

Firrhill High School
Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association Annual General Meeting
Minutes 4 September 2017

Present : Fred Bell (Chair), Magz Smith, Carolyn Hargest, Susan Bailey, Cheryl Primrose, Ian Gebbie, Romy Ritchie, Stephen Preston, Ruth Gebbie, Richard Imach, Jon Buglas, Joyce Swan, Christine Olsen, Pauline Clark, Lynne Arnot, Elspeth Wedgwood, Rosanne Murphy, Ariana Allen, Ross Isdale, Alison Murphy, Michael Musialdwic, Dawn Alsop and Michael Gordon, Roz Ranger.

Apologises: Margaret Hampton, Alison Brookes and Gordon Jardine.

Staff : Martin Pickett

Secretary: Julie Darling

Welcome

Fred welcomed everybody to the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Parent Council and the Parent Teachers Association.

Minutes of 2016 AGM

The minutes of the previous year's AGM were reviewed. No matter arising and minutes were approved.

Chair's report from Fred Bell

2016/17 has been another busy year for Firrhill Parent Council and it's been my first year as Chair so I'd like to start by thanking all the PC members for their hard work, and for their support and help to me over the period. I'd like to offer a special mention too to Catriona Luff who as my predecessor did such a fantastic job in the role before me.

As the HT Graham has now fully settled in at Firrhill and we've appreciated his openness and commitment to working with us; we look forward to another productive year working with him and his team. I'm particularly keen to help build parental involvement and engagement with the school where we can. And as always I'd be delighted to hear parents or carers views on how we can do that.

2016/7 Overview

The PC has been active across a number of areas and you'll hear about some of the very practical achievements shortly from our Working Group representatives. Other activity has included:

- the Annual Jobs Fair & career skills support
- the S1 parents social night
- the Holocaust Memorial Day
- the parental communications survey
- engagement with the school on the curriculum & timetable changes which have now been implemented;
- work towards the new website and so on – a full year indeed!

We have also continued to support the South West Locality Group which brings together parent councils from this part of the city

In closing my short report, I would like to again thank our all school, parent and ex-officio members, for all their time, commitment and support to Firrhill Parent Council. I would also highlight the work done by Ruth Gebbie and the PTA members for their fantastic fund raising activity,

A special thanks finally goes to my fellow office bearers - Margaret Hampton in her role as treasurer and to Julie Darling as our Secretary.

Working Groups

A huge part of the parent council work is undertaken by our PTA and our different working groups. These groups allow parents to support the school in lots of different areas in a practical way and I'd now like to ask each group lead to provide a short summary on their work over the last year:

PTA – Ruth Gebbie

Business and Enterprise Group - Catriona

Communication group - Jane Williams

Environment Group - Carolyn Hargest

Health and Well Being – Margaret Hampton

Parent Council Membership

I would like to say thank you to those PC members stepping down:

- Ros Ranger our school staff rep who has provided such great support to the school and PC over many years – and to wish her all the best in your new role at Balerno HS
- Ruth McQuillan, who's provided so much input to the PC and I'm pleased to say will continue to deliver the very successful parenting courses
- Catriona – again I'm very pleased she will continue on the Business & Enterprise WG
- Councillor Elaine Aitken who stepped down format the time of the local elections

Working Groups Reports

Business and Enterprise Group

Have registered with Event Bright to collate responses for the job fair.
Interview Skills and CV writing events undertaken. Planning with the school an information evening for parents about modern apprentices.

Working on - Preparing for the job fair on the 16th June. Consider issues arising from recent Creative Career Conversations event hosted at Firrhill.

Communications Group

Survey drafted and circulated to parents on their preferences regarding communication. Parent council Information on website been reviewed and ready to be updated as soon as access becomes available. Reviewed Firrhill News for May and June and the Bumper edition to be given out to P7 parents at the June Information Evening. A massive thanks to Carolyn Hargest once again for all the hard work she puts into producing Firrhill News every month. She is both the editor and the photographer and without her there would be no Firrhill News.

Working On - Website – WG ready to update the Parent Council website pages as soon as access to the new school website is available. Current pages reviewed and areas to be updated identified. Twitter – consideration being given to a Firrhill Parent Council and an Env. Group twitter account. Guidance being developed to how this would be run and managed. Firrhill communication methods – feedback that parents would find it useful to have a comprehensive list of twitter account and other forms of electronic communication being used at Firrhill. This may be developed as part of the new website. If not will be taken forward by the WG.

