

Minutes of BHS Parent Council Meeting 6th March 2013

- Present:** Barrie Rutherford (BR), Gordon Miller (GM), Carolyn Watson (CW), Carol Jewell (CJ), Eleanor Rutherford (ER), Tom Dowie(TD), Wendy Sinclair (WS), Karen McDonald (KM), Judith Pearson (JP), David Grant (DG), Jose Rodriguez (JR), Susan Whiteford (SW), Councillor Caroline Shiers (CS), Councillor Bob Ellis (BE).
- Apologies:** Apologies Councillor Elizabeth Grant (EA), Councillor Alan Grant (AG),
- Minutes:** The grant awarded the Support for Learning Unit should read £600 and not £660 as stated otherwise the minutes of the previous meeting of the 23rd January 2013 were approved as a correct and accurate record of proceedings.
- Proposed:** Judith Pearson
- Seconded:** Carol Jewell

Action

1. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 23rd January 2013

There were no matters arising

2. Presentation by Scott Jewell – Headboy

Scott Jewell informed the Parent Council that a Fundraising cheese and wine night was being planned for the first Thursday after the holidays on the 18th April 2013. This initiative was to help fund the costs of school pupils participating in an event at the Concert Hall. Scott was seeking the help of Parent Council members in the serving of the cheese and wine. The Parent Council agreed to help and in addition agreed to fund the cost of the cheese and wine. Scott was to get back to the Parent Council with projected numbers for the event. Scott also thanked the Parent Council for their support for the Oscar Awards. These awards were to take place on the 22nd or 23rd and there were two complimentary tickets for the event available to members of the Parent Council.

PC to support this initiative and to fund costs

3. Head Teacher's Report

School Staffing Report

GM reported the following staff changes

Mr McEvoy Support for learning has left
Mr Henderson Art is confirmed as having left
Miss Martin Modern Studies is to replace Gillian Sharp
Mrs Kennedy has been appointed to the Art Department and starts in May
Mr Darby is leaving in the Summer having secured a Principal Teacher's post at Dundee High School
The janitor (Dennis) has retired

Business Breakfasts

GM informed the Parent Council that Mr Fernandez had the idea to invite local business to the school to talk to pupils about what their various companies did and how they operated. Eight local employers including Tesco, the Job Centre and Proctor participated in this event. The pupils, the staff and the teachers found this exercise very beneficial. Mrs McIntyre from Proctor pointed out that 40% of their workforce came from Blairgowrie. This initiative addressed the wider achievements as required by the Curriculum for Excellence. The school and the pupils were able to benefit by receiving employer support in the following areas

Sponsorship in time not money
Mentoring – young enterprise companies
Provision of outside speakers –assemblies
Work Experience placements.

This initiative was such a success it is planned to run it again in October and ways of extending this to younger age groups is to be examined.

Education Scotland Inspection

GM began this debate by asking members of the Parent Council how they perceived the inspection report as posted on the Education Scotland website. CJ stated that the report did not reflect what the school is involved in. The report was very narrow and did not address the breadth of initiatives the school pursues. JP stated that the letter was appalling. It was full of jargon, grammatically incorrect, not specific and out of context. BR remarked that the report was full of assertions and statements made were coming across as facts. These statements however were not backed up by evidence.

GM stated that to date he had only received verbal feedback and that he was promised a copy of the full report by the 13th March at the latest. BE stated that all elected members had a copy of the full School Report and also the Community Education report.

GM stated that the report was quite damning. There did not appear to be any correlation between the report and the evaluations. The early presentation strategy that had been followed had caused problems. It

had however been agreed to make changes to the curriculum and to ensure that the curriculum was much less exam driven up until 4th year.

This would be in line with the Curriculum for Excellence. It was pointed out that the school was not a failing school but it was acknowledged that things can be done better. Attainment had increased steadily over the past five years.

However the school had got the fundamental areas correct and the focus now would have to be on the actions necessary to address the areas that the HMI had indicated that were in need of improvement. It would also be necessary to examine ways in enhancing teacher morale as the results of the inspection despite their best efforts had been demoralising.

It was intended to organise a parents' meeting on the HMI report as soon as the RIF had been received. The Chair of the Parent Council was to be involved in this. An Improvement Plan was to be formulated. As a first step of pupil review remits were to be examined and specific tasks allocated in response to the RIF. A working group is to be established in order to investigate, make recommendations and ensure implementation.

The school website is to be revamped and good news stories to be published. There was a need to secure Community involvement in the website design. Volunteers are also required in respect of the school newsletter. It may be possible to involve senior pupils in this. It is also proposed to examine the possibility of utilising Facebook and Twitter but it is acknowledged that this does present difficulties.

BR indicated a willingness to draft a letter responding to the report to be sent to HMI and PKC following wider parent consultation. To this end all parents to be invited in the forthcoming school newsletter to send their observations on the inspection report to the Parent Council, prior to its next meeting. It was pointed out that the Head Boy had already responded to the HMI report.

GM thanked the Parent Council for their support.

4. Joint Treasurer's Report

JP and CW reported that the balance of PKC Funding monies stood at £604 and that Fundraising monies balance stood at £634. Among the items funded was software for the Maths department, items purchased for the Support for Learning base and trophies for the Oscar events. In addition a grant of £75 for each of 2 pupils had been made to help fund a trip to America. Dictionaries had also been purchased for the English department. It was still intended to support the purchase of football strips.

Grants had been received from the Soutar trust, Physical and the Blairgowrie Common Good Fund.

It was pointed out that impending changes to the benefits systems would further disadvantage those claiming benefits. Parent Council to consider the establishment of a Hardship Fund as a response to these changes.

PC to consider establishment of a Hardship Fund

5. Fundraising Sub Group – Report of Activities

At present there are various activities in the pipeline. A teacher at the school Patrick Egan has agreed to do a bungee jump. As this will result in a lot of interest it should be advertised and promoted in the school newsletter. It may even be possible to film the event.

John Strang from Nae Limits has suggested an Adventure Trip. This would take the form of a raft race from Craighall gorge to Blairgowrie bridge. John would be willing to do this at a much reduced cost thereby ensuring as much sponsorship money as possible was retained. The offer is on the table until the end of August. It might be possible to have some input from PKC.

The Tesco raffle is scheduled for March 2014

The coffee morning in Alyth will go ahead in 2014.

The Charity shop in Coupar Angus is scheduled for October 2014

There will be involvement in “All Things Fair “ which supports local businesses and promotes fair trade.

6. AOB

Linda Lawrence a member of the ECO committee is to arrange for plants to be planted at the front of the school. This is part of the Blair in Bloom initiative. It was pointed out that Blairgowrie is entered in the Britain in Bloom competition.

GM told the Parent Council Blairgowrie Golf Club was hosting the junior Ryder Cup in 2014. This was an opportunity for the school and this should not be allowed to slip. ER is a member of the working group formed to deal with this initiative and she will try to ensure the best outcome for the school.

BE informed the Parent Council of the Perth Kilt Run. This is a 5 kilometre event and is to take place on the 10th August at the North Inch in Perth. This is an inter school competition and all primary and secondary schools will be invited to participate. This was also intended

as a Family Day out and therefore not restricted solely to school pupils.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is the 17th April 2013 at **6.30pm**. The venue is Blairgowrie High School.
