

# Stromness Academy Parent Council

## Minutes of Meeting

### Thursday 28 September 2017



**Present:** Kate Carmichael (Chair), Ian Berstan (Acting Headteacher), Jane Partridge (Depute Headteacher), Morag Miller (Service Improvement Officer), Carmel McElroy, Cllr Rachael King, Fiona Towrie, Karen Bevilacqua, Kirstie Moar, Joe Horrocks, Moira Flett, Brenda Johnstone (Teacher Representative), Rosie Paulo, Barbara Scollay (Minute Clerk)

**Apologies:** Kate Thompson, Rob Crichton, Rosemary McLaughlin, Emma-Jane Rendall, Lorraine Sharpe, Helen Wailoo, Steven Tulloch, Melanie Johansen, Kate Shiner, Jane Beckwith

Kate C explained that due to clashes of commitments Fiona Laing is stepping down from the committee – thanks were paid to her for her contribution and attendance at meetings and events over the last two years.

**Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting:** the minutes of 30 August 2017 were proposed by Joe Horrocks and seconded by Carmel McElroy.

#### School update

Jane Partridge was successful in gaining the permanent Headteacher post at SA and will start this role after the October break. Recent additions to the staffing are in Science with Edward Ninn, and English with Martin McGeary, and Mark Berry was successful in gaining the PT Guidance post. Advertisements for a Depute Headteacher and PE teacher will be live shortly.

S1 pupils recently took part in a Safe Islander event, and six senior girls attended a future asset event on the mainland about increasing diversity within the financial industry. S5 and S6 pupils have attended a Safe Drive, Stay Alive event at KGS featuring practical advice, talks and videos, and combined this with a visit to Orkney College to find out about the courses offered there.

Next week there will be a Make your Mark event supported by the Scottish Youth Parliament as part of a drive to improve political education. Jane is going to be leading improvements to the website and the school calendar has been issued to parents/pupils, and is available on the school's Facebook page and the website. The committee welcomed and praised the increased activity noticed on the school Facebook page.

School focuses over the next four terms are, in sequential order: curriculum development, learning and teaching, tracking and monitoring, and long-term action plans.

There has been an increase in pupils attending extracurricular activities during the new lunch slot, including the homework club, and pupils can ask for a special pass to get through the queues faster to attend their activities.

Kate C then noted, on behalf of the committee and parent body, that this was Ian's last PC meeting and paid thanks to him for all he had done in his time here and the positive changes he had instigated, and wished him all the very best for the future. She then formally welcomed Jane to her new role and expressed how the committee were looking forward to working with her.

Morag also explained that she had been asked to give thanks to Ian on behalf of Wilf Weir and James Wylie for moving the school forward in such a positive way and having a very productive time and effect at SA.

#### Matters arising

- STEM committee revival – two businesses have expressed interest in being part of this; a date and time needs to be set with a month or so's notice for the invite.

**Action 1:** Ian/Jane to seek date for first meeting

- Duke of Edinburgh – advice has been sought and bronze is the only level that can be offered presently due to the number of staff members available. More willing staff need to be trained before other levels could be added into the programme at SA. Parents are able to assist with events but the school is awaiting advice from Walter Gorman in relation to expeditions. Currently there are 23 pupils signed up at bronze level.
- Transport – the parents involved are still in discussion with the Council about the issue.
- School Review – Morag was unaware that a request had been made for a plain English briefing and advised she felt the priority would be to progress the actions arising from the report rather than try to re-word it at this time. Those present were in agreement with this and Morag explained that she would try to make the action plan as clear as possible and would share it as soon as practical.
- Internet Safety – waiting to hear from Kerry Spence on a date for this.
- Welcome Pack/Booklet – this has not been fully discussed yet via the closed FB group as planned but this will be done prior to the next meeting; a list has been started but needs to be populated further. Jane commented that she would intend to take this to the Pupil Council to gain their insight on this as well.

