

**Firrhill High School
Parent Council Meeting
Minutes 12 November 2018**

Present : Fred Bell (Chair), Jon Buglas, Ian Gebbie, Louise Wilson, Jennifer Orr, Deirdre McKay, Nigel Harper, Carolyn Hargest, Romy Ritchie, Margaret Douglas, Tim Wallace, Jane Williams, Richard Imach.

Apologises: Susan Bailey

Secretary: Julie Darling

Welcome

Minutes – Minutes from the previous meeting agreed.

Chairman's Report:

**Firrhill PC – Chair's Report
12 November 2018**

South West Locality Group Meeting 6 November

I attended this meeting which brings together Parent Council reps from local primary and secondary schools. Agenda points of note included a short presentation by the SQA and an item on council budgets. The SQA presentation was high level outlining their role, the Scottish exam structure, what their website contains, etc. The most interesting part possibly was their offer to come and speak to individual parent councils and provide a little more depth. I think this would be useful to us; agreed?

Action – Set up meeting for SQA to attend Parent Council Meeting....

Parental Engagement session 12 September

Attendees were a mix of primary and high school reps although far more of the former and most but not all were PC members. Main issues included:

Membership & involvement - other than usual parental reps it was suggested that local police, business, church & other faith related, community, councillors, council parental engagement officers, pupils might all be worth considering inviting along. Also recognised that addressing gender balance &, diversity, disabled access & attendance would be a good thing.

Barriers - all the usual issues recognised including time, location, disabled access, childcare conflicts, perceived lack of knowledge and / or skills, existing cliques, financial costs, language.

Overcoming barriers - ideas included changing meeting times and locations, running crèches to allow parents with babies & toddlers to attend, bringing in translators to support parents with language issues, running working groups to allow those with particular interests to engage, producing jargon busters to help demystify education terminology.

Recruitment - all recognised the challenge here; suggestions included mailshot to all parents, school gate recruitment (recognising this works for primary more easily), running open mornings and changing meeting times to accommodate different groups, meeting outside schools, using social media to raise awareness and engagement (one PC had even produced their own video to promote their work), setting up at parents' evenings & induction days, and using noticeboards.

Making PCs more friendly - ideas included establishing parents' rooms for toddlers & babies, running BBQs, markets, quiz nights etc and other family friendly events, running drop in sessions.

A wide range of ideas were raised and it was recognised that what works on one place might not work elsewhere – much depends on the school and its 'constituency'. It was food for thought though and there were some ideas we could consider although it was also heartening that we're doing some good stuff in these areas already. One for another PC discussion or maybe a new working group to look into and come up with proposals?

Social Media for Parents Councils & PTAs

Connect are running a free online event on this topic on 28 November. This online session will walk through some do's and don'ts when using Facebook and Twitter to connect with parents and promote the activities of Parent Councils & PTAs. Registration is via:

<https://connect.scot/events/social-media-parent-councils-and-ptas-28-november-online>

Edinburgh Council – Planning for Change, Delivering Services 2019-2023

A reminder that we all have the opportunity to participate in the consultation on the above process and the possible budget cuts that might be required. The consultation is open until 7 December 2018 and is accessed via the following link:

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/bi/change/>

Edinburgh – Placing in Schools Appeals Panel

New members are still sought for this body which hears appeals from parents against the Council's decisions to refuse school placing requests at Primary and High School level or appeals from parents relating to exclusion decisions made by schools. Speak to Fred for further information.

GDPR

A reminder that we are all bound by GDPR and that we all have an individual to ensure that we are only hold personal data where is good reason to do so within the terms of our Parent Council policy on this.

Ukulele Club

We have been approached by one Adam Kenicer MMus who is a guitar/ukulele teacher based in Edinburgh. He wonders if there is interest in establishing a ukulele after-school club at FHS. Adam has not contacted the school about this and is offering his services in a private capacity at a rate of £34 per hour... He advises that he has PVG Disclosure and has completed Child Protection in Education (Music) Level 2 through Educare. Adam notes that he has been running such a club at Bruntsfield Primary School for some time and that it has been popular. Should anyone be interested in taking this forward at all he can be contacted on 07789152424.

