

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 25 OCTOBER 2022 in the SCHOOL

**Parent Members:** S Wellwood (Acting Chair)  
J Massie  
L Gurney  
C Jones  
L Forrest  
A Clark  
J Cottrell  
J Leslie  
P Bekkers

J Cottrell (Head Pupil).

**Other Parents Present:** K Duncan, G Milne

**Apologies:** T Heal, D Edmondson, Cllrs J Findlay and L Allan, Ms A Clubb, DHT

**Staff Members:** M Moore, Head Teacher

**Councillors Present:** Cllr Carol McFarlane

A Cosgrove, Clerk.

- 1. Welcome:** The Chair welcomed the three new members to the meeting. She noted that the previous unminuted meeting had discussed an agenda item from the AGM relating to the School playing field allocation. This was to allow all members the opportunity to digest and consider the position and various implications and elements of matters raised prior to the AGM, during and subsequently.

**Governance: Constitution – Appointment of Vice Chair:** The Vice Chair nominated by Clare Jones, seconded by Jude Leslie. Noted that the existing Vice Chair was currently also the Acting Chair.

**Members -** There were currently 12 members, with 6 available spaces. There was no provision in the Constitution for members to be nominated other than at the AGM. Important to note that current PC membership sits at 12 which is the constitutional minimum IF the office bearers are including but the current wording is not clear on this. Ms Milne had asked Connect to clarify the position as to whether this was correct: an EGM was required to effect change, but parents could self nominate at that date and also amend the Constitution if this was necessary.

Noted that the Constitution was based on Connect's own style of document.

**Code of Conduct –** Several parents had not yet signed up to this. All PC members present at the meeting have now signed the Code of Conduct. Duncan Edmondson and Tristan Heal are to email a copy to Allison directly. Some wording could be re-addressed if wished.

**AGM Minutes –** Ms Moore had made some changes to the Minutes and Anna Beedel and Damien Noonan, former Chair and Chair elect, had agreed these. There was a discussion on how to proceed. The Chair will try and insert Track Changes to reflect other amendments; ensuring that any decision is as one voice.

**Format of meetings –** it was agreed to have physical meetings in the future, with Ms Moore suggesting that these could be held in Home Economics Social Space. Michelle suggested that a photo could be taken at the next meeting showing PC members which might be a nice thing to do which was agreed.
- 2. Update from Head Teacher**

**New Extension Block -** the Canteen space was very welcome with the 6<sup>th</sup> year using the space as well as the breakout spaces in Modern Languages and Social Subjects. There were some snagging issues, including wifi dropping out: and staff were becoming accustomed to new bases. The Home Economic space was very good and practical cookery had re-started.

**Questions on Toilets –** The toilets in the new block were not gender neutral: there were girls' toilets on the ground floor, boys' on the first floor and girls' on the second floor. There was one gender neutral accessible toilet on each floor. All doors were floor to ceiling which aided privacy. Ms Moore can ask for pupil feed back through the Pupil Council if they have any concerns, and pupils had noted less vaping activity.

*In Service Day* – On the School Improvement Plan, the pre-Covid school strategy groups had been restarted. These were the Eco-group, Raising Attainment including Writing, Rights Respecting School (UNCRC), Digital Learning Group, and the BGE Assessment Group. Staff in these groups will collaborate to move their areas of focus forward. Whole school focusing on quality of learning and teaching including a very intensive Faculty Review process. During the period 7 November – 20 January every staff member would be observed.

*Other matters* – Latecoming in the morning was identified as an issue, with a focus on punctuality, as well as the curriculum. All secondary schools in ELC asked to consider their curriculum rationale.

*National discussion on education* – a current national consultation had 12-15 questions on the purpose and future of education in Scotland, with a deadline of 5 December. Parents were encouraged to participate, and it could be discussed at the next meeting before the deadline if parents wished. The link to the consultation is <https://consult.gov.scot/national-discussion-scottish-education/?s=03>

*Staffing Update* – An update was made to parents.

