



## **Minutes of Meeting of Balerno High School Parent Council Annual General Meeting 12 September 2016 at Balerno High School at 6.30pm**

### **Present**

#### ***PC members***

Caroline Anderson, Andrea Brewster, Jessica Bryce, Tony Foster (Chair), Mike Humphries, Yvonne Jarron, Sanjay Kallat, Peter MacLean, Paula Miller, Marion Milne, Christine Paterson, Peter Reekie

#### ***School staff***

Neil McCallum (HT), Lindsay Fullarton (DHT), Ruth Douglas (PTC Science)

#### ***Senior pupils***

Naomi McLeod (Head girl), Calum Greer (Head boy)

#### ***Public***

Yolande Montero, Jan Roberts, Gillie Scholtes

### **Apologies**

Cllr Ricky Henderson

### **Introduction and Welcome**

1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.

### **Minutes of last AGM**

2. Some corrections to be made
  - Jessica Bryce and Tony Foster also PC members
  - Amend Treasurer to read Lauchie Scougall

Draft Minutes of 2015 AGM - proposed by Mike Humphries, seconded by Peter MacLean

### **Chair introduction, PC remit and report**

3. Tony Foster drew attention to the PC remit (previously circulated and copy below). While not going through it in detail he invited questions about it. No questions were raised.

#### **WHAT IS A PARENT COUNCIL?**

A Parent Council is a group of parents in a school who represent parent views and work in partnership with pupils, the headteacher and the local authority to achieve the best for pupils at that school.

The role of the Parent Council is to:

- support the school in its work with pupils
- represent the views of all parents
- encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community
- report back to all the parents in the school (called the Parent Forum)
- play a role in the appointment of headteachers and depute headteachers
- support the school and pupils during school inspections.

Parents have a key supportive role to play in assisting the headteacher and school staff in their aims to raise standards of education and to secure improvements in the quality of education provided by the school. The education provided must take account of the whole needs of the child in respect of developing a child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. School education is about more than the

- Curriculum and includes the school's provision for social, cultural and recreation activities and for physical education and training.
- The Parent Council can support the work of the school in a variety of ways. It can:
  - be involved in drawing up the school development plan and consider how parents might support its
  - consider ways parents can be involved in children's learning to improve achievement
  - build positive relationships between parents and school staff
  - support the school in consulting with the wider parent forum on school policy decisions and other matters
  - use its own formal and informal channels for communicating about school events and how parents can become
  - fundraise to provide additional equipment and resources for the school
  - facilitate school events and work with the head teacher and staff to devise events which are enjoyable, encourage parental participation and that suit the needs of parents and fit into their
  - The Parent Council may also be involved in consulting the Parent Forum about the full range of school policies, e.g. in relation to uniform, drugs, school ethos, etc. It can collate the views of parents and report them to the headteacher of the school and to the education authority as appropriate.

Given Parent Councils' role in representing the collective view of parents, the education authority must consult them on their arrangements for a complaints procedure. Parent Councils can also make general representations on matters arising from individual complaints where these raise issues of a wider policy or strategic concern.

### Report from the Parent Council Chair

Tony Foster drew attention to his previously circulated report (copy below) and spoke to it, highlighting different key points.

I'd like to thank all outgoing Parent Council members for the work you have done on behalf of the school, thank you.

Particular thanks to Liz Carrie after many years of service on the school Parent Council and work beyond that.

Thanks to all those who are supporting the work of the school by remaining on the Council and we welcome any new members tonight.

### **EXAM RESULTS 2015**

Achievement in S5 and S6 is best ever.

Results in H English were double the national average and the number of pupils receiving A or B awards was 30% above the national average. Results in PE, Art and Computing also very good.

S6 Attainment greatly improved

There was a small dip in performance compared to last year ( 5%) in those attaining 5+ N5

Some subjects outstanding at N5; 80% of those who sat Physics gained an A pass, 75% of those who sat English gained an A. Results in Chemistry, French and Media were also very good.

Maths results at N5 were not good. On request by the SMT the Parent Council spent time working with the SMT and Maths Department on addressing this issue throughout 2015-2016, as well as asking for updates on changes to science the year previously.