Environmental Group

Gardening – maintaining Anne Frank garden and celebration gardens with pupils planted 2 more trees in Anne frank garden. (pond garden lock faulty – no access possible). Urban flora project wild flower project entry submitted. Ethos day activity for pupils: propagating and potting on , and making bird fat balls activity with pupils and staff.

Working on - Clean out bird boxes possibly reposition some.
Also Pond garden to be weeded if access possible. Plant indoor hyacinths with pupils and sell at xmas market. Plant up the new planter and ask for funding for more planters.
Book Swop /give-away.

Aims and Summary from September 2016- September 2017

- *To help the school in its Eco work*
- *To promote cycling among pupils, in the summer term*
- *To initiate interdisciplinary learning projects within the school, relating to the environment*

Eco Schools: The Environment Group works closely with the school Eco Committee with lead eco teacher, Mrs Barley their year included:

- Achieving Eco Schools' Green Flag Award December 2016
- "Recycled fashion show" with Braidburn school in May, organised and funded by eco group

School & Grounds

16 new nest boxes sited with RSPB leader's help. 21 nest boxes in total, sited in school grounds.

AMEY refused to allow swift nest boxes to be sited.

More bird feeders purchased, which pupils replenish.

Maintenance/planting in all gardens

- Celebration Garden: planted three azaleas, replanted two fuchsias, refreshed and re-mulched planters, added pebbles to cobble river, added 2 tons of gravel to garden in June.
- Anne Frank Garden: daffodils and grape hyacinths planted in October and December, and two new trees were planted in June, arranged for bench to be oiled by Tiphereth
- Pond Garden, cleaned bird nest boxes, January, cleared litter, sited more bird feeders.

Transport

- Cycle shed repaired again
- Hands up survey
- Pupils are helping Miss Norman to deliver Bikeability Scotland in feeder primary schools.
- Dual use signage is now in place near Firrhill Day Centre

Litter

- Met with council staff to discuss littering, distributed anti-littering leaflets.
- Litter picks in school grounds
- Encouraged parents to report graffiti, littering and fly tipping to council

Waste Minimisation

- Vision Aid Overseas 280 glasses/ sunglasses were collected
- School office organises unclaimed lost property to go to clothing reuse scheme
- PTA Thrift Shop
- November Book Swap event for National Book Week (please donate books to Carolyn Hargest)

Involving the whole school and the wider community

- Parent Council and Eco Notice boards are regularly updated with *Firrhill News*
- Eco items appear in the *Firrhill News* produced monthly for this aim, by the Environment Group
- *Firrhill News* is on the school website
- Hyacinth bulbs were sold at Christmas concert and Dance Show

Other

- Ethos Day in June - took part for 2nd time - propagating plants and making bird feeder fat blocks
- Urban Flora Project: Firrhill took part, also emailed info about the project to other schools
- PC funding obtained for: compost, mulch, indoor bulbs, bird food, and nest boxes, plants & planter, gravel and stationary (£120 for notice boards remains to spend)

- Promoted: the PTA Thrift Shop, Tobacco-free Generation, Earth Hour (March) in *Firrhill News*

Eco Plans and Aims for 2016-2017 to repeat the various environment group tasks & events, plus:

- Travel Plan for update - Miss Statham to arrange meeting with pupils and M. Symonds
- Plant indoor hyacinth bulbs in August, to sell at Christmas Market in November
- Celebration Garden: 50 trees sculpture repair, two rhododendron need planting out and their planters need new plants. New S1 pupils to place cobbles in river.
- Large planters for school entrance - one planter funded by PC, but four more are needed
- Dobbies may assist with more planters and creating a perennial meadow at rear of school

Health and Wellbeing

Invitation sent to all parents re event on Wed 30th Aug on Growth Mindsets.
Working On - Planning Growth Mindset event on Wed 30 August.

PTA

Quiz night went well - £750 raised. Funding allocation commenced

Working On - Commemoration Eve 6th June PTA assisting with refreshments.
P7 Info Evening 19th June – PTA talk and Thrift Shop. Complete Funding Allocation round
Christmas Market Planning.

Jon Buglas is the new Chairman.

Other Business

All the above groups would always welcome new members.

Treasurers Report

To Be Included.

