

Minutes of HPCP Routine Meeting

Tuesday 28th November 2017, 1000-1300, Highland Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness

Attendees:		Apologies:
<u>From 1000</u>		
Fergus Weir (Chair)	Kirkhill Primary School	Wendy Hennem, Tain Royal Academy
Mark Gunn (Sec)	Nairn Academy	Liz Green, Culloden Academy
Samantha Blyth	Dingwall Academy	Andy McKenna, Lochaber High school
Sheila Lall	Gledfield Primary	Martin Fitzgerald, Holm Primary
Eve Von Delft	Holm Primary	Lorraine Thain, Drakies Primary
Kate Morris	Charleston Academy	Audrey Fraser Ben Wyvis Primary
John Whitfield	Golspie High School	Coreen MacRae, Alness Academy
Katie Christie	Bridgend Primary	Kate MacDonald Inverness Royal Academy
Rebecca Langlands	Portree Primary (via Video Conference)	Laura Trappitt, Croy Primary
Jon Greenhowe	North Kessock Primary	Kirsty Shaw, Portree Academy
Michelle Tyler	Rosebank Primary	
Garry Mark	BSG Inverness	
Joe Hallwood	Fortrose Academy	
<u>Present from 1100 to 1205 only</u>		
Jim Steven	Head of Education, Highland Council	
Ros Bell	Policy Officer, C&LS, Highland Council	

1. Introductions and Apologies. Fergus welcomed everyone to the meeting and each person introduced themselves, including Rebecca via the Video Conference from Portree. Fergus offered his thanks to all involved in the annual Conference on 18 Nov, noting that he had received feedback from many delegates on how useful the Conference had been, and that Mr Swinney had found it valuable too. Fergus also told the meeting that Alastair Christie had resigned as Convener of the Highland Council People Committee (on taking up an appointment with NHS Highland), and that it was not clear who would succeed him as Convener. Note that Jim Steven and Ros Bell were not present for the whole meeting, and whilst the minutes below are set out as per the Agenda, they amalgamate discussions that in some cases were held in three phases.

2. Update and confirmation of minutes from 27 Sep 17. There were no amendments to the previous minutes which were proposed as an accurate record by John Whitfield and seconded by Sam Blyth.

3. Matters Arising.

3.1. Communications.

3.1.1. Fergus has received confirmation from Google that the HPCP is now an accredited non-profit free-access G-Suite user with the domain HighlandPCP.org, and that the process to migrate the HPCP onto G-Suite will begin immediately, with the aim of having all HPCP business and communications (including the email addresses for Parent Councils) available on the new domain by Spring 2018.

Action: Fergus Weir (with assistance from Mark Gunn) will migrate the HPCP to G-Suite by

end Dec 17 and establish all the revised Gmail accounts by 31 Mar 18.

3.1.2. Mark has requested via an MSP (Mr Edward Mountain) that the Scottish Govt is asked to agree with the Information Commissioner's Office Scotland and all Local Authorities that a method is put in place across Scotland to enable Parent Councils to have the relevant contact details (email or postal address) for all parents of children in their schools. Mr Mountain understands the need for this and will progress the request with colleagues at Holyrood.

3.1.3. Fergus advised that the requested update to initial (P1 or other entry to Highland Education) data capture forms has been made, which should see Parent Councils get new parent emails or postal addresses. However, the global update to SEEMIS needed to achieve this for all regular (eg annual) parent contact detail updates is "stuck" in the SEEMIS management group (all 32 Local Authorities (LA) in Scotland). It was also noted that typically 15% of parents will not have, use or want email and that other methods ("school bag" post or Royal Mail) will still be necessary, and PCs can and may need to use their admin support grant from HC for such communication.

