

Minutes of the GGS Parent Council which was held in the Grantown Grammar School staffroom at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7th September 2010.

1. Welcome

Mr McCook opened the meeting with a welcome to all present. He introduced S6 pupil Hannah McCook, Captain of Revoan house, who represented the School Captains. He also introduced Conan Farningham from the Highland Council who is the Case Officer in charge of planning operations.

Present

Mr Sandy McCook	Convenor
Miss Hannah McCook	S6 School Captain, Revoan house
Mrs Cath Buxton	Clerk
Mrs Heather Tucker	Chair Fundraising Group
Mrs Kate Young	Treasurer
Mr Conan Farningham	Case Officer in charge of planning operations
Mr Stuart Morrison	Technical Support Officer
Cllr Jaci Douglas	
Mrs Sharon Kerr	
Miss Kendal Delaney	
Mrs Catherine McAuly-Brand	
Mr Robert Brown	
Mrs Irene Carson	Headteacher
Mr Giles Baker	
Mrs Liz Amphlett	

2. Apologies

Mr Chris Bremner	
Mr Andy Liggat	Chair Communications Group
Mr McLain Carter	S6 School Captain, Revack house
Miss Ananda Hummel	S6 School Captain, Roy house

At this point in the meeting Mr McCook explained that he had attended a meeting with Mr Farningham and the residents of Seafield Park with regards to the planning proposals. The Parent Council had previously objected to mistakes in the previous proposals and, since there was little notice of a new application, Mr McCook had put forward further objections on behalf of the Parent Council. Mr Farningham explained under new rules, the school had not been notified of the new application

because it was outside the required 20m. He is, however, looking into this since the school is on the boundary. The main issue related to the width of the corridor access/egress from the school. Mr Farningham assured Mrs Carson that that condition would not be relaxed. The other main issue relates to increased health and safety issues as a result of the proposed solid fencing around the entire park, excluding the clubhouse. It will be set down that part of the fencing should at least be open mesh. The discussion will go to a full committee around the 26th October. Mr Farningham will send a draft report to residents and the school around the 14th October. The present fence is up to spec for the Highland League, but if the team move forward to the Scottish Cup the solid fence would be necessary. Mrs Carson informed Mr Farningham that when the Club asked for her support for their entry to the Highland League she had been assured that there would be no impact on the school other than the building of the pavilion. Mr Farningham told Councillor Douglas that reference would have to be made to all points when trying to reach a decision, even though the issues are not all planning issues. These issues include car parking and the air ambulance's use of the land. Mrs Carson said the scout hut has been available for use by the school and it was her understanding the football club would upgrade it as part of the agreement with the Council. Mr Farningham will contact the Scout Association. Mr Farningham added that decisions would be based all the evidence, such as what went on previously – the original decision was contrary to the original local plan. There were lots of concerns with the overall application and he will consider the fact that the fence was agreed the previous year then changed recently. Mr Farningham will keep in contact with Mr McCook and Mrs Carson and a decision should be made by the end of the month.

Mr McCook thanked Mr Farningham and Mr Morrison for attending the Parent Council meeting at very short notice.

3. Minutes of last meeting

Mrs Tucker proposed the adoption of the minutes of the last meeting and Mr Baker seconded the proposal. The minutes were duly adopted.

4. Matters arising

The School Captains have now been appointed. They are Ananda Hummel, Roy, Hannah McCook, Revoan and McLain Carter, Revack.

The climbing wall was opened after the last meeting in June.

5. Parental query

A parent had enquired about the opportunity for pupils to work towards the Baccalaureate. Mrs Carson explained that this is available in Languages and Science. One pupil successfully did the languages qualification last year, supported by Mrs Searle and Mrs Buxton. The science department is keen to support the Science Baccalaureate but this year time is tight. The school will support the qualification if time, the staffing situation and budget allow. Mrs Kerr had enquired last year and found that only two schools in the Highlands were offering the Baccalaureate: Grantown Grammar and Charleston Academy. Peter Finlayson is trying to encourage uptake of the qualification. Mrs Carson said lots of development time is needed and schools are already stretched with Curriculum for Excellence developments.

6. AGM

An advert has gone in the Strathy and parents have received a newsletter with details of the AGM, which is to be held next Tuesday, 14th September. Mrs Tucker has tea, coffee and biscuits and will email Mrs Thom to organize this. Hannah McCook was asked if she could persuade some of the seniors to be involved. It was suggested that those attending the AGM would break into two groups towards the end of the meeting. New parents would be welcomed and encouraged to become involved. Mr Baker asked if trustees would have to be re-appointed. Mrs Wharton, who will be taking over as treasurer, is willing to become a trustee. Mrs Young will check the procedure and inform Mr McCook. Minutes of the AGM will have to be signed.

7. Headteacher's report

The school roll for the new session is 430. There has been a good start to the term with new staff settling in well and the appointment of School and House Captains, who are being very pro-active. It is hoped there will be an active Student Council this year.

Mrs Carson has produced a document of Job Roles in preparation for the Welcome Disco to be held on the 16th September. This outlines roles of staff, S6 pupils and parent helpers at the event.

Sponsored Event - The organization of this is in progress. It will include a walk, run, swim, climb and spin.

E1 - There are still ongoing problems. Staff training begins on Friday.

SQA results – Mrs Carson distributed STACS and whole school information and provided some specific information on successes and areas for a closer look. Mrs McAuly-Brand requested a simplified version of the results for parents.

Department review meetings will be held before the October holidays. This will lead to an update of the Improvement Plan. Staff are members of Learning Development groups. A document outlining the ECS priorities was produced last week and the school is well in line with these. Other commitments delayed the production of the Standards and Qualities report, which was shown to the Parent Council last year.

Mrs Carson explained the present building position, with improvements having been made to the main building and ongoing work on the STEM building.

ICT procurement – the embargo will continue until October at least. Proposals are being made and discussed for printer solutions.

S4 pupils are beginning their week of Work Experience.

With the increase in roll numbers there have been some transport issues. After discussion with the bus companies changes have been made. Mrs Carson is monitoring the situation.

8. Treasurer's report

Mrs Young distributed copies of the end of year accounts. She explained that VABS now charge £50 to audit the accounts so this may have to be re-considered next year.

9. Fundraising

Mrs Tucker has five volunteers for the disco, Several help forms have been returned.

Since her son has now left school, Mrs Tague has given up the co-ordination of the Lucky Number Draw. Mrs Tucker has presented Mrs Tague with a bouquet of flowers and a card in appreciation of all the work she has done. It will now be necessary to find someone willing to take on the Lucky Number draw. The bulk of the work is the distribution of renewal forms once a year. Numbers will be drawn at Parent Council meetings. Miss Delaney will ask staff if they would like to buy numbers for the draw.

The sponsored walk clashes with a sponsored cycle at Nethy and Deshar. Five helpers will be required at the walk. Mrs Tucker wondered if Mr Croall still wanted cups for refreshments during the walk and asked that he let her know.

Mrs Carson added that an S6 class is organizing a fashion show in November as a fundraiser for the prom. Other money raised for the event at the Try-Tri amounted to £70.

Winners of the Lucky umbers, drawn at the meeting were:
P Rattray, H Farquhar, M Rose

10. Any other business

Mr Brown commended both the pupils who took part in the triathlon and Mrs Ann MacKintosh, the only member of staff who took part.

The date of the next meeting will be decided at the AGM and is likely to be at the beginning of November.

Mr McCook thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15pm.