

PORTLETHEN ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting - Wednesday 15th June 2022

PRESENT

Viv McNeil (Chair), Kerry Kidd (Treasurer), Lesley Robertson, Fiona Lindsay, Louisa Snelling, Allyson Townhill, Rowena Beaton, Ejiro Fujinmi, Nikola Lancaster, Lorna Robertson, Ian Bruce, Obaro Obaruakford, Tracey Robinson (Secretary)

Barry Drennan (HT), Rhona MacKenzie (DHT), Craig Cowie (DHT), Euan Lawson (DHT)

APOLOGIES

Alison Harris (Co-Chair), Jenny Law (DHT), Kirsty Campbell-Robertson (DHT), Lauren Miller (DHT)

WELCOME

Viv McNeil welcomed all to the meeting which was a hybrid meeting, predominantly face to face but with members joining on Teams

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND CHAIR'S REPORT

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 February 2022 were approved and the update on the open actions are as follows:

Action: to take up Barry's offer to update the contact details for the Parent's Council on the [Portlethen Academy webpage](#) and to send out a communication to the school community with the links. **Partially discharged** the web page now gives the Parent Council email address

Action: For Parent Council to consult with wider parent body around the length of time for parent/carer-teacher appointments versus the amount of slots available to book and feedback to Barry. **Update** – there will be a survey to the parent forum the school which included this – further detail in the Headteacher's report.

Actions regarding fundraising ideas. Dons Day out has been paused for now to be resumed next academic year. Similarly the 100 club and raffle have also been paused until next academic year as require the updates to the PC bank account to have happened

Further actions are:

Action: Barry to ensure all the links on the Parent Council web page work

Action: Viv for the draft minutes of the Parent Council to be circulated soon after the meeting

Action: Viv a privacy notice to be given to enable the Parent Council to have the email addresses of the Parent Forum where the member has consented to give their email address to receive the draft minutes

TREASURER'S REPORT

Kerry Kidd reported that online banking was now in place. She confirmed that the current balance remained at £1,796.80

Ties to welcome the new S1s to the school will be funded by the Parent Council.

This is c£800

HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Good News Stories

This month Portlethen Academy featured heavily in the [Aberdeenshire Council Good News Story bulletin](#), thanks to the excellent work of staff and pupils.

COVID19 Update

Most mitigations have ceased, and known cases remain very low. Distancing is still recommended where possible, along with good hand hygiene and such like. It is hoped that over the summer holidays, the COVID19 signage, posters and tape can be removed

Staffing Updates

There have been a number of staffing updates since our last meeting in April, a lot of vacancies have been filled with some still live. Details below:

- **SLT:** Euan Lawson (DHT job-share with Craig Cowie) will continue 3 days a week for next session, and Craig's post with the Developing Youth Work Team will also continue across the Local Authority.
- **Guidance:** Scott Reid has started as full-time permanent Guidance Teacher for Auchlee House since the change of timetable.
- Angela Cowie (PT Guidance, Downies) will be leaving at the end of this session, her job is currently being advertised
- **Science:** Cindy Hudgins (PT Science) has reduced her hours to 0.6 FTE so the Faculty Principle Teacher post is now job-shared with Jen Jewell (Biology)
- Mercedes Ugbe (Probationer) has successfully completed her year and is commencing a post in Inverurie Academy next session.
- James Hill has been appointed to Biology and will be joining the school after the holidays.
- **Design and Tech:** Innes Murray in Design and Tech has reduced his hours to 0.8 FTE. This time has been absorbed within the Faculty.
- **Business/ICT:** Sarah Jones in Business/ICT has returned from a long-term absence
- Ian Simpson (Faculty PT Computing/Business/ICT) will leave at the end of term to take up a lecturing post at NESCOL and his post is being advertised.
- **Modern Languages:** Karyn Hunter and Alison Campbell are both retiring from Modern Languages at the end of term. Helen Brossard (Probationer) has successfully completed her year and is commencing a post in the International School next session. Amelie Pointet is returning and the school have recruited a Spanish/French teacher as a replacement, and have another post currently advertised at present.
- **Humanities:** Mrs Matheson will be leaving as Teacher of Modern Studies at the end of term and her post is being interviewed this week.
- **Maths:** Mr Brown is leaving at the end of term and Mrs Pert will not be returning to Portlethen Academy from her Maternity Leave next October. Ms Sultana is continuing on a fixed-term basis until the end of Term 1 next session, and the school has 2 posts going live which we will recruit for at the start of next term.

- **ASL / Support for Learning:** Susan Christie has joined as an ASL Teacher full-time since the change of timetable, and Meagan Lorimer will join from next session. Meagan will focus on enhancing the Behaviour Support Department.

