

# Minutes of Meeting

## South Morningside Parent Council Meeting

Monday 7 October 2019 at 6.45pm in Staff Room

### Total Attendees (20)

Brendan Paddy	Clare Bowyer
Olly Headey	Andrew Leiper
Jill Dallas	John Cameron
Shelagh Halford	Eilidh Stimpson
Alison Reeves	Elisabeth Quinn
Lizzie Boyce	Colin McRae
Ellie Trotter	Michael Urquhart*
Susie Morgan*	Karen Richmond*

### Parent Council Members (16)

Parent council made up of 28 Parent Members plus 5\* non-voting staff members

### Guests (4)

Cllr Melanie Main	Bobby Pathak
Stephen McMenemy	Helen New

## **Welcome, attendees and apologies – Brendan Paddy (Co-Chair)**

Brendan welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year and confirmed that apologies had been received in advance.

Everyone present introduced themselves.

The minutes of the meeting on 10 June 2019 were approved.

## **Review of matters arising & actions from last meeting**

See separate document.

## **Report: Chair (Brendan Paddy)**

Report provided in meeting pack.

Brendan welcomed new members to the Parent Council.

Brendan suggested changing the format of PC meetings to allow time for more substantial discussion and making discussion of standing agenda items shorter. Everyone agreed with this proposal.

Brendan corrected the figures in his update. The funding available is £7,000. Additionally, the standing commitments for the year have been covered by the available funds but fundraising for 2020/21 needs to take place to meet standing commitments next year.

All the funds ring-fenced for the playground works have been spent.

Building works have commenced at Comiston Road.

There has been no update on the new school at Deanbank but Mr Urquhart is attending a meeting on 8 October and will provide an update after that.

## **Report: Headteacher (Mr Urquhart)**

Mr Urquhart gave a presentation on the Raising Attainment and Achievement initiative which is a group of schools sharing best practice and giving support to each other including Bonaly and Cramond Primary Schools. The schools report on attainment levels.

### Literacy

Within the catchment, some children come in to the school with limited English and take time to get up to speed, which affects the results.

P1 – only 2 children didn't achieve the writing target out of 105. Almost all children are reading by the end of P1.

Mr Urquhart clarified that testing at this age is 1-2-1 with a teacher. The teacher then makes a professional judgement about whether the child has achieved the target.

P4 – almost all children achieved the reading target and there was a slight decline in writing but almost all are achieving.

P7 – Reading – almost all achieved. A new programme has been introduced providing a more enriched experience and stronger comprehension and reading for pleasure. Writing – almost all achieved.

### Numbers/Maths

P1 – all children achieved the required level.

P4 – improvement from last session. Almost all achieved (up from ‘most’ in 17-18)

P7 – Historically low score, however with ‘most’ 88% achieving. This cohort had an intervention based on fractions led by Support for Learning teachers and has improved from ‘majority’ achieving in 16-17.

The school also tracks equity and involvement in a wider out of school life. Agnes Campbell is the PSO for the school and is charged with making sure the children don’t just have academic achievement but participate in activities in wider life. Children who don’t are targeted for extra curricular activities to help bring up their attainment as the two are linked.

Eilidh asked if there were many children being helped by the school. Mr Urquhart confirmed there were. At the end of letters issued by the school addressed to parents regarding activities, there is a sentence asking parents/carers to come forward if they need any assistance. Mrs Morgan said there were other children who had additional support needs who also may get some assistance.

Alison asked whether other schools tracked their results in the same way. Mr Urquhart said it was not done in the same way but other schools would be measuring their performance.

Elisabeth asked whether there was a list of recommended books to read for fun. Mrs Morgan said that her recent newsletter had a link to some suggested texts, e.g. the Scottish Book Trust website.

Mr Urquhart will bring another topic for discussion to the next Parent Council meeting.

### **Report: Treasurer (Jill Dallas)**

Jill confirmed there was just under £7,000 unallocated spend in the budget.

Jill queried whether some elements of the committed spend could be removed -

- 1) Unspent teachers allocation budgets from last year (the school confirmed these could be removed and the money reallocated)
- 2) school competition entry fees (the school confirmed these could be removed and the money reallocated)
- 3) Scottish Opera transport 18/19 – Mrs Morgan will double-check

Jill said the Parent Council is also due to receive a grant for administration. Jill will speak to the Business Development Manager about this.

