

GRACEMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL

PARENT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD ON 17th JANUARY 2008

Present:

Jim Cassidy	<i>Head Teacher</i>
Ken Gregor	<i>Parent Member (Chair)</i>
Morag Clarke	<i>Parent Member (Vice Chair)</i>
Ian Duncan	<i>Parent Member (Treasurer)</i>
Arthur Hopkinson	<i>Parent Member</i>
Heather Boag	<i>Staff Member</i>
Bob Perry	<i>Co-opted Member</i>
Scott Mackenzie	<i>Business Manager</i>
Caroline Sanderson	<i>Clerk</i>

1. Welcome and Apologies

Ken Gregor welcomed everybody to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2007 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

Pupil Toilets (Item 7)

Since the last meeting 3 Pupil Forums had been set up (S1/2, S3/4, S5/6) and they had discussed the problems relating to the pupil toilets. They were making good progress in coming up with constructive solutions, which the school would implement.

Maths Classroom (Item 8)

Ken had not written to the Council about this issue, because of additional information which had come to light after the meeting. The Maths department had been offered alternative teaching accommodation but had chosen to use the open plan area. Amey would not reduce the quote of £9,000 to carry out the building work and the school had now withdrawn the change request.

4. Report from Chair

Ken reported as follows:

Items for Agenda

In future topics for discussion at meetings should be notified to Ken at least a week in advance, if possible. This would ensure that:

- issues raised were properly the business of the Parent Council;
- normal internal management procedures had been followed first, where appropriate;
- any necessary background research could be carried out before the meeting.

Parental Involvement Newsletter

The Parental Involvement Unit had issued 2 newsletters to date, which had been circulated to members.

School Session Dates 2009/10

The draft session dates for 2009/10 were noted, with no comments.

Change of Date for Next Meeting

Ken wished to change the date of the next Parent Council meeting for family reasons and it was agreed to hold the meeting on Monday 10th March instead of Thursday 13th March.

Parent Forum AGM

It was decided that the Annual General Meeting of the Parent Forum should take place in September.

5. Report from Treasurer

Ian Duncan reported that the budget allocation of £225.70 had been paid into the Parent Council bank account. The current balance was £225.86 after the addition of net interest (income tax had been wrongly deducted but would be refunded). It was not known if unspent funds could be carried forward at the end of the financial year.

Ken to contact Parental Involvement Unit to ask about the possibility of carrying surpluses forward.

6. Introduction of Business Manager

Ken introduced Scott Mackenzie, Business Manager, who then talked about his role in the school. The post of Business Manager had been created about 5 years ago and was intended to leave the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team free to concentrate on strategic learning and teaching issues. The main duties of the post included facilities management, administration of examinations and financial management.

7. Report from Head Teacher

Jim Cassidy reported as follows:

Staffing

- Joan Clark, Learning Support Teacher, would be retiring.
- Neil Goodfellow had been appointed to the vacancy in Geography/Social Sciences, which was currently being filled by Peter Hannan on a temporary basis.
- Pauline Walker would be away on maternity leave from 2nd May to 28th September 2008 and her post would be covered internally.

Update on School of Ambition

Spending on the School of Ambition project had now reached £165,000. Amey had quoted a cost of £5,000 to put up and maintain 48 notice boards inside the school and £2,500 for an external sign, including life-cycle costs. This was expensive and raised the question of whether it was a good use of the funding, given that it had been awarded to improve the life chances of young people. Ken would write to the Director of Amey to say that these costs were prohibitive and to ask if they could be more supportive.

Ken to write to Director of Amey about the cost of notice boards and sign.

Finance

There would be a cut of £45,000 in the school budget for 2008/09. Fortunately the school would be able to manage this for next session, because it could be offset by other resources. However, continuing budget reductions of this size could not be sustained in the long-term and ultimately there might need to be cuts in staffing.

8. School Review Report and Action Plan

The report on the School Review had now been published and it was very positive. Following the review an action plan had been drawn up, containing 3 recommendations, and the school was already addressing these.

9. Issues Raised by Parents

Morag Clarke raised the subject of parents driving into the school grounds at the end of the day to collect children. The number of vehicles doing so was causing congestion in the car park and also posed a threat to the safety of pupils leaving on foot. Jim offered to issue a letter to parents asking them to park elsewhere, but there was no means of enforcing it if they did not comply with the request.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 10th March 2008 at 7.00 pm (please note change of date)