



Dunrossness Parent Council Meeting
Approved Minutes
23rd June 2025
Dunrossness Primary School



Dunrossness Primary School Parent Council Meeting

Monday 23 June 2025

18:00

Dunrossness Primary School

Attending:

Parent Council	School	SIC	Parents	Other
Sarah Green (Chair) Sam Adamson (Deputy Chair) Katrina Jamieson (Treasurer) Catherine Puxley	Louise Leslie (Headteacher) Brenda Smith (Teacher) Emma Graydon (Classroom Assistant)	Shona Thompson (School Estates) Emma Sandison (School Estates) Neil Clubb (Assets) Lauren Smith (Assets) Davie Sandison Catherine Hughson	Willie Leask Jillian Mouat Alex Fenton Simon Allen Leona Leask Nicola Sutherland Mandy Barclay Anita Graham Jason Reeve Leigh Smith Hayley Smith Alastair Leslie Ewen Adamson Megan Taylor	Gary Docherty (NHS Shetland)

Extraordinary Agenda Item

1. Welcome

Extraordinary meeting called following concerns raised by the parent body at Dunrossness Primary School and the Parent Council regarding poor communication from the Council regarding the plans for the school following the “condemning” of the old P1/P2, young childrens’ toilets, playroom and ASN classroom extension of the school following the discovery of “Sullom blocks” within the architecture of the school building.

During 2024, a consultation had been held regarding the plans for the school. At this time the Parent Council had attempted to engage with SIC about the plans for the school and how the decision regarding its long-term future was to be made. We called a Parent Council Meeting where Emma Sandison was due to attend to discuss this with us, but unfortunately she did not attend and we received responses to our questions after the meeting, which can be found in the previous minutes.

We were advised that a consultation would be held, regarding options around the future of the school, and this would involve stakeholders from the school before any final decisions were made. The following day, information was released on the Shetland News website that a decision by the Council had been made to demolish the “temporary” buildings. We were



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advised that no budget had yet been set for this. Key stakeholders for the meeting were introduced, and SIC representatives are very welcome at the meeting to discuss the school estate challenges.

2. School Estate and Proposed Works

- a. Demolition of the temporary buildings
- b. Proposed renovation of the swimming pool
- c. Arrangements for 2025-26: improvement of the school environment, ASN provision, additional class

A school plan was shared by the Council of the current building and proposals for the future changes. Plans include the demolition of the relevant section of the temporary buildings, renovation of the existing pool room to make a classroom space and an ASN space, the addition of a toilet block, alterations to existing layouts to improve flow and the addition of a changing space and a sensory room in an existing toilet space and cupboard area.

A discussion followed regarding how the decision had been made for demolition of the temporary buildings. It was noted by the SIC representatives that no quotes had been received as part of the costing process for any option involving re-building the existing structure. The meeting was advised that this had been put out for companies to provide quotes for work, and only one company had provided a "vague ballpark" but no official figures had been considered.

Concerns were raised by parents that the work had not been appropriately assessed and the cost of repairing compared to the cost of demolishing could not be undertaken. No structural engineering reviews have been carried out and attempts to cost the work in a transparent way have not been made. The assessment report written by Mott MacDonald, which was an appendix to the Business Justification Case which the Council voted on, suggested that it was feasible to repair or demolish the temporary buildings, but that a cost benefit analysis should be undertaken to determine the best way forwards. Parents raised that they had made their own enquiries regarding the cost of repair work and were surprised that no quotes had been provided, as this had not been their experience in this area. Recommendations were offered for specific companies to approach for consideration. Shona Thompson took an action to go back to the Council and discuss obtaining formal quotes for the repair work to enable a full comparison of costs and benefits compared to demolishing.

A discussion was held regarding whether the new plans or renovation of the temporary buildings would ultimately be better – if funding was not the immediate driving factor. A number of considerations were made including those below.

Concerns were raised regarding the current school environment and proposed future plans:

- Inadequate spaces for children with complex additional special needs (ASN). There was recognition from all that the school is experiencing high numbers of pupils



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requiring significant educational support for complex ASN and that the current layout did not have adequate space to allow this to happen.

- Discussion regarding the Shetland News article released with a statement from Sam Flaws, director of children's services, stating that both staff and pupils were delighted with the changes at Dunrossness. The Parent Council asked for it to be officially logged in the minutes that this is absolutely not the case, and that a large volume of staff and pupils would wholeheartedly disagree with this statement.
- There is now a complete lack of quiet/decompression areas or breakout spaces for children to use.
- The flooring, lighting, and general environment in the pool room is completely inappropriate for ASN children. No discussion or costing have been made in the proposed renovations for filling in the empty void beneath the floor, which is a huge concern. The pool room has previously been deemed as not meeting children's needs and information was passed to the school regarding this by Gary Docherty (Consultant Learning Disabilities Nurse) – who attended the meeting in an advisory capacity.
- The pool room is incredible echoey and noisy, so the acoustics need a significant review before the room can be utilised.
- Overall capacity concerns about the school roll – now and in the future. The council calculations suggest the remaining space in the school, without the temporary buildings, could house 150 children. Parents attending the meeting objected to this, as the total space, including the temporary buildings, was designed for fewer children than 150.
- There is currently a lack of safe spaces for children needing to step out of classrooms temporarily. The classroom tents which have been put in place to provide quiet space are not effective as they can often cause embarrassment for those using them.
- Many staff members have raised safety concerns around being left alone with children having behavioural difficulties, and the lack of adequate training to appropriately manage this.
- Inaccessible and inadequate toilet facilities raised and discussed at length.
 - Many of the toilets included in the official numbers across the school estate are unsuitable for the children to use. For example, there are toilets which contribute to the numbers of toilets on the school estate, but which pupils would need to be accompanied to use – for example in nursery, in NOOSC (outside of the school gates), and at the back of the kitchen.
 - At present, there is only one toilet block being used by the whole school, which is completely inappropriate, and insufficient to support the number of children in the school.
 - Sam Adamson gave her perspective as a GP regarding toilet facilities and highlighted that many children are developing continence issues due to inadequate/intimidating school toilets.
 - The feedback from the school surveys and to teachers regarding the toilets is very negative, with them being described as “spewy” and not a positive environment or an encouraging space to be used by the pupils.



