

Dingwall Academy Parent Council

Minutes 22nd Jan'24

Present:

Sam Blyth	Karen Cormack	Karen O'Hanlon	Kerry Webb
Gill Macpherson	Paul Macpherson	Hilary Cameron	Nicola Wojtunik
John MacDonald	Steph O'Connell		

1. Apologies: John Tompkins
2. Minutes from previous meeting approved by Gill and seconded by John M
3. Matters arising:
 - Absence of councillors noted. **ACTION: Sam to raise at next DCC meeting.**
 - School minibus. **ACTION: Karen OH to contact Graham Mackenzie, who offered to raise this with HC.**
 - Concerns re vaping. **ACTION: Karen C and Karen OH to discuss this in context of involving more parents in activity on back of positive response to Facebook post (>100 parents).**
 - Gambling harms. **ACTION Karen C and Karen OH to provide info for parents as previously discussed.**
4. Headteacher's Report
 - Staffing – just beginning to make enquiries within the school. Too early to know impact on 2024/25.
 - Minibus – on the agenda for HC Headteachers meeting later this month, update to follow: **ACTION: Karen C**
 - CCTV – 5 cameras installed as discussed. Proving useful.
 - Christmas Fair – Karen C expressed her thanks to the PC volunteers. Christmas Fair exceeded expectations, with excellent S6 pupil involvement, also many adults hadn't been in the school before.
 - As with previous years, S2 pupils will be holding a scaled-down spring fair on Friday 28th March.
 - S5/6 prelims have started and S2/S4/S5 options processes are underway, with more info being shared with parents/carers, as requested by the PC.
 - School closures – take the lead from bus companies, often not cut and dry. Thurs last week was worst case scenario as started to snow heavily once decision had been taken to open to senior pupils. HC Headteachers will be reviewing the process, as no longer reflects working practices. Don't know if plan is to take parent/carer input. Key worker/vulnerable groups need to be looked at. **ACTION: Karen C to update at next meeting**
5. Treasurer's Report – Cheque Account balance £6,223.50 and savings £79.66.
6. Christmas Fair Funds Raised – Total raised £4,130.50 comprising £1,595 from tables, £703.70 from the bottle stall and £1,833.80 from the raffle.

Suggestion from Chair, following discussions with Karen C, that the PC explores supporting the school to deliver timetabled vocational learning such as Construction. This would not be a one-off project but a longer-term commitment, it could include providing tools/equipment and/or access to a dedicated space on or potentially off site, the latter potentially providing new opportunities for potential employers to get involved. **ACTION: Karen C will find out which Highland schools deliver Construction and look into costings. Karen OH and Karen C to workup the 'business case'.**

Suggestion that the sensory garden project be progressed as a 'community project' and not funded by the PC. A post seeking parent/carer volunteers has been drafted and businesses will be re-engaged. **ACTION: Karen OH has reached out to John T and will pursue this offline and report back at the next meeting.**

Dingwall Community Council have offered Dingwall Academy use of the 'marie curie garden'. No funds required, DCC offer to cut back vegetation, enabling the school to access to this additional outdoor space.

Agreed that PC will run a 2024 Christmas Fair and date set - 6th December. Important that we review tabling pricing, T&Cs etc. so tables on sale from summer'24. Will also look to improve the process for stallholder paying and receiving notification of payment.

Suggestion that PC needs a clear narrative on what we are fundraising for, amount required etc. before committing to any further fundraising such as a Summer Fair. **ACTION: Karen OH for narrative and Sam to notify stallholders on Facebook re Christmas Fair.**

7. Constitution – draft constitution updated and agreed. **ACTION: Karen OH to finalise document.**

8. AOB

- Community stage for Spring fair – **ACTION: Sam**
- Highland Council Parent Council Forum – Dingwall Academy now participating in this important group. Last meeting focused on school meals, next meeting 30 Jan'24. Also, now using the email address provided by HC for all official business, as per instructions from the Council.

9. Date of next meeting - **Monday 22 April 2024 – Teams/in person tbc**