



## **Dingwall Academy Parent Council**

### **Minute of the Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 7pm**

#### **Present**

Helen Cameron  
Laura Ross  
Samantha Blyth  
Anita Munro  
Karen Cormack  
Alison MacLeod

Alister Mackinnon  
Lindsay Ramsay  
Mike Evans  
Graham Mackenzie  
Alan Radin  
Nigel Greenwood

#### **Apologies**

Sandra Rae  
Nigel Greenwood  
Angela MacLean  
Linda Watson

Margaret Patterson  
Alison MacLeod  
Stephen Mackenzie

The following revision will be made to the minute dated 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2014:

1. The date for the minibus driver training has yet to be set. The course cannot run without a minimum of eight volunteers.

There has been no response to the request for a minute secretary. Karen Cormack will ask if there is a senior pupils interested in the role.

#### **Matters Arising**

There will be a Duke of Edinburgh announcement to pupils this week. Sheena Forsyth will be managing the award within school. Discussions are currently taking place as to which skills are needed from volunteers, once this is agreed, the parent forum will be contacted and asked for assistance.

Karen Cormack will find out if P.E. volunteers are still required. If so, Lindsay Ramsay and Mike Evans are both interested.

The minibus driver training is still on hold until more volunteers are found. Sam Blyth will contact Dingwall Primary to see if they have anybody interested in participating.

The budget consultation has now been completed and returned. Karen Cormack confirmed the 1% staffing cut has been deferred for 1 year. However, it is 'anticipated' the cut will occur within the next academic year. What has been

confirmed for next session is that all schools will lose their entitlement to additional posts – in Dingwall Academy this is 2 full time members of staff. Karen Cormack and Helen Cameron will draft a letter to parents informing them of the potential effects of these changes:

1. Many classes will be at maximum numbers.
2. It is likely there will be a reduction in subjects offered, particularly at Advanced Higher stage.
3. There will be no guarantee of cover during staff absences and as such, all certified courses will take priority.

The Parent Council as a whole expressed their grave concern regarding the significant cost to every pupil in the light of these losses.

Online courses are currently being explored in an effort to increase the number of subjects that will be offered to senior pupils. The plans currently include a series of lessons, workshops and online collaboration between local academies. The use of Google Hangout to facilitate some of this work is also being explored.

### **Spring Fair (28<sup>th</sup> March 2015 11-3pm)**

Karen Cormack and Sam Blyth reported on the plans for the Spring Fair. The pupils are currently engaged at every level and the work is providing a great opportunity for contextualised learning within the Curriculum for Excellence..

- Every school group/department has been given the opportunity to raise funds with the profits going back to that group/department.
- Every S2 S.E. group has been tasked with the job of running a stall to raise funds for the school.
- Every job (except external activities) has been covered by a pupil group, from crowd control to promotional work.

The parent council have been asked to manage the external activities. Sam Blyth reported the following activities are currently being negotiated:

- Large inflatables (as requested by the pupils) including Human Table Football, A Wrecking Ball, Laser Tag and Bouncy Castles. The parent council agreed this package can be negotiated and booked with Karen Cormack and Helen Cameron's agreement rather than the whole committee having to come back together prior to the next meeting. Sam Blyth suggested the package would cost between £1,500 and £2,000. These activities will not necessarily run as a profit making exercise, rather the costs will be kept as low as possible in order to afford many pupils the opportunity to participate and also, as a marketing strategy to bring people to the fair.
- The Community Council stage will be booked to offer another platform for pupils to showcase their talents. Nigel Greenwood has provided booking details.
- Lindsay Ramsay will contact the Police and Fire Brigade to ask if they will provide a display of equipment. Sam Blyth to contact the Ambulance Service.

- Highland Highlife and Youth Highland have both agreed to provide activities and showcase some of their work on the day.
- E.Q Sports have also agreed to take part. The school are also planning to work with them on the revamping of Pefferside Park at a later date.
- Creative Skate have also been contacted but have yet to confirm their participation.
- Quotes have been requested from the British Red Cross and St Andrew's for first aid cover on the day.
- Graham Mackenzie will also look into other possibilities for entertainments.

In the event of bad weather it will be possible to bring a number of outside entertainments into the halls. Karen Cormack will also investigate 'inclement weather' insurance.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Cheque Account £1,543.09

Deposit Account £1,178.26

The two cheques for the sponsored walk refreshments have been cleared (£152.62 + £61.00)

There is a small outstanding amount due to Linda Watson for stationary and printer ink. This will be resolved as soon as Linda returns.

### **A.O.C.B**

Karen Cormack reported the I.T. 'refresh and reduction' will begin by April 2015. Guest Access to Wi-Fi for portable devices is also expected to be in place by the start of the next academic year. A pilot has not yet been completed for this project but one should start within the next few weeks.

Graham Mackenzie reported that the challenge of a right of way through the Academy had been raised again by a local person at the recent Community Council Meeting. The challenge has been handed over to law students at the University of Aberdeen. The Parent Council will await the outcome before deciding on a course of action.

The date of the next meeting is 2nd March 2015 at 7pm.