3.1.4. It was agreed that if the HPCP proposed an appropriate format for an email to all parents requesting that they give consent to being contacted by their PC and HPCP (consent being given via the HPCP 'mail chimp' system), this could be sent out via schools as a directive from HC Education Service. The intent here is to develop and promulgate a "best practice" parental contact and consultation process that HC could also offer to the Northern Alliance local authorities and any equivalent bodies to the HPCP in their areas. A meeting between HC data-protection specialists, Fergus and Mark would be arranged by Jim Steven to facilitate the technical aspects of this. This also covered Item 10 on the Agenda.

Action: Fergus Weir to draft a suitable letter, for HC to check for compliance and for Jim Steven to send out to all HTs for onward to all PCs.

Action: Jim Steven to set up a meeting with HPCP and HC Data Protection.

3.1.5. The need for a Highland-specific "starter pack" for PCs was discussed, which would detail how to claim the PC Grant, and guidance (eg a flow-diagram) included on "effective engagement", ie who to contact and how to contact them to deal with the various issues that PCs may face. This starter pack would build on the more generic SPTC and NPFS information already available, and include details on HC structures, personnel and engagement, with the aim that the "reach for your local press reporter" option would not be the default for any PC finding it hard to progress an issue. The information should include a guide on how best to use Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and it should be hosted on the HPCP website, but might also be useful as a hard-copy booklet for new PC Chairs.

Action: Jon Greenhowe and Sam Blyth to develop an "effective engagement" flow diagram by 31 Jan 18 for circulation and consideration at the Feb 18 HPCP meeting.

Action: Fergus Weir to consider the "starter pack" content and ask for support in building it once the scope has been decided, for circulation and consideration at the Feb 18 HPCP meeting.

3.2. People Committee.

3.2.1. There had been no progress on achieving voting rights for the HPCP rep to the People Committee, and the action on Fergus Weir and Sam Blyth (from 9 Jun 17) to meet with Margaret Davidson about this matter was ongoing. It was considered that it might be easier to at least obtain speaking rights on Education matters debated in the People Committee, and that whilst voting rights on Education matters was what the HPCP wanted, an interim position of speaking rights should be discussed.

Overdue Updated Action: Fergus Weir and Sam Blyth to meet with Margaret Davidson before Christmas to discuss gaining voting rights / speaking rights for up to two HPCP Reps on the People Committee.

3.2.2. Getting access to People Committee papers in advance was still not happening, and it was agreed that it would make sense both to have the HPCP involved at the development stage of relevant papers and to develop joint HC-HPCP proposal papers. Topics for jointly-developed HC-HPCP papers could be proposed either by HC, the HPCP, individual PCs, or elected members.

Action: Jim Steven undertook to hold a standing action to get HPCP involved at the development stage of relevant People Committee papers and propose/evaluate proposed topics for the development of joint papers.

3.3. Closing the Attainment Gap. Jim Steven and Ros Bell had provided some further information and guidance on issues such as how PCs might use ParentZone Insight data and what online resources were available on attainment gap closure methodologies. This would be posted on the HPCP website and completed the outstanding action, with the understanding that updates would be welcomed by the HPCP at any time.

3.4. PC Insurance and Grant Funding.

3.4.1. Ros Bell confirmed that insurance for PCs would continue to be provided by Zurich (renewals 1 April) and paid direct by HC; there was no need to use insurance from SPTC or other sources. Insurance packs would be sent by Zurich to HTs in early March 2018. It was considered that these should perhaps go direct to PC chairs and not HTs.

3.4.2. Ros Bell provided some data on what other Local Authorities pay PCs as admin support grants. The figures are set out below, indicating no common approach, a huge variation in effective per-pupil allocation, and no clarity as to whether PC admin costs are seen as being driven by flat-rate factors (eg two meetings per term) or pupil numbers. So far in this year 50% of Highland PCs have claimed; last year only 29 did not.

Action: Ros Bell to provide updated list before Christmas of PCs that have not claimed their grant money (about 50% of PCs), and details of how much each PC has received.

