

PRESTON LODGE HIGH SCHOOL
MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
THURSDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2008
AT
PRESTON LODGE HIGH SCHOOL

Present: Mrs M Gilroy, Parent Representative and Chair
Mr J Berg, Parent Representative and Vice Chair
Mrs L Mitchell, Parent Representative
Mrs L Morgan, Parent Representative
Mrs L Marshall, Parent Representative
Mrs C Turner, Parent Representative
Mrs A Black, Parent Representative
Mrs L Robertson, Parent Representative
Mrs H Coogan, Parent Representative
Mrs M Stuart, Parent Representative
Mr J Tait, Parent Representative
Ms K Carson, Co-opted Teacher Representative
Mrs S Thomson, Co-opted Member
Mr C Stewart
Mr W Galbraith, Head Teacher
Cllr P McKenzie
Cllr M Libberton
Mrs J Dunlop, Clerk

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Miss M Angus and Cllrs Innes and Currie.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2008 were a true record.

3. EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

East Lothian Council's budget has been set on 12 February with council tax being frozen. Education will have to make a 1.5% efficiency saving this year, not the 3% which had been expected. There will also be a budget uplift of 2.57%, although Mr Galbraith was not sure on which part of the budget this would impact. It now looks as though the school will have to make £79,000 of savings. The Business Manager had completed a two scenarios on how this could be achieved (copy on file) with the differences being in whether or not the school employs people to fill staff vacancies. Mr Galbraith noted that he was presenting the figures as he understands them. He also noted that it was difficult to do any planning exercises as he did not know how many staff he would be able to employ.

Cllr McKenzie noted that there will be stream 2 funding to come into the budget to allow for a reduction in Maths and English classes in S1 and S2, a total of £200,000 has been allocated between all the secondary schools. There will also be a predictable needs budget of £86,000 between the secondary schools.

Cllr Libberton noted that pressure put on the Council by parents and parent councils influenced the Council and gave a better deal for the schools.

Mrs Gilroy asked for confirmation on what Stuart Currie had said at the last meeting that if something was an efficiency cut, and not a saving, it would not be allowed. Cllr McKenzie noted that tough decisions had to be made and by reducing the efficiency saving to 1.5% it was hoped that there would

be no cuts but it was up to the Head Teacher to work it out due to the devolved school management and if there were cuts it would be regrettable. He also noted that although it was 1.5% this year, it would be 2.25% in 2009, 2.25% in 2010, so in total it will still add up to 6%. Don Ledingham and Alan Blackie had both agreed that with more notice it would enable better planning to be carried out in order to facilitate the efficiency savings.

Mrs Marshall noted that the Parent Council recognises the pressure that the school is under and the need to support the Head Teacher and teachers. Mr Galbraith agreed to report back to the March meeting on the finalised figures and would be able to calculate what this would mean in terms of staff. (*Action Mr Galbraith*)

4. WORKING GROUP UPDATES

- a) Burns Supper – this raised a total of £840.75 and this would be transferred into the Parent Council Bank Account. Thanks were expressed to everyone involved in the running of what was a very successful evening.
- b) Uniform – it was agreed that as the majority of the Parent Council were happy with the uniform as it stood, but would prefer it to be worn correctly, especially when pupils were representing the school in public. An on-line questionnaire would be sent to parents asking if they were happy with it. This group would thereafter not be progressed any further.

Mrs Coogan noted that the way in which some of the teachers dress does not set a good example. Mr Galbraith noted that East Lothian Council does not have a dress code for staff but if he sees something inappropriate he would speak to the staff member about it.

- c) Parents Evenings – Miss Carson agreed to liaise with Mrs Turner and Mrs Black regarding the teachers consultation on parents evenings. (*Action Miss Carson*)
- d) Communication – The group had decided that the web-site should be pushed. They have run a competition amongst P7 pupils of the cluster primary schools to design an A4 poster which advertises the web-site. A book token will be awarded to the winner in each school. It was also agreed that the Preston Lodge web-site address would be put in the Primary Schools newsletters. Linda Robertson will write an article for the East Lothian Courier on the website address.

5. CONSULTATION USING ICT

Mr Stewart noted that a questionnaire will go on the website for parents to complete using the HMIE audit questions. When it about to go live he will issue a text alert to all parents.

6. AOCB

- a) 3 Harbours Festival/Twinning – it was hoped to have a reciprocal visit from the pupils from Barga and the teachers from the school will be visiting in early February. The school is keen to be involved in the 3 Harbours Festival and it is hoped that this can be tied into a Barga Visit.

Mr Galbraith is keen to progress the idea of twinning and a Twinning Sub-Group will be formed in East Lothian Council to organise a twinning association for the Preston Lodge Cluster. Margaret Libberton expressed an interest in being involved in this.

- b) Evaluation Visit – Mrs Gilroy and Mrs Morgan will represent the Parent Council for the evaluation.
- c) Cluster Meeting – Mrs Gilroy and Mrs Marshall attended the cluster meeting and the minutes have now been distributed. It was hoped that the cluster could meet on a regular basis to exchange views.

- d) Training – Information has been received for the undernoted Parent Council meetings/training:
- i) Mini-Toolkit Meeting – John Berg and Linda Morgan agreed to attend this meeting.
 - ii) East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members – Margaret Stuart and Lorraine Mitchell will attend this meeting.
 - iii) Establishment of a Governing Body for Parent Councils – It was agreed that the £30 grant would be used to pay for a text to alert parents to the on-line questionnaire on what the governing body would be able to do for parent Councils. Jacqui Dunlop agreed to liaise with Calum Stewart to put on the website. (*Action Jacqui Dunlop*)
- e) Bank Account – Linda Morgan agreed to look into what was required to open the bank account and who would be required to sign cheques. (*Action Linda Morgan*)

Date of Next Meeting : Thursday, 6 March