**Action 2:** all PC members to contribute to wish list of information to be included in a welcome pack or booklet

- School Uniform – Kate T is willing to prepare a survey on this and a draft will be uploaded into the closed FB group for comment prior to the next meeting. A list of families will be obtained from the school to ensure each family only receives one survey to complete. It was suggested that other questions on other subjects could also be asked when having the opportunity, so that will also be discussed.

**Action 3:** Kate T to draft survey and all PC members to review

- National Parent Council Forum of Scotland/Scottish Parent Teacher Council – Kate C confirmed she had signed the SA PC up as members of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council, SPTC, the body which covers Public Liability insurance and will enable the group to obtain one to two days of free training on site. The annual fee of £135 is comparable to that paid to OIC for arranging insurance cover. Morag intends to check which forum this is as there are two with similar names. The insurance certificates for display had been received.

### **Raffle for 10 October concert**

Parents will be asked to donate prizes for the raffle at the autumn concert, and Fiona and Kirstie agreed to run the raffle on the night.

**Action 4:** purchase raffle ticket books (Fiona)

A question was asked in relation to residents from Smiddybrae about areas suitable for wheelchair users to sit, and it was agreed that it would be useful for the school to know in advance how many would be attending to ensure enough space was set aside for them.

### **Courtyard Fundraiser**

Kirstie has been hard at work and reeled off a list of around a dozen prizes she has secured for the raffle as well as some other donations promised – and she was praised for her amazing efforts.

Tickets are to be sold at parent's evenings, at school events, in local shops and by parents – it was agreed that giving 10 tickets to each family and each staff member to sell on to friends and family would be reasonable – with a return date for any unsold tickets and no pressure to buy/sell. It was agreed that the PC should aim to get tickets printed by the end of October and the date of the draw should be the Talent Show. Total number of tickets to be printed to be decided once costings sought.

**Action 5:** raffle tickets to be printed by end of October once date of draw (Talent Show) is set (Kirstie)

### **Talent Show Fundraiser**

The date discussed at the last meeting is no longer possible so Jane will try to ascertain exam dates and date in late March will be sought. It was agreed to wait until a date is set before publicising.

**Action 6:** attempt to clarify when exam dates are in March so date for talent show can be set (Jane)

### **Parent's evenings**

Volunteers are needed between 5 and 7pm for the parent's evenings, and Ian noted that an electronic booking system is being looked at.

Thurs 16 Nov – S1 – Joe, Kate C, Kirstie

Wed 13 Dec – S5&6 – Rosie, Kirstie

Thurs 18 Jan – S4 – Fiona, Kirstie

Tue 20 Feb – S3 – Joe, Kate C

Thurs 8 Mar – S2 – nearer the time

### **Amnesty Orkney – proposal for school group**

A fifth-year pupil is interested in starting up an Amnesty Orkney group within the school and Jane advised she is waiting for the pupil to discuss this with her further.

### **Treasurer's update**

The balance in the account is around £600.

### **AOCB**

#### Discipline on school buses

A query was made about who is responsible for discipline on school buses and Ian asked that parents report any concerns to the school first, and they will investigate and liaise on any further actions to be taken.

#### Minutes

A request was made for the minutes to highlight any actions needed, and to be turned around swifter than at present; the minute clerk advised she couldn't commit to a week's turnaround but will endeavor to speed the process up in future.

#### School updates/bulletins

The request to circulate a school update with the agenda was reiterated and Jane will try to prepare something ready for the next meeting. Discussion around how and where to publicise school bulletins also took place as parents would be interested in reading these.

**Action 6:** *short school update to be provided when agenda for future meetings circulated (Jane)*

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is on Wednesday 8 November at 7pm in the Upper Library.

Apologies pre-notified from Carmel and Morag.

The school requested a clear agenda in advance. Jane will bring information on the school improvement plan and curriculum rationale to the next meeting to share with parents.