

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 28 th April 2015
Venue	Learning Support Room, NBHS
Purpose	Parent Council Meeting
Present (PC)	Liz Noar (PC Chair), Evelyn Watson (PC Vice Chair), Eddie Clark, Pam Floyd, Michael Ingram, Jeff Knight, Alistair Leckie, Sharon Street, Nina Thain, Anne Whiteside and Isla Wightman (Head Girl)
Present (Parent Forum)	Patricia Gibb
Apologies	Laura Burnside, Tom Heaphy, Pete Higgins, Mark Holling, Penny Lochhead, Robert Jones (DHT), Lara Neri (DHT), Claire Prete, Tom Lansdown (Head Boy), Jonathan Crain (Depute Head Boy), Sarah Dunlop (Depute Head Girl) and Cllr Tim Day
Staff in Attendance	Lauren Rodger (HT), Michelle Moore (DHT) and Joanne Bloomfield
Guests	East Lothian Council: Cllr Dave Berry and Cllr Jim Goodfellow and Jimmy McGuinnes
Clerk	Minutes taken by Tracy Ann Lonie (PC Clerk)
Circulation	All Parent Forum, Local Councillors
Next Meeting	Tuesday 9 th June 2015

1.	Welcome	Action
	<p>Liz Noar (LNo), Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting including guest speaker, Jimmy McGuinnes from East Lothian Council. Apologies were received as above. Following the previous meeting, it was made clear that several members of the PC feel too intimidated to voice their opinions in our meetings and during certain discussions which can be dominated by one or two members. This is very concerning as we need be hearing the views of all those present. The Chair also asked that members couch carefully their comments to ensure that they won't cause offence. After the last meeting, we all left feeling that the atmosphere has been less than pleasant which really hinders our progress and productivity as a group. Whilst the PC must voice parental opinions and concerns, we do not have a mandate to effect change nor should we be unnecessarily challenging.</p>	
2.	<p>Update on Mains Farm development by Guest Speaker – Jimmy McGuinnes Jimmy McGuinnes, (JMcG), ELC's PPP Project Manager, was invited by LR to update the PC on the Mains Farm development. Planning issues of concern to the school were discussed with the new road alignment proposed for Law Primary School being highlighted with the 'hallowed' strip of land to be safeguarded as owned by the Trust and designated for educational purposes. Jeff Knight (JK) also raised the issue of the portakabins being constructed on</p>	

	<p>land designated for educational purposes and the cycle path constructed on Grange Road also encroaching on this land. Cllr Goodfellow assured the PC that the portakabins are not on land designated for educational purposes and will only be there for one year. JMcG informed the group that the relocating of Edinburgh Road should be carried out by Christmas and is a precursor to Law Primary School being developed. This should also help the parking issues near the school and a 1.8m fence with gates will be constructed on the title boundary of the secondary school to keep pupils safe. A discussion then ensued on the educational trust and its role and JMcG confirmed that there were no plans for any further development. JK further raised concerns that this 'hallowed' strip of land had already been encroached by 150sqm and felt strongly that the land should be protected. A vote was taken to support the protection of the land designated for educational purposes and there was unanimous support in favour of this motion. It was suggested that the Planning & Development sub-committee group write to ELC, the Trust and developers to raise the concerns on behalf of the PC and have their voice heard.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising The minutes were taken as read with an addition to item 3 pointed out by LR which should read: "However it is lower than the virtual comparator for the lowest 20%.", at the end of the Head Teacher's report under 'Exam Results'. Matters arising: Definition of attainment – to be covered in LR's Head Teacher's report, (agenda item 4.). Consultation on Children and Young People (CYP) Act Guidance – it was noted that the PC had submitted no responses after the request from LNe at the last meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Head Teacher's Update (please refer to the report circulated on e-mail by LR) LR noted that under staffing, the Librarian had also retired at Easter and that she will be involved in the appointment of a replacement to start after summer even though the role of the Librarian now comes under the remit of Customer Services. Regarding probationers, or newly-qualified teachers, LR noted that an RME probationer has also been asked for in addition to an English, HE, maths and history probationer. The Chair asked if there were any questions on LR's report and Cllr Berry asked if the library was working well under Customer Services and LR confirmed that Eileen Morrison was excellent and services were expanding including the learning resource centre and looking to keep the library open during lunch. Anne Whiteside (AW) inquired about study leave and the activities put on for those taking less than three National 5 qualifications in S4. Michelle Moore (MM) confirmed that this could be shared on the website. Twenty pupils had taken part in the activities, which included a talk from a RAF Officer and an employability skills workshop.</p>	
5.	<p>Sub Groups Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications – website/newsfeed/e-mail addresses/communications policy <p>Sharon Street informed the PC that the main focus was still on the school's website with improvements to the PC & PTA pages and use of twitter as well</p>	

