

Pencaitland Primary School PTA

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Scottish Charity Number: SC042585

Minutes of General Meeting

21st September 2011

Attendees

Charlotte Taylor (Chair)
Celia Dean (Treasurer)
Mat Ford (Secretary)
Mary Rodger (Teacher representative)
Marie Campbell (Teacher representative)
Sophie Stein
Emma Hack
Janis Ward
Alison Mells
Viv Smith
Ian Archer
Tim Neighbour
Mandy Ramsay
Sean Ramsay
Gillian Sinton

1 Attendance and apologies

All present, no apologies.

2 Matters arising

a. PTA spending

Celia explained that a parent consultation on PTA spending was being considered. There are two major expense items – the nursery playground improvements and a new PA system. A consultation now could result in a very diffuse response, which may be unhelpful. Should we wait to the end of the year, or consult now?

Celia referred to page three of the handout and presented the analysis of PTA income and spending provided there. The question of whether we could agree on what we will fund at this stage was raised.

Traditional school expenses including Christmas Gifts for the lower school, Christmas crackers, Christmas crafts, P7 Leavers books, P1 Gym bags and minor other items e.g. for the school garden were all approved by acclamation.

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There are two additional potential sources of funding for the PA equipment that the Parent Council is exploring.

Regarding the proposed library area, this would be for P3 upwards to provide support for the Accelerated Reader program. Some concern was expressed that IKEA furniture may not stand up to wear and tear, and that employing a local joiner and doing some of the work (painting etc.) ourselves could prove a better investment. This was not included in the current plan, and would need to be addressed quickly given that the school session has already started.

The PTA, by consensus, agreed the following priority order for spending:

1. Library area
2. School trips
3. PA equipment

The teacher representatives agreed that the school will supply a revised cost estimate for the library work. The work must be checked by the Council upon completion.

Mandy offered to put the work past Dave Baur.

Emma Kerr was volunteered by the teacher representatives to oversee the job.

Given the analysis of PTA funds and spending commitments agreed above, it was agreed to wait to see whether there is sufficient funding to make a parent consultation on PTA spending worthwhile

Celia concluded the discussion by emphasising that it is desirable to make this spending planning process an annual exercise.

b. French club

This was originally unsubsidised. The fees haven't increased for many years meaning the PTA is now providing a £600 subsidy for 24 children. The PTA agreed that an increase in fees to £3 would still be good value and would restore the original unsubsidised situation. It was the consensus of the PTA to increase French Club fees to £3.

Sophie agreed that she will take this forward and inform the parents regarding the increase in charges. Sophie will also emphasise that the parents of the children attending the French Club should be the parent helpers in rota, and not the PTA members, as the PTA already provides considerable support for the French Club.

c. Nursery playground developments

A conditional offer has been received to fund a new surface, new climbing frame, and a new shed for the nursery playground. The plan is to aim for getting this work done during the October break.

d. Fundraising ideas

Ian introduced a proposal made by Ralph Averbuch to create a local online swapshop that could generate revenue for the PTA by charging a small fee per swap transaction. Concerns were raised by several PTA members that this risked cannibalising income from the Spring Fayre. The local community are used to planning for exchanging uniforms etc. at the Spring Fayre. We sell these things to raise PTA funds already and make more income than it sounds like this initiative would generate.

Tim suggested encouraging anyone raising funds for charity to consider donating to the PTA now that it is an incorporated charity. The benefits of registering with JustGiving for this kind of thing were discussed. Ian agreed to explore setting this up.

Additional fundraising ideas that were raised:

- Infant discos – raise money through a tuckshop, kids tattoos, etc.
- Charlotte mentioned that she was exploring organising a big band ceilidh (Fri 2nd Dec).
- The fashion night generated considerable funds in the past.
- orienteering/treasure hunt
- 10k fun run/kids run – could be combined with orienteering
- faster pasta
- French Club café

3 File Sharing & Google Docs

After discussion, it was agreed that Google Docs was preferred over Dropbox due to concerns regarding formatting of documents, ease of use and security. Dropbox is still useful where preserving document formatting is important, e.g. for PTA Calendar-related files.

Document creation in Google Docs is adequate (saves importing from external word processing application), but spreadsheet not so functional.

Celia explained that she has created Task List documents for each of the main fundraisers and the PTA management roles and that these are uploaded to the Google Docs facility. All members were encouraged to fill these in as they go to ensure continuity in case of people leaving PTA, or new committee members coming on board.

4 Fireworks

Charlotte nominated Ian to lead the fireworks group and this was widely seconded. Ian and team will convene a separate meeting to agree task allocations

5 Calendar

Janis was nominated to lead the Calendar group as Emma is also attending the Parent Council. The raw data for calendar production is in the PTA dropbox folder as Word documents, jpegs, etc. After some discussion it was proposed to have an Olympics theme. This proposal will be discussed amongst teaching staff – they already have an Olympics themed week, so this seems a good fit.

Charlotte emphasised the need to get moving on this as we want to start distributing the finished calendar at the beginning of December and need time for layout, printing, etc. Emma volunteered to handle sponsorship, as she has already started a list.

It was agreed that advertising rates would be £95 full page, £50 half.

6 Other tasks

Xmas presents - need ordering, checked with school for suitability, wrapped.

Crackers - Mandy can price crackers as she is already pricing a large order.

Viv volunteered to handle ordering of Xmas presents. The school office can confirm numbers, budget £250.

Janis, Celia and Viv volunteered to wrap the presents once purchased.

7 AoB

Celia highlighted to the whole committee the charity trustee obligations as detailed by OSCR and requested all members take the time to review these.

Celia also drew the members' attention to the form of words that *must* appear on all PTA-related correspondence, publications, external email etc. The wording is as follows:

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Saturdays 8 & 15 October - dates for clearing playground in preparation for installations.

If the ceilidh band is able to attend it will be Friday 2nd Dec.

8 Dates of future meetings

26th October - 7.30pm, Winton Arms function room

21st November - 7.30pm, Winton Arms