Lunnasting Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 25th February 2025

Time: 18:30

Location: Lunnasting Primary School

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| **Attendance:** | | | |
| **Laura Tulloch (LT)** | Head Teacher | **Charlotte Allam (CA)** | Chair |
| **Allison Christie (AC)** | Vice Chair | **Louise Manson (LM)** | Secretary |
| **Carol Nicol (CN)** | Treasurer | **Tori Johnson (TJ)** | Member |
| **Abbey Thompson (AT)** | Parent/Carer | **Vaila Wallace (VW)** | Parent/Carer |
| **Andrew Hall (AH)** | Councillor |  |  |

1. **Apologies**

Leanne Moss (QIO) sent apologies. AH asked if Leanne was dedicated to this school. LT explained that Leanne covered a number of schools. TJ added that there was another QIO for Early Years (Catherine Jamieson). CA explained that historically the QIO and local councillor had been invited to Parent Council (PC) meetings and that this had fallen away over time. After a recent issue regarding a lack of communication, it was agreed to reintroduce this invite. AH added that he was happy to be invited and that this involvement was really important.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

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| **Proposed: AC** |
| **Seconded: AT** |

1. **Matters Arising**
   1. ***Library***

CA explained that at the previous PC meeting improvements to the library had been discussed (new books/improving the space). CA confirmed she had submitted a Tesco Strong Starts application again, which can take around 12 months for an outcome.

LT is to liaise with Kenny (janitor) regarding bespoke shelving and whether this would fall under his remit. CA added that some funds had been raised already from the Christmas Card deliveries and that the Parent Council would be willing to look into alternative options should it fall outside his remit.

AH asked whether the SIC provided books. LT explained that the school has a collection of books,

but it is not through Shetland Library (as in some other schools). The system is run on an old computer, and when that breaks, there will be no electronic system to check out books. LT explained she wanted to make the experience at Lunnasting the same as it would be if it was a Shetland Library. AC added that the children keep returning home with the same books. LT explained she wants to make it more appealing with a broader range of updated books. AH asked how many books the school was looking to get. CA confirmed there is around £500 so far, and if Tesco funding is received this could be a further £1,000. Some of this will also need to pay for shelving/displays. AC queried whether grants from the Community Benefit Fund could be used on new books. It was agreed this was a good funding route, but might be a better option for the garden.

* 1. ***Garden Planticrub***

CA confirmed she had spoken to Chris Dyer from Bressay regarding the planticrub and he was keen to be involved. CA explained that the existing crub is collapsing and not safe for the children to use. CA listed some potential options which could be explored to restore the Planticrub (and very rough costings):

* Make it safe. Effectively reducing it to the ground (£1,000)
* Improve. It is built with round stones/pebbles which are not great. Planticrub could be rebuilt principally with the original stones and some additional local stone (£3,000)
* Make a feature. Building a new foundation, rebuilding using additional stone, add a gate, bench, etc. Could be used by the children (£5,000).

CA explained there was around £2,000 left in the current garden funds, which can keep being topped up (for repairs to play equipment, etc.) and asked what members felt about the options. LM suggested that if we are looking to do something with it, we should be looking to make it into something the children can use and make it a feature. CN agreed, suggesting we should be aiming big in the first instance.

CA confirmed some more research would need to be done. LT added that the school has limited green space and so we should try and make the most of what we have. LT explained the Council had been in assessing improvements to the playground and she is still awaiting confirmation of when this will be happening.

CA explained the current timescale was undetermined and would depend, in part, on funding and availability. Chris typically does his drystone wall work over winter, but it is not impossible over summer. VW asked whether this is something that could be a learning opportunity for the older children at the school. CA explained that Chris is keen on sharing skills and she had asked about the possibility of parents being involved.

**Action: CA/AC to look into Community Benefit Fund and ALL to explore fundraising options.**

* 1. ***Homework Grids and Termly Overviews***

LT said the homework grids are something for the children to keep and check off what they have completed. She had included a column for them to add in their own ideas. The consensus was that these are a good things for the children to engage with and a helpful way to involve topic work at home. LT had cut the “jargon” from previous versions of the termly overviews.

* 1. ***ICT Agreement***

LT confirmed she had received guidance from the Council with regards to required wording. LT explained that we are allowed to change the wording - as long as the context is not altered – to make it more child-friendly. Children are required to sign the agreement once in P1; however Lunnasting asks children to sign it every year. LT confirmed that the agreement will be updated for starting the new school session (August) and will include consequences misuse (rights and responsibilities).

1. **Treasurer Update**

CN confirmed there was £3,779.51 in the account (approximately £2,000 is from garden fundraising). CN added that the Halloween Party raised £151 profit and the Christmas party made a loss of £179.02 (still awaiting the Hall hire bill, but approximate accounted for).