	<p>as progressing links with the local press. The ongoing success of the gathering of e-mail addresses from parents was noted. The next meeting will be held shortly and the Chair suggested that the dates of sub-group committee meetings should be posted on the NBHS website prior to PC meetings. Cllr Berry commented on the erraticness of the twitter feed with good promotion of sports but potential to improve other communications including events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution <p>The Chair informed the group that she would be meeting Stephen Pearson on the 1st May to discuss an issue with a clause in the PC constitution regarding the Parental Involvement Act 2006 and that a document would be circulated to the PC one week ahead of the next meeting to allow for a formal review period before the planned AGM in September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Development (school group) <p>MM had nothing to report, as a sub-group meeting had not been held since the last PC meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Wellbeing <p>LNe was not present at the meeting and no update was given. LR stated that volunteers were needed for this group and Evelyn Watson (EW) questioned the name of the group and whether this was appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Teaching <p>EW had no update but informed the group that a further meeting was to be scheduled in the next two weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning & Development <p>Refer to agenda item 2. – update on Mains Farm development.</p>	<p>SS/MH</p> <p>LNo/LB</p> <p>MM</p> <p>LNe</p> <p>EW</p> <p>JK/EC</p>
6.	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP) – feedback from planning meeting held on 24th April</p> <p>LR updated the PC on the meeting held recently to discuss the SIP. The senior management team, four teachers and a parent attended and went through the objectives with some amendments being made which will be shared with the staff in due course. The schools aims were also discussed and it was felt that they don't reflect where the school is now and are somewhat outdated. A consultation is planned to define what's most important to focus on and a further meeting planned in June.</p>	
7.	<p>Discussion on 'a good learner'</p> <p>LR handed out a 'learner body diagram' and asked the PC to work in groups of 2/3 for ten minutes to consider the characteristics of a 'good learner'. LR thanked the group for their participation and said she would feedback at the next meeting after pupils have also participated in this research.</p>	
8.	<p>Parentzone Exam Data</p> <p>LR wanted to draw attention to the information on exam data now available on the Education Scotland Parentzone website. As of end of March, data on all schools exams in Scotland has been available for the first time in this format and LR encouraged all of the PC to visit the website: http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/mychild/secondary/</p>	All PC
9.	<p>Pupil Council Update</p> <p>Isla Wightman (IW) gave an update from the Pupil Council with recent events including the Fun Day to celebrate the end of Sixth Year. MM said how proud</p>	

	<p>she was of this year's S6 pupils and Cllr Berry agreed they were a credit to the school. IW was praised for her role as Head Girl and an impressive £2,600 had been raised for the three chosen charities as well as an additional £1,200 raised for pupil Rebecca Dalgleish's charity, CHAS.</p> <p>IW presented the PC with chocolates and a card thanking them for their support.</p>	
10.	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EW offered to provide a response for the Consultation on Children and Young People (CYP) Act Guidance and will pass through the Chair. • Joanne Bloomfield (JB) provided a synopsis of the recent ELCAPM meeting with a request for PC members to have training in recruitment and selection with the next training date scheduled for 12th May. Currently JK, MI, NT & EW have already received training. However EW will step down from the PC in September. Darrin Nightingale had also provided a budget update and it was suggested that a representative from the school should also attend the Area Partnership Meeting. • Cllr Berry commented on the latest SQA results and congratulated the school on its achievements. • Cllr Berry informed the PC that the bus timetables for the 120/101 service to Haddington were changing and that the bus route in the town centre was also being changed. • Cllr Berry suggested as Chair of CAPP, the meeting could be held at NBHS and pupils be invited to the meeting which is open to the public. The meeting is held on the last Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm and it was proposed that the June meeting could be held at NBHS. • Cllr Goodfellow gave an update on the MIR and ELC's obligation to carry out a catchment area review meeting due to a tentative proposal for large-scale development in Drem with a new primary school. • AW inquired about the status of the Ferrygate planning application and Cllr Goodfellow confirmed that the developers had requested a judicial review and that a second reporter had been asked to examine the application. • Jeff Knight (JK) referred to the definition of 'attainment' as provided by LR in her Head Teachers report and defined by the Scottish Government. JK stated his disappointment with the unsatisfactory definition provided by SG and that it raises the question how to track/measure attainment. A discussion ensued on the meaning of attainment and how it could be measured. LR explained that it is hoped the consultation with pupils, parents, staff and partners on the school's vision, values and aims will give further clarification on the views of the school community on attainment. JK suggested that one of the focus groups should be held during an evening session when parents can attend. 	
11.	<p>Close of Meeting The meeting finished at 21:10.</p>	
	<p>Dates of Parent Council Meetings 2015 Tuesday 9th June 2015</p>	