

St Ninian's Parent Council



Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 12th May 2014

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| Parent Members Present | M Ward P Burns D Manini | K Reilly R Convery D Grant | P McGrotty J McLachlan J Mackie |
| School Staff Present | J A Docherty M McKean | J Fuchs | J Cumming |
| In Attendance | Cllr V Waters | | |
| Minutes | D Kennedy | | |
| Apologies | Cllr J Fletcher Cllr A Lafferty Cllr M Montague | Cllr G McCaskill Cllr J Swift A McGowan | Cllr E Green J McAllister C Merrick |

1. Welcome & Prayer

Mr Ward welcomed the Council and started the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies

Received from Cllr Fletcher, Cllr McCaskill, Cllr Green, Cllr Swift, Cllr Lafferty, J McAllister, M Montague, A McGowan and C Merrick.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (March 2014) were proposed by P McGrotty and seconded by K Reilly.

4. Sports Facilities

a. Progress on Completion of 4G Pitch

The pitches were previously due for completion in April 2014. Cllr Waters confirmed that work is currently ongoing as a reapplication of the rubber crumb needs to be done. However, this would need four days of dry weather in order to do this. Plans are in place to start this work by the beginning of the week (19th May) depending on the weather forecast. The drainage and water is in but electricity is still to be done but this is hopefully scheduled for mid-June. After this there is not much more to be completed and handover of the pitches is imminent.

The issue of access to the 4G pitch was raised and if the school was comfortable with the proposed arrangements Mr Docherty advised that as long as there is access to the 4G pitch for school use from 9am until 6pm Monday to Friday in term time then he is happy with this. It was important that the school had independent access to the pitch including keys & ability to operate lighting. In addition it had been previously agreed that the school would have 4 weeks' access during the summer holidays & 1 week's access during the Easter holidays and the understanding was that this arrangement was being honoured.

b. Grass Pitch / Sports Day

It was noted that there are currently no painted lines on the grass pitch as in previous years. Cllr Waters advised that this should have been carried out as part of an internal agreement between the Environment & Education departments of East Renfrewshire Council and there should not be an incremental cost to do this. Cllr Waters agreed to investigate and advise.

It was noted that should this not be completed a provisional arrangement had been made with Eastwood High School for the use of its running track but the cost of transporting the pupils from St Ninian's would be in the region of £500.

c. Longer Term Provision

The provision of 3G & 4G pitches satisfied substantially the original plan for improvement of sports facilities at St Ninian's which had been set out by Jim McAllister in his e-mail. It was noted however that the sports facilities for St Ninian's, particularly outdoors, was still behind that provided for some other schools in East Renfrewshire and for the largest school in the area still had a way to go. Cllr Waters advised that a Capital Plan Application could be considered in relation to next year's budget however, it is up to the Education department to do this and something may have to come out in order for this to be considered. Cllr Waters agreed to speak to Cllr Fletcher to find out what is happening with this.

Jo Mackie confirmed that the Friends of St Ninian's was still prepared to assist in providing a contribution to funding for any projects but that there was a lack of clarity as to what the objectives and priorities were. Mike Ward and Jo Mackie agreed to meet before the next meeting to agree a proposal for supporting any upgrade programme.

5. Proposed New Primary School in Newton Mearns

Cllr. Waters confirmed that the Planning Application for the construction of the new school has been done. The plans have been passed to the Scottish Government and it is anticipated that there will be an update mid-Summer but no problems are anticipated. There is capital available to do it and is currently running on schedule. The early part of the new phasing works would be carried out by McTaggart and Mickel. The school is projected to open around August 2017.

Cllr Watters advised that the consultation document for designating the new school denominational and also as a joint campus Roman Catholic / Jewish school was likely to be issued in the near future. Discussions had been held with representatives of both faiths and it is understood that there is support from them for the proposal.