Local Authority	Number of schools	Funding
Shetland	24 Pri, 1 Sec, 4 Junior High, 2 Pri & Sec combined	Lengthy grant form completed annually to receive up to £400 pa for a clerk if not a member of PC. Can pay for admin/photocopying if requested. Also pay SPTC membership but PCs fund raise in the main to cover other costs
Fife	141 Pri, 19 Sec, 6 ASN	£370 flat rate per school plus 21p per pupil. £152 additional allocation for community use schools.
Falkirk	50 Pri, 8 Sec, 2 ASN	Funding based on pupil roll. Cost of insurance is deducted from overall PC allocation
South Lanarkshire	128 Pri, 20 Sec, 6 ASN	Insurance and clerk fees paid. Other costs can be covered on a needs basis. Annual Conference paid for by Council.
Dundee	33 Pri, 8 Sec, 1 ASN	£100 to each PC. Also clerk fees and insurance paid
Inverclyde	20 Pri, 6 Sec, 3 ASN	£350 per Primary, £490 per Secondary. SPTC membership paid including insurance.
Aberdeen City	48 Pri, 13 Sec, 4 ASN	£250 per school plus approximately 1% of per capita of school roll. Pay for public liability insurance
East Renfrewshire	23 Pri, 7 Sec, 1 ASN	£17,000 budget. SPTC membership paid from budget and balance of £13266 used to pay for clerk fees and an PC allocation as follows: Primary & Special Roll 1-100 £50; 101-200 £100 201-300 £150; 301-400 £200 401-500 £250; 501+ £300 Secondary Roll: 1-749 £350; 750+ £500
Aberdeenshire	152 Pri, 17 Sec, 4 ASN	£375 per secondary £270 per primary plus 15p per pupil
Glasgow City	148 Pri, 37 Sec	£400 to each PC plus membership of SPTC

3.5. Social Media Policies. Fergus Weir agreed to put relevant information (eg NPFS, SPTC) on the HPCP website, and it was pointed out that if any PC wanted to run its own social media operations then it

was best to have closed moderated groups so that online abuse could be stamped out very quickly on whatever forum was in use. The “do it properly or not at all” approach was recommended, which included making sure that any photographs posted had proper consents in place.

Action: Fergus Weir to post updated information and guidance on the HPCP website regarding PC use of social media.

3.6. Chromebook Roll-out Plan and the Virtual Learning Course Provision Status.

3.6.1. Fergus Weir had been in discussion with HC officers including Seb O’Dell regarding the roll-out timing and progress, reporting that the infrastructure position was officially still at “Amber” but improving, and there might even be scope to bring forward roll-out in some areas. However it was a concern that there seemed to be a lack of effective HC publicity and information aimed at parents and pupils about the roll-out (eg nothing at all on the HC Website Education Service pages, and sites like <http://www.digilearnhighland.co.uk/parents--carers.html> not linked to), and parents needed answers on matters such as what happens if chromebooks are damaged, stolen etc. It was also apparent that information about the use of G-suite and Google Classroom was hard to come by, and this needed to be fixed. As the Virtual Learning/Classroom environment and collaboration across schools was going to be substantially dependent upon both chromebook roll-out and upgrade of the HC ICT “backbone” (the main data-bearer which determined the actual bandwidth available), parents need much more information about what was happening, and when it would affect their children. The information at the Highland Digital Learning site was good but simply too hard to find https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cplog6VOIJ_KWJpsBvEvNHGZS8v-CqCkQN4AyBuRJ7k/edit.

New Standing Action: Jim Steven to include Fergus Weir on relevant Chromebook publicity work and meetings, with the HPCP undertaking to support information dissemination and publicity about the chromebook roll-out programme.

3.6.2. Ros Bell provided an update by email on the 14 subjects currently available via Virtual Learning, most at Higher but with some at multiple levels (Nat 5 to AH). Jim Steven commented that all pupils had access to online courses; chromebooks made this easier but they were not a requirement for access. He also commented that Google Classroom was working well in this environment and he was not seeking to replace it with e-Sgoil.

