

Aberdeen Parent Council Forum
Meeting for Parent Councils

Monday 23rd January 2017
Town House, Aberdeen

Minutes of Meeting

PC Reps: Margaret Davidson (Aberdeen Grammar), Angela Bowyers (Mile End & Aberdeen Grammar) Colm O’Riordan (Aberdeen Grammar), Frances Reid (Hazelhead Primary) Allan Frances (Airyhall), Linda McKessick (Bridge of Don & Scotstown), Beata Woinska-Keatings (Ferryhill), Erik Aasterud (Aberdeen Grammar), Susan Pirie (Bucksburn Academy), Louise Bruce (Brimmond), Tony Rafferty (Cults Academy), Pauline Glendinning (Charleston), Chika Obi-Ofodie (Charleston), Kelly Murray (Stoneywood), and Susan Pirie (Bucksburn Academy).

Other: Ross Watson (Aberdeen City Council)

Apologies: Audrey (Walker Road), Donna Clark (St Machar Academy), Aurelie Irving-Morland (St Josephs) and Anne Singleton (Oldmachar), Lynn Scanlon (Aberdeen City Council)

Sederunt and Apologies for Absence

Margaret welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. She advised everyone that Derek Samson is changing roles and Lynn Scanlon will take over responsibility for supporting the Parent Council. As she was not able to attend the meeting, Ross Watson attended in her place. Margaret also passed on the apologies received.

Announcements

There were no announcements

Intimation of Any Other Competent Business

No intimations of AOCB

Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest

Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 14th November were updated to include the names of 2 additional attendees. After these changes were made the minutes were accepted by the APCF. They were proposed by Tony Rafferty and seconded by Colm O’Riordan.

Outstanding Action/Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

- Primary and secondary school meals surveys – Lynn Scanlon spoke to the Catering Manager and it was agreed they will be re-run in early part of this year.
- Aisling MacQuarry is going to provide feedback on the Children’s Plan in the near future. She was unable to provide feedback in time for this meeting as she is on leave at the moment.

Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools

Tony Rafferty advised that he will be attending a national meeting on bullying on 9th March. The main topic will be the events at Cults Academy. This is a very important meeting and Tony invited those present to email him with details of anything they want brought up, e.g. good practices, comments or concerns.

Aberdeen City Council is currently reviewing its Anti-Bullying policy and Kelly, Angie and Tony advised that they have volunteered to be on a focus group made up of parents, which is due to meet in January. As yet no date has been set but those present expressed their hopes that the meeting will take place in the near future so that Tony can feed back information from it to the national meeting.

It is hoped that the Aberdeen City Council anti-bullying policy will lead to a consistent approach to bullying across the city's schools.

Seat Belts on School Transport(Scotland) Bill (Parliamentary Reception for MSPs)

Tony Rafferty will be attending a meeting regarding seatbelts in school transport this week. Tony requested that anyone present who had any thoughts or comments email him in advance of the meeting on Wednesday. He advised that it is unclear at present what the proposal is.

Aberdeen City Council Update – Ross Watson Anti-Weapon Strategy

- An Anti-Weapons Crime pack has been developed for schools. The pack is based on the Ben Kinsella Trust resources as per recommendations from the review following the incident at Cults Academy. The pack will be distributed to all Aberdeen City schools.
- The pack will include a draft local authority policy which schools can provide feedback on. The pack includes learning resources (lesson plans for P7, posters, model assembly etc.) for primary and secondary. There is also a leaflet for families which will outline the protocol for when a child is found in possession of a weapon at school. There will be a model agenda item for Pupil Councils with further agenda items being issued to schools so that anti-weapon crime continues to be discussed. In addition to the review recommendations, resources for P1-P6 and S2-S4 will also be developed. The pack also includes badges and pencils displaying key anti-weapon crime messages.
- Head Teachers will be introduced to the pack at a local ASG meetings.
- The pack will be made available as a digital resource.
- Police Scotland have been working with S1 pupils in Aberdeen City schools on the topic of anti-weapon crime. They will also do so with S5 and S6 in the near future. This has been planned in partnership with the Council.
- Anti-Weapon Pledge – the Council is developing an online pledge with a hashtag. It is hoped that this will be endorsed by local and national celebrities. The key points of the pledge will be:
 - Never carry a weapon
 - Share information
- APFC members were interested in finding out more about the parent leaflet and were advised it will be made available to schools this session. Ross advised that if the APCF have any questions after reading it, he will be happy to provide answers.
Action: APCF members to email any questions to the APCF email inbox so Margaret can pass them on.

