

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday 23rd February 2017, 10am, Committee Room 1, Highland Council Headquarters,
Glenurquhart Road, Inverness

Attendees:

Apologies:

From 10am

Fergus Weir Kirkhill Primary School

John Whitfield Golspie High School

John Greenhowe North Kessock Primary

Giles Baker Grantown Grammar

Pauline Whittka-Jezewski Ben
Wyvis Pr.

**Samantha
Blyth** Dingwall Academy

Wendy Henham ??

Morag Wilson Glenurquhart High
School

Andrew McKenna Lochaber High School

Martin Fitzgerald Holm Primary

Eve von Delft Holm Primary

Liz Green Culloden Academy

Kate Morris Charleston Academy

Jo.Anne Pugh Fortrose Academy

Jill Fryer Crown Primary

From 11am

Jim Steven Head of Education, Highland Council

Ros Bell Policy Officer, Highland Council

Bill Alexander Director of Care and Learning, Highland Council

Peter Finlayson ICT digital curriculum **title?**



1. Confirmation of minutes from 21st December 2016

Agreed correct.	Proposed: Sam Blythe Seconded: Jo.Anne Pugh
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2. Welcome and HPCP Update

Fergus Weir chaired and opened by welcoming new parent representatives to the meeting and re-iterating the positive impact and difference that HPCP is making to parent representation across Highland. In particular, Beth Brown of the Quality Improvement team is grateful for the help HPCP is making to engage parents.

Communication continues to be the core issue that underpins the effectiveness of HPCP. There are still a number of parent council chairs not logged on to the school googlemail accounts, so do keep reminding your fellow parent chairs to do so. To have more control and flexibility over HPCP email communication it would be beneficial to switch to a @hpcp.org.uk address, however to change a google domain would cost £5 per user per year which is unacceptable. However having charitable status would make the switch over free.

2.1 Charitable Status for HPCP was agreed as the best way forward to facilitate a free transfer of email systems, despite HPCP having no ambitions to have funds. Several parents present had experience of registering for charitable status and re-assured that the process was straight forward. One small change required was a replacement of paragraph 7.4 to the HPCP constitution namely that *'if HPCP was dissolved that any funds would pass to a charity linked to education'*. This was voted and agreed unanimously at the meeting.

ACTION Giles Baker to register HPCP as charity and office bearers to forward address paperwork back to Giles when requested.

3. Reports from Regional Representatives

Regional Representatives were appointed at the last meeting/ AGM as a way of strengthening the regional voice of schools, linkages between schools and as a route for schools to input to meetings more effectively in the future.

The feedback from the Regional Co-ordinators was as follows:

- North Region Primary vacant
- North Region Secondary John Whitfield (Golspie)



-John emailed all the schools but has had low response rate so far.

Mid Region Primary Sam Blythe (Dingwall)

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-Sam emailed all the schools and has had only 3 replies so far. Would appreciate a further volunteer to help with this region.

South Region Primary (Inverness) Jill Fryer (Crown Primary)

South Region Secondary (Inverness) Kate Morris (Charlston)

South Region (other primary and secondary) Giles Baker (Grantown)

-roles were re-organised and newly appointed at this meeting and new reps will contact schools before next meeting.

West Region Primary Hugh Wright (Lundavra Primary)

West Region Secondary Andrew McKenna (Lochaber High School)

-Andy and Hugh have been discussing how to best use the Oban Times and possibly other media outlets to promote issues related to schools; for example the background to the 4.5 day week being implemented across all schools. Community Councils in the region are also hoping to have local schools on their agenda to help raise awareness and address concerns. Big local news is that Liberty have bought the Aluminium works and there are likely to be 300 new jobs in the area which will have big implications for schools in the region.

3.1 Parent Council Funding not applied for

The following 60 school parent councils have still not applied for their parent council funding. **Fergus to insert list here.**

ACTION Regional reps will contact schools who have not applied for their Council funding.

4. National Parent Forum Scotland meeting update (Fergus Weir)

Fergus attended the last meeting on 20/01/2017 where 21 of the 32 regional representatives were able to attend. The main points were as follows:

Fergus to substitute his text here

- Gaelic medium – if 5 or more parents want gaelic medium education, the Council has a duty to provide it;
- NPFS submitted a 40pp response to the Governance Review;
- Upcoming consultation on religious observance as it is thought to be an outdated statute to have religious reps with voting rights on education committees;
- Upcoming consultation on STEM subjects and provision;
- NSPCC are pushing for no physical punishment on the basis of human rights.

