



Minutes of 36th Stranraer Academy Parent Council Meeting Thursday 9th Dec 2010

PRESENT: -

Parent Members: Emma Sutherland, Christine Fowles, Lesley McColm, Anne Boyd, Jo Cochrane

Co-opted Member: Robert Downie
Student Rep: Caitlin Knotts
Head Teacher: Norman Dawson
Teacher Rep: Susan Boyd
Clerk: Lorraine Heron
Council Member: Councillor I Dick
Attending Parent: Lyn Mawson
Attending: PC Garry Mitchell

1.	WELCOME & APOLOGIES
	Chairperson Jo Cochrane opened the meeting and apologies were put forward on behalf of Neil Fyfe, James McQuisitn, John Crawford, Michael McClorey, Rod Baxter, Neale McQuisitn and Helen-marie Bradley.
2.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING 11th Nov
	The Minutes of the last Meeting were proposed as accurate by Norman Dawson and seconded by Lesley McColm.
3.	MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING
	Dux Board – Mr Dawson advised the members that the Dux Boards have been taken to Dumfries by Neale. Paul Jardine has had a look at them and thinks he will be able to repair them. Work Experience – Mr Dawson has spoken to Adam Stevenson regarding work experience and he advises that this is connected to SVS. At the moment it is a struggle to find enough placements for all the children who require it. Any business which takes the students on a work placement must be risk assessed by the council and this is the reason there are so few places. However, he advises that if parents, pupils or the school manage to arrange any additional placements, they will be ok as long as a similar type of business has had a risk assessment carried out by the council in the past.
4.	STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT
	Uniform – Pupils are now allowed to wear grey jumpers as discussed last month and this information has now been passed on to the pupils. Xmas Fayre – There will be a xmas fayre on Mon 20 th Dec in the school. There will be various stalls including Bring and Buy, cake, Lucky Dip, Eco Schools and Amnesty International.
5.	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
	Jo Cochrane asked Mr Dawson if there was still a School Improvement Plan. Previously with the School Board, this was presented each year for approval by the members but is not now a requirement with Parent Councils. The members felt it would be helpful for the PC members to have a look at this and Mr Dawson agreed to bring a copy to the next meeting. Action N Dawson
6.	CLASSROOM ACCESS AND KEY STRATEGY
	Lorraine wrote to Colin Grant, Director of school services, on 15 th Sept detailing our concerns over the key strategy currently in place within the school. A response has since been received, from Larann Foss, development officer, giving assurances that steps were being taken to resolve the issue. However, as this letter was sent on 6 th October, it was decided that Lorraine should send another letter asking for some sort of timescale or update on progress and suggest that 3 or 4 master keys be issued in the meantime until a permanent solution is in place. Action L Heron
7.	CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL HANDBOOK
	The Scottish Government has published a public consultation on their requirements for providing a School Handbook. They have made the consultation paper available on their website and are requesting that Parent Councils and forums respond to an online survey giving their views and opinions. Jo asked that all members think about what should be included in the Handbook and how it should be distributed etc. She will collect the info at the next meeting and submit it on the PC's behalf.
8.	3G PITCH
	Jo read out an email from James McQuistin who is currently trying to secure funding for the 3G pitch we are hoping to have at Stranraer Academy. He has had a very successful meeting with Stephen Jack, from D&G Council and is proposing that we form a group of at least 100 members to apply for grants and/or lottery funding. The members agreed the group should be called 'Wigtownshire Sport For All' and will take over the Pitch on a 50 year lease. The council currently have a Stage 1 agreement with SportsScotland for £183K but we need to get more funding elsewhere to get the application to Stage 2. Councillor Dick advised that It is currently about 11 th on the Capital Development block with no indication when the money will be available. He also advised that he is raising the issue at every opportunity. Mr Jack is going to ask for clarification on the figure of £121k which is being quoted to amend the PPP contract and remove the pitch from it.