SQA Exams

SQA Exams have gone well. The school is conscious that these were the first formal exams that they have sat and observed that despite this, pupils were a real credit and hopefully their hard work has paid off.

The timings/timescale for Appeals is currently unclear, as the dates set fall within the School Holidays. Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Directors of Education have written to the SQA to explain the dates and that this would not be possible for us in the North-East, and are awaiting a response. The school will write to all as soon as this information is known.

The number of appeals is expected to be quite low, but there will be a Microsoft Form to complete in the first instance to gather initial data and then the school will be back in touch. More information to follow.

Action: The Parent Council to remind the Parent forum that young people who sat exam this year can still register with the SQA to receive their results by text

Change of Timetable

The change of timetable happened on 6th June. It was difficult to timetable all pupil choices, due to the increasing number of pupils and courses on offer, so not all pupil choices can be awarded due to timetabling clashes; however, the Guidance Team have been working with individuals to make appropriate choices, and to help with any difficulties. Please liaise with your young person's Guidance Teacher in the first instance if there are any significant issues.

Wider Achievement / Attendance / Senior Phase Agreements

In response to the ever increasing competitive market, an enhanced suite of Wider Achievement opportunities for Senior Phase pupils has been developed to help set Portlethen Academy pupils apart from their competitors when applying for employment, University, College, Apprenticeships etc. Consequently, S5s have been timetabled for an additional qualification and S6s will undertake the Leadership Award (Level 6). All young people will participate these awards and S5/6 pupils will have an agreement stating the expectations for coming back into school including the number of subjects/qualifications they are undertaking; commitment to the wider achievement; attendance at Clan and more. These will need to be signed/returned before the end of term. Barry noted that attendance at Clan is an issue for some pupils however it is an integral part to the school day

Awards Ceremony

The Awards Ceremonies will take place next Monday and Tuesday and preparations are underway. These will be scaled down version from the usual full event; however, the school felt it was important to recognise the successes of young people who have gone over and above what is expected, and to thank them for their hard work. S1-4 will take place during the school day next Monday and Tuesday in Year Groups, and S5/6 is next Monday in the evening.

3-Year Vision / Self-Evaluation

Staff have been working towards the 3-year Vision for Portlethen Academy in the last few months. This has included self-evaluation discussions, surveys, focus groups, S6 Induction towards School Improvement, a Faculty Principle Teacher Leadership Day, and Senior Leadership Team Visioning session and a Staff Collegiate towards this.

The next stage is to pull all of this information together and present the 3-year Improvement Priorities to all, for an update and discussion.

Surveys / Data - Social Media / Promotion and Support

At the last Parent Council meeting the school was asked to collate Surveys/Feedback into one letter, which was circulated to all parents/carers for completion. There were around 40 responses to the TMIR Survey and just under 200 for the whole-school Parent/Carer Survey. The school would have liked numbers to have been higher; so, Barry requested that the Parent Council promoted and supported future surveys

From the survey results the following decisions have been made:

- to return to face-to-face parent/carers evenings with the appointments made online. This will also enable the school to show/profile pupils' work. It was recognised that there is more demand than slots available so parents and carers should consider why they need to speak with a teacher.
- Introduce S1 open days for parents and carers to see what happens
- To produce a curriculum map for each faculty so that parents and carers have a better idea of what their young person can expect to learn over the course of a term/year
- There will be more surveys
- The timing of the senior reports has been amended to reflect feedback from staff, parents and carers
- Level changes for qualifications will be at 2 stages of the year i.e. stricter about level moves and increased focus on attainment
- Junior phase timeline. S1 parent/carers evening will be moved from March to November and the S2 and S3 timeline will be amended so that the full report is issued just before the subject choice deadline

The school webpages will be updated to reflect these decisions

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

School trips – the school hopes to bring these back, the main limiting factor is the red tape such as insurance for the longer trips such as GOOSE week and the Morocco trip. In the meantime one day trips will be able to go ahead

Fundraising:

Don's trip. Fiona Lesley volunteered to look at this again once the list of fixtures is out. There was also discussion about the set up with agreement that the reference each person would use on the google form to secure the booking would be the same one used on the online bank transfer to enable the payment and the booking to be matched up.

Teas for the Christmas Concert. There could also be a raffle

Fundraising sub group to be set up – this group would apply for various grants. The school faculties, through their improvement plan work, would identify the

equipment/help required and apply to the Parent Council, setting out the requirement and timescale on a form. The sub group would then take this forward.

Action: Parent Council to set up a fundraising sub group

School pantomime/play/show – staff are considering which to take forward next year

New S1's – Parent Council to organise a welcome and opportunity to learn more about/join the parent Council

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING (Annual General Meeting)

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