Concern was raised by members of the Parent Council regarding the impact of the additional stream of primary education which would have 1st priority

access to St Ninian's on the capacity at the school. Cllr Waters advised that St. Ninian's High School would be able to cope with the additional stream as this was a total of 10 streams.

Cllr Watters further advised that there are going to be around 5,750 new houses built in East Renfrewshire, with 1,500 of these being in Newton Mearns between now and 2025 which would impact significantly on the demand for education with the council area.

6. School Budget 2014/15

Mr Docherty highlighted that £79,000 in staffing formula of 2/2.5 teachers not being replaced. This causes concern which is outlined in the Head Teacher's Report below.

Cllr Watters advised that ERC faced a £25.6m budget reduction over the next three years (from 1st April 2015). The ERC operating budget is in the region of £215m per annum.

Cllr Waters discussed and confirmed various elements of the budget savings for 2014/15. He advised that the Education Dept. budget takes up 50% of the total ERC budget. A public consultation will be launched in September. It was noted that placing requests from outside East Renfrewshire were using up a percentage of the budget and this concerns some of the parents. There was also concern expressed over the new free school meals policy but Cllr Waters advised that they are fully financed by the Scottish Government so this would not have any impact on the budget.

It was noted that the Education budget includes costs relating to the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) which were fixed and could not be included in any cost saving exercise. This would impact the remaining balance of costs as the full savings would have to come from the remaining balance of the budget.

Mr Ward and Joe McLachlan agreed to meet to discuss a letter to represent's the Parent Council's position to the proposals.

7. Head Teacher's Report

As previously stated Mr Docherty advised that the school needs to have proper access to the pitches from 9am up until 6pm. Giffnock Soccer will manage the pitches and there hasn't been an Athletics Programme available as the synthetic/G3 pitch isn't designed for that purpose. Mr Docherty has asked that before the handover he would like it to be made clear that the pitches are to have floodlights. Mr Docherty shall send a letter to Cllr Fletcher detailing what has been agreed. Mr Ward also asked if a copy of this could be sent to him for information.

Mr Docherty reported that overall it has been a good year at St. Ninian's and the pupils have done well. The chemistry exam, which took place earlier that day, went particularly well. The P7 induction night was hugely successful and Mr Cumming has done a tremendous job.

Parents present commented that the P7 evening was exceptional and the turnout was phenomenal.

Mr Docherty advised that although the trip to Manchester was cancelled everyone had an enjoyable trip to London instead.

Over the holiday Mr Docherty had received very sad news that a pupil Sana Bashir had passed away whilst visiting family in Pakistan. A service and Mass will be held in memory of her and her family.

Mr Docherty also mentioned that he finds working at St Ninian's High School a pleasure and a great place to work. The morale of the staff is very good and in relation to the budget it is extremely beneficial that the pastoral teachers and PSA resources are kept. It would not be good to cut these.

Mr Fuchs gave a very good and positive presentation on pupil achievement and announced that St. Ninian's had won three football league trophies at the weekend and all in the same day!

Three girls from the 3rd year also came 3rd in the UK Cryptography Competition. This was a worldwide competition so this result is fantastic.

Joe Mulloney (6th year) won the Modern Languages Award.

Miss Milne had organised a 2nd year Netball Tournament and St. Ninian's had won!

Mr Ward's son (Michael in 1a7) took part in an East Renfrewshire Cycle Cross Competition and had done particularly well.

So, overall, a very good start for the first half of the year at St. Ninian's.

8. Chair's Report

Mr Ward, on behalf of the Parent Council, expressed his appreciation of the dedication shown by the teachers and how impressed he is with the teaching commitment at St. Ninian's High School.

Mr Ward also noted a few items of interest for the Parent Council. The meeting of all East Renfrewshire Parent Councils will be held on 4th June and there is a SCES seminar for Catholic parents in Carfin on 14th June, should anyone be interested in attending.

9. AOCB

J Fuchs advised that approximately 26 pupils have received a Cantas Award and these should be received at the end of May.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 9th June 2014.