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- Given the UK wide public health crisis regarding continence in children, this was highlighted as an area that needed a much stronger focus and more solution planning than a tick box exercise of number counting of toilets available per pupil.
- You can realistically have a pupil in P7 who is starting their period in the next cubicle to a pupil in P1 who may have had a toileting accident and needs help to get changed. One toilet block is leading to embarrassment by many pupils who are actively avoiding using the toilets, which is leading to further continence issues.
- Louise Leslie (Headteacher) has pointed out that the Council are due to come and paint the existing toilets over the summer holidays, however the Parent Council feel that more work needs to be done before the environment is more positive for children to use.
- The noise levels across the school are a problem, and potentially harmful (possibly exceeding 85 decibels) in busy/congested areas like the lunch hall. Very noisy environments potentially cause damage to children's hearing.
- Proposals for the 2025-26 academic year discussed, as there is currently no space in the school for a 5th class. The solution is currently proposed for a class to go out to "the huts", i.e. the NOOSC huts, which are across the road from the main school. Concerns were raised for the teacher in a separate building from the main school, as they would be isolated and potentially at risk in an emergency situation. A walkie-talkie system has been proposed, and at present there is no plan to have a consistent second member of staff in the huts to support and mitigate risks. Emergency procedures for the huts should be worked through in the event of the teacher becoming incapacitated.
- Storage issues for music and art equipment to be reviewed.

Discussion about the playground areas. Shona Thomson and Emma Sandison spoke of plans to add play equipment facilities following building demolition. Parent Council have raised the lack of play equipment compared to other schools in previous meetings with Malcolm Malcolmson, where we had been told that the SIC would not take on further playgrounds or provide any maintenance of playground equipment. The DPC have been actively involved in promoting the purchase of playground equipment, despite the potential maintenance challenges, but work in progress has been put on hold due to the proposed plans regarding the temporary buildings.

Parent body were unified in their support of Louise Leslie as Head Teacher and her amazing staff body, but recognise we need to work together and alongside SIC to support Louise Leslie in being able to meet the needs of all children in the school. Concerns about the level of resourcing to be able to meet the needs of children with ASN, and particularly complex ASN.

To date, communication between SIC and parents has been woefully inadequate. Attendees and the Parent Council will be requesting better communication from the SIC moving



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forwards, and in particular the School Operations Committee (SOC), regarding the proposed demolition plans and future updates.

Plans were discussed for the agreed updates to the school over the Summer holidays:

- New tables ordered for the hall for lunches to better utilise the space, and to encourage more sociable table arrangements.
- Painting of NOOSC huts to prepare for transformation to classroom.
- Painting of the main toilet block to improve the environment.
- Installation of a new sink to support the use of the main hall for art classes.
- Review of storage in the foyer area with proposed seating and breakout spaces – supported by the Parent Council.

The Parent body are very willing to assist with the upgrades to the school required over the summer and will leave it with Louise Leslie to request support where required.

Resulting Actions from the Meeting:

1. SIC will revisit getting quotes for the repair of the existing building and these will be reconsidered alongside discussion with the Parent Body through the re-assessment of the decisions. (Shona Thomson). A number of Parents offered to support with this process if needed. SIC to liaise with Sarah Green, Chair of the Parent Council, to review.
2. A meeting will be set up between the School Inclusion Team and the Parent Body regarding numerous concerns around managing increasing needs of children at DPS with the reduced spaces and resources.
3. SIC will actively engage with staff, pupils and parents regarding the renovation of the pool room to ensure plan meet the needs of all children.
4. SIC will liaise with the Parent Council regarding plans for the outdoor playground space, as well as consult further with staff, pupils and parents. The Parent Council will engage and provide support where needed, including work parties etc.

Standard Agenda Items – *postponed to Term 1 2025-26*

3. [Approve Previous Minutes](#)
4. [Headteacher Report](#)
5. [Priority activities to agree for 2025-26](#)
6. [AOCB](#)
7. [Date of Next Meeting](#)

Attached Documents:

- SIC Business Justification Case with appendices for item 2
- Previous Minutes from 25/03/2025 for item 3
- Dunrossness Parent Council Long List of Agenda Items for item 5