

Present: Lesley Walker (Teacher representative); Ishbel Gordon (Whiting Bay); Beth Mowatt [Chair](Dippen); Mandy Aitken (Brodick); Yvonne Wilson (Brodick); Gordon Provan [Treasurer]Whiting Bay); Andrew Walsh (Whiting Bay); Robin Jenks (Community representative); Ruth Betley [Vice Chair] (Torbeg); Deborah Robertson (Blackwaterfoot); Daryl Urquhart-Dixon (Balmichael); Janine Hart (Brodick).
In attendance: Barry Smith (Head Teacher); John Butcher (Executive Director of Education for North Ayrshire Council [NAC]); Parent Forum members: Pippa Downing; Andrew Downing; Utte Locatell and Kate Jenks (clerk)

1. Apologies: Deborah Robertson (Blackwaterfoot); Ruth Betley (Torbeg); Alison Richards (Lochranza);
2. Minutes of meeting November 24th 2014 – agreed as read.
3. Matters arising:
 - 3.1 Confusion re raffle at Christmas Concert AW/BM/GP – It was disappointing that, despite the Parent Council having been asked to provide the raffle at the school concert in December, an alternative raffle had been organised by school staff. BS apologised on behalf of the school and assured the parent council that this would not happen again.
 - 3.2 Meeting with John Butcher – Mr Butcher was welcomed to the meeting and agreed that he would speak after the business of the meeting. As his attendance was only confirmed earlier in the day, it had not been possible for all the 'chairs' of the primary schools to be contacted.
 - 3.3 Constitution changes – it was agreed that any changes would be deferred until the AGM, in September.
4. Parental Concerns
 - 4.1 Timing of homework – BS will remind the teacher of History of the agreement that homework should not be given the day before it is expected to be completed. BS also encouraged parents to communicate with teachers via the jotters or to contact the school to speak with the relevant teacher or Mrs Macbeth.
5. For Discussion/Update:
 - 5.1 Facebook page (AW) – meeting with Mr Lambert still to be arranged. ACTION **AW/BM**

5.2 Website (BM)

5.3 PC update for Newsletter – BM advised that AR wishes to pass this task on to another PC member. BM expressed everyone's thanks to Alison for the reports she has done for the past few years. Ishbel agreed to take this job on and will liaise with Alison. ACTION **IG/AR**

6. Head Teacher's report

6.1 BS advised that the English post is being re-advertised with a closing date of 31st January in the hope that more suitable candidates will apply.

Issues around attracting teachers to Arran were discussed, including that of accommodation. Mr Butcher will pick up on the NAC owned housing stock on Arran. He also suggested being creative with housing. LW pointed out that one difficulty teachers with partners experienced, was that of their partner finding a job on Arran.

JB also suggested that posts on Arran could be part of a development programme for newly qualified teachers i.e. teachers who would come for the whole academic year.

6.2 BS reported that the school had received favourable feedback from a CforE 'Engagement' visit in early December, with some 'learning points' to be actioned.

He was delighted that several S1 pupils had succeeded in completing the 'John Muir' award with AOER.

S1 had also met with a Paralympic athlete, who has the 1500m world record and is going to 'Rio', who was hugely inspirational and encouraged pupils to "Dream Big".

BS thanked parents for all their support around Christmas, Mr Lambert was pleased to see so many parents at the Christmas concert.

BS reported that the school ski trip to Norway had been a huge success.

Also – the Mountain Bike Club had received an award of £7300 from the Arran Trust, to build a skills loop on school grounds and in the Dyemill. That sum will enable them to employ a professional design company.

Mrs Walker advised that all S4 pupils have their personalised 'pre-lim' timetables and most of those in S5 & S6 will get theirs on Wednesday.

Forthcoming events include: S1 Enterprise Event; P7 transition weekend (~30 pupils) run by LW, Mrs Hogge and Mr Donlin; Primary schools Sportshall athletics at which senior pupils will be helping; St Andrew's science bus will be coming

to the school in early February; 9/2 Inservice day at which staff will be consulted about the 'Visions, Values and Aims' of the school (pupils and then parents will also be consulted).

MA raised the issue of participating pupils in the Christmas Concert who were unable to see other pupils performing, which was disappointing. Suggestion that a video link could be made to where the pupils are waiting.

AW asked whether there is funding available for pupils to attend music courses in the summer, as costs should not be prohibitive. MA to look for funding ACTION **MA**

LW advised that that a new post has been created to provide a link with local businesses, as an extension of the 'Work Placement' programme. The hope is that people will come into the school for groups of young people who may be interested in that line of work. She asked whether any PC members knew of people who would be willing to be involved with the school to strengthen links between the curriculum and 'life after school'. Pippa and Andy offered. ACTION **LW** to ask Ms Paul to get in touch.

7. Chairperson's report:

7.1 Meeting with pupil council – BM felt this was a good thing to do and commented that it was well chaired. Issues that were raised included:

- a) Money i.e. possible application to the parent council for help with costs of Leaver's 'Do'; weight training equipment (pupil council to do a survey as this is a 'niche' activity)
- b) Wall hand dryers are 'pathetic'. They should be 'fit for purpose' and are not. There was discussion about the relative 'eco-friendliness' of dryers vs. recycled paper towels. – for discussion with the 'ECO' group. Mrs Gregg to be asked to liaise with MITIE. ACTION ? **BS**
- c) Pupils who are using top floor classrooms do not have easy access to tap water, to fill their water bottles. Mr Smith to investigate ACTION **BS**

7.2 Roles within Parent Council – Beth announced that she would be stepping down from the Parent Council (and role of Chairperson) at Easter. KJ had also advised that she would resign from the role of clerk in the summer. There was a brief discussion about the roles needed within the parent council – to be put on the agenda for the next meeting ACTION - **clerk**

8. Curriculum for Excellence:

9. School Improvement Plan:

9.1 'Values' working group

10. Finance

10.1 AW had received a reply from Frances Rodman (FR), who reiterated the fact that there was no additional funding and that more cuts are planned. AW asked whether travel and accommodation costs could be reimbursed if, for instance, the Chair person attended meetings on the mainland – or if video-conferencing could be arranged. FR to discuss with her office re other routes of funding but confirmed that travel expenses cannot be paid.

AW felt that, despite Section 50 of the Scottish Parental Involvement bill placing an obligation upon councils to support Parent Councils, if there is no money, there is no money and that the PC should leave it for now.

Mr Butcher (JB) agreed to pick this up with Stephen Quinn and Frances Rodman. Although, generally, travel expenses are not paid, there is a uniqueness to Arran and he is keen that NAC benchmarks their treatment of Arran against other rural areas of Scotland. The Bill is not designed to exclude any parent from participating. **ACTION JB**

10.2 BS advised that he has received some requests for funding from Social Subjects to support extracurricular activities (£431); also from the English dept. and he has 7-8 bids. BS to email list of bids to PC members so that they can be discussed at the next meeting.

11. A.o.c.b. John Butcher presentation (sent to him for confirmation before being distributed).

Date of next meeting: Monday 23rd February 2015

Current Dates for 2014-2015 Session – Mondays

March 23rd

April 27th

May 25th

