

AGM MINUTES

Tolsta Primary School - Bun-Sgoil Tholastaidh Parent Council

Tuesday 23rd August 2016

In Attendance

Fiona Black (Chair), John Maciver (Treasurer), Gavin Minion (Secretary), Donna Macdonald (Acting Headteacher), Katherine Mackinnon (Teacher P5-7), Rachel Craig, Paula Greenstock, Erica Macleod, Effie Macmillan, Leigh Minion, Anne Ramsey, Susan Thompson.

Guest attendance: Bernard Chisholm (Head of Children's Services and Resources).

Questions to Head of Children's Services and Resources

After a short introduction Bernard Chisholm was invited to address the parents of Tolsta School Bernard gave a description of his role and asked for questions from the parents.

From Paula Greenstock: "Regarding maintenance, and in particular the poor drainage of the school playground and access routes, what is being done? During wet weather, both the main access and the disabled access are flooded."

Bernard Chisholm: "Currently there is a review of all school playgrounds and play areas, this will prioritise repair and remedial work. However, if there is an access issue then this is separate and should be given a higher priority."

From Rachel Craig: "After a couple of incidents on the school playground, I asked about playground supervision and was told that, for less than 50 children, supervision is not required. Is this true? I am worried that, without supervision, there will one day be an accident."

Bernard Chisholm: "I have not heard of this rule."; Donna MacDonald: "I have heard it mentioned before"; Bernard Chisholm: "I was not aware of any such rule, I will check and also look into the history". Paula Greenstock: "Provision used to be made at Tolsta".

From Fiona Black: "Does the closure of the nursery mean that the building will not now be painted?"

Bernard Chisholm: "It does not mean that, but the council currently does not have a budget for that kind of maintenance (painting)";

From Gavin Minion: "Does that mean that remedial work does not get done, that does not seem sensible as minor repairs missed now can lead to much larger repairs later on".

Bernard Chisholm: "Yes, it does not make sense. Until recently the council had more buildings than it could afford to maintain. The number of buildings has been reduced and the council is now taking stock."

From Anne Ramsey: "When are the extra nursery hours for pre-school children coming?"

Bernard Chisholm: "The plan is to roll them out in 2020. Politically there is a commitment and the council is looking at the provision of resources, buildings etc to ensure there are places available. Currently Stornoway has a waiting list of 40 children for nursery care."

From Anne Ramsey: "Why not bus those children out to rural nurseries?"

Bernard Chisholm: "Generally, parents choose nursery provision close to their place of residence or work. Data for the Western Isles indicates that many parents are taking on jobs at unusual hours and they struggle to get childcare. EU funding has been secured to assist with rural childminder recruitment"

From Leigh Minion: "Are childminders able to get startup Grants?"

Bernard Chisholm: "Yes, money is available for those who want to become childminders"

From Susan Thompson: "The 8 week school holidays are ridiculous, parents cannot get childcare, will anything change? Where holiday clubs are available, the price is so high that working parents cannot afford them"

Bernard Chisholm: "The council is looking at more holiday club provision. This is also something that communities are encouraged to work together on."

Bernard Chisolm was thanked for attending and the meeting moved on to the election for office bearers.

Office bearers

The Chair began by announcing her intention to step down as Chair from this point. The office bearers were therefore elected as follows:

Chair, Leigh Minion (Proposed by Rachel Craig, Seconded by Fiona Black.)

Secretary, Gavin Minion.

Treasurer, John Maciver.

Leigh took the chair and thanked Fiona for her services to the school.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place at the School on the 13th of September.