

**GRACEMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL
PARENT COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 21 MARCH 2011



Present:

Pauline Walker	<i>Head Teacher</i>
Ken Gregor	<i>Chair</i>
Lesley Gibson-Eaglesham	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Ian Duncan	<i>Parent Member (Treasurer)</i>
Gwen McLeod	<i>Parent Member</i>
Mike Brooks	<i>School Link Police Officer</i>
Norma Cook	<i>CEC Cllr Labour</i>
Ashleigh Kennedy	<i>Clerk</i>

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Ken welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Mike Brooks, School Link Officer for Lothian and Borders Police who was present to discuss his role.

Apologies were received from Chris Hume, Staff Member, Beth Gregor, Pupil Member and Bill Cook, CEC Cllr Labour.

Due to Mike Brooks visit it was agreed that Item 9 on the Agenda would be taken first to allow Mike to leave the meeting when it was completed

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes were approved from the last meeting held on Monday 7 February 2011.

3. Report from Chair

a. Parent Council Funding

Parent Council Funding had been approved for the next year. There had been no cut from the previous year. The Parent Council would receive £560.80 based on the school's projected role of 618 next year.

Ken announced that Ashleigh would be leaving as Clerk in June. He thanked her for her work as part of the Parent Council.

b. GLOW

Ken indicated that there would be a showcase of GLOW from Steven Whyte, Computing Teacher at the next meeting. The Parent Council would be used as a trial and members agreed to this.

c. Dates for Next Year

Ken asked members to think about meeting dates for next year. Dates would be discussed at a future meeting.

4. Report from Treasurer

Ian reported that the balance for the Parent Council account was £621.94. A cheque for a £250 donation to the school's drama production had cleared. Also the penalty notice for a driving ticket Gwen had incurred while attending the City Chambers as part of a delegation to the CEC Budget meeting on behalf of Parent Council.

5. Report from Pupil Member

Beth was unable to attend due to an exam the following day.

6. Report from Head Teacher

a. Staffing Update

Due to the sensitive nature of the Budget proposals there were many issues surrounding staffing at the school. Therefore, Pauline stated that after the Budget proposals had been made public she could report on the school's staffing at a future meeting.

b. Improvement Planning

Pauline indicated that staff were reviewing the current year's School Improvement Plan. Thought had been given to next year's Improvement Plan and Pauline explained that the good practice that had been implemented in the current year would be maintained. This was due to issues such as the restructuring of staffing and the implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence. She also wanted to

continue to encourage parental involvement. Parents were to be contacted by e-mail, phone and questionnaires issued to get their views.

Pauline explained that she would share the results of this year's Improvement Plan and next year's priorities with the Parent Council at a future meeting.

c. Exam Focus

Pauline explained that the Spring term was coming to an end and pupils were getting tired due to Easter being late this year. In addition pupils are off for most of April due to various holidays. This would impact on exam preparation. However, Pauline had arranged for extra Easter study classes during the two week break. Extra Gracemount After School Study (GASS) would take place the week pupils returned to school.

Ian asked if teachers were paid to take the Easter study classes as it was during their holidays. Pauline confirmed that teachers were given a notional payment.

7. Budget Update

Lesley explained that she had attended a City of Edinburgh Council Budget Meeting on Monday 8 March 2011. It reported that the number of Teachers, Learning and Classroom Assistants, repairs, Additional Support Needs and Libraries would be protected in the Budget.

The ongoing review of Bursars and Business Managers now involved various Unions and a Working Party had been set up. One suggestion was to create a role that combined the roles of the Bursar, Business Manager and Senior Clerical jobs. Implementation would be in August.

The role of Janitors was also discussed at the Budget meeting. There had been a proposal to centralise janitors instead of them working at individual schools. Options were being developed by a Working Party on this matter.

