

Minutes of the Grantown Grammar School Policy and Planning group held in the school on Wednesday 24th March 2010

1. Welcome

Mr McCook opened the meeting with a welcome to all present. Representatives of the Kingussie Parent Council were unable to attend the meeting as they had previously planned.

Present

Mr Sandy McCook Convenor
Mrs Cath Buxton Clerk
Mrs Heather Tucker Chair Fundraising Group
Mrs Hayley Muir
Miss Kendal Delaney
Mrs Catherine McAuly-Brand
Mrs Irene Carson Headteacher
Mrs Liz Amphlett
Cllr Jaci Douglas
Mr Dugal McCrow

2. Apologies

Mr Andy Liggat Chair Communications Group
Mr Giles Baker
Mrs Kate Young Treasurer
Mrs Anne Sullivan
Kingussie Parent Council

3. Minutes of last meeting

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

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Charity status

Mr McCook had received a letter from OSCR granting charitable status to the Parent Council. The Parent Council should now put the charity number onto any stationary within the next six months. The school will now be able to accept bequests and gift aid.

Headteacher's report: Budget and staffing

Mrs Carson gave the budget and staffing report at this point for the benefit of the Fundraising group who would then hold their meeting separately:

Budget – Mrs Carson was pleased to announce the school is now in a green position with the possibility of a carry over into the next financial year. £7,000 has been kept aside for the building and this will include the removal of the cupboard in room 5 and carpeting for rooms 5 and 17. Beale & Pyper is to do the carpets. The school will not receive council funding for data projector points in rooms 5, 6, 7,

15, 16 and 17 and may make a request for these from the Parent Council.

Mrs McAuly-Brand asked if the school budget would consequently be cut the following financial year. It will not.

The impact of the Fujitsu contract, from the 1st April 2010 is now clear. There will be some positive benefits for the school but overall there will be a 25% reduction in the number of PCs which can be linked to the network within the contract though there is scope for funding additional PCs. Now, any ICT bought or gifted to the school, that goes onto the network, has to be serviced through Fujitsu. The costs will be £9/month for each laptop and £6/month for each desktop computer. The computers will have higher specs allowing more access e.g. video conferencing. IT problems will be resolved remotely where possible. Fundraising could focus on increasing the number of computers within the school and the service charges should be built in to this cost. Other computers can be kept in school but will be used for word processing only and not attached to the network.

Other areas for the Fundraising group to consider would be to refresh the outdoor equipment and to look at any outstanding departmental bids.

Staffing – Two temporary Guidance teacher posts have been advertised to cover maternity leave in August. The closing date is Friday 26th March 2010. One member of the science department is also due to go on maternity leave. Additional teachers have been requested in maths, home economics and science. GGS is one of the few schools in the Highlands with significant rising rolls. The expected roll after the summer is around 336-440 pupils. A fifth section will be necessary in S1.

At this point the Fundraising group left to meet.

6. Feedback from the Standards and Quality Report

Mr McCook asked if there were any issues or queries about the Standards and Quality report which was issued at the last meeting. Mrs Carson will discuss the report with Pupil Council. Mr McCook recommended that the Parent Council would be happy to accept the draft of the Standards and Quality report, January 2010. This was agreed unanimously.

7. School Dress Code update

Mrs Muir brought samples from Highland Schoolwear on Academy Street in Inverness. The shop is hoping to set up a webshop in the near future. It is a flexible business and does not require to be the sole provider of uniforms to a school. There is a summer uniform option, prices are reasonable and the school produces a letter to parents. The Wee Gooseberry, in Grantown will also supply school uniform. Summer wear and uniform options will be discussed with the pupil council. Mrs Muir will contact Mrs Thom. A decision should be made by the next meeting so school uniform items can be prepared in time for the new school year.

