

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING OF 8 MARCH 2023 in the SCHOOL

Parent Members: S Wellwood (Chair)
L Gurney
L Forrest
A Clark
D Edmondson
K Duncan
J Cottrell
G Milne
C Jones

Other Parents Present: E Revell, J Massie

Apologies: T Heal, P Bekkers, J Leslie, C Burgess, Cllrs L Allan and J Findlay

Staff Members: M Moore, Head Teacher, A Clubb DHT, R Jones DHT

Councillors Present: C McFarlane

A Cosgrove, Clerk.

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

2. **Minutes of Meeting of 16 January**

Parent Council members agreed that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

Conflict of Interest

The Chair reported as follows:

"I have investigated this fully and spoken at length with Connect, read guidance, and reached out via WhatsApp and various FB pages to other PC Chairs. Not one group has a list or register for their members. Some PCs have wording like us on Code of Conduct or on their Constitution. Everyone is simply relying on members to declare interests.

In terms of what constitutes a conflict Connect say:

"You would declare a potential conflict of interest a) if you have an external interest in a discussion item b) if you have an external role which might require you to prioritise that organisation over your responsibilities in a PC. Once declared (and you declare in advance of discussion, explaining it is a potential conflict of interest). If the chair has the potential conflict of interest, then someone else chairs the item. If there is a vote or an agreed course of action, the person with the potential conflict of interest should not take part in the decision making."

The Chair noted that the Area Partnership have a standing agenda item on this point. As they by definition are comprised of multiple groups wearing multiple hats they would be a good group to emulate.

Underneath matters arising on their minutes they have:

Declaration of Interest

"This is a standing item on the agenda. Please declare any conflict of interest when voting."

Chair suggested adoption of this wording and PC members review agenda in advance of every meeting declaring this at beginning but also during as dialogue can become a conflict as discussions evolve. "

Members unanimously agreed to this wording and voted to adopt this practice for this meeting and for meetings in the future.

Communications

The Chair advised that a WhatsApp group had been created for the Parent Council, and a new email account which had had good feedback. The website was mentioned – this was addressed at Item 8.

LDP Renewal Survey – The Chair had completed this, as had Law Primary PC. Ms Moore had been sent the link and advised she had shared this with the HT of Law Primary. She advised that the School had not completed the survey as the Parent Council had already done so.

Trip Survey – This was up and running in the newsletter with a deadline of 12 March: the data would be considered after this date. The PTA had been asked to promote it on their website. There had been 197 responses so far. Chair asking for some information from the school on the number of families across the school to help give some text to this survey. R Jones said he didn't know this but would try and find out.

Parents asked about the current school roll, and Mr Jones advised it was 1047 that day but he would obtain a ballpark figure.

Connect survey – Responses were requested for this.

North Berwick Area Partnership Meeting on 24 January – The Chair and G Milne had attended, with A Clark and E Revell. The ongoing concerns over lack of detail from ELC on playing fields was flagged up and Kenny Millar (Chair of NBCC) who was present and confirmed that they had sent an email to ELC asking them to provide this information and engage with local groups, but had received no acknowledgement or reply to date.

Cllr Findlay reiterated that he was unable to get information from Eamon John and the Area Partnership asked him to try again, going to Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure at ELC.

On the Move, a subgroup of the Area Partnership, also fed back their concern and would also write to ELC saying the same as the PC and NBCC. This group's next meeting was the same time as the PC meeting, but they had stated that Safe Routes to School and the shelter belt were on their agenda. M Moore's attendance and support via the NC Children & Youth Network was also noted and thanked at the meeting.

4. Staff Introductions

Robert Jones, Alice Clubb and James Mumford were asked to introduce themselves and Ms Clubb and Mr Mumford outlined their posts:

Ms Clubb advised that her remit was Learning and Teaching, leading on the Faculty Review and the timetable process. Her previous post had been Head of Maths.

Mr Mumford was the new Head of Equity, a post funded by Strategic Equity Funding from the Scottish Government, initially for a 12 month period. His role was integrating data using 14 different core measures for measuring attainment, and identifying change by looking at pupils in SMID qualifying areas, and care experienced pupils. Targeted supported study groups for these cohorts were also examining the correlation between attendance and attainment – 3 core aims related to attendance - and a spreadsheet had been created showing the level of interventions and their nature for young people in school.

On a question as to whether extra curricular activities were included, Mr Mumford advised that they were, but the focus was on literacy and numeracy, and information was being provided by ELC on equity for trips and activities.

A further question was on looking at transition from P7 to S1 and whether it was included, but at this stage most of the metrics had been set by Scottish Government at senior level.

5. Head Teacher's Report

Ms Moore thanked those who came along to the Course Choice Events – feedback had been good, and it had been well attended. There would be an S6 event in June.

There would be a Family Learning Event on 26 March, with another planned after Easter. A Study Skills session was also planned.

Parents' Evenings – 75% of parents were happy with online events: parents of younger pupils preferred in-person sessions. Some hybrid sessions were being considered.

P6/P7/S1 events were very popular and were oversubscribed.

Hayward Review, phase 3 – A survey for parents/carers and young people was taking place, based on the learning from earlier phases of the Review. This would be sent out in the weekly update. A move to two year courses over S4/S5 was proposed, as well as interdisciplinary learning and accreditation for out of school activities. Parents were encouraged to reply individually.

