

Uryside School – Parent Forum

Minutes of Term 3, held at Uryside School on Thursday 9 February 2019 at 7.00pm

Present

Colin Anderson (CA), Councillor Lesley Berry (CLB), Dawn Carnegie (DC), Kevin Christie (KC), Kim Dodd (KD), Alisa Foster (AF), Craig Johnston (CJ), Catherine Liebnitz (CL), Monica Martinez (MM), Jackie McBeath (JB), David Shanks (DS), Adrian Stewart (AS)

Apologies

Councillor Neil Bailie (CNB), Diane Brands (DB), Joanna Bruce (JB), John Cooper (JC), Tanya Doig (TD), Claire Green (CG), Councillor Marion Ewenson (CME), Councillor Judy Whyte (CJW),

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Craig welcomed everyone to the meeting. AF to be taking minutes.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

CJ approved the previous minutes.

COUNCILLOR UPDATE

School Bus

There had been a discussion with parents and the school bus has been extended until Easter. CLB stated that if anyone has any queries re budget, this is very open and transparent.

Market Place Building

The Garioch Partnership had put in a business proposal to use the building as a third community hub but this wasn't accepted by the council. High rates are currently being paid on the empty building which has been vandalised and they would need to replace windows/carpets/disabled toilets. Their business plan was disappointing. The council are also looking to use the building as a car park for their new office and the plan is to take this to Scottish Ministers.

Garioch Area Committee

The GAC are sitting on £70K cash which has been gifted if anyone is requiring funding. This is a slow process with the minimum grant of £100 (for admin charges) and the maximum £500. Decisions would be made every 3 weeks. KD suggested this could be used for residential trip fees, this would come under social inclusion.

Local Parking Charges

The removal of the free thirty minutes parking in Inverurie under review and CLB urged everyone to make views known as comments will be taken into account for the final decision. The reasoning behind this being scrapped is to make up for the loss incurred since it was introduced and that shopper might stay for longer if they had to pay a charge to park.

Recycling

As the Scottish government is planning not to use landfill by Jan 2020, we need to think up some creative ways to recycle. Food/garden waste is the main problem. There was a discussion why we don't have a brown bin as in the city. This is due to cost element and is not statutory as Inverurie is so rural. CLB stated that leaflets with numbers won't make people recycle more, making it easy for them will. DS mentioned Compost 4 Schools, this has shown the children where food waste goes and we should keep promoting it to get the future generation on board.

Zebra Crossing

DC asked CLB if this had been actioned. CLB stated that the council had surveyed the road three times during busy periods and hadn't seen a requirement. CJ bought up that the kerb and road should not be at the same height on the mini roundabout for safety purposes. A report had come back from the road safety department saying this has been engineered incorrectly. DC also reiterated that cars do not slow down to let children across Peregrine Drive beside the school entrance and it can take them a long time to cross. CJ to dig out report and forward to CLB.

School Parking / Park and Stride

CJ stated that the service delivery area to be used as an overspill carpark causing a risk to emergency vehicles. It was discussed how it could be made clearer that this is not to be used for parking – i.e. putting a chain up/having the p7s in hi-vis vests telling cars they can't come in/coning it off. There was a discussion about park and stride and clarification of safe walking routes as the map doesn't cover a lot of houses. DS stated there has been a marginal improvement and it would be great if we could advertise a specific place for park and stride. It was suggested that there could be a designated drop off/pick up for P1 – 4 only. KD said this wasn't enforceable due to equality, inclusion etc. The path from Lidl was also discussed, this cannot be safe route as it was never specifically intended for a school route and if it floods the school has no way to communicating this to pupils. This would be especially dangerous in the dark as children wouldn't be able to see until they were in danger.

COMMUNICATION

CJ stated that Facebook and the school weekly news were both providing good feedback. The weekly news can now be added as an attachment and we are currently trying to get everyone's email addresses.

HEAD TEACHER REPORT

- KD thanked everyone for a wonderful warm welcome and complimented the caring staff. She would describe a very happy, positive school.
- A new teacher, Jen Power, will be starting in the yellow p3 – 5 area. She will be an additional flexible resources as the P4s were at capacity.
- There are currently 318 children at the school, 73 places in the nursery with 30 in both the morning and afternoon (some of these are split places). There are currently 65 p1s expected next year at present and are 70 nursery applications. This is before any of the new houses come online. The school is currently trying to gauge as clear an idea of numbers as possible with big growth period and rezoning etc as they will need to increase staff but are on top of it.
- Focus on maths and literacy which is having an impact anecdotally but not statistically yet.
- Emphasis on behaviour and what is expected with an emphasis on kindness and respect. This has been received well from children.

- The dentist visiting had praised the very good dental hygiene and politeness at the school.
- Holiday weekend coming up. Insert days will focus on visible learning and skills for life. Nursery staff are underdoing LCAN training.
- Focus on Chinese New Year
- Revamp of library planned

TREASURER REPORT

KC stated that he is unable to spend any money as he requires at least two new signatories. There had been a mandate signed and the previous signatories had not signed over to the new ones. CJ and KL agreed to take on the role and will require to give their full name, address and length of time at address, DOB etc. This will take a few weeks to set up. DC suggested that as the PTA is no longer, we should merge together. KL stated that she has until May to update info to OSCAR. She also needs an independent witness who has nothing to do with the Parent Council, possibly a staff member.

New books for the school library are required and it was decided that £1K be donated, possibly for the top twenty novels of the year. KL to set up a donation and KD to send an email of thanks.

DS stated that there has been significant damage to the school slide and we have applied for Tesco coins to raise money.

AOCB

Litter at School

MM mentioned there seemed to be a lot of litter around the school. It was felt that a lot of this wasn't generated at the school but blown across in this direction. The environmental group will be an opportunity for the children to be on committees etc and the children will be aware of the environmental impact by helping look after the nature reserve. DS stated there are now CCTV signs up after bottles were found in the nursery garden. Fortunately not in Inverurie, but other Aberdeenshire schools do have problems with broken glass and hypodermic needles. Nursery staff always check over the garden before they let the children outside.

Usage of Hall

CJ asked if there would be evening usage of the hall for possible revenue. This is still ongoing, possibly but there would be staffing contracts etc to consider. This will be discussed at the weekly HSE meeting.

Icy Pavements

There was a brief discussion regarding ice outside the school, this is outwith the school's control and is down to Aberdeenshire Council.

Parent Feedback – Home Learning

CJ stated there hasn't been much feedback. DS suggested deciding what exactly you wanted to look at, make minor adjustment and send out again.

Lunchtimes

KD stated that lunch has been increased from 45 minutes to one hour and this is improving by the day. The difficulty now is getting the older children to get up and leave. CJ asked if timings would become more of a problem as numbers increase. DS said that we would consider moving packed lunches into another area, or outside, weather permitting.

Summer Fayre

KD stated that the school would not have time or resources to organise the Summer Fayre this year. A core committee to ask for volunteers and a fundraising committee would need to be put together if this is to go ahead. This is too much responsibility for one person and someone needs to be delegating. MM to action. CJ to arrange putting out a plea on Facebook. DC pointed out that at the last Poppy Tea there were far too many volunteers turned up. CJ stated that a list of contacts is required to stop this happening in the future.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 2nd May at 7.00pm