8. Head teacher's report

Phoenix E1, a new MIS (Management Information System), has now been set up in school. There have been some teething problems with the server and on the

first day it took two hours to do afternoon registration. The system is more secure and data will no longer be held centrally. There will be a roll-out to staff so they will have access to pupils' timetables, electronic mark books. It has huge potential but is still developing at present. The office staff and Senior Management Team had three days of training. There has been a problem with SQA data so two systems are being used at present to ensure all the SQA information is sent. The system can be accessed from home. All schools are transferring to Phoenix E1.

The senior options stage 2 forms are due back on the 25th March. The S3 option forms will be distributed after the Easter holidays when Mrs Carson has looked at the senior choices. Timetabling will be more difficult this year because the extra column for practical classes in S1 will have to be taken into account and this will mean there will be no more additional staff available for senior school options.

Ski championships. Pupils did exceptionally well at the Highland Schools Snow Sports Championships, winning the Francis Walker trophy and the Baxter's Cup.

Mrs Carson has nominated the school for the Sustainable Schools Award. The school has also been nominated, by a pupil, for the Get Scotland Active award and individual teachers have been nominated for awards.

Mr Smith was due to meet with Britspace with regards to issues concerning the new STEM building. Britspace now have an aftercare department. The Building Inspectors have approved the building warrant.

S2 community events – the Quiz night was successful and pupils raised £80 for the school fund.

An Open Day is to be held on the 20th April

The BBC news report went ahead despite a time issue error and some S1 groups managed to complete their reports in less than two hours.

Eco Schools – 57 pupils from S1, 6 from S2 and 1 from S3 showed an interest in Eco Schools. Those who attended a meeting were given the chance to go to an Eco conference for 2 days, 1 night at Badaguish. Mrs Carson visited them in the evening and was impressed to hear their ideas on diversity.

Senior prelims were affected by the snow closures. Interim reports were distributed today for S4 pupils. S5/6 pupils will either receive their reports on Friday or by post.

Higher Maths prelims were held up due to the disruption at the beginning of the year with the change to the STEM building.

9. Discussions with Kingussie Parent Council

The Kingussie Parent Council were unable to attend the meeting.

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

10. Treasurer's report

In the absence of Mrs Young, Mr McCook went over the Treasurer's report. The biggest income since the last report was the Valentine disco, which raised £529.50

11. Fundraising Group

The fundraising group went over the previous bids. The items on the list could go ahead and this would still leave £4,500.

It will be necessary to add a gift aid option at the bottom of the sponsor forms.

Mr and Mrs Kerr would like to donate trophies to the school for P.E., art and english and have suggested individuals or businesses could sponsor a trophy and donate tokens, with the trophy then being named after them. It was agreed this would be a matter for the P & P group.

The idea of a Friends of GGS was raised where people could give an annual donation and this could be acknowledged somehow. It was agreed this could be looked into and discussed further when the treasurer was present.

There will be a Quiz night in the Ben Mhor hotel on the 27th May. Award ceremonies will also be held during the day.

It was suggested that the Fundraising group meet during the Policy and Planning group meetings since few people turn up to their meetings.

S2 pupils are likely to contact the Parent Council for help with their community events.

S6 pupils would like to hold a disco in the summer term.

12. Communications group update

There was no Communications group update in the absence of Mr Ligat.

13. Any other business

Mr McCook has had an information pack from the Learning and Teaching Scotland with regards to the Curriculum for Excellence.

A letter has been received from the Cairngorm National Park with regards to the Building Application for the Muir houses, to which the Parent Council objected. The application has been refused.

A letter has been received inviting renewal of the subscription to the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Sports Council.

It is hoped to provide more opportunities to parents to find out more about the Curriculum for Excellence. In the new school year it is hoped to arrange a joint school/Parent Council information evening on *What CfE means for your child*. This will include DVDs of pupil work. Mr McCrow has offered parents the chance to participate in Making Connections classes but has had little uptake.

The P7 Parents' Evening will take place in the 3rd week in June and the Parent Council will attend.

There was a reminder that the Parent Council needs a new treasurer.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 19th May 2010

It was decided that the following meeting, and final in the school year, would be held on Wednesday 16th June 2010

The meeting was closed at 9.25pm.