

Aboyne Academy Parent Council

Minutes of Meeting- Thursday 8th June 2017

Ballater Primary School

Attendees

Office Bearers	Parent Council Members
Sarah Leahy (Chair)	Andrea Geddes
Lynn Murphy (Secretary – joint role)	Sheila McMurtrie
Gill Ewart-Bannister (Secretary – joint role)	
Julie Mitchell-Mehta	
Lorraine Scott (Head Teacher)	

Other attendees:

Kay Glancy, Elaine Starritt, Julie Christie, Kevin Christie, Cllr Paul Gibb, Mrs C Drewitt, Principal Teacher for Developing the Young Workforce

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Karen Birnie (Teacher Representative), Michael Mc Cann (Teacher Representative), Cllr Geva Blackett, Jo Croll, Cat Houston

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (Wednesday 15th March 2017)

Arising from previous minutes, Julie had moved the bank account from the Clydesdale Bank Aboyne Branch to the TSB Aboyne Branch.

The setting up of a smaller group to review the very comprehensive list of fundraising ideas suggested by staff and pupils to report back to AAPC has been put on hold until after the Silent Auction which the Rotary Club have offered to run on our behalf (See item 10)

The AAPC had supplemented staff ticket prices for the Senior Summer Ball which was greatly appreciated.

The minutes were approved.

2. CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

Sarah had received positive feedback from Aboyne Twinning Association of which AAPC are

members. This followed a rugby weekend at Deeside Rugby Club against a touring team from Aboyne's twin town of Martinez. It was reported that many Aboyne Academy players were involved and that lots of French was spoken improving language learning. It was suggested that this idea would be valuable if used by other sports teams in future.

3. TREASURERS REPORT

The AAPC account balance at present sits at £280.50.

A float is to be provided for the Summer Concert Raffle (see item 11) **Action- Julie**

4. HEAD TEACHER REPORT

1. NEW TIMETABLE (see also AOB)

This commenced on 5th June 2017 rather than 31st May. SEEMIS was unable to allow a mid-week change to the new timetable.

S2 Aiming Higher Course has been introduced – interdisciplinary work centred on John Muir award.

Personal Development Units will take the place of Personal Finance in S4 which is no longer available.

More volunteering and leadership opportunities available through enrichment of the curriculum.

2. STAFFING

3 probationers (Spanish, English and Home Economics) were provisionally allocated to the school.

HE probationer and Spanish probationer will not be taking up their places. The English probationer has visited the school.

Current vacancies – Maths, Technical, Chemistry, PT Maths

Recent appointments – Jennifer Glendinning (Geography)

- Mandy Philipson (PT SfL)
- Ashley Easton (PT Guidance)

3. PUPIL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

This has been introduced for a range of different groups of leaders with the aim of helping them to ease into their new roles more effectively. The link with Horseback UK who delivered training to the S5/6 captains and Vice Captains seemed to be a really positive and worthwhile experience.

4. PEF FUNDING

This has been discussed and allocated to help reduce the attainment gap for pupils who receive free school meals. Further ideas for spending next session would be welcomed from Parent Council.

5. P7 TRANSITION

2 successful link days have taken place with the 2 day induction being 15th/16th June. More extensive information has been supplied by primary schools. Some teachers have elected to visit primaries to look at how they meet the needs of a wide range of learners.

6. BUILDING WORK

The Walker building toilets will be upgraded this session and Room 7 will be extended by removing the toilet area to cope with the increase in pupil numbers.

Money has been allocated for the development of a Learning Plaza. The location of this area has still to be determined.

7. SENIOR BALL

A very successful ball was enjoyed at the Marcliffe Hotel. 23 staff attended and were grateful for the contributions made by Parent Council.

5. ATTAINMENT/IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mrs C Drewitt, Principal Teacher for Developing the Young Workforce has been in a part-time role looking at ways to improve opportunities in employability and leadership at Aboyne Academy. Mrs Drewitt has a school wide remit and gave AAPC an informative overview of some of the areas she has worked on: Aiming Higher Classes to be extended into S2 ; Leadership Day; more work experience opportunities; developing further links with business partners; skills for work partnerships in Travel and Tourism; 'My World of Work' S4 & S5 Ambassadors; extending Saltire Award Scheme . Pre- Apprenticeship Programmes.

6. PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING

Lorraine explained how this government funding was allocated according to the take up of free school meals. Aboyne Academy has been allocated £18,000 to close the gap for these pupils. This is to be used to employ two Pupil Support Assistants from August to April to support this target group to reach their true potential. This funding has been guaranteed for 3 years and will probably increase in future due to the method used to calculate it.

In Addition to part funding one PSA, Lorraine will bring in more peer reading materials for English plus library materials suitable for parents and pupils to share at home.

7. CHANGES TO QUALIFICATIONS

Sarah and Lorraine gave feedback from the recent Parent Chair Meeting held this time at Aboyne Academy. The draft letter from Aberdeenshire Council to parents/carers was referred to, this includes FAQ's and explains what the changes will mean. Changes this year will be for N4 & N5 qualifications then will follow on annually to Higher & Advanced Higher. Parents were reassured by some of the methods staff are using to ensure pupils achievement continues to be evaluated and assessed internally in order that staff have sufficient evidence to ensure that pupils are entered for the correct qualification. Parent Council members were also pleased to hear that both the Scottish government and Aberdeenshire Council have acknowledged that where Nat 4 and Nat 5 outcomes can be linked to level 4 outcomes then these can be taught in S3 to allow progression to the correct level in S4.

8. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ACT

The Parental Involvement Act 2006 is being reviewed to ensure it fits with today's life. Aberdeenshire Council's Donna Wilson (Parental Engagement Officer) and Maria Walker (Director Education and Children's Services) are beginning a 'big conversation' to create an Aberdeenshire Parent Charter. This has implications for Parent Councils. Sarah has been sent documents about this issue. It was agreed that a copy of these will be attached to the minutes. **Action Sarah/ Gill**

Present performance on parental engagement and planning for the future was reported on at authority, school and AAPC level. Sarah reported for AAPC and Lorraine for School. Matters arising from these reports were discussed.

9. 20 MPH CONSULTATION

Sarah had received an e-mail inviting Parents Councils to participate in 20MPH consultation requiring AAPC to state if they wanted roads around the Academy to be considered for 20 MPH zoning. This was agreed. AAPC members volunteered to stay on at the end of this meeting to complete the relevant questionnaire. **Action: Sarah to complete questionnaire on behalf of AAPC.**

10. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING WITH ROTARY/ROTARY FUNDING

At this meeting Rotary offered to donate some of the funds from a silent auction they are organising. Donations will go to 2-3 local charities, Aboyne Academy being one of them. The event will take place on 29th September at Aboyne Victory Hall, 7-9pm. Tickets are priced at £5 + a glass of Fizz. A small bar will be available. Rotary are organising the event but would like AAPC to help at the event. It was agreed AAPC would offer help and donate a hamper lot to the auction. Rotary would also like to know asap what any money donated would be used for. Lorraine reported that this money needs to be spent on something tangible. Ideas for this were discussed. **Action: Lorraine and Sarah to feedback to Rotary.**

Rotary also asked for help from pupils 16+ at the Kincardine Speed Festival on 20th August. Lorraine explained this would not be possible this year as pupils do not return to school from the summer Break until after this date.

11. FUNDRAISING (SUMMER CONCERT RAFFLE)

The concert combines music and drama for one evening performance. Raffles are needed Lynn/Sarah offered to collect them. Request was made for someone to miss first half of concert to stay with the raffle and stick on winning tickets to prizes. **Action-Sheila agreed to do this.**

12. AOB

- **GEOGRAPHY**

An enquiry was made regarding the **Geography Advanced Higher** course to find out if it was running this session (2017-18). Lorraine reported that Mr Foy is still working on timetable changes, but that small numbers of pupils do not make running AH courses viable. Lorraine also reported that there is a need for pupils to increase the number of Highers attained in the senior phase in preference to Advanced Highers in order to increase prospective students UCAS points. It was pointed out by parents currently engaged in the UCAS process that some university courses do still require specific Advanced Higher subjects so Advanced Higher provision is still a requirement in the senior phase at Aboyne Academy where it is possible to offer it.

- **PREFECT RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

AAPC had been made aware of issues concerning the Prefect selection process. Following a long discussion it was agreed that the school would review the process and the timing. It was agreed in future that the selection process should be used as a valuable "first interview" for pupils where feedback would be provided on their application and their interview techniques."

- **TIMETABLING**

Issues with new timetables were raised and discussed and anomalies are currently being looked into. In particular there were concerns about a number of blank timetables

Action- Lorraine agreed to investigate further and report back on measures to improve system for next year.

- **CANTEEN SEATING**

This year again there is an even larger S5 & S6 year group meaning that there is a pressure on canteen seating. A rota for occupying tables is in place. Lorraine hopes new atrium area may ease this situation. **Action- Lorraine to monitor and feedback**

- **TRANSPORT TO ABERDEEN COLLEGE**

Confirmation was given that Taxis are running from Aboyne Academy to Aberdeen College and more pupils are accessing some college courses. This is being funded by the authority. It was agreed this was of great benefit to Academy pupils and to be commended. Funding for any transport remains a key issue for Aboyne Academy due to its rural location.

- **SCHOOL COLOURS**

Clarification was sought with respect to School Colours following a school bulletin item. It was agreed that these should be better explained and the criteria for the awarding of

school colours should be displayed on the P.E. notice board. (action- Lorraine & Mr Arthur, Health Faculty PT)

- **New Local Councillor Paul Gibb** attended this AAPC meeting to learn about the AAPC role and asked what AAPC would like from him. Some suggestions were put forward including taking our issues forward to council when they arise e.g. from past issue of 6/8 subjects; issues with the ageing building such as the toilets; attending AAPC meetings; help attracting teachers and promoting Aboyne. There was a discussion about initiatives to attract teachers and housing schemes to help stop high housing costs deterring teachers coming to Aboyne. Paul stated that he was happy for AAPC to pass on his e-mail address to parents so they could contact him directly if any issues arose. (cllr.p.gibb@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)
- Paul also stated that if ever AAPC had issues we needed more information about or an enhanced explanation, he is happy talk to the ECS team on our behalf. Sarah & the AAPC thanked him for his support.

Lorraine apologised for the lack of refreshments when holding our meetings at other schools.

Thanks were given to Mrs Birnie, Teacher Representative and PT of Mathematics for her valuable contribution to AAPC over the years. AAPC wished her all the very best in her new position.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

AGM

Tuesday 5th September, 2017

7pm

Aboyne Academy