Treasurer Report -

Current financial position

The Parent Council's only regular source of income is funding from City of Edinburgh Council, which is transferred annually. Funding of £1,135.17 was transferred in September. The City of Edinburgh Council also pays for membership of Connect, which includes insurance cover.

There is £1,380.68 available in the Parent Council bank account with no outstanding liabilities from last year.

Funding Requests

The Working Groups were asked to identify expected funding requests for this session, in order that the Parent Council could agree an indicative budget for each group. The requests are detailed below.

Last year the Parent Council agreed that a contingency of £200 should be held back to cover events or other items that we might want to fund later in the year. The PC is asked to consider the level of contingency it should retain in the account before committing to the requests for this year.

Working Group requests for 2018/19

| Working group | Total Details group request (£) | £ |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------|
| Health and Wellbeing | 115 Refreshments for parenting course S1 parents event refreshments Mindset/stress event refreshments | 35 30 50 |
| Environment | 475 Dr Bike - 2 mechanic 1 hour session | 100 |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|
| | | Velodrome trip/ RUTS bike maintenance course | 250 |
| | | 1 four door locker unit and fixing charge | 125 |
| Business and Enterprise | 100 | Jobs fair refreshments, photocopies, badges | 100 |
| Communications | 370 | Ink /paper for newsletter | 150 |
| | | Firrhill news printing for new parents in June | 220 |
| PC events | 30 | Refreshments for next AGM | 30 |
| TOTAL | 1075 | | 1075 |

For information, the table below details the working groups' approved budgets and spend in 2017/18.

Working Group Budgets and Spend in 2017/18

| | | Budget (£) | Spend (£) |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Health and wellbeing | Total | 374 | 361.10 |
| Parenting course refreshments | | | 30.96 |
| Mindset event refreshments | | | 106.14 |
| Training of mindset mentors | | | 224.00 |
| Environment | Total | 400 | 419.20 |
| Hyacinth bulbs | | | 54.00 |
| Picnic bench | | | 365.20 |
| Business and enterprise | Total | 100 | 23.18 |
| Jobs fair | | | 23.18 |
| Communications | Total | 320 | 289.00 |
| | | | 100.00 |
| FHN printed edition for P7 parents | | | 189.00 |

Recommendation

The Parent Council is asked to:

- Agree the level of contingency that should be held in the Parent Council account.
- Agree the indicative budget for each working group

Contingency agreed at £200.00
All Budgets have been approved.

Other Business.

BA Systems came to the school to talk to the S2 pupils. This was part of the STEM curriculum. Concern over the ethical position of the company BA systems and the appropriateness of this company giving a talk at the school.

Action – Graham/ Fred to find guidance around the ethics surrounding businesses visiting the school.

Travel Plan

Carolyn Hargest – Aims and Adjectives of the Travel Plan

To give more leverage for help with signage, dropped kerbs etc.

Bidding for Lockers

Electronic Information for Bus schedules.

Lighting in the dell.

Mirrors on the school drive

Some of these items would be great to implement and will be looked into and the Action points will be addressed.

Teaching Cover

A couple of concerns have been raised over teaching cover for Advanced Higher and S3 Maths.

Graham reiterated that in respect of Advanced Higher all periods would not always be taught by teacher and pupils would be required to work on their own but with support if needed. In respect of the S3 Maths Graham stated that although there was a teacher down the classes were not at a disadvantage as pupils were supported. A Maths teacher has now been appointed.

Head Teachers Report

In brief –

Staffing - Firrhill staffing is nationally in a good position.

Finances – At present no difficulties – allocation to refurbish toilets, electronic taps etc.

Attainment / Performance - Twin challenge to raise attainment and close the gap between deciles. All detailed information is available in the Attainment Review Report.

Graham noted that the overall results were reflective of a tremendous effort in the school and thanks must go to staff and pupils for these significant improvements.