

Minutes of PC meeting held on 12.09.2011

Apologies:

Jim Gladstone; Ricky Henderson

Present:

Francis Barkey, outgoing Chair; Helen Purves, new Chair; Clare Atkins, outgoing Vice-Chair; Sue McLeod, new Vice-Chair; Liz Carrie, Treasurer; Kirsty McKeown, Parent Member; Mike Humphries, new Parent Member; Aileen MacLeod, new Parent Member; Carol MacLeod, new Parent Member; Marion Milne, Co-opted member (BCC)

In Attendance

Graeme Sives Headteacher (HT) and adviser to PC; Bobby Smith, Ratho Primary PC rep; Julie Greer, member of Parent Forum; Karen Scott, Chair, Balerno High School Parent Teacher Association (BHS PTA)

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted

PC meeting minutes are taken in turns by members of the PC. This allows the PC to claim unused Clerk's fees from City Edinburgh Council (CEC) which can then be donated to the school. Minutes are sent to the Chair within 1 week of the meeting. Chair then sends on to HT, as a courtesy, for comment. The HT cannot alter PC minutes without the agreement of the PC. Minutes are then sent to all PC members for comment, comments to be made to Chair within 5 days. Accepted minutes are then sent to email contact list, placed on PC website / school website and wider distribution list which includes head boy and girl, local councillors, Primary School reps, Chair of BHS PSA

School Report

Graeme updated the PC on the many staffing changes which have taken place. Several of the changes were due to the retirement of staff. Balerno was fortunate to have filled all the vacancies before the start of term. The school budget has been cut by 4% which equates to approx. £100,000. Community Education income has fallen by 7-8% which is mainly due to a decrease in the number of adults enrolling in classes. The revised management structure is still under development, however, Graeme stated that he would like to work with 3 Depute Headteachers. This depends on the school roll being 784 on 22nd September.

The Guidance structure for all schools is being reviewed and a report will be issued at Christmas. Graeme has been busy since taking up his post. There have been many meetings with members of the community, he has signed the school up for Citizen Science and has committed BHS to being involved with the Ratho Community Centre project. There are pre-inspection departmental evaluations under way which will require evidence trails to support statements.

In-house, bespoke Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for staff is being developed focussing on the innovative use of IT in all lessons.

A business support review is underway with interviews for the appointment of the new post of Senior Administrator.

A review of Janitorial staff is also underway.

The After-School Club will continue to function, being run by North Edinburgh Childcare with 2 existing staff members staying on.

Several maintenance issues were addressed during the holidays: graffiti on the roof was removed - a culprit was caught for this so the repair bill has been passed to the police; the fire detection system has been updated; and some work was done on the water tanks.

Exam result analysis is underway. Standard Grade results are the best in the five year cycle.

At General level 88% of pupils achieved 5+ passes. This is in the top 20% in the country.

At Credit level 59% achieved 5+ credit passes, an improvement of 12% from last year. This places Balerno in the top 10% in the country.

At Foundation level the results for 5+ awards were disappointing and warranted further investigation. There seemed to be a particular issue with the attainment of girls.

The 4th year exam results compare favourably with our comparator schools. Balerno was top in Chemistry, second in German and third in PE.

At Higher and Advanced Higher level Balerno is in the top 20% nationally. 40% had 5+ Highers after 6th year.

PTA Report

AGM will be held on Wed 14th September. New members are required.

BCC Report

New young representative(s) from the school is/are needed. Marion also asked about progress on the logo competition.

PC Website

Sue had led an excellent tutorial for Liz, Chris and Kirsty. Another is required along with discussion about content. A link is needed from the school site to the PC site and vice versa.

AOCB

Liz outlined a meeting attended by Marion, Sue and herself with Mike Molleson regarding a renewable energy project for the school. Graeme advised that the current budget situation meant that such a scheme was not feasible.

Mike asked how staff morale was holding up in the face of so many changes and cuts. Graeme commented that philosophically the staff is on board with change - it is the rate of change that is causing anxiety.

Date of Next Meeting

7th November 2011, 7:30pm, Room F.10, BHS

Dates of future meetings

9th January 2012

12th March 2012

11th June 2012

(plus one more TBA as business dictates)