*Questions* - i. *Would the National discussion on education lead to the disbandment of the SQA?* Ms Moore replied that a different consultation called the Hayward Review was connected to the senior phase, but the National discussion applied to all children. Staff at NBHS have contributed to the initial phase of the Hayward Review. There is a proposal to create new national governing bodies for education following the Muir report.  
ii. *How could confidence boosting of young people affected by Covid be addressed?* Ms Moore advised that Mental health had been high on the agenda last year. Kathy Duncan from Herbspace works with the School on confidence building, and work was ongoing with MyPas, CAMHS and the Youth Project. All the different organisations were better connected and working together. The PSE curriculum needed to be considered as to its relevance, and discussions were already ongoing with pupils.

Jasper Cottrell advised that one of the Head Pupils was already working on peer discussions to assist with mental health, and training was being considered for peer counselling. Ms Moore supported this, saying that the Council was moving towards more focused targeting, and more offers of support were available. 3 new offers are now available and school works in partnership to refer young people into these services: The Early Intervention Team (combines teaching and family support), a new mentoring programme called MCR Pathways for care experienced and other identified young people, and an increase in funded Youth Workers through the Connected Communities programme.

The Chair added that after the meeting, parents could get in touch if interested, and the wider parent community could also be involved.

*East Lothian Council education briefings* – these would cover key aspects of the Local Authority Education Improvement Plan, which is indicative of areas of focus for all schools in ELC.

Ms Moore explained the apprenticeship systems that were available and that NBHS uptake of School College Partnership offers/Apprenticeship programmes was something she was proud of.

### **3. Sports Council**

Assistance would be available for pupils to take part in activities, with an ongoing system to track young people who might benefit. Mr McDonald was working on setting up the Sports Council which would support young people.

### **4. School Trips/DoE**

Paul Bekkers advised that the DoE programme was ongoing, with the assistance of Robert Jones, who was the main point of contact. Supervisors with hill or moorland experience were needed. For those not able to commit to group leading, assessors were required to carry out online assessments, as well as First Aid trainers. Some offers of help were made. Mrs Moore would ask Mr Jones to provide additional information.

Ms Moore had asked staff who would be interested in attending residential trips. There would be an S3 whole year trip for one week from 2-5 May; it had been shown through tracking that 3<sup>rd</sup> year had had the least experiences. Ideas for trips from parents were welcome. Noted that the Design Tech visit to London was curriculum focused.

Help with the Prom was also likely to be needed this year. Mrs Moore had sought information from Bev Skirrow about parent volunteering and no PVG is required for one off school events at secondary school as long as number of parents matched by numbers of staff, and parents not supervising groups alone.

### **5. Parent Council clarification letter**

This referred to clarification of the issue around the proposals for school playing field allocation.

The Chair advised that the school now had the preferred drawing selected by NBHS from the options provided by ELC and would submit a collective letter with questions for the Council to answer, including the required numbers for a new sports hall. No Safe Routes to School were noted on the plan, but a separate map from Law Primary PC had these noted. Michelle/Robert had already sought clarification on some points but at the date of meeting had not had any response.

It was agreed to ask questions now prior to planning consideration: noted that it was up to the Council and the School to decide, but the Parent Council can make representation.

## **6. Matters Agreed After Clerk left meeting**

Ali Clark & Chair would pull together points for a letter to ELC on playing fields to share with PC.

Paul Bekkers would follow up on trips/S4 position on DoE with Robert and seeking wording for what Michelle outlined in terms of what parents volunteers are needed which he will feed back so we can put out on FB page but Michelle will also put in newsletter.

AGM minutes, Chair do track/changes and share to PC for comment.

Jude Leslie agreed to overhaul the constitution and share with PC to be approved at EGM which will be prefaced to the next meeting to get everything back on track.

There was a brief discussion about no chair position but as Chair already outlined until we fix constitution there is no provision for new members or chair/vice outwith AGM during course of year so will be agenda point for next meeting once amended constitution approved.

Jacqui Massie asked that an agenda point for a future meeting would be a discussion about the PC tab on the school website.

*Date of Next Meeting – 22 November.*