Prelim results were a 'mixed bag'

### **SCHOOL WORKS, IMPROVEMENTS & BUDGETS**

Tweaks were made to the new school timetable, based on staff, pupil and parent/carer feedback as the new school day/times became established.

The 4G pitch 'bedded in' and Pitchfever moved forward. Congratulations on those who worked on the fundraising and work to make the hockey pitch refurbishment a reality.

Balerno is now one of 4 schools to be upgraded over the next 4 years. Most likely that Balerno will be refurbished as no site for new school. Not certain if or when works would commence. However, mechanical plant in the school will reach end of working life in the next 5 years.

Window replacement Works went well. An additional £50000 was available as contractors came in under estimate so Science, Art and CDT side OF the building got new windows too. There were plans to re-floor the concourse.

The Parent Council encouraged parents carers to read and feed back on National Improvement Framework and Budget proposals.

### **AWARDS & EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITY**

The Parent Council welcomed the academic awards, the Christmas and Spring music performances, The Power Trip play, the achievement awards and achievements of the school externally in academic and sporting achievement. Along with academic success the Parent Council feel this is key to a successful school that maintains pupils and helps the school role

### **CONSULTATIONS & ISSUES**

The Parent Council were involved with discussions on catchment area from Gillespie Crossroads to Balerno. We also urge the school to consider promotion through Ratho Primary, as there are new houses being built in the area.

Other areas of work included employment opportunities, the merit system, wifi and data allowance in the school, school website development, school sport and school behaviour. Communication from the school in a timely manner and to parents/carers generally became a general theme, both from the PC and school.

New Parent Council members also felt that they needed a more 'local' induction to the school than the PC induction from Edinburgh City Council and would like to know about annual school planning so we could contribute well in advance. There was a commitment to do this.

### **COMMUNICATION**

The PC utilised wisepay e-mail and maintained facebook and twitter to communicate to parents/carers. We recognised the limitations to our website and agreed to merge with the school website developments – thanks to Mike Humphries for making that happen. We urged the school to

populate the website as soon as possible, but welcomed the new site. Communication can always be improved but if we are made aware of any issues we do act on it as quickly as we can.

We also welcomed the Daily Bulletin being put on line to help parents/carers know additional school news and encourage our children to participate in the opportunities that are available to them.

## **RECRUITMENT OF HEAD TEACHER & PARENT/CARER CONSULTATION**

Thanks go to Graeme Sives, who resigned as Head Teacher this year. This left the PC with the task to recruit a new Head Teacher. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the process over the academic year. The number of candidates who applied was very high and it was extremely difficult to create a long list for first interview as well as second. The successful candidate was Neil McCallum.

Prior to interview the Parent Council took the opportunity to ask the while Parent Forum what they were looking for in a Head Teacher and their thoughts on the school. This was an extensive piece of work that would provide invaluable information for the new HeadTeacher in their role.

The target for the survey was 90, for any meaningful statistical analysis from a parent/carer population of approx 800. Despite only five days of consultation over a holiday weekend the survey gathered 126 resp. The report from the consultation will be made available online – however a summary is below

## **CONSULTATION SUMMARY**

- 126 people did the survey – our target was 90, which would have been a good representative sample for accurate findings.
- 54% heard about the survey on wisepay, 33% from social media/website, 13% other/word of mouth.
- There were over 200 comments with 25 parents/carers interested in the Parent Council, 16 the fundraising PTA and 60 wanting more information on the report (which will be made available after we share it with the new Head Teacher).