5. Education, Care and Adult Services Committee feedback

Sam Blythe from Dingwall Academy PC is the HPCP advisory rep on the ECAS Committee and attended her first committee on 26 January 2017. The main issues of note were as follows:

- Although the education budget has been largely protected there are still cuts coming through from last year.
- There is a new Principal Primary Teacher role;
- A school must have 172 pupils before it is eligible for a Depute;
- Newly appointed Group Heads may still have class contact duties in addition;
- The new Business Management role is not fully agreed yet;
- For the Capital budget the Council have less than 50% of what is required;
- The long term preference of the ECAS Committee is to have no unelected members with voting rights. The existing non-elected members with voting rights number five and include the Youth Convenor, three religious reps and the NHS rep.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 1 March 2017. It is of great disappointment to HPCP that the Council papers were not ready in time to discuss at our meeting. The papers should be ready 7-10 days before the ECAS committees and our meeting have been specifically scheduled to tie in with this to allow maximum discussion and representation of parental views via Councillors beforehand.

So far the role of the one HPCP rep is advisory, not allowed to speak and has no voting rights. HPCP passed a mandate at the last HPCP conference to pursue having two reps with voting rights (as many other Council regions do) and push for possible travel expenses and loss of earnings payment. Fergus will draft a bullet point mandate to Councillors before the May 2017 elections that we can hold them

account to, along the lines of firstly increase the budget for education and secondly ensure full parental representation on the ECAS committee with voting rights.

ACTION – Fergus to draft mandate for circulation to all Councillors and press release.

6. HPCP Conference Planning

Inviting speakers to the HPCP conference on Sat 18 November needs to happen now.

ACTION -Fergus will invite John Swinney or a rep from the Scottish Education Committee.

A Parental Engagement Strategy is being put together by **Eileen XX and Beth XX** at Highland Council and it maybe that a session could be organised around this.

Following the ICT update (later), it was requested that an ICT session be organised for the conference demonstrating some worked examples of how google classrooms works in practise. Perhaps someone from Kingussie High School, or one of the other original pilot schools for Chrome books could be invited.

ACTION – all ICT suggestions/ offers welcome

After the last conference several delegates asked if more time could be given to hearing what is going on in the Regions and also more time for discussion and questions. Any Parent Councils with ideas on how to make this happen for the conference this year, please send in your suggestions and offers. We still need volunteers to form an organising committee for the HPCP conference this year – most of this can be done via email contact, so please get in touch with Fergus HPCPchair@googlemail.com or Liz HPCPsecretary@googlemail.com

ACTION – all.

7. ICT Update – by Peter Finlayson, with additional comment by Fergus and Bill Alexander

Peter began by outlining the inequity of curriculum provision across the 29 secondary schools in Highland. Across the region, only 8 schools are able to offer computing and 12 offer business management. The reality for smaller schools is that the curriculum provision is very limited. One way round this is to offer courses online and pedagogically, with some training in supervision and delivery this has been shown to be successful, especially during the senior phase of S5/6 where pupils are more strongly motivated. The plan is that where the class size is small for Advanced Higher and Higher classes that schools will be able to link up online in the future.

To start with the Council is offering 4 pilots using Google Hangers. These include Millburn delivering Physics to Plockton, Grantown delivering Business Management to Portree, and Psychology being delivered via the Highland College.

Next year further online courses will be rolled including Admin, Business Management, Computing, Languages, including gaelic, Modern Studies and Psychology. Information will sent out to parents accordingly. Additionally the College (UHI??) has received European funding to work to make College courses more accessible to schools.

Fergus asked what is the Council's vision for the width and breadth of the online curriculum, what they had done about strategically identifying gaps in the curriculum



and whether the Council would aspire to a commitment along the lines of 'any child in Highland will have access to and be able to take any Higher within 3 years'. The answer was a cautious yes saying that outcomes were all predicated on having the necessary infra-structure in place.

Fergus also emphasized the importance and need for the Council to promote the strategic benefits of the ICT rollout; a holistic message about the digital strategy in schools across Highland that encompasses an open curriculum and digital learning for all pupils that will equip them for the modern day world. Fergus also mentioned the possibility of having an ICT roadshow that tours the regions.

7.1 Chrome book roll out

27,000 Chrome books will be delivered in total. Meanwhile online learning is still feasible without chrome books on other devices. For example Grantown and Gairloch have no chrome books but use google classrooms quite widely.

