

Minutes of the Parent Council meeting held in the Grantown Grammar School staffroom at 7.30pm on Wednesday 26th January 2011.

**1. Welcome**

Mr McCook opened the meeting with a welcome, to the first meeting of 2011, to all present.

**Present**

Mr Sandy McCook	Convenor
Mrs Cath Buxton	Clerk
Mrs Heather Tucker	Chair Fundraising Group
Mrs Hayley Muir	
Mr Robert Brown	
Mrs Claire Thom	
Mrs Irene Carson	Headteacher
Mrs Liz Amphlett	
Mrs Tracy Wharton	Treasurer
Mrs Ene-Karmen Forsyth	
Mr Andy Liggat	Chair Communications Group
Miss Kendal Delaney	
Cllr Jaci Douglas	
Mrs Catherine McAuly-Brand	
Mrs Ann Sullivan	
Mrs Sharon Kerr	
Mr Dugal McCrow	
Miss Hannah McCook	School Captain, Revoan

**2. Apologies**

Mr Giles Baker  
Mrs Susan McLaren

In addition to items on the agenda, Mr McCook introduced Mr Andy Smith, Depute Rector, who gave a presentation on the situation with computer equipment in the school. Mr Smith explained that Fujitsu now have the contract for all computing equipment in the Highlands. At present the school has over 300 machines, including some passed down from other schools and the computers which came when the STEM building was built. As a result of the Fujitsu contract, five schools in the Highlands, including Grantown Grammar School, will lose over 50% of their computers. The immediate impact to the school will be taken into account. Schools will also be required to pay an annual amount for servicing each computer on the network. It would be possible for the Parent Council to buy additional computers for the school, or they could choose to pay the annual fee to keep some computers on the network. Mr Smith is exploring other options. One option could be to open up public networks so several machines could feed off wi-fi. The costs and security implications would have to be taken into account. Mr McCook asked about printing costs. Solution X is looking at reducing the number of printers in schools to save money. Tain Academy is a pilot school involved in investigating what cost savings could be gained for the council without a detrimental effect on education. At present there

are a number of problems with the original suggestions. Mr McCook asked Mr Smith to give a resume of his presentation to Mrs Buxton to distribute. It was suggested that parent reps, with computer knowledge, could join ICT discussions and then report back to the Parent Council. Mrs Carson asked people to let her know if they would be interested in joining this or the Curriculum Architecture group. Mr McCook added it would be best, for continuity, if parents of junior year pupils were involved. Councillor Douglas hadn't been fully aware of the detail or impact of the issue.

### **3. Minutes of last meeting**

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

### **4. Matters arising**

Development following the planning proposals has now been allowed, despite a site visit. It was passed unanimously. There are some conditions, including the distance from the path.

The lockers are in progress.

Hannah McCook, School Captain, has appeared in the Times Educational Supplement.

The boys have won the Scottish Ski Championship, the first time the trophy has come to the school since 1987.

Alison Simon has been appointed 0.7 LS, in place of Sharon McWilliam who went to Millburn Academy. Jas Hepburn and Julia Scott will be covering Johnny Croall's post while he is in the Guidance department. Amy Clark will be acting PT PE.

### **5. Treasurer's report**

Mrs Wharton distributed copies of the report and explained the details. The disco was cancelled but the concert raised £228. There is still some sponsorship money to go into the account and we are waiting for the grant cheque. The closing date of Cash for Clubs is March. Mrs Buxton is to inform Mr Croall and Miss Clark. Mrs Wharton now has a contact list. Mr McCook added that the annual report to OSCR is due. Mrs Wharton will discuss this with Mrs Young.

### **6. Fundraising**

Mrs Tucker thanked everyone for donations to the Christmas hampers and those who sold the tickets.

Last year the Quiz Night was poorly attended despite all the work that went into it. Mrs Tucker asked if it was worth the effort. Mr McCrow suggested an S2 Making Connections class could organize a quiz for their community project. The Fundraising Group could provide support for this. It would need to be organized before the change of timetable. It was agreed that fundraising projects work best when there is pupil involvement. It was also suggested a Silent Auction be alternated each year with the Sponsored Walk in the autumn. The hall floor has been re-done but the school is still waiting for the new windows. After Easter exams will begin which means the hall cannot be booked at present. Mrs Shearon is looking into the possibility of a joint summer concert with

Kingussie High School, at the MacDonald resort, on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June. The Sports Day will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> June.

Mrs Tucker asked for a volunteer to take on the Lucky Number Draw. The biggest job is sending out the renewal forms each year.

There will be no Valentine Disco since the date falls in the school holiday and clashes with exams and replacement of floor and windows. There will be a disco at Easter instead.

Mrs Muir asked about the possibility of hosting Burns Suppers at school. She suggested this would be a good whole school opportunity. In the past it had been thought this could take away from the many village events organized at this time. Mrs Carson also said it is a bad time of year for teachers to slot something else in. Mrs Tucker felt Health and Safety issues could cause problems. However, it was agreed it would be worth considering if further research went into the possibilities.

#### **7. Any other business**

Mr McCrow announced that £200 was made at the Art Exhibition. Campbell Bryson, the school's former Head of Art had donated some of the profits from his sales.

**At this point school staff, who had already discussed the following points, left the meeting.**

#### **8. Highland Council Budget cuts**

Mrs Carson first informed the meeting that LTS has invited the school to run Open Days to share good practice in terms of Global Citizen. There will be a budget of £1000.

The final edition of the video on Sustainable Development Education, from last April, is to be released.

There is to be a 5% cut in the school budget and a staffing reduction is the only option. 2.4% of this will be covered by the removal of the maximum of twenty classes sizes in Maths and English. The 2.6% is problematic. The number of courses offered to senior pupils will have to be reduced. At present Stage one option forms are being done. The S5/6 Information Evening will be next week. Mrs Carson explained that, for some courses, such as Advanced Higher Art, charges would have to be made for the use of materials.

The next stage of options depends on staffing. Some teachers have indicated an interest in early retirement. There is no slack in the budget. If there was a problem an emergency budget would be introduced and, for example, all practical work in Home Economics could be withdrawn.

Councillor Douglas said Councillors had tried to hold back from cuts in schools.

#### **9. HMIE Inspections: Change of focus**

Curriculum for Excellence is now a major feature. Mrs Carson explained the seven characteristics which have been identified. There are seven year cycles to an HMIE inspections stemming from the first date of a visit. In the case of Grantown Grammar School this date is February 1994. At present two weeks notice is given but this is to be reduced to one week.

Mr Croall has been contacting employers with whom the school can make links. It is hoped that a rep from the Curriculum for Architecture Group and Mr Croall, from the Skills for Life and Work Group, could come and talk to the Parent Council.

#### **10. School Improvement Plan**

Mrs Carson distributed copies of the School Improvement Plan, version 4. She explained that the Grammar School is working on the plan with the Area Schools Group (ASG) and that improvement priorities of each school have been included. In future there will be one plan to cover all. Mrs Carson asked everyone to look at the plan and would value feedback.

It is hoped that some parent representatives will agree to join the following groups: Funding and ICT; Curriculum for Architecture; Skills for Work and Life. Anyone interested should inform Mrs Carson. It would be particularly beneficial to have parents of younger Grammar school pupils involved.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at 7.30pm.

Mr McCook thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.35pm.