beverley Klein