

Spean Bridge Primary School Parent Group Meeting

12th March 2020

Present - Norma Young, Iain Jackson, Lindsay, Ruth, Rachel S, Eilidh, Ali B, Kim B.

Apologies - none

Previous Minutes - approved

Community Benefit - Mitie have said that the school would need to take responsibility for any equipment installed which SSE wouldn't approve. Group agreed not to submit an application at this time. The hall committee may apply for something themselves. It was agreed this item can be removed from the agenda for future meetings.

RoyBridge Update - Iain recapped the meeting from September 2019 held in RoyBridge Hall when people were encouraged to contact him. He has had very few people contact him and with that number so low it has been decided Roy Bridge Primary will not open in August this year. There are now 2 plans.

A - Roy Bridge school is mothballed further.

Plan B - there is a formal closure consultation which takes one year. Local council members who were supportive of RB staying open in the past are now supportive of a closure.

Currently Dorothy Gibb (estates dept) is looking after RB.

A community group have informally approached the highland council about transferring the use of the school buildings for community purpose but this couldn't happen until after the closure consultation.

Parent consensus seems to support closure. There have not been high numbers wishing to reopen it. The group discussed should Speans projected population increase be considered - current pattern is approx 15 kids per primary with nursery numbers gauging the same. Including house building underway and those projected numbers we would be looking at a school roll of 120 pupils (current roll is 110) Projected roll for 2029 is 120+. By 2027 the highland council will own Spean Primary outright and they have already reviewed the ground available at Spean for possible expansion in the future.

It was highlighted that properties in the Roy Bridge catchment were still selling despite the schools mothballing so lack of school not impacting growth of village.

The group discussed Spean school borrowing some of the resources currently sitting unaided in RoyBridge to benefit the children and could be returned if needed but this would need to be discussed again in further detail.

All present at the meeting tonight we're in favour of moving to a formal closure consultation. Support was vocalised for community transfer if possible. In place of the community council the local SCIO would be consulted.

Iain and Norma left the meeting at 7pm.

Fundraising - A healthy bank balance of approx £9000 at this time. Bingo planned for next week but will likely be cancelled - the group will make that call on Monday and notify everyone. Plans ongoing for a summer raffle and fun night. There will be another meeting in April when the schools go back to discuss this further. The group will send Kim a list/plan. The shed beside the container is to be cleaned out and used by the fundraising group to store items.

Unclear if £5000 donation to the school cheque had been cashed and the SCIO still have not been sent invoices for the Aug-Dec 2019 term. These should be sent to Brian Donald. Kim will check the money is in the school account. It was discussed that perhaps the SCIO should type up something formal for the arrangement/donation offered for transport costs. The donation is for £3000 per year for two years.

Financial Requests -

£5000 cheque given - Kim to check if cashed

No other requests submitted. This cheque will include the costs for school trips. Kim's planned transport spends total £3170 with £3000 expected from SCIO.

A parent suggested the Rural Complex 'seed to supper' project would be a great activity for the P1/2 class. There are 10 sessions in total held at the complex. The group discussed how this might work eh sending half the class at a time or p1 for 5 and p2 for 5. Kim to discuss further with staff.

Discussed canteen supervision - Kim currently covering lunches and nursery breaks daily which is now impacting the running of the school. Clear need for additional staff cover but this isn't available.

A suggestion was made for the school to ask parents to support transport for trips like swimming lessons to alleviate pressure on staff.

SB13 - Ali B has applied for funding through Arkaig Forest Trust for an art project for P4-7 in Sept. Ali asked for a donation of £500 from the fundraising group to help with this. Approved by 3 members.

Headteachers Report - Kim will attach to the minutes.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Next meeting scheduled for June 2020, date to be confirmed