9.	HEAD TEACHERS REPORT
	<p>Norman Dawson reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing/Absence – Carrie White is now on Maternity leave and Mark Cameron has been appointed to the Acting PT Science post. As there were no applications for the Chemistry post the advert was changed to Science and attracted 2 applicants. Interviews will be held on Monday. Iain Watt and Sandra Ferguson have now returned to school and Jane Law is absent following a knee operation. Sandra McHarrie is Acting PT. • Exclusions – 3 since last meeting, 2 for persistent disobedience and 1 for assault. • Tracking and Targeting – Mike Warren produced a booklet to try and explain the tracking process and this was distributed with the S4 report. Mr Dawson distributed copies of the leaflet to the members but the general feedback was that it was still difficult to understand. It was suggested that members consider what information they would like to see on a booklet and bring their concerns to the next meeting where it will be discussed in more detail and perhaps ideas passed on to the school. • WOSSTA Course – This week the sea fishing course is proving popular with a group of 12 S4's. Activities include fish-filleting, first aid and fire training. • Health and Safety Visit – Mr Jim Patterson visited the school to look at the schools' H&S policies. In general he was fairly happy with our procedures although made some suggestions for improvement. One of his recommendations is that any meeting which is held in the school should have H&S on the Agenda – even if it is only to confirm no business required. This should probably include the Parent Council. • HMle visit – Mairi Timmons and Douglas Hutchinson from HMle were in school on Tuesday 23rd Nov working with staff and offering advice on Curriculum for Excellence. It was a good day and feedback was excellent. The visit has helped us focus as a school on the planning process for each topic being taught. • Hairspray – Tickets are selling well. • Royal Society of Edinburgh – Allan Little – The Christmas Lecture is going ahead tomorrow at 7pm with Allan Little. There will also be an afternoon lecture which will be attended by all S5/6 pupils and will be filmed by the BBC and distributed live as a web-cast. They are hopeful around 100,000 pupils from around the UK will watch the web-cast. • House System – Kevin Butler has asked if the PC would consider paying for trophies for the inter house competitions, initially for S1 but hopefully this will be rolled out throughout the school in the future. The PC members agreed. • Bad Weather – We have been fortunate with the weather although a couple of staff got stranded as a result of being away for the holiday weekend. The Drummore bus didn't pick up pupils today after it was involved in an accident on the way. • Eco-Schools – Green Flag inspection visit on 20th December. Alex Fergusson MSP will attend. There will also be a wear green day on same date.
10.	TEACHERS REPORT
	<p>Susan Boyd reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Drawing Class – This took place on 13th Nov and was attended by 8 pupils each paying £5. There was a shortfall of £45 to pay the model. The Parent Council had previously agreed to meet this cost and Lorraine to arrange a cheque. • Green Flag – Moira Weatherup from D&G Council visited the school and gave a presentation to the Re-cycling group. • Young Enterprise Group – A group of senior pupils are involved in Young Enterprise Scotland. They have formed a small company making hand-crafted scented candles. They have visited the xmas market in Dumfries and have so far raised £270. They will sit an exam in order to gain a qualification. Ann McCormack looking at having an award through ASDAN. • Study Groups – There are currently some study groups taking place after school and there will be more after Xmas. It is hoped the information regarding times etc can be put on the school website and in the school newsletter to let parents know what is available. • ASDAN – Lynne McCormack is currently working with pupils in the Learning Centre.
11.	TREASURERS REPORT
	<p>The balances of the bank accounts are as follows: Treasurer's a/c £1060.65, and fundraising a/c £2395.48. Again it was noted that the fundraising account is very healthy and ideas of how to spend the money were welcome.</p>
12.	CORRESPONDENCE
	<p>There was no correspondence this month.</p>

13.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
	<p>PC Garry Mitchell reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do The Right Thing - The 'Do the Right Thing' program was recently held in the School and was very well received by 2nd year pupils. The programme is aimed to raise the awareness of issues such as alcohol abuse, sexual assault, use of weapons etc. • Big Screen Gaming Event – An event similar to last years Big Screen Gaming competition is being held in the hall on 18th January. • Anti-Bullying Message – An Anti-Bullying message has been made available to all pupils via Bluetooth. • Story of Alcohol – A new initiative called The Story of Alcohol is being introduced. It will detail the history of alcohol and the effects it has on other agencies such as the NHS. Funds are available to take some pupils to a local Distillery to learn more about the production. • Angling For Youth Development – The Angling For Youth Development programme is in place for those pupils who would like to gain a qualification inn Water development. <p>Transport – Christine advised the members that Wigtown Community Transport will be providing busses to places which do not have service buses for pupils who wish to attend after school clubs. There will be a charge of 50p each. This will allow pupils to attend any extra- curricular clubs as well as study clubs.</p> <p>Duke of Edinburgh Awards – Lesley McColm asked if it would be possible to have those pupils who have achieved their Duke of Edinburgh Awards recognised at the Schools Awards Ceremony which takes place before the summer break. The reason the awards are given at a different time is because they are completed at a different time of year. However, there will be no problem with including them in the Awards Ceremony.</p> <p>Prelims – Emma asked if there was any possibility that when sitting prelims the pupils be allowed to leave the hall when the exam is finished. They are allowed to do this when sitting the SQA exams, but not the prelims. Mr Dawson advised that as Teachers are used to invigilate the Prelims, there may not always be a Teacher available to take the classes which the pupils are returning to. When the SQA exams are on the Invigilator are brought in externally so the Teaching staff are still available.</p> <p>Evaluation Document – Jo distributed copies of the amended Evaluation Document. A few changes have been made after discussions at a previous meeting. She asked that the members have a look at the questions and we will discuss everyone's views at the next meeting.</p>
14.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	The next meeting will be held on Thursday 13 th Jan 2011.