

Minute of Parent Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7 June 2016 at 6.00pm in the Principal's Office

Present: Lewis Paterson (Acting Principal)
Kristyna Macsween (Staff)
Amanda Campbell (Chair)
Ollie Clegg (Deputy Chair)
Ken Campbell (Treasurer)
Anne-Marie Mooney (Clerk)

Apologies: Jackie Smith

In Attendance: Cllr Cathy Fullerton; Robin Yellowlees, Service Manager, Sports & Outdoor Education, CEC; Tony Begg, Club Development Manager, SFA

1. Minute of Last Meeting

The minute of the meeting held on 20 April 2016 was approved as a correct record.

2. 3G Sports Pitches

Robin Yellowlees outlined the proposal to fund the installation of a 3G pitch to the members of the Parent Council. Robin explained that in his opinion the school is a very deserving case and he has approached the case with vigour. Robin has previous experience of working with partners to source funding for a new rugby and football 3G pitch at Malleny Park, Currie with Currie RFC and Balerno High School.

The proposal involves tripartite funding to cover the estimated £450k cost of installing a 3G pitch for football. The project would be funded by Hutchison Vale Community Sports Football Club who have applied for £150k funding from Cashback for Communities Fund and a further investment of £150k subject to Hutchison Vale Community Sports Club Board approval; Cllr Cathy Fullerton currently sits on the Board of the club. With the £150k balance to be met by WHEC from a 20yr Council loan. The annual loan payments of approx. £14,666 for the loan would have to be met by the school.

The school would have complete access to the pitch from 9.00am-6.00pm Mon-Fri; Hutchison Vale FC would want to have exclusive access outwith this time period.

The existing grit pitch would be replaced with the new synthetic pitch.

Kristyna explained that the existing outdoor and indoor pitches are in use for our school curriculum which involves football, rugby and athletics. Robin suggested that the grass area could be used for rugby and athletics. Hutchison Vale FC may also look to utilise the grass area and would look after the grass area on behalf of the school – the grass is currently not in good condition.

Tony Begg suggested that the proposed model to utilise Cashback for Communities Fund is all about delivering better social outcomes for local kids and to engage them using football. We could run a School of Football, there are currently 5 running in Edinburgh at the moment, staffed in partnership with the SFA and the school, cost approx. £12k pa.

WHEC students could have opportunities to develop skills for work via an education programme e.g. sports journalism, business management, photography.

In addition there would be an opportunity to widen access to the community by providing young people the opportunity to play football via an SFA Midnight League programme, usually run in blocks, which would be free and supervised.

Kristyna asked for assurance that further consultation would take place. At the moment our Leisure & Recreation staff run a Holiday Club during the summer holidays – we would want to have agreement from Hutchison Vale that we could have access to the pitches out with 9am-6pm.

Robin agreed that the details would need to be discussed in full and pending further consultation with the community and school the next steps would be:

- Hutchison Vale FC to discuss proposal and take to their Board for approval.
- Result of Cashback for Communities funding expected mid-July.
- Proposal to be put forward to CEC Finance & Resources Committee Sept/Oct.
- Approx. 6 months for a formal service level agreement to be put together.
- New 3G pitch in place summer 2017.

Ken questioned funding – if the school needs to contribute an annual £15k approx. where would this funding come from? Given that the Council is currently proposing combining the management of school sports facilities with Edinburgh Leisure's estate there would be no scope for the school to raise any revenue to cover this payment. Robin indicated that responsibility for the amount borrowed would be passed to Edinburgh Leisure. Lewis raised concern about the complexity of issues that a project of this nature involve that will need to be fully explored with all parties involved.

Ken raised changing facilities – our current changing facilities would not be adequate for adult football teams. Kristyna advised that our existing facilities are policed throughout the day by teaching staff.

Tony indicated that The Scottish Football Partnership would support the project by providing portable changing rooms that would be separate from the school.

The school has already had experience of working with Hutchison Vale, Kristyna was disappointed that the relationship wasn't as successful as she had hoped. Any future relationship would need to be based on trust and commitment to ensure that our students are not disappointed. Cllr Fullerton agreed that the football club would need to work in partnership with the school and the football club would look to take the children with them.

