

**Minutes of Bell's Brae Primary School Parent Council
Held in the Bell's Brae Primary School Staffroom
On Monday 3rd October 2022 at 6.30pm**

Present

David Thomson	Chairperson
Laurie Pottinger	Vice Chair
Anne-Lise Anderson	Parent Member
Sean Garrick	Parent Member
Susan Liphthorpe	Parent Member
Kerri Redfern	Parent Member
Richard Douglas	Parent Member

In Attendance

Jennifer Wadley	Head Teacher
Julia McGinlay	Depute Head Teacher
Dawn Ratter	Clerk /Treasurer
Cllr John Fraser	Councillor
Cllr Stephen Leask	Councillor
Cllr Gary Robinson	Councillor

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Marianne Masson, Cllr Denis Leask and Cllr Cecil Smith.

2. Approval of the previous minutes (Wednesday 18th May 2022)

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by Anne-Lise Anderson and seconded by David Thomson.

3. Review of matters and actions arising from previous minutes

Bonus Ball Bingo

The Bonus Ball fundraiser went ahead with a profit of £100 for Parent Council funds and Louise Sandison won the £100 prize.

4. Treasurer's Report (see attached)

The available balance is £3,383.51. The Parent Council has received funding of £750.00 from Arnold Clark. The Bonus Ball Bingo fundraiser made a profit of £100 for Parent Council funds. The Parent Council provided a donation of £252.00 to the school towards the P7 Leaver Hoodies and the accounts audit fee of £20 has been paid. The bank account is now set up for online banking. A grant application has been submitted to the SIC for £170.00.

5. Staffing update

- Learning Support Worker 17.5 hpw (temporary) – Preferred candidate stage.
- Learning Support Worker 18 hpw – Interviews scheduled for Friday.
- Learning Support Worker (temporary) – Currently advertised.
- ELC Support Worker – Preferred candidate stage.
- ELC Practitioner – Interviews scheduled for Thursday.
- ELC Senior Practitioner – Recruitment forms have been submitted.
- Primary Teacher (temporary) – Currently advertised.

Staffing during September has continued to be extremely challenging. This is a result of the level of absence due to sickness and the number of vacancies that haven't gone through the recruitment process quickly. In the 5 weeks from 29th August to the end of September there were 239 work days lost due to absences or vacancies. The school managed to find cover for 153 of those, meaning the school ran short of 86 work days during this period. The knock

on effect of the existing staff and management of maintaining the running of the service has been extremely challenging. In one day alone there were 5 Learning Support Workers absent. Jennifer noted massive credit to Julia McGinlay, Deputy Head Teacher for ensuring cover was provided for all pupils with medical needs and those with severe and complex needs. Staffing changes at the last minute can be very disruptive for class teachers, learning support staff and the pupils.

David asked if the school are aware of any increased efforts from Children's Services to support schools to deal with high numbers of absences and sourcing supply cover. Jennifer advised parent members that the school are ensuring the challenges faced are being communicated with central officers. Phone calls from staff members regarding absences can start from as early as 6am each day. Jennifer praised the school management team and staff – they have been absolutely amazing and so flexible with necessary last minute changes.

Cllr Fraser asked if there would be an opportunity to amend the absence reporting policy to redirect these phone calls to central services and if it would help to co-ordinate a more efficient and effective approach to sourcing supply cover and absence reporting across all schools in Shetland. Jennifer noted the positive thing about getting a phone at 6am is that they can start looking for cover in time for the start of the school day. She acknowledged the points raised by Cllr Fraser around a centralised system for supply cover but felt the school would be in a better position to source supply staff, especially for support staff working with pupils with particular needs. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of available staff on the supply register to provide cover across all schools. Another challenge the local authority is going to face is to meet the commitment from the Scottish Government to increase non-contact time for every teacher which could be in place as early as 2024. This will result in an increase of 1.5 hours of non-contact time which will result in an additional 20+ teachers required in Shetland to cover this increase. Jennifer is on the working group looking at how to implement this.

Cllr Leask asked if there is an onus on the supply staff to put themselves forward with their availability. The supply teacher pool was reduced when the terms and conditions changes a few years ago. Jennifer noted there is currently a spreadsheet in place which is accessed by all schools, with a list of all supply staff which can be filtered to teaching staff and support staff. If a school is to take in a member of staff on supply the onus is on the school to update the list which added to the workload of school staff. In reality, the updating of the supply list is not a high priority for schools so it is not always updated. Jennifer is aware of conversations happening centrally to possibly transfer the onus onto the supply staff member.

