

## Balerno High School Parent Council

### Minutes of meeting of 11 June 2012

#### 1. Present and Apologies

Apologies: Carol MacLeod, Liz Carrie, Sue McLeod (parent members), Bill Henderson, Ricky Henderson (councillors), Bobby Smith, Ishbel Smith, Sanjay Kallat (Ratho, Dean Park, Kirknewton Primary PC Chairs), Jim Gladstone (Staff Representative)

Present:

Helen Purves, Chair	Marion Milne, Community Council Representative
Aileen Macleod, Parent Member (Minutes)	Karen Scott, Chair PTA
Sally Gartside, Parent Member	Amy Christison, Head Girl
Mike Humphries, Parent Member	Kenneth Wong, Head Boy
Kirsty McKeown, Parent Member	Susan Stride, Staff Representative
Chris Merchant, Parent Member	Graeme Sives, Head Teacher & Adviser

#### 2. Previous Minutes – Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

No matters arising

#### 3. Dates of Meetings for next session

10 September 2012

5 November 2012

14 January 2013

11 March 2013

3 June 2012

Meetings will start at 6pm

In response to a request for meetings not to clash with events at associated primaries, HP has already sent these dates to PC chairs at these schools.

#### 4. Pupil Perspective – Amy Christison, Kenneth Wong

Recent events have been:

- The S6 prom
- The S6 fashion show in April which was organised by the PTA and was a very successful event.
- Whoop Day
- Ravelrig Assembly where goodbye was said to Ravelrig House.
- Some staff and pupils took part in the Moon Walk and the Sport Relief Mile

Forthcoming events are:

- Leavers' Assembly on 13 June and sports day in the last week of term.
- The chemistry competition in Bristol for S6 pupils.
- The Young Enterprise final in Glasgow

The head boy and girl were asked to give their thoughts on their school experience, focusing particularly on:

- What have been the best aspects of their school experience
- What they would like to see improved
- What parents could do to help with this

They both agreed that the school provided them with the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities such as the chemistry and maths challenges and encouraged them to participate in foreign trips such as the Beijing exchange. They stated that the staff provided them with an education which went beyond academic and helped them build confidence and learn new skills.

They would like to see more involvement with the community and pupils to be encouraged to take part in volunteering opportunities in the community.

They think it would be beneficial for pupils to have more help in S6 with university applications in addition to the assistance they get with the personal statement, for example funding and accommodation and more information on alternatives to university.

They both agreed that they had enjoyed their involvement in the Parent Council and their increased insight into the working of it has led them to believe that it would be helpful if more parents were involved and encouraged the PC to consider events which would raise its profile.

On behalf of the parent council Helen thanked them very much for their extremely valuable contribution to the PC meetings this year and wished them well for their future.

## **5. Headteacher's Report**

HP had asked the head teacher to address the following points in his report

- School Improvement Plan process
- Pupil Support (Guidance teachers) review
- Fabric Improvement
- Staff Changes

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) process was now more streamlined and tied into HMIE procedures and in line with CforE. Two days have been set aside in school for the SMT and invited group to allow for an increased level of stakeholder input. A draft of the report will be issued before the summer.

A discussion took place about the role of the PC in this process. GS stated that he had consulted parents and had taken on board views expressed in the PC meetings over the last year. He had had a number of discussions with HP regarding issues to be included in the

SIP. He stated that as part of the process of increasing stakeholder involvement, the Parent Council would be issued with a draft of SIP before publication.

The Pupil Support review had resulted in the recommendation from City Edinburgh Council for the school to have three pupil support staff, now known as Support for Pupil Leaders and one head of Support for Learning.

The Fabric Improvement of the school has been progressed by the head teacher and Business Manager, Linda Parkes who have done a full audit of the school and have prioritised the work required within the constraints of the budget. For example a top priority will be the upgrade of the girls' toilets.

Staffing changes, the following appointments have been made:

- Ms Barnett – Biology (also Chemistry)
- Mr McKenna – PE
- Ms Stubbs - Music

## **6. Parent Voice**

3 topics were concentrated on

- Communication
- Parent feedback forums
- Possibility of open information sessions in place of 2 of the planned 6 PC meetings.

Sally reported that the S2 information evening had been very successful and the parents had benefited from the time that GS had given over to answering the many questions after the main meeting was over. GS agreed that these meetings were valuable and had already scheduled one for S5/S6 in September. It was agreed that the PC would go ahead with their plans to have an S1 parent forum feedback evening after the October break and look at the schedule for other year groups for next year. The PC agreed that it would be useful for the S3 year group to have a meeting to discuss the ongoing transition to CforE.

A discussion took place about accessibility to the school calendar via the website and it was agreed that this needs to be improved taking into account time and resources. It was also suggested that this would be a good example of how a PC working group could adopt this as a project. HP agreed that she would discuss with Luke McAllister how to take this forward. GS also informed the PC that the school would be linking in with an initiative from a parent and CLD in Ratho who will be publishing a school magazine which is being funded from EU funds. There will be five issues of this magazine over the year.

## **7. Local Updates**

PTA - KS informed the PC that due to their successful fundraising events, the PTA had already been able to give £1000 to the school, with another £1000 available in the near future. The PTA has also been able to recruit some new members and it is hoped that more will join at the S1 information evening next week on 21 June.

Community Council - MM, informed the committee that Balerno was aiming to become a fair trade town and that the school could be involved by using and promoting fair trade goods.

MM also expressed the desire by the community council for the school to be involved in the Balerno Music Festival and GS stated that two lunch times concerts have been arranged. She also asked for contributions from the school to the Balerno Forum magazine.

## **8. AOCB**

KM asked about the new initiative on school uniform. After some discussion about the pros and cons of school uniform, it was agreed that parents appeared to be largely in support of the changes. Detailed information about this process is available to parents on the school website.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting & AGM**

Monday 10 September 2012 at 6pm, Room F10