

**Minutes of Bell's Brae Primary School Parent Council  
Held in the Bell's Brae Primary School Staffroom  
On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 6.30pm**

**Present**

David Thomson	Chairperson
Laurie Pottinger	Vice Chair
Louise Garriock	Parent Member
Kerri Redfern	Parent Member
Susan Liphthorpe	Parent Member
Shaun Garriock	Parent Member

**In Attendance**

Julia McGinlay	Depute Head Teacher
Dawn Ratter	Clerk/Treasurer
Cllr Neil Pearson	Councillor

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Jennifer Wadley, Marianne Masson, Anne-Lise Anderson, Cllr Cecil Smith, Cllr John Fraser and Cllr Gary Robinson.

**2. Approval of the previous minutes (Monday 03<sup>rd</sup> October 2022)**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by Shaun Garriock and seconded by Kerri Redfern.

**3. Review of matters and actions arising from previous minutes**

Christmas Cards

The Christmas cards have been distributed.

**4. Treasurer's Report (see attached)**

The available balance is £3,343.51. The Parent Council have registered for a Lottery Licence. The registration fee was £40, with an annual renewal of £20.

**5. Staffing update**

- Learning Support Worker 17.5 hpw (temporary) – Preferred candidate stage.
- Learning Support Worker 18 hpw – Preferred candidate stage.
- Learning Support Worker (temporary) – Carla Tait appointed and due to start in January.
- ELC Support Worker – Bonita Riise is now in post.
- ELC Practitioner – Vanessa Mainland is now in post.
- ELC Senior Practitioner – Awaiting to be shortlisted.
- Primary Teacher (temporary) – Preferred candidate stage.

Kerri left the last meeting feeling that the jigsaw puzzle the staff at Bell's Brae are working with is phenomenal. As a parent, she asked what pressures the authority are taking away from the school in order to make it more manageable for the staff. She feels parents do not fully appreciate the difficulties the school and staff are under in order to keep the school functioning on a day to day basis. Laurie is in agreement, this was part of the reason she joined the Parent Council. Kerri said she feels the school are doing everything they can to ensure quality and consistent staff are employed to cover classes however, she stressed that she does not feel the authority understand or appreciate the amount of work this causes for school management staff. The level of expectation from the authority is still there to close the attainment gap even when the school are under huge staffing pressures.

Julia said they are lucky in that they have a big compliment of staff and everyone pulls together to provide cover for classes. However, the setting is unique in terms of the volume

of support staff. It is very difficult to re-organise staffing each day to cover the level of absence the school are experiencing. In terms of recruitment, Julia noted it is good to keep this in the school, although it is a lot of work, it is valuable to be involved in the recruitment process, especially in relation to ASN staff. Cllr Pearson asked if the applicant numbers are healthy. Julia advised it is tricky for teaching posts and ELC posts but is quite healthy for support staff. On the other side of this, the higher the applicant numbers the lengthier the shortlisting process.

The Parent Council has a limited role in terms of what they can do in relation to staffing. David feels it is really important that the depths of the challenge is seen by those who do have the potential to act and he is particularly grateful to have Cllr Pearson at the meeting tonight, especially at a time where Shetland Islands Council are going through a no growth budget exercise.

Kerri emphasised how challenging it is for the school to ensure classes are covered each day, and the appropriate support staff is in place for pupils. She feels strongly that something needs to be done to ensure this message is clear to all parents. Louise suggested a campaign to increase the knowledge of the difficulties the school are facing by creating some eye catching notices to promote the Parent Council, as well as raise concerns.

Laurie asked if the school receive many concerns from parents regarding lack of staffing or consistency, or are they generally supportive. Julia feels the parent body are pretty understanding and know the school will always try to find a solution that works for the school and pupils.

David reiterated that the Parent Council are here to support the views of the school. If the school require input/support, please do not hesitate to ask for support.

## **6. Next Social Events**

The Halloween party was a great success with approximately 100 children / 80 adults in attendance. Dawn asked anyone who purchased items for the Halloween Party to email through receipts for reimbursement.

The Parent Council agreed to hold a Christmas Party on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December, following the same format as the Halloween Party. David will issue an action list for parent members to volunteer for. There was a discussion on whether to hold 1 party or to have 2 parties to allow more children to be able to attend but the Parent Council agreed to just hold 1 party due to the low number of parent members. Tickets will be free, and issued on a first come, first served basis. There will be a donations box for anyone who feels they can contribute to the cost of the party.

**ACTION: David**

There was a suggestion to issue a pre-warning social media post to let families know the party will be happening and information on when tickets will be available. Julia suggested contacting the school office for the notice to be displayed on the big screen in the canteen to make pupils aware.

Louise suggested issuing a notice to the parent forum following the events to highlight that these types of social events can only continue if more parents become involved.

## **7. Fundraising**

Not discussed.

## **8. Road Safety**

David received an update from Neil Hutcheson, Roads. Neil advised they are now looking at feedback in relation to St Sunniva Street. The Scottish Government have asked Shetland Islands Council to undertake an assessment of the impacts of revising the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph. Over the winter they will be promoting 20mph speed limit zones on the north crescents and Gilbertson Road. Roads have received funding from Scottish Government Cycling Walking and Safer Routes to improve the footpaths around the Gilbertson Park. This will include the path from the games hall car park to the Montfield land. These works are scheduled for February with completion by the end of March.

**9. Correspondence**

All correspondence has been uploaded the Facebook page.

**10.AOCB**

None.

**11.Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 6.30pm.

**Bell's Brae Parent Council**  
**Treasurer's Report - February 2023**

	<u>£</u>
Opening Balance as at 01/04/22	2,955.51

**Income**

Arnold Clark Funding	750.00	
Bonus Ball Fundraising	200.00	
	<hr/>	950.00

**Expenditure**

P7 Hoodies Donation	252.00	
Audit of Accounts	20.00	
Bonus Ball Prize - L Sandison	100.00	
Grant u/spend	150.00	
Lottery Licence	40.00	
Halloween Expenses - LP	57.32	619.32
	<hr/>	330.68

<b>Available Balance (13/02/23)</b>	<hr/> <b>3,286.19</b> <hr/>
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