

Ellon Academy School Council AGM & Parent Council Meeting – 30 November 2022

Attendees:

Angela Stott (Chair), Ruth Leuchars (Treasurer), Pauline Buchan (Rector), Jan Connell (Committee Member), Karen Gray (Committee Member), Kim Finlayson (Committee Member), Nick Topping (Committee Member), Sarah Warne (Committee Member), Alice Currie, Ansons, Debi de Villiers, Mel Wilson, Nicki Nicholls, Susan Madden, Wendy Jones, Iwona Rymes, Moira Geddes, Roslyn Keating, Jenni McDonald, Frank Rymes, Iona Rymes, Sarah MacPherson, Becky Johnston

Apologies: Fiona Callan (Committee Member)

Agenda for AGM

Apologises for absence: Fiona Callan

Minutes of last AGM: Nothing to carry forward

Chairpersons Report: Angela took the role on in June so still finding feet but getting there. Parent Council has been involved with preparation of the google classroom survey, the parental response was quite disappointing unfortunately but the school is continuing to progress in this area. We've also implemented parent leads for each year group still looking for S1 and S5, any volunteers for these posts please contact Angela. We are hopefully looking to have the next parent council meeting in person at the school with the option to join online as well.

Treasurers Report

Ruth Leuchars:

Progress has started to be made with accessing the bank account. I have met with Dave McCulloch a fortnight ago and he has handed over the treasurer information including bank details. I have had a couple of meetings with the bank manager in Ellon and chased the Business banking branch up after forms promised a week ago didn't materialise.

Angela and I have completed the banking mandate form but because we don't know who or where the former signatories are, we now have to complete an additional Members Resolution Instruction form. This requires me to get agreement at our next meeting in accordance with the parent council Constitution and rules so that Angela and I can be added to the account.

Once Angela and I are set up it would then be my intention to add another 1 or 2 committee members to the mandate and get internet banking set up so that 2 signatories are required to authorise any payments from the account either online or by cheque. This will hopefully prevent this signatory situation reoccurring.

The bank has asked me to submit the following with our mandate forms:

1/ A copy of our constitution

2/ A copy of the AGM minutes detailing Angela & Ruth's roles /election onto the committee.

Ruth has asked to document the committee post titles against member attendees for future meetings if we need to use minutes for an evidence trail. That has been done on these minutes.

Commented [RL1]: Just ticking boxes for the bank here to match up with the forms!

Commented [RL2]: Can you add (Committee Member) beside all members so it doesn't just look like we are a committee of two people

Commented [RL3]: I changed some of this para but tracked changes didn't pick it up!!

Balance is just under £4k, and the bank manager has advised that there have been 2 transactions this year.”

No objections were raised in the meeting - Angela and Ruth agreed to be added to the bank account as signatories.

Pauline Buchan (Rector) has agreed to write a letter to confirm the committee appointments of Angela Stott (Chairperson) & Ruth Leuchars (Treasurer) to the Parent Council so that we have documentation on headed paper as requested by Business Banking. Ruth to liaise with PB.

Appointment of committee members

Secretary vacant post – No volunteers.

Other posts – all other members are happy to stay on.

Chairperson – Angela Stott – Karen Gray nominate, Nick seconded. Angela re-elected chair.

Treasurer – Ruth Leuchars - Angela nominated, Karen Seconded. Ruth re-elected treasurer.

Vice Chair Post – No volunteers.

Karen Gray has offered to prepare minutes for the meeting this evening.

AOCB

Agenda for PC meeting

Welcome and apologies – Fiona Callan apology

Minutes of last meeting

No comments from anyone of the last meeting minutes.

Rectors Update

New Staff:

PE – Miss Williams and Miss Morgan

Music – Mrs O’Connor

Modern Studies – appointed. Start date to be agreed.

PSA Literacy Support – Mrs Quantrill – 12.12.22

Office – Mrs Henderson, Mrs Law

Advertising for:

Technical

Principal Teacher Literacy

Principal Teacher Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

Principal Teacher Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Staff Up-dates:

Maths – Mr Royale moving on.

English – Mrs Leith returns from Maternity Leave – 15.12.22

Budgets:

Investing in ICT – Laptops for pupils and Clever Touch Projectors

Resources for Reading School Accreditation

Policy Refresh

- Mobile devices
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Promoting Positive Relationships
- Anti-bullying

Strike Impact

Mrs Buchan says it is difficult to answer how this is going to affect the pupils. Legally Pauline can't comment around the strikes and supports support the staff. Last week all pupils in Aberdeenshire were off. Next week the strike is one of the smaller unions, the numbers are smaller and they vary from school to school, there are 21 in Ellon Academy, other school have less and there will be less impact. The staff are doing everything they can to reduce the disruption to the pupils.

