

Buckstone Primary School Parent Council
Minutes
Tuesday 5th June 2018
6.30pm-8.00pm, Staff Room

Parents Council Members Attendees: Brian Chalmers (Chair), Fiona Damen (Vice Chair), Hilary Brown, Nicole Johnston, Louise Logan, Emma Forson, Morag Place, Jamie Deas, Anna Hind, Vera Norton, Carol Malkin, Katy Wilson, Caroline Morrison, Fiona Brien

Co-opted Member Attendees: Mrs Imrie, Mrs Henry, Mrs Conlin, Miss Fotheringham

Other Attendees: Councillor Scott Arthur, Andrea McKenzie, Nicola Pay

Apologies: Lisa Sykes, Helen Szoor-McElhinney

Minutes: Christine Stewart (Clerk)

1. Approval of previous minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 26th April 2018, were approved. Moving forward, there will be an update on action points from the previous meeting.

Action points from meeting held on 26th April 2018			
Item	Who	Action	Update
5	Morven Langley	Discuss goal post installation with football coaches	Morven has contacted the coaches; they are not saying 'no' but stress that location and flexibility are key and need to understand exactly what is proposed. Goal posts have come and gone from the Field in the past, leading in one case to safety issues. Brian recommended a discussion & site visit with all interested parties.
2.1	Mrs Imrie, Lisa Sykes, Nicole Johnston, Claire Probert	Parent input into upper area redesign process	The volunteers were unable to attend a design meeting in May due to very late notice. Action: Brian to circulate details of the June meeting.
4	Brian Chalmers	Circulate draft 'class rep guide' for feedback	Brian circulated this today with the aim of launching a class rep guide in August. Action: Reps to feedback on draft.

2. Councillor update

Cllr Scott Arthur circulated his local report for June 2018 (see Appendix 1). The school playground 'mud review' that he outlined at the last meeting has taken place. The recommendation is for tiger mulch, a poured rubberised surface often seen in community play parks, to be installed in the muddy area near the P2 doors, and for the depression further back into the playground to be filled in. This work will be completed during either this summer, or summer 2019, and Scott is in the process of securing funding for this work.

Two trees were removed from the playground partly due to complaints from two adjoining residents. The residents have agreed to replace the trees in the autumn – possibly at a new location outwith the school grounds.

A formal planning complaint about the school playground lighting has been resolved after some modifications. The manhole cover near the Buckstone Lea entrance to the school was collapsing but Scott arranged for this to be fixed following complaints from parents.

3. Mrs Imrie Update

3.1 Playground access during holidays: Over the summer holidays, the school water main will be moved out of the adjacent residential property and into school grounds. The playground will be closed over the holidays to allow this work to be completed. The new car park may need to be dug up in order to move the water main - this is unfortunate particularly as the issue was highlighted at the time of the hall build. Extensive electrical work also planned for during the holidays. A meeting is scheduled for Friday to discuss what is required for both projects. The Council health and safety assistant will discuss the wider issue of community access to the playground.

3.2 Upper Hall Design: A further meeting will take place in June. P6T did an excellent job of trialling furniture and making a presentation to the designers. Planned electrical work will be completed before moving on to this redesign work.

Lunches: Parents have now met with the catering manager. **Action: Brian will contact these parents for feedback.** The manager also observed today's lunch service and felt it was well organised. Food now comes from a new location and is accompanied by one of the team who prepared it, who supervises how it is served. Vera Norton proposed twice yearly healthy eating weeks focusing on the food that is brought into school, which could utilise the NHS Change 4 Life literature.

Summer Fair: Thanks to the fundraising committee for their help with the summer fair.

Inservice day (8th May): The staff agreed priorities for the next school year and will share a summary with parents in due course. The senior team met with cluster colleagues to discuss Curriculum for Excellence bench marks, and the 'Developing the Young Workforce' programme. Brian Chalmers sat in with staff for part of the day looking at what has been achieved over the year.

Other school events: Thanks to all who came to Sports Day, and to all the parent helpers who supported the trips last week. Transition activities for P7s to high school, and for the new P1s, are now in full swing.

Q&A

Playground access. Mrs Imrie anticipates that in future, the playground will be shut during winter holidays as the equipment cannot be used if it is icy. Nicola Pay, who had a key role in the Grounds for Learning playground redevelopment in 2014, stressed that community access was a condition of that redevelopment funding, She asked what exactly has changed between 2014 and now, that has resulted in the playground being closed to the public.

Relevant national strategies such as the Scottish Government play strategy seem to be the same as they were four years ago. In fact, the national play strategy cites Buckstone Primary School playground as a case study of a school playground used by the community (<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/02/6688/4>). She mentioned that other Councils now make it standard practice to open school playgrounds to the public. It was agreed that the playground is a high quality and well-used resource.