CN highlighted there is a bingo night on Friday (28/02/2025) and the Christmas Card deliveries had made £473. It was discussed that an auction could have been planned, however it was felt there had been a few auctions recently and the timing might not be the best. Other ideas included a takeaway night and school tea towels (children draw pictures of themselves/staff and have them printed on tea towels).

**Action: Tea towels to be looked into.**

1. **Learning Support Worker hours – reply to QIO**

CA explained that, following communication with Emma MacDonald last year about cuts to LSW hours, she had written to Leanne Moss (QIO) in relation to this and to invite her to future Parent Council meetings. CA summarised: LSW hours were cut at Lunnasting at the start of the school year and it was felt that communication about the reasons for the cuts and the annual audit to assess need was lacking. It was hard for parents to understand why hours had been cut at a time when school numbers and need had increased. It was felt that the parent body should be made more aware of what the audit entails and that more information should be shared.

In the absence of attending Parent Council, LM had offered to meet with CA her to discuss parents’ concerns and for CA to report back to the Parent Forum. However since being discussed initially, nothing further has been raised by the parent body and CA was unsure what a meeting would

achieve at this time.

LT explained that the audit looks at level of assessed need and there wasn’t enough to warrant an

extra member of staff. LT explained also that Linda Hughson and Jenni Spall also come in and help. CA asked whether there was scope for parents to come and help. VW suggested this would require lots of checks. CA added that the PC would keep inviting the QIO to meetings and signposting to the minutes.

1. **Succession and Handover**

CA highlighted that May will be the final PC meeting before the September AGM and we should organise handovers for any potential new members of the PC. LM would look at starting to collate information. CA asked if everyone could think about what would be useful information to share; i.e. fundraising – what has been done before; projects – what has been started and not finished; garden – set aside funding; etc. CA added that it would be good to put this on parents’ radars after the next Parent Council meeting. CN spoke about the Hall committee and how they had summarised their work/achievements in a fun/ eye-catching way and that something similar would be good.

**Action: CA to speak to Laura Hay. ALL to think of content for next meeting.**

1. **School Closures and Contacting Parents**

CA added that some concerns had been raised following the recent school closures due to power cuts. CN explained that this was not a criticism of the school and understood that the phones go when there is a power cut. However when contacting parents, many may be at work or without phone signal. LT explained that the emergency phone line to the school had been cut and this was not known to the school until after the fact. LT added that suggestions had been made that the school has an emergency mobile, however there is no reception at the school. LT explained that the emergency power backup had been improved to increase the length of time power would still be available during a power cut, and the Council had also launched a Shetland-wide project to research the issue.

1. **School Uniform**

LT explained that the wearing of school uniform had come and gone over time. It was felt that children wanted to wear their own clothes, LT wanted to know if parents still wanted it, or whether it was a nuisance. LT added that it can be made a “school rule,” but not mandatory. LM stated that if it is not mandated, it won’t happen. CN added that everyone would need to be on board. The consensus was that both sides could be seen. AT added that if uniform only comes out for special occasions, you are then asking parents to buy uniform that may only be worn once before outgrowing. TA added that LHD could be approached for costing.

**Action: LT to survey parents**

1. **Connect**

CA reminded everyone that Connect provided lots of informative webinars (which don’t have to be attended live, can be watched on demand). Anyone can create an account.

1. **Any Other Business (AOB)**
   1. **Constitution**

CA explained that the Constitution needs to be reviewed, and will be added to the May agenda.

* 1. **Bike Ability**

It was discussed that Bike Ability was visiting the school. CA requested that the tyres and pallets be removed from the bike shelter so that children can park their bikes. LT confirmed it was level 2 that was happening this time round. CA asked whether level 1 was being offered to the younger children.

**Action: LT to liaise with Danny Peterson for more information.**

* 1. **Safety of Road**

VW raised an issue regarding the safety of the road to the school. Currently there are sections with no barriers from the sea-side of the road (fences fallen away), no path that follows the road the full way to the school, and an increased amount of traffic when the Whalsay ferry docks at the Vidlin Ferry Terminal. AT added she had an up-to-date risk assessment for the road to the school which could be shared. It was asked when this assessment was done and if data had been collected when the ferry is in at Vidlin. Discussions followed around what we can do as a Parent Council to have this revisited by the Councils and who would do this (School Transport, Transport Planning, Roads).

It was discussed that the Ayre has been deemed as dangerous due to the fact its coverage can be affected by seas (high tides/big swell). CA suggested that it would be worthwhile raising this through the PC. LT suggested that we also offer a solution – what are we looking for to improve the situation. CN suggested that we get the data on how often the ferry has been in Vidlin. CA suggested that VW draft the main points and we will take it from there.

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Parent Council meeting will be in May 2025, date to be confirmed.