

Balerno High School Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on 7th November 2011

Apologies:

Aileen Mcleod; Kirsty Mckeown; Kenneth Wong; Bobby Smith; Ricky Henderson.

Present:

Helen Purves	Chair	Graeme Sives, Headteacher (HT) and adviser to PC	
Sue Mcleod	Vice-Chair	Jim Gladstone	Teacher Rep
Liz Carrie	Treasurer	Susan Stride	Teacher Rep
Sally Gartside		Amy Christison	Head Girl
Mike Humphries		Ross Macnaughton,	Dpty Head Boy
Chris Merchant		Karen Scott, Chair, Balerno High School PTA	
Carol MacLeod		Alister Paisley	Councillor
Marion Milne, Co-opted member (BCC)		Sheila Lowe (shadowing Cllr Paisley)	
		Ron Cairns	Councillor

Welcome and Agenda

Helen (HP) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked members to consider for the future, what items they would like to be included on the agenda.

Matters arising from previous minutes

Chris (CM) asked for an update on the school roll. Graeme (GS) advised that the roll threshold was achieved which was great news in terms of funding.

School report / Inspection feedback

GS advised that there was a limit to what he could say about the inspection at the moment but could say that the Inspectors were very impressed with the school and that he felt the week could not have gone any better. There was more of a partnership approach to the inspection with whole culture, tone and atmosphere being very positive. GS advised that during the inspection, the Inspectors had fed information back to him on a regular basis.

GS advised that this was a good news story to share and that the full report will be out before Christmas.

Members of the meeting who were involved in focus groups gave feedback on how these went.

Jim (JG) advised that although it was a tiring week for the teachers they were positive and buoyant, feeling that they had a good week.

GS stated that the whole school community should take heart from the inspection and be confident in the staff at the school who are always willing and looking to improve.

CCwP / NPFS / EPCN

Consultative Committee with Parents – HP introduced the CCwP which is a consultative committee established by the Council to provide a forum for discussion and consultation with parents. HP asked if anyone would be interested in being our rep on the CCwP. There are

6 meetings scheduled until June 2012 with BHS being in a neighbourhood group alongside High Schools, Currie, Firhill and Wester Hailes Education Centre.

HP provided update on meeting of 12 Oct. Sport and extra-curricular activities dominated the evening specifically the transition for children from P7 to S1. Discussion on healthy lifestyles and International matters were slightly pushed to one side due to this.

Update: Chris Merchant has since agreed to be BHS rep on the CCwP and will attend the next meeting on 15th November and report back at the next PC meeting.

National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFs) Helen passed informative newsletters around the meeting. These are available online

www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/getinvolved/forumscotland

EPCN stands for Edinburgh Parent Council Network

Parent Council Website www.balernohighschoolparentcouncil.org

HP thanked Sue (SM) for the work she was carrying out on the website. SM asked for profiles for members who had not submitted them yet. All the basic information is there and we now need to start writing articles and building information on the site.

Liz (LC) CM Kirsty (KM) and SM to meet to progress content and site maintenance.

Discussion took place on gathering email addresses and getting people to sign up for regular updates.

PC to look at publicising the site in the New Year.

Parent Surveys/Focus Groups

LC explained that in the past PC has facilitated parents' focus groups with different year groups. The most regular one being for S1 families in the term after arriving at High School. Discussion took place on whether the information could be gathered electronically as well as face-to-face. GS advised that there was an intention for the school to facilitate focus groups and involve pupils and parents in the improvement planning process.

JG advised that due to the recent inspection there were no plans this year for the S1 feedback session to take place before the end of this calendar year.

Advanced Highers & University Sector Development

Traditionally university entrance for Scottish students has been based on Higher exam results and the degree courses offered have been of four years' duration. Historically, some students with A levels have been able to by-pass first year with the proportion doing so varying greatly between subjects. However, CM advised that, with the change in University fee structures, the Scottish Universities with significant intakes from England are now actively working to offer three year degree courses for candidates with A level as the norm in most subjects. This will also allow Advanced Highers holders to access three year degrees on the same terms (provided the current parity with A levels is maintained). There was a view that this could change the perception of Advanced Highers in the minds of some students.

Sub-groups e.g. CfE

Discussion took place within the group on Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) with Sally (SG) volunteering to be the CfE Champion for the PC. HP to assist.

To help demystify CfE for parents GS advised that if he received FAQ's from parents he would be able to answer these with the information he has at present and could restate the position at BHS.

There was a genuine worry in the group as to the amount of work still to be done on CfE and the information still to be filtered through to the HT's as well as the pupils and parents.

Updates – BCC / PTA

BCC – Marion (MM) asked when the logos would be ready. HP advised that they will be available next week with a winner being chosen by the middle of November.

MM advised that the BCC was currently looking for a youth member who lives in Balerno and would be interested in joining the BCC.

PTA – Quiz night to be held on Saturday 12th at 7.30pm - tickets are £6 and there will also be a buffet.

PTA meetings held on the 2nd Wed of every month the small meeting room at BHS. New members welcome. Karen (KS) advised that the PTA had a link on the BHS website.

Councillors

Ron (RC) advised that the council (CEC) would not be funding a new Hearts stadium and that Balerno will not be losing its library.

Alistair (AP) advised that Currie Rugby Club would be given access to a piece of land which sits just above the stand for training. This would help the overuse of the running track and pitches. A grant has been given to the CRC for the Youth section.

Pupil Perspective

Amy (AC) advised that following a vote from all BHS pupils, the charity 'Rays of Sunshine' was chosen as this year's charity. Events will be held throughout the year to raise money for the charity with £300 already raised through a Masquerade Ball where pupils were also given a little professional tuition in ballroom dancing.

The senior students are very pleased as they have booked Norton House Hotel for their prom venue next year.

Ross (RM) advised that S6 have been setting up sports clubs including table tennis and fitness clubs and that senior pupils have been involved in football courses including 'early touches' and SFA coaching badges.

AOCB

SG enquired as to when the strike would be. GS advised that the date has been given as the 30th November and is still on at the moment.

Date of next meeting

16th January 2011, 7.30pm, Room F.10, BHS

HP advised that the PC constitution allows for 1 other meeting as dictates and suggested holding the AGM in April/May time.