### **1. QUALITIES IN A HEAD TEACHER**

Your absolute musts were

- 1) Good Communication (89.68%)
- 2) Supports academic achievement (79.37%)
- 3) Fairness (78.57%)
- 4) Inspirational Leader (65.87%)
- 5) Positive Approach to Behaviour Management (63.49%)
- 6) Ability to know the pupils (61.90%)
- 7) Can plan and implement curricular policy (57.14%)
- 8) Authority (53.97%)
- 9) Supports extracurricular activity (42.86%)
- 10) Works well with the local authority (32.54%)
- 11) Engages with the community (30.95%)
- 12) Experience of being a HeadTeacher (19.05%)

### **2. YOUR PRIORITIES FOR A NEW HEAD TEACHER**

- 1) Communication & engagement 35 comments
- 2) High Quality Education 27 comments
- 3) Staff retention, motivation and action 24 comments
- 4) Discipline, Drug & Alcohol abuse 21 comments
- 5) Extra Curricular activity, school trips, sport – 18 comments
- 6) Increase subject choice & work with partners 17 comments
- 7) Learning & emotional support – 9 comments
- 8) Pupil retention & engagement (particularly in S6 year) – 9 comments
- 9) Leadership & motivation – 9 comments
- 10) Refurbishment & update equipment – 8 comments

- 11) Support outwith academic route – 6 comments
- 12) Equality of feeder primaries – 4 comments
- 13) Maintaining uniform policy – 4 comments
- 14) Stop mobile use in class – 2 comments
- 15) Storage in school for pupils – 3 comments
- 16) Develop school 'brand' – 2 comment

3. A second open ended question was asked for further skills, qualities and comments. Responses covered fairness/engagement (26 comments), leadership (19 comments), academic success (8 comments), good communication (8 comments), well being on campus (5 comments), support needs (2 comments)

4. Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey. It helped us greatly during the recruitment process and for Parent Council priorities for the future.

### **THANKS**

Our thanks go to all staff of the school for their hard work over 2015-16 and to those who left or retired after many years service after our last PC meeting.

### **PARTICIPATION BEYOND THE PARENT COUNCIL**

Two years ago we cut meetings down from 6 to 5 – allowing for more participation at meetings that feed into education policy. Members of the Parent Council to please take note.

Future dates – all at new time of 6.30pm in LRC if in Balerno

12 September Balerno

14 November Balerno

23 January Ratho (TBC)

6 March Kirknewton Primary (TBC)

8 May Balerno

### **Accounts**

4. The accounts were presented (as below) by Peter Reekie

#### **Accounts 2015-16**

This year's accounts are as follows:

Accounts 2015-16

This year's accounts are as follows:

	£
Balance brought forward.	1,916.73
Income received from CEC	852.96
Interest income	0.80
Expenditure	0.00
Year End Balance	2,770.49

Proposed donation to School 1,500

PC funds balance after donation 1,270.49

The proposed donation of £1500 to the school was unanimously agreed upon.

Neil McCallum suggested 2 possibilities for use of funds

- To ensure access for all for school trips through subsidies
- To invite departments to bid for funds to develop their curricular area

Those present agreed to leave final decision to Neil McCallum.

Mike Humphries asked if we could give more to the school.

Peter Reekie suggested reviewing in May meeting when additional funds were paid into our account by Edinburgh council and it was clear that the PC had no other need for the funds.

### **Election of Office Bearers & new members**

5. Tony Foster asked those present who wished to serve as PC members for 2016-17 to tick against their name on the attendance sheet.

Tony Foster indicated that he would continue as chair for the time being but would like to review his role in Jan 2017.

Sanjay Kallat agreed to continue in role of vice chair although indicated he would be unable to consider the role and workload of chair in the future.

Peter Reekie agreed to continue as treasurer.

It was agreed to discuss a succession and handover plan for the chair in future PC meetings this year.

Peter Reekie noted that the constitution allows for:

- 2 staff members. Neil McCallum to highlight to BHS staff.
- 3 reps from the feeder primary schools. Andrea Brewster is current link between BHS & Dean Park Primary. Other primary school PCs will be reminded of their opportunity for involvement.
- 2 community members (currently have 1 space filled by Marion Milne as Balerno Community Council rep)

BHS PC membership for 2016-17 is as follows:

Tony Foster – Chair

Sanjay Kallat – Vice Chair

Peter Reekie – Treasurer

Caroline Anderson, Andrea Brewster, Jessica Bryce, Mike Humphries, Yvonne Jarron, Peter MacLean, Paula Miller, Christine Paterson

Marion Milne – Balerno Community Council Rep