

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 21 JANUARY 2020

Present: N Bradley (Chair)
J Leslie
D Edmundson
T O'Connor
I Armstrong
N Meikle
L Turnbull
H Way
E Clark
L Johnston
S Spring

Pupils: H Fish
K Davidson
A Fergusson
A Greenwood

Attending: Lauren Rodger, Head Teacher

In attendance: A Macdonald (Staff)
Cllr J Goodfellow
Cllr J Findlay
Allison Cosgrove, Clerk
John Smart, Parent

Apologies: L Gurney, A Clark and E Davidson.

1. *Welcome:* The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year. It was agreed to have Item 4, Sustainability and Environmental Issues, discussed first, to allow Ms Greenwood to leave if she wished to do so.

2. *Sustainability and Environmental Issues:*

In Ms Prete's absence, Mrs Rodger drew attention to the last two pages of her HT Report, where there was a comprehensive list of actions that was being undertaken to achieve the School's Green Flag status. These ranged from being part of the North Berwick Steering Group, looking at food and drink packaging across the town, to tree planting, alternatives to 3G pitches and litter picking. Other work included beekeeping, gardening, composting and reducing plastic waste in some classes.

An Eco Week had been held in 2019, however Mrs Rodger expressed a wish to have sustainability issues embedded across the school, rather than focus on them for one week only. She informed parents that the Eco-Committee was one of the biggest pupil committees, with all year groups involved across the School.

Ms Greenwood also spoke to the Report, giving information on a range of alternative products. She advised that the evidence gathering for obtaining Green Flag Status had already begun. There was a specific notice board in the School on environmental issues and the group planned to attend Assemblies to keep pupils informed.

Parents discussed possible savings that could be made in lighting in the School, and Cllr Goodfellow would find out if LED lighting was used. He was asked if the Council would help with the cost of Vegware, and the Eco-Committee could consider requesting this.

Other questions were asked about litter collection being a house competition; a Christmas jumper swap scheme; recycling crisp packets; and alternative to 3G pitches. Parents also asked if the School extension would have solar panels and the Councillors both agreed to see if this could be incorporated in the next Local Development Plan.

3. *Minutes of Meeting of 20 November:*

These were agreed by all present.

4. *Head Teacher Report:*

A staffing report was made to the Parent Council.

Prelim exams were referred to in the report and parents had a number of questions about study support, and Homework Clubs. Mrs Rodger explained the provision within the School, advising that most classes have study support which could be ad hoc if required. K Davidson asked if it would be useful for Advanced Higher pupils to share good practice with Higher class pupils.

At the recent S2 parents' evening, parents were asked for feedback on their experience of the evening. Collated information had been attached to the HT's Report, with views from parents.

Mrs Rodger advised that she would be shadowing classes in S1, S2 and S3 for a day each during the term, and asked for a parent member to come along and observe. J Leslie and N Meikle offered to help on Monday 16 March.

Work was ongoing towards a Bronze Award in Rights Respecting Schools, with Verity Munro and Lynne Martin.

On the School Expansion, Mrs Rodger advised that she had spoken with the Council architect and had been informed that work would not now start until April at the earliest. There are three elements to the work – the new classroom block; the new sports hall; internal refurbishments – plus a fourth element, the North Berwick Trust land to the west of the school. As the School Roll projections had been reduced from 1200 in 2027 to 1050, only the new block and the internal refurbishments would be going ahead at present.

Mr Macdonald expressed his disappointment at this decision, informing parents of the limited space available for sports activities which was quite insufficient for the number of pupils. Cllr Goodfellow explained the reasoning behind this, which had been based on the School having the use of the Sports Centre. However, as time had gone on, more of the Sports Centre was being used by North Berwick residents, allowing less and less use for the School. He advised that if the roll was at 1100 within 3 years, the sports hall would be constructed. The Chair asked if the presumption that the School had unlimited access to the Sports Centre could be challenged, and it was agreed that Mr Macdonald would produce a report for the Council on the present position. The Chair and L Johnstone would assist, as well as pupils H Fish and A Fergusson.

Discussion on the Trust land were still ongoing. Cllr Goodfellow was aware that a path would be needed to access the community pitch and the old pitches had drainage problems. Noted that new pitches would take a year to play on.

5. *Chair / Parents' issues:*

A budget consultation was ongoing from ELC, and all parents were encouraged to take part.

Update on the Common School Day – will be discussed at the next meeting.

The Area Partnership meeting was in a week's time, and the East Lothian Association of Parent Councils meeting was on 5 February.

Parents asked about the capacity of buses, and Mrs Rodger advised that there was capacity, but there were some issues with pupils not able to access buses. There could also be a problem with congestion once the Common School Day came into force on 1 June, as the School and Law Primary would have all pupils coming out at the same time.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 3 March 2020.

