

Minutes of the EGM of the Grantown Grammar School Policy and Planning group held in the school on Wednesday 10th February 2010

1. Welcome

Mr McCook opened the meeting with a welcome to all present. He apologised for the cancellation of the last meeting due to bad weather and lack of time to consult parents over the proposed new constitution.

Present

Mr Sandy McCook Convenor
Mrs Cath Buxton Clerk
Mrs Heather Tucker Chair Fundraising Group
Mrs Kate Young Treasurer
Mrs Hayley Muir
Miss Kendal Delaney
Mrs Catherine McAuly-Brand
Mr Robert Brown
Mrs Claire Thom
Mrs Irene Carson Headteacher
Mr Giles Baker
Mr Andy Liggat Chair Communications Group
Mrs Liz Amphlett

2. Apologies

Mrs Liz Amphlett who would be arriving late
Mr Chris Bremner

3. Minutes of last meeting

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

4. Matters arising

There have been changes made to the Seafield Park set-up. The Council and users of Seafield Park are discussing a new lease agreement.

A completion certificate is imminent for the new building. There has been confirmation of work to be done on the refurbishment of the old science labs. It has now been agreed that the art rooms will also be refurbished and this is all due to happen in the summer holidays. Quotes for work to improve room 5 are being requested but this will have to be funded by the school as are carpets and fixings for data projectors in rooms 5, 6, 7, 15, 16 and 17.

The Fundraising group Christmas Hampers raised £340.00

Mr Brown asked about the procedures for Lost Property. Mrs Thom said there would be a new store place for lost items and pupils would be reminded of this once a term. There could be support for pupils who lose items regularly – if this is a problem parents should contact the Guidance teacher.

5. Adoption of new Constitution to comply with the OSCR regulations

Mr McCook explained the Policy & Planning Group had been working on a new constitution over the past year. The previous constitution had been kept short but was too tight for OSCR. The proposed constitution has already been accepted by OSCR in its draft form. They had suggested changes and re-worded paragraphs, agreeing to the subsequent update which met their criteria. It would be necessary for parents to agree to the proposed constitution before a signed copy could be sent off with a copy of the meeting's minutes to OSCR. The Parent Council will then be assigned a charity number. The proposed new constitution was made available to all parents three weeks prior to the meeting via the school internet and the school office. This was advertised in the local newspaper.

Mr McCook asked all present if they had read and understood the new constitution and asked if there were any issues arising. Mrs Carson highlighted the fact that OSCR will not provide funds for something the Highland Council should normally pay for. Mr McCook explained the money raised could be used for items such as tents for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and lighting for the stage, which would improve education and facilities for the youngsters. Mrs Young pointed out from an accounting point of view it would be easy to point out what had been gift-aided.

Mr McCook proposed the adoption of the new Grantown Grammar School constitution. Mr Liggat seconded this. A show of hands was called for. Twelve were in favour with no abstentions and no votes against.

Mr McCook expressed his thanks to Mr John Rainy Brown (VABS) and Mrs Kate Young for their help in the preparation of the constitution and looked forward to setting up gift-aid.

6. Standards and Quality Report

Item 8 on the agenda was brought forward. The Standards & Quality report draft is to be made available to parents. Part 1 will be made available on the school website or from the office. Part 1 is taken from the annual review of departments. The latest version of "Success at GGS" information is to be included as part of the report. Staff will be

asked if there is anything to add and the format of Success at GGS will be improved.

The pupil council and the Parent Council will be invited to comment and are asked to read the report in preparation for the next meeting.

7. Treasurer's report

Originally item 9 on the agenda.

Mrs Young distributed the Treasurer's report and explained the entries. She had phoned Moira McCarrell with regards to the Highland Council grant. This is no longer restricted and can therefore be entered into the general income section. Available funds amount to almost £8,500. Mrs Young is looking into a possible grant from the Sports Council: an equipment grant to buy a canoe.

Mrs Young explained these would be her last few months as treasurer. If anyone would be willing to take over or would like more information as to what is involved they should contact her. Mrs Young would help anyone willing to take on the responsibility.

At this point the fundraising group left to hold their meeting.

8. Head teacher's report

Originally item 6 on the agenda.

