

NOTE OF MEETING

MEETING OF: Portobello High School Parent Council

HELD AT: Portobello High School – Library

DATE: 16 January 2012 at 7pm

PRESENT: Paul Smart (Chair), Peigi Macarthur (HT), Tom Ballantine, Christine Rogers, Sue Davidson (Clerk), Fiona Finlayson, Councillor Maureen Child, Councillor Gary Peacock, Councillor Stephen Hawkins, Emma Wood, David Seaton, Liz Meikle, Carole Tracey, Katherine Taylor, Sheila Elliot, Kathleen Bolt, Alison Holligan, Verity Brooks, Michael Bracewell, Ann O'Hagan, Allyson Dobson, Caroline Falconer, Mimi Philp

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

PS welcomed those present. Apologies from Kenny MacAskill, Ewan Aitken, Stefan Tymkewycz, Mike Bridgman, Sarah Morton, Morag Grant

2. Note of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of meeting held on 14 November 2011 were approved as correct.

3. Management Restructuring Update

PM reported that the CEC protocol for the restructuring of school management teams had been signed off by the unions in December 2011. Interviews for the relevant Curriculum Leader positions took place last week and appointments are currently being confirmed. CEC have organised a working group to examine the structure of Support for Pupils departments which is likely to delay any changes until the summer term. The CEC embargo on permanent teaching posts has been lifted and 7 teaching posts have now been made permanent. PS thanked PM on behalf of the PC for having managed a very difficult situation.

4. Curriculum Initiatives

- John Muir Award. CF and S2 pupils outlined this initiative.
- History project. MP and Oscar McIntosh (S2) talked about the combined creative writing and history slavery project for S2s resulting in the publication of their novel 'Four Links in the Chain'.
- Green Flag. Schools now have to reapply every two years and PHS is currently applying for its 5th flag.
- Learning & Teaching Working Group will shortly be launching a 'Supporting Your Learner' portal on the school website. Parental feedback would be welcomed.
- Curriculum for Excellence and planning for senior phase. The management team are looking at provision in the 2012/13 timetable for 'skills for work' in the retail and creative industries for S5 and S6 pupils. It is hoped to expand this in successive years to offer work experience, internships and volunteering as part of the curriculum.

ACTION

All

5. ICT Developments

- A refresh of Edinburgh schools' BT ICT contract is on target.
- Staff are trialling the 30 iPads purchased before Christmas. Feedback is very positive so far. It was noted that it would be helpful to have a two way exchange (between staff and children) of recommendations for useful educational applications. It was added that parents would also probably welcome advice on suitable learning apps.
- IT teaching staff are offering CPD sessions to other staff to update computer skills.
- Recent purchase of additional Alphasmarts for Support for Learning has enabled 100% pupil access for those with specific ASL needs.
- No decision has yet been reached on the potential pilot 1:1 computer project but PHS staff remain committed to take part.

6. Events – March and beyond

Fashion show – 1st March. Tickets to go on sale shortly.
Cabaret - 3rd March. Tickets to go on sale shortly
Raffle to be drawn at summer term music concert
PS noted that any other fundraising ideas would be welcomed especially for this autumn which tends to be relatively quiet time for PC/school events.

LM
EW
EW
All

7. Financial Report & School Lottery

- CR reported total balance £1521.84 to date. School Lottery balance £679.24, 140 members.
- EW submitted a cheque for £750 from the 'swishing' event. PM to recommend how it may be spent, with the purchase of 'beer goggles' being one suggestion to support the 'Alcolol' project.
- A new volunteer is needed to run the school lottery from the 2012 summer term. FF to email PC members seeking possible candidates.

PM

FF

8. Topics for Future Meetings

- 16+ choices and positive destinations (CEC project)
- 'Scotland & its people' – an interdisciplinary school project
- Information on National 4 and 5 qualifications
- Peer group pressure/electronic media in the home
- Alcohol dialogue project (Alcolol)

PM
PM
PM/AD
D McKee
EW

9. AOB

- The recent high winds have damaged the roof of the assembly hall. It has been made watertight in time for the prelims, further work to be carried out. The bike sheds and shelter by the Astro turf were also damaged.
- The city-wide Holocaust Memorial Event will be hosted by the school on 25 January from 6.30pm until 8.15pm. All welcome – contact Mamie Philp.
- Debate on 2 hours/week physical education for S4-6 – to some concern it was noted that PHS cannot accommodate 2 hours/week due to facility/budget limitations in current school. Accordingly school had been given special dispensation by CEC to provide 1 hour pw for S3-S6. Agreed that the issue may merit further discussion at some point.
- CEC consultation underway for term dates 2013/14. Check CEC website for details.
- Alternative business models – full council debate to be held on 19 January. Since the meeting there has been a decision taken to keep Council services 'in house'. Report back on consequences for PHS would be

PM

welcome.

- CEC 'Consultative Committee with Parents' will issue regular bulletins throughout the year. SD circulated the first one prior to meeting. PS attends CCwP meetings regularly.
- New school - There has been a 2 day court hearing for the challenge to the use of the land on which the school is to be built. A further day's hearing is booked for 1 February 2012. Update to be provided at next meeting.

CEC?

- 10. DONM**
12 March 2012 at 7pm.