

# Torphichen Parent Council

Torphichen Primary School  
The Loan  
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## Minutes & Actions of Torphichen Primary School Parent Council Meeting and Annual General Meeting ('AGM') 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 - 6.00pm

### Attendees

Susan Campbell (Chair)	SC	Thea de Joode (Vice Chair)	TJ
Alix McFarlane (Treasurer)	AM	Richard Venters (Secretary)	RV
Marnie Ferguson (Head Teacher)	MF	Laura Gallagher (Principal Teacher)	LJ
Catherine Murray	CM	Stephanie Sage	SS
Moira Gault	MG	Jen Neville	JN
Gill Young	GY		

### Apologies

Julie Yuill	Julia Miller
Anna Thomson	Paula Cherry

### 1. Introductions & Apologies

- SC welcomed all attendees and apologies were stated per above

### 2. Minutes & actions from last meeting

- The minutes from the previous meeting were approved and actions updated on.
- By way of an update; 23/09-01 can now be closed as the Constitution has been updated to reflect that the activities and purpose of the Council now include the nursery. 23/01-01 and 12/02-01 – these remain open and are still being scoped and costs by staff and the Parent Council, an exercise interrupted by COVID and the school holidays, but it is recognised that the outdoor learning aspects in particular are now higher priority because of COVID. 12/02-02 remains open and a new fundraising meeting (possibly virtual) will be organised. 11/12-03 can now be closed with the playground alterations having been made.

### 3. AGM - Nominations and elections of committee for the new school year

- Complying with the requirement to offer up the four officeholder positions for re-election each year, the Chair asked if there were any volunteers willing to stand for office. No new volunteers were forthcoming and so each of the four incumbent officeholders put themselves forward for a third year and were duly re-elected.
- It is worth noting that each of the existing officeholders has expressed that this will be the last year they will be willing to continue to fill the roles and so if the Parent Council is to continue (there being a legal requirement for each of the positions to be filled), new volunteers will be needed in time for the next AGM.
- As such if anyone is interested in exploring what's involved, please feel free to get in touch – it would also be possible for the roles to be 'job shared' if that made them more appealing

- The Council's Financial report has been completed and audited by Julie Fisher (to whom we extend our thanks) and is available from Mrs Callan
- As a reminder, all minutes from previous meetings are available on ParentZone.

#### **4. Headteacher's Report**

- MF extended her thanks to the Parent body for their patience regarding the time it took for a new calendar of events to be made available by the school and for the comparative lack of events (when compared to prior years) which has been the result of ongoing and changing guidance on COVID.
- Focus in this new school year remains on teaching and learning but this will be done in conjunction with regular risk reviews and with the guidance of appropriate bodies to ensure staff and pupil safety remains paramount. The teaching staff are confident that the measures currently in place leave pupils and staff in as safe a position as they can be during the pandemic.
- Literacy & Numeracy – the teaching staff are undertaking a lot of early assessment with the children to judge where they sit following the extended period of learning from home during the lockdown period. Areas for development will be identified and worked on.
- The school is also keen to focus on Agile learning this year – considering the extent to which the skills being taught in school are preparing the children for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and also the methods of teaching – trying to use the learn from home period and the significant increase in the use of technology in learning that was required there to springboard changes that will remain in place. As such they are looking for some parent volunteers to experience and feedback on the Agile learning approach they are developing and will send out communications on this to the Parent body shortly.
- Outdoor learning, which is something the school was looking to build up and invest in prior to COVID is clearly now receiving more focus and the school are working with TPC to develop this further. It was noted that every one of the P7 Leadership role candidates expressed a desire for more outdoor learning both for wellbeing reasons as well as it being seen as exciting. As a school and with school funds each child and staff member will be provisioned with waterproof gear to continue that outdoor learning can be undertaken throughout the school year.
- The school continue to look for ways in which they can use technology to enhance learning in view of COVID restrictions – including for example looking to use SWAY to conduct full school assemblies which worked well during the lockdown period.
- With singing currently not permitted in school it isn't likely that there will be a school show this year, though the teaching staff are looking to see what alternative Nativity events might replace this.

#### **5. Fundraising Report/Forthcoming Events:**

- Given the restrictions being imposed as a result of COVID it is not considered feasible to hold a Christmas Fayre this year – since this was by far and away the largest fundraising event in the calendar this year, the impact on monies raised is likely to be significant. As such the Fundraising team are looking at a series of other potential events which could be run in a COVID environment, including; a pumpkin trail for Halloween; a car based treasure hunt similar to one run by the Church a few years ago; an online quiz and raffle. Other ideas would be much welcomed and can be forwarded to TdJ in the first instance.
- Bags for School will be run again this year with bags being asked for by 27<sup>th</sup> October.
- It was noted that we are still looking to appoint someone (or more than one person) to act as a Grants coordinator to try and secure funds from businesses, grant making bodies and charities to support our efforts. If you have any interest in exploring this further, please let SC know.
- In terms of what we are fundraising for – we had been working with the school, prior to COVID, on a wishlist of items at the top of which was a new projector. This has been reassessed in the current environment and more priority is now being given to outdoor learning support. As such the school and TPC are looking at what can be acquired to incorporate outdoor shelter and/or learning spaces, new sheds, tools for the pupils to begin learning with. This will be discussed further at the next TPC meeting.

#### **6. Financial Report:**

- The Council accounts begin the year in a reasonably healthy position with an opening balance of £3,427.82. This reflects the impact of £1,946.19 being raised in the last financial year (£1,500 of this from the Xmas Fayre) offset by £534.36 of outgoings.
- A copy of the report has been circulated to the school and is available on request.

- Following the success of the Christmas Fayre and various smaller initiatives, the balance in the account now stands at £3,324.81. A copy of the financial update is included as an appendix to these minutes.
- A request was made by the Nursery via MF for support in acquiring a Bird feeding Station and some outdoor paint at a total cost of c.£70 – this was approved by TPC.

#### **7. AOB:**

- A query was raised by SS as to whether, if and when the outdoor learning plans come to fruition, parents might be able to help assemble this equipment to help keep costs down. MF advised that for small projects/items this should be achievable but for anything material they are required by the Council to use approved contractors.
  - CM raised a query as to whether TPC should look to acquire a charity status which would enable us to look to support fundraising through the use of things like Gift Aid. SC advised that this had been looked at before and hadn't been considered feasible but agreed to look at this again and an action has been created accordingly.
  - AM – raised again the point noted in AGM section above, that to ensure the orderly continuation of TPC in its current format we need to ensure successors to the four offices are found- please do reach out to any of us if you'd like to ask questions as to what's involved, how much time it absorbs etc
  - SC to MF query around format of Parents evening this year. MF advised it will be conducted via Skype and the school will be in touch in the next few days to advise parents how to book their slots.
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- Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 6.30pm –to be held virtually

## Existing Actions

23/09-01	Constitution to be updated to reflect involvement of the nursery	This has now been incorporated	Closed	SC
12/02-01	AT to begin sourcing more detailed costings for Outdoor Classroom project and to feed these into TdJ/JY to allow them to complete grant application forms etc		Open	LT/TdJ/JY
12/02/02	Next fundraising meeting to be organised and advised via Facebook page		Open	TdJ

## New Actions

Action Ref	Action Details	Action update	Status	Owner
28/09-01	TPC to assess the benefits and obstacles to applying for charitable status		Open	SC