Subject	Levels	Recipient Schools	Tutor	Location
Business Management	Higher	Ardnamurchan, Portree, Ullapool	Ben Williams	West Highland College
Chemistry	AH, Higher	Inverness High, Thurso, Wick	Sarah Canham	Dingwall
Computing	Nat 5, Higher	Gairloch, Plockton, Portree, Tain, Grantown, Nairn	Nicola Hearnden	WHC
German	AH, Higher, Nat 5	Charleston, Fortrose, IRA, Mallaig, Nairn, Thurso	Maike Muthil	Mallaig
History	AH	Golspie, Kingussie	Mike O'Brien	Grantown
Human Biology	Higher	Portree, Plockton	Jenny Hendry	Portree
Latin	Nat 5, Higher	Dornoch, Lochaber	John Garvie	Home Based
Mathematics	AH	Dornoch, Inverness High, Wick	Kirsty Yoxon	Portree
Modern Studies	Higher	Dingwall, Gairloch	Katherine Lothian	Culloden
Music		None this year	Finella Whittle	Farr High
Photography	Higher	Mallaig, Nairn	Dugal McCrow	Grantown
Physics	AH	Invergordon, Portree, Tain	Martyn Crawshaw	Millburn
Psychology	Higher	Ardnamurchan, Dornoch, Mallaig, Kinlochleven, Plockton, Portree, Ullapool, Wick	Marina Finlayson	WHC
Spanish	Nat 5, Higher	Dornoch, Nairn, IRA, Lochaber, Portree	Ann MacIntosh	Grantown

3.6.3. Jim Steven confirmed that the “churn pool” of chromebooks would be maintained. Thus all chromebooks will be handed in at the end of the summer; eg departing S5 or S6 will not be able to retain them or make a purchase. Damaged chromebooks will be replaced by HC (assuming the damage was not gratuitous) and replaced from the churn pool, and each chromebook had an assume 4-year lifecycle. Schools would not be allowed to retain their own “spares pool” (eg for staff use) beyond a very small number of authorised spares.

4. Annual Conference. Fergus Weir thanked all those involved in what was a very successful Annual Conference, the minutes for which would be issued soon pending any further HC input (Jim Steven later confirmed none was needed) and the writing of a Chairperson’s Report to summarise the Conference outcomes and cover the Minutes. The Portree contingent thanked HC for the mileage allowance which made a big difference for those travelling from afar. A provisional date of 17 Nov 18 was proposed for the next Annual Conference, for confirmation in Feb 18, with the Council Chamber agreed as an excellent venue, and the next Conference planning group would be set up in May 18.

Action: Fergus Weir to write a brief Conference Chair’s Report to be sent out with the Conference minutes by 7 Dec 17, including to HC Elected Members, PC Chairs and all HTs.

4.1. Feedback and Online Survey. Some feedback had already been provided, ranging from the suggestion of an evening social event to allow those staying overnight to meet and discuss key issues, inviting the DYW team to the Conference, through to Fergus Weir agreeing that he should set up an online survey to garner the widest range of opinion and shape next year’s event. It was also suggested that the Regional Groups should try to get together a month or so before the next Conference to bring Regional issues to the Conference for debate and solutions.

Action: Fergus Weir to set up and promulgate an online survey for the 2017 Conference Attendees, with initial results for discussion at the next meeting (end of Feb 18).

4.2. Press Coverage. This was a bit disappointing considering the attendance of John Swinney. Photos from this year’s Conference would be put up on the website and ideas for how to get better press interest would be considered next year as part of the planning group work.

4.3. Next Steps: Regional Groups and Strategic Goals.

4.3.1. It was clear that everyone agreed that there was much to be gained from getting ASG PCs and then the Regional ASGs working more closely together to support each other, share ideas on local issues, and forge links with the HC Area Improvement Officers. This would need the Regional Groups to have a few more volunteers each to help with the communications and logistics of having many PC meetings to attend or support, and it would also need suitable publicity and letters. Ultimately if even only one PC chair from each ASG in a Region could come to a Regional meeting every 4 to 6 months, much could still be gained. Jim Steven agreed that it was perfectly reasonable to invite HC Officials to ASG-cluster or Regional Group PC Chairs meetings if they were needed, and that the Head Teacher channel should be used to help arrange, publicise and facilitate ASG, cluster and Regional meetings.