On a question as to Further Education and University courses would change to meet this, Ms Moore agreed that they would. The timescale may be from S2 forward, with the current S3 using a hybrid system.

Staffing – a staffing report was made to the Parent Council.

School Behaviour – Ms Moore explained the procedure in place for Partnership Working with Community Wardens, Community Link Police Officer, Fire Safety Officer, Healthy Respect and North Berwick Youth Project. She added that behaviour out of school was not always the school responsibility, but that action would be taken where it was appropriate to do so.

Recent Inservice Day – had cemented procedures on latecoming with the staff as a whole. On behaviour in school toilets, there was a final disciplinary warning process to identify young people frequenting toilets in antisocial ways. A small number had been excluded, but all had support. In addition an “hall pass lanyard” process to identify any pupil out of class.

DofE Award Scheme Update – Mr Jones advised that there had been an amazing response to a request for volunteers and there was now a current capacity to take on 56 pupils into the programme at 3rd Year Bronze. A presentation had been made to staff, resulting in some interest.

At present there was no capacity for Gold Award, but noted that pupils could complete the programme up to age 25.

6. Summary of Educational Triangle Discussions on 7th March 2003

The Chair reported on a recent meeting with the Primary School, North Berwick Trust and the Council, where the Trust had expressed dissatisfaction over the delays, and were keen to push the matter forward by inserting a temporary pathway. Drawings had been produced and sent to parent council indicating the preferred drawing which everyone had agreed. Noted that the Pump Track footprint was on the plans, and the Trust had asked that the Pump Track group get involved with a view to possibly leasing the ground to ELC who would then use their existing contract with ground services to deal with any maintenance matters relating to the Pump Track just like any other public playpark or space in NB otherwise this would be subject to a private insurance claim which NB Trust did not consider appropriate. The Trust would pull together a working group to act quickly on this matter to include the same attendees plus residential input via Lauren Taylor. NB Trust made it very clear that they are not bothered whether the Pump Track is installed or not but will leave space and will simply plant over this in the future if not used. It was noted that the Pump Track Group had not attended this meeting or the previous one between the school, school reps and ELC on 30th November 2022.

K Duncan asked that any aspect of the design affecting the school be fed back to the Trust and Mr Jones advised that he could get focus groups together in the school.

7. Playing Fields Update

Responses were awaited from parents in reply to PC communication. General query is why is this information is coming out via the Parent Council and not sent by the school directly. Been eclipsed by the trips survey with the earlier deadline for reply. Some people have requested the full hedgerow document and others have referenced the previous robust consultation regarding the new extension. As Robert Jones is present at this meeting Chair asking him to elaborate how that process was carried out. R Jones says that to his recollection it was led by ELC architects not the school as such but there were several sessions a day time one and evening and also a communication that went to call parents and carers. Drawings were made available and they were laid out with a discussion and an open feedback session. He can't recall who the lead person was but there was one contact that co-ordinated this. PC noting this and agreeing if this was possible before then why are ELC not adopting the same process now.

8. PC Communications with Parent Forum

The Chair had spoken to the PTA about possible assistance with a website, but they were having difficulty filling the Chair post and have only just secured a treasurer in response to a PC plea on their behalf. An enquiry had been made to Connect, and they may be able to assist in future.

It could be possible to use the PTA Bank Account for future fundraising.

The Parent Council had a small budget of £265 for the year which could also be used for supporting a website. Clerk to share details with G Milne after the meeting.

Chair has gone back through all notes & communications leading up to AGM as Chair was Vice Chair at that time with Anna Beedel as Chair, Damien as potential Chair and SMT. It was specifically asked, on more than one occasion, in advance of the AGM and prior to agreeing any involvement of ELC officers at the meeting, whether any presentation would be deemed to be a consultation. SMT and PC reps were told that it was merely to start of the conversation and intended to simply share drawings. The AGM was also never advertised as such to the wider parent forum other than saying there would be a normal PC meeting followed by an AGM and then followed by sharing of drawings. Time was very tight and the suitability of the AGM as being best forum for this was a concern for the Chair/Vice. It was suggested by ELC officers that a consultation would follow the AGM and this has never taken place or been responded to despite requests by the PC directly and via the SMT.

North Berwick Community Council, Paul McLennon, On the Move (as part of Area Partnership) and Connect are all concerned at this breach of Scottish Guidance. Jeremy Findlay asked if there was any one person or small team who would co-ordinate the whole NBHS/ Nursery site and was told that there is no-one doing this at ELC. He is now trying to speak to Tom Reid.

As part of the dialogue that these groups have had with ELC and fed back via the Area Partnership and Community Council, there is now a suggestion by ELC that a consultation did indeed take place. Given this wholly incorrect assertion it is very important that the Parent Council clarify our position on this specifically.

Noted unanimously by all members in attendance that the event at the PC AGM by ELC on the Playing Fields was never seen or construed as a consultation, rather a presentation. And no-one deemed the attendance of ELC officers at the end of the AGM to have been acceptable given the dissatisfactory conduct on the evening. No consultation had been carried out with the community or the Community Council.

J Massie checked the wording of the minutes of the AGM which does indeed comment on a presentation and not a consultation. J Massie also sharing with the Parent Council that the Council Audit Report had identified lack of community consultation as an area of concern. Chair asking J Massie to forward a copy of this to her to review.

Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 25 May.