The restructuring of Senior Management at Schools was also discussed. The City of Edinburgh Council was to make savings of £2.4million over the next 2 years. They had asked Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers for voluntary redundancies. A model for the restructuring of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers had been shared with Head Teachers and it was explained that more information would be

shared with Parents when agreement had been reached with individual Schools. So far no more information had been distributed.

Despite the cuts the City of Edinburgh Council projected £7million growth from 2011 – 2014.

Ken concluded this discussion by adding that the model for restructuring Senior Management at schools had been shared with Head Teachers who were actively involved in consultation. Once this had been sorted out it would be shared with the Parents. Ken believed that the speed of these changes is too fast.

Norma Hart left the meeting at 8.30pm.

8. Facebook Update

Gwen handed out the document *Adoption of Facebook Profile: Strategy and Implementation* to members. As discussed at the previous meeting, Gwen explained that she had set up a Facebook page for the Parent Council. She discussed some of the issues outlined of the document she had handed out.

Gwen drew members' attention to item 2.4 of the *Strategy and Implementation* document. She asked if everyone was happy with the Page data. Lesley suggested that certain offensive words should be blacklisted from the page. Gwen agreed to do this. In addition Pauline asked that the school's website on the page could be changed to the official school's website. Gwen agreed to do so.

Ken suggested that to keep an active interest in the page there should be an update once a week. Gwen felt that updates should be made which are relevant and meaningful. Lesley and Ken suggested a regular flow of information between the school and the Parent Council that could be used to update the page. Pauline agreed that communication could be established and she would make this an agenda item to be discussed at the upcoming Senior Leaders Team (SLT).

Gwen suggested that a target could be set to encourage members. After discussion it was decided that the Facebook page would be reviewed at the next meeting once an e-mail about the page and the leaflet advertising the Parent Council and the Facebook page in the Easter newsletter had went out to parents.

Gwen concluded this section by asking members to spread the word amongst other parents. Pauline said that she would send an e-mail to staff to advertise the Facebook page.

9. Police Visit

Ken welcomed Mike to the meeting. Mike began by explaining his role in further detail. He is based at Howdenhall Police Station and is part of the 'Safer Neighbourhood Team' and is attached to Liberton High School as the School Link Officer. He has been in this position for 12 months. He explained that 7 – 8 schools in Edinburgh had a School Link Officer and the Scottish Government decide the funding for the positions.

In his role he works with the Guidance and Senior Management Team at Liberton and patrols the school at lunchtime and at the end of the day. His presence promotes closer relationships between the police and pupils, staff and the wider community. He also mediates in Restorative Justice whereby a juvenile offender meets with their victim in a structured setting. He also works with the Educational Welfare Officer to encourage persistent non-attendees to attend school. Overall the role is viewed as promoting positive relationships between young people and the police.

Mike was asked what the most common themes of issue he dealt with. He answered by stating antisocial behaviour was the main issue he dealt with.

Although he is attached to Liberton High School Mike delivers talks and assemblies for Gracemount. He commented that Carol Menzies, a Community Officer also has good links with Gracemount.

Gwen asked why there was not a School Link Officer at Gracemount. Pauline explained that application had been made by the school when the Link Officer Scheme was being set up but had been unsuccessful. Ken stated that it would be beneficial for Gracemount to have a School Link Officer attached to the school. Members agreed with this and Pauline stated that it would be one step in solving antisocial behaviour that takes place outside the school.

Mike suggested writing to elected Councillors and representatives to request an officer for Gracemount.

Norma Hart joined the meeting at this point.

Norma was asked to investigate with Lothian and Borders police how the allocation of the position is decided.

Ken thanked Mike for attending the meeting.

Mike left the meeting at 7.50pm.

10. Issues from Staff/Pupils/Parents

a. Staff

There were no issues from staff.

b. Pupils

There were no issues from pupils.

c. Parents

There were no issues from parents.

11. Any Other Business

There was no any other business.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 26 April 2011. Lesley gave her apologies for this meeting.