Bill Alexander commented that Head Teachers have now been provided with Year One of the proposed roll out timetable, from August, involving over 30 schools in 3 ASGs before the end of this year. The following timeline is for school ASGs. August – October 2017 □ Millburn Phased Roll-out November 2017 – June 2018 □ Dingwall □ Portree □ Kinlochleven □ Kingussie □ Gairloch □ Mallaig □ Lochaber □ Grantown Grammar □ Ardnamurchan □ Dornoch □ Invergordon □ Plockton

The order takes account of various factors – school readiness, G Suite for Education usage, technical readiness, CAT F schools, schools with hostels and new builds. This remains subject to change, given the ongoing work to ensure SWAN roll out and network development, but this is presently on schedule. A verbal update will be provided at the ECAS Committee on 1st March.

Phase 2 Consultation will start in May 2017, it should ensure that there is full local consultation and consideration before any proposals for Phase 2 are presented for approval in January 2018, for August 2018 implementation.

7.2 ICT Infra-structure

1. Swan has been rolled out in $\frac{3}{4}$ of schools. The 25-30 schools that will not have swan by April will have by August.
2. The network has been having lots of work and is on schedule with WiFi connections.
3. The figure for parental contribution towards chrome books is still under discussion. The issue relates more to philosophy and ownership than absolute cost.
4. There are problems and challenges and the Council need to work to ensure that these do not trump the big and positive message of digital learning ahead.
5. A new project manager for chrome book roll out will be advertised from Tues 28 Feb.
6. A launch event on 3rd May, entitled 'ICT and Science' will be attended by all Head Teachers and there will be a big push on publicity then.

8.1 Scottish Government Budget settlement by the Council (Bill)

In broad terms the Council has managed to maintain the education budget for this year. Following the spending review in December there is a 3.86% reduction in the overall budget of £30 million. There are also residual cuts from the previous year including a 1% reduction in staffing costs.

Music tuition fees will increase by 10% and school meal price increases have been scrapped. Music is not a statutory requirement and is not equitable across Highland. Every Council is reviewing music and in some regions such as Aberdeen City Council music teachers have gone independent.

This is a one year respite and cuts are likely to fall again in 12 month time. The council is however hopeful of long term (4-5 year) budget planning after June.

8.2 Attainment Challenge funding will continue and is bid for each year from a total available pot of £900,000 in Highland. This is available to primary and secondary schools in SMID areas 1 and 2. There are 14 eligible schools in Highland.

8.3 Pupil Equity Funding will continue. Highland will get £4 million of the £120 million allocated across Scotland as 'Pupil Equity Funding' (formerly 'Closing Attainment Gap funding'). The money is allocated across P1 to S3 pupils on the basis of free school meal entitlement and is worth £1200 per pupil per year. The measure of entitlement is due to be improved upon.

The framework for spending Pupil Equity Funding is based on improving literacy, numeracy and health/wellbeing, and yearly feedback/ reporting is required. Money will be available from April and can be spent from August. Schools must produce a Coherent Improvement Plan and money is released on the basis of this. The Council, via the Quality Improvement Team, is supporting schools as to what makes a difference and to spend the money effectively. Bill reassured that the financial tracking requirements on schools will be paperwork light (a single page) and based around data collection.

8.4 Capital Budget

The Capital Programme of spending includes big projects (such as new schools at Tain and Wick), life cycle investment projects and new projects. There is not an option to take much out, yet there is a big short fall in available funding. The ECAS committee on 1 March 2017 will try to agree priorities ahead.

8.5 Early Years Provision

Following new Scottish legislation, the Council has a duty to provide 1140 hours per year of nursery provision for all 3 and 4 year olds. Many facilities do not have the capacity for this. The Council is expecting an announcement before 12th March of new money from the Scottish Government to address this and bring facilities together.

9. Highland Council INSIGHT data sharing plan

Jim reported that the Quality Improvement Team are working on guidelines as to how parent councils can best access the INSIGHT data which summarises attainment results and positive destination results for each school.

10. Governance Review Update



No announcements on the Governance Review consultation are expected imminently, partly on account of the Scottish Government receiving 1,100 responses. Regional collaborations are definitely being looked into and the Council is confident that the existing Northern Alliance structure is supported.

11. Date for next meeting

The next meetings in 2017 are scheduled to take place at Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 09 June, Wednesday 27 September and Tuesday 28 November – please register your availability via Doodle website meeting planner:

The HPCP conference this year will be held Saturday 18 November, with venue to be decided - please let us know your suggestions.