Mrs Imrie said that there has been a marked increase in the Council's health and safety requirements since 2014. She noted that the playground is open til 9pm on term time weekdays because there is a janitor on duty. One issue is that if someone finds a faulty piece of playground equipment, then there is no route to report it if no staff are on duty. There have been several instances of anti-social behaviour by older teenagers in the playground 'out of hours' when the playground is open. At the health and safety meeting this week, she will seek advice on whether the community can voluntarily assume liability for any accidents if they enter the playground e.g. an 'at your own risk' notice. **Action: Mrs Imrie will provide Parent Council Chair with an update following the meeting.**

There was general agreement that the play park at High Buckstone is in need of upgrading. Community fundraising could be an option; Brian recommended discussion with Scott Arthur.

4. GDPR

Brian referred to the recent implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation, effective from 25th May 2018, which includes Parent Councils. Relevant templates are available from Connect, the parent teacher body. After discussion, it was felt that parents of existing year groups have already been clearly informed about, and consented to, the use of their data by Parent Council. This use includes school-related messages and class contact lists for personal use. Moving forward, as new year-groups join the school, Parent Council will supply wording for data collection forms. **Action: Carol Maitland (current Nursery AM rep) will contact the new P1s parents about how their data will be used, both by email and at the meeting for new P1 parents on 12th June.** There are no known GDPR considerations in relation to Facebook. **Action: Brian and Hilary Brown to discuss possible new Parent Council FB page.**

5. Diversity and Inclusion

Brian read out an update from Helen Szoor-McElhinney. She has met with members of East Lothian Council and parents from a small school in Drem who were happy to discuss their approach. The values drafted by Helen are in line with the values they use within their framework. Helen proposes that these are now circulated to the parent body as Parent Council has had an opportunity to review. Helen and Christine Stewart still have not had a chance to meet yet to move other subgroup tasks forward, but plan to do so to discuss the constitution. **Action: Brian would like the subgroup to move forward with the proposed parent survey around Parent Council inclusivity.**

6. P6 Uniform

Mrs Henry fed back that the P6 year group has unanimously opted to keep purple as their P7 hoodie colour and to order a special year tie. They still need to choose a tie design. Lisa Sykes has met with the P6s and is asking Borders Embroideries to quote for ties. Hilary Brown presented mock-up designs from an alternative tie supplier, costing £4.95 per tie.

As a rough costing, £5 per tie and a year group of 70 pupils totals £350. The fundraising committee has already agreed to give P6 £150 towards this from Parent Council funds – the income from the stall that the P6s ran at the summer fair. It was agreed that Parent Council would also give P6 the shortfall of approximately £200 as a loan to allow them to order the ties, on the condition the money be repaid in money or time (e.g. working at the Christmas fair). Mrs Henry gave very positive feedback on the P6s input into this initiative, and it was felt to be appropriate to acknowledge their hard work and motivation in this way.

Action: Mrs Henry, Lisa Sykes and Hilary Brown to continue work with P6 on the school ties. It was noted that in future, this sort of initiative needs to start earlier in the year.

7. Fundraising Committee

The committee thanked everyone who attended and volunteered at the summer fair. From the committee's perspective, the earlier 3.30-5.30pm timing was a success. The fair attracted more volunteers (the new sign up system initiated by Morag Place was a success), more entrance tickets were sold than usual, and the £4k income raised was on a par with previous fairs. A really positive aspect for the committee was that the 5.30pm finish allowed the committee to have all clear up finished by 7pm, as opposed to the usual 10pm – a big improvement. However, the committee was aware of some criticism of the earlier timing. They asked Parent Council for feedback, and a decision on the timings of the 2018/19 fairs.

The discussion looked at various options, however taking into account the increase in volunteers, the increase in entrance tickets sold, the good amount of money raised and the earlier finish time for staff and parents volunteers, it was agreed to hold the 2018/19 Christmas and Summer Fairs at the earlier start time of 3.30-5.30pm. There is no doubt that this timing is more challenging for working parents, but it is hoped that by giving lots of notice of the fair dates and times, as many people as possible will be able to arrange to attend. Members of the fundraising committee themselves take time off work to take part. **Action: Parent Council to circulate a note to parents relating to the 2018/19 fairs, including dates, timings and an explanation on the shift of timing.**

8. Ukulele Club

The teacher who is employed by Sounds Like Music to teach the ukulele lessons at Buckstone PS, is proposing starting an after school club at the school. The club would be in addition to the lessons and led by him as an individual. There would be a fee to take part. It was agreed that this club is of interest. Mrs Imrie recommended that if it does proceed, that it comes under the auspices of Parent Council. The school does not own a set of ukuleles and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to ask participants to purchase their own. **Action: Brian to ask the teacher to submit a full proposal on how the club would run.**

9. Buckstone Ski Club

Action: Fiona Damen will follow this up again with Hillend ski centre.

10. Football Team

Morven Langley reported that everything is going well.

11. Finances

Parent Council finances are in good health, boosted by the summer fair income.