- APCF members are interested to know if incidents will be catalogued and measured to evaluate the process and to ensure that it is working. Members of the group suggested that pupils be given talks by the police which include the real-life consequences of carrying weapons. **Action:** Ross will pass on both comments to the relevant council staff.

School Football

- Progress has been made with Aberdeen Secondary Schools' Football Association (ASSFA) allowing the pupil to play in his year group team in matches between other Aberdeen City Schools during the current season.
- The ASSFA will discuss this further at their AGM in May. The chairperson of the group previously indicated that he will campaign for change to the rules going forward.
- Currently, the pupil is not permitted to play in cup matches or against schools in other areas in Scotland. The matter is being explored by the pupil's mother with support from the school.
- The issue is complex as age groups for competitive football are compiled and overseen worldwide by FIFA, by UEFA in Europe and in Scotland by the SFA.
- Ross advised that there is provision for dispensation to play in a category a year younger or older, however age alone is not grounds for this.
- A discussion took place on the importance of ensuring the small number of pupils affected by the rules each year are allowed to play alongside their peers. The hope is that no other child will need to go through the upset and distress experienced by this pupil.

Treasurer's Report

- The Treasurer's Report was not provided. Due to an oversight, it was not moved to the start of the meeting to allow Tony to cover it before he left to attend another meeting.

National Parent Forum of Scotland Update

Colm O'Riordan fed back on the last NPFS meeting:

- Governance Review – the consultation on the Governance Review closed on 6th January and has been the focus of the previous 2 NPFS meetings. Colm advised that both the NPFS and the APCF fed into the review. He reminded everyone that there had been concern in Aberdeen that some of the money raised from a council tax increase will be used to close the attainment gap in other parts of the country where there is more deprivation. Confirmation has been received that the money being used to fund the initiative will come from general taxation.
- PISA results – the latest PISA results have seen Scotland drop back from above average to average. John Swinney MSP spoke of pushing through reforms which will address this. It is all about trying to get teachers in schools to close the attainment gap.
- The next meeting which will take place on Saturday will focus on the review of the Parental Involvement Act which has now been in place for 10 years. The group will review the results this weekend, with the report being published in March. As part of the review MORI were asked to speak to random parents to find out if they know about Parent Councils and their effectiveness. 85% didn't know what Parent Councils do. APCF members expressed their concern at this statistic and led to a short discussion on how we get more parents to engage with Parent Councils.

ESC Committee Update

There is not much coming up at the moment as it is getting close to election time. An additional committee meeting has been set for 1st March but Tony and Louise have not been made aware of the agenda yet.

- Rezoning – proposed changes which will remove a few areas of dual zoning will be discussed. No objections have been received.
- Recruitment and selection process for teachers – the proposal is to stop the council policy which allows teachers to take up post before their PVG is cleared. This is the result of the council's review following the allegations of child abuse within football. All teachers taking up post under this policy already had a PVG in place for a previous school. There has been no suggestion that this is in response to any incidents within the authority.
- Imagineers – 300 children from Bramble Brae, Manor Park, Riverside and Tullos primaries are taking part in a Children's Parliament Project called the Imagineers. The committee will receive feedback on the views of the children who imagine Aberdeen as a place where every child is healthy, happy, safe and doing their best. Louise advised that the committee are looking for questions to ask the Imagineers and to pass any on to her before Wednesday.

AOCB

School catering – Airyhall is amongst a small number of primary schools now using payment cards for school meals. This pilot has been very well received and it is the understanding of some APCF members that it is being rolled out across the city.

Action: Margaret to ask Lynn Scanlon if she knows when the system will be available in all primary schools.

Future Meeting Dates

APCF Dates (All in Committee Room 5) Town House	E&CS Committee Dates
Monday 23 rd January 2017, 18.30 - 21.00	Thursday 26 th January 2017
Monday 29 th May 2017, 18.30 - 21.00	Thursday 1 st June 2017
Monday 11 th September 2017, 18.30 - 21.00	Thursday 14 th September 2017
Monday 13 th November 2017, 18.30 - 21.00	Thursday 16 th November 2017