Jill confirmed there was a segregation of duties between Treasury and Finance. Requests to spend money need to go to the Finance group. Requests for funding shouldn’t go to Treasurer as the Treasurer arranges payment.

## **Review of Funding Requests**

Mrs Morgan has said her request for books was not on the committed spend (total £1,000). Mrs Morgan said this is usually part of the committed spend as books need to be replaced every year. This request is to be forwarded on to the Finance group and, if approved, will be voted on by the Parent Council.

The Chairs will liaise with Finance to get standing commitments clarified.

## **Standing Agenda Items**

### a) Accommodation update

Andrew said there was no update on the new school.

Cllr Main said Planning Officers were still awaiting information. It is unclear what the delay has been.

Brendan suggested writing to the Council (Robbie Crockett) for an update.

Cllr Main said re the new school will share the field with St Peters Primary and that the field can get muddy. A Friends of the Field group is to be set up to look after the field. A drop in session will be arranged at the end of the month (Cllr Main will circulate a link).

### b) Clubs Group update

Alison read an update from Louisa:

*Great news for this school year that we have managed to keep 15 clubs running this year out of 22 clubs with the amazing support we have received from the local community, most notably Greenbank Church but also Morningside Library and The Open Door.*

*We are now focused on setting up a meeting with all of the club conveners to start looking at transitioning back to the Main School next year and how we can start to be more proactive around inclusion and access for all.*

*We are (I am) delighted to welcome Alison to the team and we are also looking for more help although we appreciate committing for a lengthy period often puts people off so we are planning to split work into tasks and ask for help with specific tasks for set periods of time - example of good information sheet on clubs for end of term before summer.*

*We are also keen to look at how we manage sign up process and allocation of places into next year so you will hear more about that later.*

*I know Lisa wasn't able to make it today but we wanted to say a huge thanks to Lisa for all her efforts with clubs. Lisa is handing over the reins to the rest of us (Louisa, Joana, Caroline and yourself) as she's decided to take up more studies.*

*Finally, we are also very much aware that the issues with the council around charging for lets and janitorial cover are still rumbling on and we are aware these could come to a head at some point this year. We will continue to liaise with Bruntsfield Clubs to see how things are developing.*

Ellie asked whether all Clubs were getting PVGs done as there seemed to be an inconsistent approach. Mrs Morgan said it was an issue last session. All tutors are PVG'd and key coaches/regular parent helpers are too but that it was agreed at the Parent Council that it would not be feasible to PVG check all parent helpers. The Club Convenor is responsible for making sure the tutor has a PVG, which is done through the school's Business Managers.

Olly said the Lead PVG signatory for the Parent Council is Craig Hilton. A couple of other people can assist with it but Craig is looking for some more help to countersign PVGs. Mrs Morgan said a number of forms have to be returned because they are not filled in correctly so help with filling in the forms is needed.

#### c) Fundraising update

Helen said that a group had met up to discuss the Winter Fair. A date has been provisionally booked for 30 November. It is still unclear as to whether Comiston Road will be available so the Fundraising team are planning to hold the fair in an alternative location. The Parent Council felt that Greenbank Parish Church is potentially a more suitable venue than Deanbank. Andrew suggested the Columcille Centre may be another option as rates are good.

Helen said that soon as a venue is chosen, Fundraising will issue a 'save the date'. Once the venue is decided, Helen said they would try to get the optimal arrangement for stalls to try to raise the most amount of money.

Colin said if he had some notice, he could help get tables to the right venue. He also cautioned about some of the stair/layout issues at Greenbank Parish Church and said he could offer some advice.

Olly said through social media, requests for help could be issued as well as a save the date once a venue was confirmed.

#### d) Morningside Community Council update

Helen attended the last meeting on behalf of the Parent Council said that the Council were at the meeting to talk about street light replacements, which will start next autumn, with LED lights.