Catering Issues

- Miss Jarvis, our Canteen Supervisor has spoken directly with several parents to advise.
- There is a list of foods with allergens on the wall where the pupils queue
- We have delivered a week of assemblies referring to food allergies and appealing to pupils to refrain from bringing peanut-based products into school. This has been backed up in our weekly newsletters of 11.11.22 and 18.11.22 as below:
- Peanut Allergies:
- This week at assemblies we have been asking pupils not to bring peanut products to school in packed lunches and for snacks are there are several pupils who have a peanut allergy and inadvertently may be affected by proximity to these products.
- Our school canteen is a 'Peanut-free Zone' and any young person who has concerns about any food ingredient content is encouraged to speak with Miss Rachael Jarvis, our canteen supervisor in the mornings.
- Miss Jarvis is also very keen to speak with parents/carers who may have concerns. Please call the school on 01358 281150 and ask to speak with Miss Jarvis directly.
- Mrs Buchan can post the allergy information onto the website so parents can see also.
- Also, Mrs Buchan has been made aware of teachers eating in their classrooms which would affect pupils if they have allergies.
- Fizzy drinks, issues have been raised and will be discussed between all schools.

Vaping

- We are proactive regarding confiscating vapes and vaping products from pupils when we catch them and we follow this up with parents, asking them to come and collect their children's vape from the school. We haven't had any parents come to pick them up yet.
- Pupils know that vaping/smoking is not acceptable on school grounds, and we do our best to patrol outside when we can. This message has been reiterated at assemblies. However, there are only 5 members of the Senior Leadership Team, and we do our very best to supervise the whole school internally at breaks and lunchtimes, and there is a rota of SLT who go out to the buses each day. We would like to have more staff to help but under teachers' terms and conditions, supervising at social times and after school is not part of their contracts, and we can't insist that they take part in a rota of supervision. So, with the 5 of us, we do our very best to cover all areas, but inside is our priority.
- Teachers are not experts in vaping and schools have been given no guidance or information on the dangers of vaping. We are reticent to give any information that may not be correct or accurate and there is nothing we trust online. Mrs Wilson, DHT Pupil Support is looking into to this and trying to find reliable information we can share with pupils and parents.
- Parents can help by:

- Checking their child's bag for vapes and vape products and confiscating these
- Checking deliveries to the home, as many pupils order these online
- Checking Amazon accounts for example
- Not buying vapes for their children (this is happening and condoned by some parents)
- Letting us know if they suspect their child is vaping
- Perhaps Parent Council can ask Connect about this, they may have some information about this. We can put this through Christine McLennan to see if Aberdeenshire Council have any resources to add and to raise the issue of the lack of reliable information sources for education settings

Activities Week / S3 Work Experience

No work experience for S3s. No Aberdeenshire school will be sending full cohorts out on work experience. This is a capacity issue for the Aberdeenshire Work Experience Unit, who have been told to focus on senior pupils requiring placements for Foundation Apprenticeships. Because of this the S3s will be included in the WOW (Wider Opportunities Week) rather than work experience. Parents should be receiving information on the options in January including costs etc.

Update on any impact on the changes to the school day timings

The majority of young people quite like the change to the school day timing. There have been less lunch time incidents due to the shorter lunch which is a benefit and most seem to be liking the additional 5 minutes at break. The shorter lunch has unfortunately affected a small number of the lunchtime clubs.

Google classroom survey

Surveys are being analysed at the moment. Awaiting feedback.

AOCB

Current Price of school ties? Available in the office, Mrs Buchan to confirm price. Some families may have spare ties and Mrs Buchan will investigate to see if there could be any opportunity to re-use these somehow.

School Concert – How will tickets be allocated? There are fewer young people participating this year and Mr Birse doesn't think there is need for a second night. This is a result of covid, lack of lessons and lack of pupils picking up instruments. During covid pupils weren't allowed to play wind instruments or allowed to sing and this will have a knock-on effect for years unfortunately. Concert is Tuesday 20th Dec.

Do any of the proposed strike dates in January affect prelim weeks? Yes, they do, Mrs Booth is looking at contingency plans if this is an issue. Should be week 2 and week 3 of next term.

Date of next meeting

March 8th