Lewis is fully aware of the social impact achieved by Spartans FC and the potential new opportunities this project could bring for more of our community to participate in sport and recreational activities. As well as learning and development opportunities this project could also have a positive impact on health improvement, increased employment opportunities and crime reduction.

Lewis would like to discuss the details further with Robin Yellowlees and the Senior Leadership Team. Lewis invited Robin to attend a meeting at the school on the last week of term.

Cllr Fullerton advised that she would welcome students from WHEC at the City Chambers for work experience placements. Lewis confirmed that senior students take part in the JET (Job, Education and Training) programme.

The Parent Council thanked Cllr Fullerton, Robin Yellowless and Tony Begg for coming to the meeting.

3. Principal's Report

We said goodbye to staff and students from Gracemount HS on Friday, they have moved to Liberton HS to join up with the rest of the school. We continue to host 30/30 babies and toddlers in our Crèche from Forthview Nursery. Whilst the experience of having additional students from Gracemount was overall a positive one Lewis explained that there has been a less positive outcome following Oxfords PS being accommodated in our porta cabins. A negative article was printed in the Evening News with photographs of older porta cabins and not the accommodation used by Oxfords PS. This has had a detrimental effect on our school roll for next session 2016-17. We will be focusing on addressing negative perceptions and will be inviting P6/7 parents from our cluster primary schools to an open day in the school. Lewis has set up a short life working group to promote WHEC, to ensure that the majority of P7 cluster pupils come to WHEC next year. Ideas include a desk at the WHHLC with promotional material, a higher profile in WH Library and possible promotion of the school via mainstream media with a student opening their exam results in August.

A newsletter to share our successes is in preparation and will be distributed to parents by the end of term. The senior awards were held recently - the event was excellent. The S3 awards will take place on Friday this week. Our S1 students recently went on trips to Bannockburn and Blair Drummond.

We are hard at work on our 2016-17 School Improvement Plan with consultation taking place with Curriculum Leaders and staff input.

There are four main priorities:

1. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
2. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
3. Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
4. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive leaver destinations for all young people.

Staffing

The school has declared half a surplus teacher and we will be interviewing to fill this position soon. Two probationer teachers will join us in Music and Art. Maggie Pagliarulo in Support for Students is winding down to retirement and will be working 3 days a week next session. Michelle Gordon will be leading on a developing workforce initiative. Lewis is delighted to report that Jess Simpson and Gavin Ellis will be taking up the opportunity to work as part of the Support for Students team. Jess and Gavin will take on caseloads and gain experience in teaching PSE and leadership skills.

Timetable

Development of the new timetable has been delayed given the extra demands of Gracemount HS being on site. New Timetabler software used to draft the new timetable does not have interoperability with SEEMIS, the programme used throughout schools to

manage data. However, Lewis and Kristyna are optimistic that it will be ready to go into operation on Monday of next week.

Senior students returned from study leave on Monday and the whole school will be involved in activities based on the Rio Olympics on Thursday and Friday this week.

Sheila Paton has been appointed as Senior Education Manager and the post of Head Teacher has been advertised. Lewis suggested that the Parent Council would like to write to Sheila. A letter from Sheila to parents and all pupils will go out next week.

Lewis thanked the Parent Council for all their support over the last 8 months, he will continue to plan ahead and prepare the school for next session having thoroughly enjoyed the last months here.

The Parent Council thanked Lewis for everything he has done for the school so far.

4. Treasurers Report

The cheque for £300 funding for the library has been paid into the Centre Fund, Anne Brownlee has been advised and will be delighted to buy new books.

5. How Do We Improve Our Parent Council

Ideas include:

- Send out an invitation to new S1 parents to join Parent Council, include date of next meeting, provide coffee & cakes.
- Put up posters in WHHLC and WH Library
- Attend cluster primary school Parent Council meetings.
- Hold an event in the school to involve the local community

6. Any Other Business

Dress Code

Lewis has received a telephone call about school dress code asking that students be allowed to wear black jeans. The Parent Council are fully supportive of the current dress code and see no reason to change it.

Promoting WHEC

Ollie suggested that we showcase drama/music at cluster primary school assemblies as many parents attend. Lewis suggested sharing individual students' success and settling in stories at primary schools. Amanda suggested we contact WH Plaza to request use of a vacant shop for display material.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 31 August at 3.00pm