Helen said there was a large resident contingent at the meeting as the Community Council were discussing the one-way plans for Greenbank Terrace. Residents are keen for that to happen. Cllr Main said it was in process along with other planned changes (e.g. a pedestrian crossing at the Hermitage) and was due to happen next year.

It was agreed that the Parent Council would operate a rota for attendance at Morningside Community Council meetings in future. The next meeting is 16 October at The Open Door (Parent Council to confirm the representative to Cllr Main). Cllr Main updated that there is also space for members to join the Community Council.

#### e) Transport update

Shelagh read an email update from David:

*We have been progressing the Walking Bus up to a point where we are almost ready to start it going. When I say 'we' it is all Philippa's excellent work!*

*We were planning on holding a meeting this week with the transport group/ teachers and city*

*council representatives, however this was proving tricky for everyone's diaries and available venues.*

*We decided to hold off while we gather more info to ensure the walking bus is viable and to this intent we propose to create a survey aimed at interested parents.*

*The survey will hope fully ascertain what days parents will be able to volunteer and which days they require the service and how many children will use it.*

*We are aiming to get an online survey out after the half term break.*

*The walking bus will operate only in the mornings at this stage.*

*Critically we need a key volunteer coordinator to set up a rota and lead the group.*

*We have possibly 8 interested families so far – once this is up and running then conceivably this will rise by word of mouth.*

*The route between the main school and Deanbank is agreed and risk assessed.*

*All volunteers will require PVG checks in line with school/PC guidelines.*

#### f) Playground update

Mrs Richmond said there were a lot of keen people following the AGM to join the playground group but that progress would depend on fundraising. Mrs Richmond said she hoped the group would be able to secure some matched funding. Mrs Richmond said it would be good to get a group together to start to look at jobs to take work forward.

Eilidh asked about the MUGA and how much it was likely to cost. Mrs Richmond said the surface was one element and the MUGA is another but that it would likely cost £25,000 for both together. Anything which is done needs to be suitable for infant children as the future of the Comiston Road site is changing and will accommodate younger children in the future.

Helen said other schools managed to raise other monies through other events and asked whether it was possible to use Deanbank for events. Mrs Richmond said the hall and outdoor space were available.

Cllr Main said there was £15,000 left in the community fund, which would be used and that the Parent Council could apply to get £5,000 of that.

Lizzie asked about the planters. Mr Urquhart said the plan is to have 4 different seasonal trees and an allotment at the back.

#### g) Communications update (paper submitted)

Eilidh said that work had taken place to ensure email groups were up-to-date and the website was up-to-date.

An update newsletter is planned for the next few days.

If anyone wants any Facebook updates put out, Alice or Eilidh can do that (email [comms@sm-pc.org](mailto:comms@sm-pc.org)).

Eilidh confirmed that a school calendar planned and that all the advertising had now been sold, which totalled an income of £1,340. The cost of making the calendars is £1,500 so the calendars need to recoup £160 to break even. Calendars will cost £8.50 each and will be composed of children's art work.

Eilidh said she has noticed that emails from the school say 'Admin@SouthMorningside' but it isn't clear which school it is. The school will remind the office to label emails. Mrs Richmond said Deanbank comms tend to come out on a Friday.

Elisabeth said the calendar was a great idea for fundraising and encouraged anyone with ideas to come forward.

Mrs Richmond said schools which have upgraded their playgrounds have done lots of small fundraising things.

h) Situations vacant

Clubs and Fundraising are the main subgroups needing additional support if anyone can lend a hand.

Brendan suggested the more specific the request, the more likely it would be to get volunteers.

Alison said Clubs were putting together a rough idea of how much time is involved in the tasks.

## **Requested Items**

### **1. PVG Checks**

Olly said Craig Hilton is still the lead signatory for PVG checks but could do with some help (a couple of people if possible).

Anyone would be helpful but if they are good with forms, can be available in the playground and are organised, that would be ideal. The time commitment is a few hours a week at the start of term and the few hours a month after that. Olly said it would be good to have a current parent involved in the process.

Alison suggested Craig could do a job description for the post. Eilidh will include this in comms, once available.

### **AOB**

None.

**Date of next meeting: 25 November 2019 (planning to have the meeting at Comiston Road, subject to building works)**