The parent council commended the school on the great job they are doing for keeping the school functioning during these challenging times.

6. Next Social Events

David feels it is really important to reintroduce social events and welcome people into the school. The Parent Council agreed to run a Halloween Party as a social event, rather than a fundraiser, due to the current cost of living crisis. All parent members were in agreement to hold the event free of charge to parents/carers. A provisional date was set for Thursday 3rd November. Dawn will email Frances Tait for previous party numbers and any planning information she has from the last Halloween Party. David will instigate conversations by email for the party planning details.

A date for a Christmas Party will be set at the next meeting.

ACTION: Dawn/David

7. Christmas Card Fundraiser

David has taken on to co-ordinate the Christmas Cards. Pupils have been creating their designs in Art this term. Anne-Lise and Richard are happy to help with this.

ACTION: David

8. Other Fundraising and Social Events

David will arrange to promote the easy fundraising link on the Facebook page.

ACTION: David

The Parent Council have a Northlink Ferry voucher which needs to be used by spring 2023.

Jennifer said the school management team have had conversations around setting up a 'Hansel Hut'. This could be a wooden shed at the front of the school what allows members of the community to pick up items, for example, a book, food bank items nearing the expiration date, any food Tesco might be willing to donate, etc.

David suggested taking the conversation offline to progress with the meeting tonight. All parent members present were supportive of a £1 raffle to raise funds to support the school with a potential Hansel Hut.

ACTION: David

9. Recruitment Drive

The most important recruitment drive will be to restart the social events and be able to speak to parents when they come into the school.

There was a discussion on whether parent council meetings could be held as a hybrid model. Unfortunately, the parent council does not have the equipment to be able to carry this out successfully and rely on the generosity of the school. It might be possible to try holding a meeting in a classroom or in the canteen using equipment available but there would be no security in place for people around the building. Some members felt there might not be the same contribution from parent members if the meetings were held online.

David suggested looking at the parental questionnaire again as a way to engage with the wider parent forum. The questionnaire could explore the awareness of the parent council, the appetite to volunteer for social events and also include a question to capture the views of the parent forum on the format of future meetings.

10. Correspondence

Junior UHA

The Junior UHA Committee have been in touch to enquire if the school could send an email to all parents/carers on their behalf. Jennifer advised the school holds parent email addresses for SIC business only so were unable to circulate the email. David shared the information on the Parent Council Facebook page.

11. AOCB

Study Club

Joanne Fraser, Community Development Officer has reached out to see if there is anything she can help the Parent Council with. David asked if it would be beneficial for to have conversations with Joanne around the Study Club. Jennifer said there is a demand for wraparound care in the community but there would be implications around staffing, organisation of staff and how it would be paid for. When the Study Club was up and running there was space for 20 pupils to attend and it was full with a waiting list most days. The Study Club was initially set up through Pupil Equity Funding to raise the attainment for a specific group of pupils. Through evaluation processes it became evident that there was little crossover between attendees and the Pupil Equity Fund eligible pupils. This resulted in the Pupil Equity Fund being used to fund something that was not closing the attainment gap. The

school can provide a venue but would not be able to provide staff or funding for wraparound care. David will continue conversations with Joanne.

ACTION: David

Universal Free School Meals

There is no update on the expansion of Universal Free School Meals to P6/7 pupils. This was due to happen in August 2022 but has been delayed by the Scottish Government.

Community Council Elections

Cllr Fraser noted the Community Council elections will be happening later in the year if anyone would like to put themselves forward. Cllr Fraser will be happy to answer any questions from any interested members.

Road Safety

The parent council has spent years working on road safety with massive exercises carried out on the education aspect. The proposed Lerwick Traffic Order has much improved proposals but does not seem to be moving forward. The parent council is really interested to contribute towards the consultation. David is expecting an update from Neil Hutcheson for the November meeting.

Laurie asked if any targeted road safety approaches have been carried out around King Harald Street, as it is such a busy and fast road. Richard advised the Police have targeted around the school, the corner of South Road and the bottom of Cockatoo Brae but they can look at deploying officers in other areas of concern.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 28th November 2022 at 6.30pm.

Bell's Brae Parent Council
Treasurer's Report - October 2022

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

Income

Arnold Clark Funding	750.00	
Bonus Ball Fundraising	200.00	
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	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	522.00
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		428.00

Available Balance (03/10/22)	<hr/>	3,383.51
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