12. A.O.B

Bioengineering: Helen Szoor-McElhinney has access to primary school teaching resources related to bioengineering. This may be useful under 'Developing the Young Workforce'.

Tuck shop: Mrs Henry confirmed that the P6 tuck shop has not started running yet. When it does it will sell healthy snacks and not sweets.

Toilets: The state of the school toilets has been raised again. Mrs Imrie is waiting for feedback from Facilities Manager on whether they will freshen up the toilets in the upper area. Parents have questioned why some children need to change for PE in the toilets; this does not seem hygienic. **Action: Staff will think about alternative options.**

Coding club: Andrea McKenzie suggested that a computer or coding club would be a good addition to the school. It was agreed that it would be good for her to look into this. Anna Hind will forward relevant information to Andrea.

Traffic: Nicola Johnston asked about the possibility of a zebra crossing at Buckstone Loan and High Buckstone. Fiona Brien noted that a traffic warden has been seen in the area, which is really positive, but their timings need adjusted as their patrols are slightly too early for peak school traffic. **Action: Brian will put both issues to Scott Arthur.**

Classes: Concerns about P1 team teaching can be covered at the P1 meeting on Tuesday. Mrs Imrie confirmed the school cluster group has agreed to 'common mixing' in for new P5 classes and new P7 classes to prepare for high school, which is why these year groups will be mixed. Aside from that, class mixing will be determined by the class organisation which is agreed on a year-by-year basis with the council.

Playground: There is an issue with mud along the school path hear the Lea / metal bars. Bark chips were suggested as a solution. Brian will follow up with Scott Arthur about tiger mulch.

Appendix 1: Prof Scott Arthur Councillor for Colinton-Fairmilehead Report for Fairmilehead Community Council – June 2018

Anti-Social Behavior – I have been working with the police to deal with anti-social behavior in the area. In particular, I have been speaking to the Police, the Parks Department and local residents about the damage to the edible corridor in Buckstone Play Park. I also had damage to the slide in Buckstone Play Park repaired.

Waterboard Development 1 – I'm in the process of arranging a public meeting (June 18th, 7pm for 7:30pm start in Fairmilehead Parish Church) to address some issues relating to the development with the aim of establishing some form of "Residents' Association". The Factor has agreed to attend, but noted that the deeds limit the ability of any Residents' Association to deal with the Factor. Topics suggested for discussion so far: Benches, Road Safety, Parking, the Factor, Fly-Tipping & "No Ball Games" signs.

Waterboard Development 2 – It appears that a few people in the Waterboard Development are under the honest impression that they own the parking bays outside their homes. However, the roads adoption process has highlighted that this may not be the case. I am working with residents to resolve this.

Fairmilehead Park – I attended a meeting of the Friends of Fairmilehead Park to start the process of getting the park a much-coveted Green Flag award. This park is important locally as it brings together children from the surrounding communities to play in a calm setting. In 2018, the following improvements are being installed: 1. A local history board; 2. A wildflower meadow; 3. A bee colony; and, 4. A small football pitch.

Pentland & Buckstone Primary Schools - Many thanks to the parents who contacted me about the problems the muddy playgrounds are causing them. I am now in the final stages of securing around £30k for improvements.

New Pedestrian Crossing on Buckstone Terrace – I have requested a formal report on the delay for June SW locality meeting. Nonetheless, the Council confirmed to FCC that they received the funding for the crossing in 2013.

Lothianburn Park & Ride Proposal – This was rejected at the May Transport & Environment Committee. It's important to note that the focus of the discussion was alleviating parking problems in the Morningside area rather than any impact accepting/rejecting the proposal would have on Fairmilehead.

17 Buckstone Crescent (Abandoned Property) – There is still no word on the bank action to repossess the property (this failed last year and was restarted) and the Council is still not in a position to recover the property via a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). Each year around August the Council produces a report on empty homes. This year, after a lot of fuss from me, it will cover abandoned homes for the first time. It is hoped it will also outline a policy for the use of CPO powers to deal with abandoned homes. If it does not contain that policy, my group has notionally agreed to formally ask for it. The report can't explicitly target 17 Buckstone Crescent, but it should be the focus for testing any policy.

Redford Barracks Working Group – I was given comprehensive tour of Redford Barracks last month. Although it is not yet certain that the Barracks will close in 2022, it is important that we plan the future of the site. With the perimeter fence, the parade grounds and many buildings all listed there are significant constraints. It is likely the site will be converted to housing and some business space, but we have to be sure the roads, GPs and schools can cope. Additionally, I am keen that we look at converting one of the buildings to a hotel or perhaps to expand Firrhill High School on the site (the listed parade grounds would make a great multi-use area). Whatever happens, I have been clear with Council Officers that all of the surrounding communities in the wider area must be consulted.

Active Transport – I shall be speaking at an event on the 5th of June at 7pm in Pentland Community Centre which aims to promote active transport in southern Edinburgh.

Hunters Tryst School Site – No news.

Comiston Farmhouse – No news.