Action: Fergus Weir to draft by Christmas a suitable proforma letter or email with accompanying poster (or flyer) appropriate to informing PCs and Parents about ASG or Regional Group meetings.

4.3.2. Another strategic element was to complete the restructuring of the HPCP (including the communications channels and toolsets such as G-Suite), and make sure that we could contribute in a collegiate fashion to the Education Bill consultation due to close on 31 Jan 18. The HPCP also needed to strive to have as many Highland PCs engaged as possible, recognising that some would always wish to simply be local and never engage on the regional or Highland level. The online survey could include a chance for PCs to comment further on the restructuring concept and improving PC engagement with the HPCP.

4.3.3. The need for an updated guidance pack for PC chairs had already been covered, but it would inevitably form a key part of the above strategic development together with the G-suite migration. It was also suggested that special media events could be organised to publicise important matters or events, and all were asked to consider this to see how it might be done in their area.

5. **AGM Report.** All the AGM aims had been achieved with no further actions needed this year.

6. **People Committee.** All points have been covered in the Matters Arising section.

7. **HPCP Input to Scot Govt Education (Scotland) Bill Consultation.** Many schools were already generating their own submissions (Culloden had a draft nearing completion) and it was likely that a wide range of opinions would be expressed. Provided that the HPCP got to see the submissions (clearly at PC discretion) then we could try to craft a consensus view, or at least offer an interpretation of the range of views that considered the overall strength or weakness of the opinions submitted. With time pressing it was suggested that a group should meet in mid-Jan 18 to develop the final HPCP submission, but that the main work should be done online via G-suite.

Action: Jon Greenhowe to lead on the HPCP submission to the Consultation, and convene a meeting in mid-Jan 18.

8. **Regional Governance.** Jim Steven provided an update of events, including that the person selected to head up the 'Northern Alliance' (NA) Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) had been "poached" by the Scottish Govt to a post in Education Scotland. A new NARIC head would be appointed in due course and David Gregory would be the HC link into the NARIC. The management of the NARIC would include a number of elected members. Fergus Weir agreed to write to all NARIC elected members about how the HPCP does business, wider NPFS matters, how to ensure that our concerns about how much parental engagement there would actually be with the NARIC could be addressed, and what NARIC involvement with the HPCP might look like in the future.

Action: Fergus Weir to write to all NARIC elected members before 31 Dec 17.

8.1. It was suggested that a meeting of all the NA Heads or Directors of Education Services should be invited to meet with the HPCP and its other NA equivalents in early 2018, to discuss parental engagement methodologies. Jim Steven agreed to set this rolling.

Action: Jim Steven to write to all NA Heads/Directors of Education Services, by 23 Dec 17.

9. **AOB.**

9.1. Jon Greenhowe was concerned about the changes to Phase 2 of the Management of Schools; Jim Steven agreed to provide diagrams (from the ICT Office) about the MoS rollout, Phases and timings.

Action: Jim Steven to send the MoS roll-out information to the HPCP before Christmas.

9.2. Jim Steven confirmed that the review of the £1.25m Music tuition budget was not about cutting it but ensuring that the management of the service (employment of tutors, travel time, billing etc) was as efficient and effective as possible.

9.3. Ros Bell confirmed that the new PC created in Portree (as Portree Primary GM split off to become a new school in its own right) could claim the PC Grant Funds mid year at the full rate.

9.4. Ros Bell undertook to check on the First Aid cover problem at Lochaber High School and have the HT respond to the PC there directly.

10. **Date of Next Meeting.** It was agreed that a provisional date of Wed 28 Feb 18 would be set for the next meeting pending confirmation of Jim Steven being available that day.

Mark Gunn, HPCP Secretary.