Staffing: Budget cuts will affect circa 0.2 of a teacher, equivalent to 1 day a week. There are 83 primary 7 pupils due to start the new school year. This will impact on practical lessons as 5 rather than 4 classes will be required. It will also affect the options which can be offered, especially with Advanced Higher groups and courses where numbers are low. Some subjects may have to be offered on a two year rotation providing an opportunity for pupils to take up a subject later. The S3 sections in the current session are almost full apart from an additional biology and P.E. which have been provided to allow more pupils to get the options they wish for.

There have been two Parent information evenings recently: Senior and S2. There was a good turn out despite the weather at the senior evening, very good turn out at the S2 event and positive feedback on both occasions.

Mrs Carson explained that the Making Connections programme for S1/2 pupils ties in with the school Improvement Plan. One concern during

evaluation last year was that the pupils didn't recognise their progress in skills development. On the 9th February Eilidh Grant, the Curriculum for Excellence Development Officer visited the S1 and 2 Making Connections classes to hear them speak about their projects. These include S2 Community projects such as a family quiz night on the 23rd February, an Open Day and a community garden. S1 pupils are designing games to highlight the Janeemo project. Pupils are taking more responsibility for their projects and are now showing evidence of recognising the skills they are developing.

Learning and Teaching Scotland were in school on the 28th January to film staff and pupils in recognition of our good practice in Sustainable Development Education. Reps from the RSPB and the Cairngorm National Park spoke about the difference that has been made by the school's involvement. This will form part of a National resource of good practice and we are one of only three secondary schools to be invited to contribute.

Mr Smith had spoken to pupils in S1/2 about Eco schools and asked who would like to be involved. There was a lot of positive feedback.

9. School Improvement Plan

Originally item 7 on the agenda.

A copy of the school Improvement Plan was distributed and questions were invited. There have been some minor amendments and wording since the draft was issued.

10. Communications group update

Originally item 11 on the agenda.

Mr Liggat informed the meeting that the last two newsletters went on the web-site but didn't go home as a hard copy. Mrs Carson apologized for this oversight and suggested Mr Liggat sends an email to Mrs Grant along with future newsletters so that she can look out for it.

Mr Liggat is to be posted to Afghanistan for 6 months at the end of July and will not be able to attend meetings during this time. He would like to continue in his role as much as possible via the web and emails to his present address will reach him. While in Afghanistan Mr Liggat will be playing a part in supporting the local community, including schools and wondered if Grantown Grammar school would consider a supporting link (pupil to pupil), sending boxes with stationary items, for example. Boxes can be sent cheaply to the British forces postal address or taken to

Lossiemouth RAF base where they would be transported. The school already has links with Malawi, China and Alaska. It was agreed a link with schools in Afghanistan was a good idea. Mr Liggat should liaise with Mrs Thom about this.

Members of the Fundraising group returned to the meeting at this point.

Mr McCook told the meeting that members of the Kingussie Parent Council were keen to have a joint informal meeting to discuss common problems. This proposal was agreed and Mr McCook will get back to the Chair of the Kingussie group to arrange a date.

11. Fundraising Group

Originally item 10 on the agenda.

There will be a Valentine disco on the 18th February. Parent helpers have been organized. The quiz night was cancelled, to avoid a clash with the S2 Family Quiz night, but it is hoped to organize something for the end of May. Mr McCrow will approach staff for questions.

There is likely to be a sponsored walk in September.

Lots of refreshments were left over after the sports day last year. This year the availability of refreshments will be advertised. The Home Economics freezers could perhaps be used for storage of choc ices.

A further plea was made for a new treasurer and secretary.

The help list needs to be updated. Email contact is easier.

There is an S2 parent's evening on the 17th March. The fundraising group hope to attend.

S6 pupils are looking at a disco after Easter – the S6 groups are rotating and this would allow each group to have the experience of organizing a disco. Mrs Carson has suggested they contact Mrs Tucker.

A plea was made for storage space within the school for refreshments. Storage space cold enough for storage of food items is a real problem in the school.

Mrs Muir will email Mrs Thom to discuss school uniform and the possibility of ordering it online.

12. **Any other business**

No further business. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 24th March 2010

The meeting was closed at 9.25pm.