

FIRRHILL HIGH SCHOOL
PARENT COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES 28TH MAY 2018

Present : Fred Bell (Chair), Susan Bailey, Richard Imlach, Martin Pickett , Margaret Hampton (treasurer), Magz Smith, Ian Gebbie, Susan Ross, Jane Williams, Stephen Preston, Ruth Gebbie, Romy Ritchie, Carolyn Hargest,

Apologies: Julie Darling (secretary), Lucie St John, Alison Brookes, Jon Buglass, Ross Isdale,

Staff: Graham Hamilton

Secretary: Jane Williams (in Julie Darling's absence)

Welcome from Fred and update on the format of the meeting.

1. PREVIOUS MIINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting on 23rd April were accepted.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Fred received clarification that Minutes are not considered to be personal data in the context of GDPR.

3. CHAIR REPORT

Dates for next academic year's PC meetings: Fred (Chair) advised that he will liaise with the school representatives to set dates for the next year's meetings.

It was discussed whether we should change the number and timings of meetings? Agreed that dates and number probably as good as they could be and that two meetings per term for the parent council and the working groups seemed fair.

The chair advised that if there were any parents interested in being involved in the recruitment of teaching staff that the next recruitment and selection course was running in June. Whilst it was difficult for many people to commit to taking part in the interview process the Chair wanted to encourage anyone who might be available to do inteviews to attend the course. He reported that he had found being involved in the interview process at Firrhill very rewarding.

Chair also highlighted that the Schools Appeal Panel needs volunteer and encouraged anyone who was available.

Finally, Fred wanted to record the Parent Council thanks to Mags and Stephen whose children had now finished at Firrhill and therefore were standing down from the parent council for their contribution to the Parent Council over the years.

4. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Parent Council agreed that they were happy to adopt Firrhill High School Data Protection policy which would apply to all PC, working group and PTA members.

Graham reminded the PC that photographs should be included in the retention schedule.

ACTION: Policy on GDPR agreed.

At this point the meeting was joined by Councillor Scott Arthur. The Chair welcomed him to his first meeting of Firrhill's Parent Council.

5. DUKE OF EDINBURGH AND SALTIRE AWARD

A wide-ranging discussion then took place over whether there was any possibility of offering to those young people who are independently volunteering and taking part in activities the chance to achieve award under the Duke of Edinburgh scheme or the Saltire award.

Graham explained that the Duke of Edinburgh award is currently offered as part of the school curriculum as a course choice at S3 and S6. The school was very supportive of the Duke of Edinburgh award but that there was expense involved not only in terms of ensuring that the teachers had the necessary training to support activities such as the expeditions but in terms of cover the cost of taking the teacher out of the classroom. If the school was able to be the operating authority for young people who wished to achieve the award independently then there may be a resource implication. Graham highlighted that the Saltire Award was something that was included in the School Improvement Plan.

Generally members of the PC highlighted the wider benefits of young people engaging in volunteering and their future employability.

It was agreed that there was merit in setting up a working group to look at whether there was a way of facilitating those young people who have not taken Duke of Edinburgh as a course choice to achieve the award via the school.

ACTION: Working group to be set up.

6. HEAD TEACHER REPORT

Staffing report

Graham advised of a number of changes in the staffing.

Probationers in Art, Biology, English, maths and physics will be coming to Firrhill in August.

Two staff – Mrs McClelland and Mrs McPhee were retiring and Mrs Adams support for learning leader leaving.

Mrs Porter (Depute) was going on secondment to Council Headquarters as a QIO. Mr Isdale will be covering 23 months secondment.

Mr Edwards had been appointed as curriculum leader for Humanities taking over from Mrs McClelland.

Graham advised that Mrs Chambers, Firrhill's invigilator chief will be stepping down. Mrs Chambers has invigilated the exams and the prelims for the last 10 years and the PC recorded their thanks to her.

Graham advised that the new timetable started 22nd May and all appeared to be running smoothly.

He also advised the PC of the Whitewater Writing Camp Project undertaken by 20 S1s. This project was funded by PEF money that the school received during the year.

The output of the project was two books produced by the S1s. The S1s were responsible for every part of the book. The books are 'Project: Iris' and 'Vengeance' by T.M. Cooks. Both books can be bought on Amazon and royalties have been donated to Kira's Campaign. Every part of the book they did. The school plans to run the project again next year. It was suggested that they might wish to contribute an article to Firrhill News.

Graham reported on the magnificent school and city effort to raise funds for the Kira campaign. In total the pupils at the school raised approximately £15k. £5k was raised at the bag packing, £3.5k on first day along. The whole school challenge money (£1600) also went to Kira's campaign.

Graham also advised that School Improvement Plan had been given out of Friday afternoon. It included a focus on growth mindset and an important shift from structures to looking at consistency in lesson to lesson from teacher to teacher to ensure that everyone has the same high expectations around learning, taking leadership, expectations around behaviour, excellence in teaching, learning intention, feedback criteria, etc.

Graham advised that he would like noted the excellent work the teachers at Firrhill do and how much progress been made in last two years. Parent Council confirmed that they too would like to thank staff.

He noted that there had been some challenges in terms of staff turnover but he was confident that this will not impact the school going forward. He highlighted that whilst it may feel like there has been a lot of change in staff that it was a very positive sign that some of it was due to promotion. Others were due to retirement or maternity leave or relocating to be closer to home.

Some discussion took place over what interviews consists of and the fact that applicants do not have to deliver a lesson as is common in England and in other areas of Scotland and whether it would helpful if that could be part of the interview.

The Chair highlighted the fact that the PC does have the opportunity to contribute to the recruitment process and again encouraged parents to attend the training to allow them to take part in interview panels.

7. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

As this was Cllr Arthur's first point the Chair invited him to address the board.

Cllr Arthur highlighted how the fundraising activities undertaken for the Kira appear across the board helped to challenge some of the negative perceptions of young people.

Unfortunately, antisocial behaviour of a small minority of young people had been raised at the community council he had recently attended

He also advised that the army are likely to leave the Redford Barracks by 2011. He advised that there are a number of plans around whether the barracks will be converted to housing or a hotel etc. There are some challenges ahead as the land includes listed buildings and the fence and parade grounds are also listed. Consultation is likely to be after summer.

Finally, he advised that the traffic on Oxfords Road North is going to be reviewed for road safety and parking

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A question was raised over whether the advanced higher maths exam had been disrupted by the fact the space was shared with Highers and national 5s. The Head had not heard any reports of this from elsewhere.

Question was asked over the who the Lead Eco teacher will be as a probationer teacher is the current one and that the eco committee may not be able to run without a teacher. Carolyn (PC lead for Eco) would like to assure that would not be a lot of work for the teacher. It was discussed whether it could be a parent? It was supposed to be pupil lead and in past been a couple of dynamic s6s so that could be an option.