

**East Lothian Council**  
**Department of Education & Children's Services**

East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meeting held on  
 Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011, Main Hall, Town House, Haddington

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**Present:**

**Don Ledingham** (Executive Director of Education), **Ruth Briggs** (Chair), **Val McIntyre** (Principal Officer), **Fearghal Kelly** (Development Officer – Curriculum for Excellence), **Rachael Rae** (Law Primary School PC), **Eddie Sinnott** (Law Primary PC), **Angie Walsh** (King's Meadow Primary PC), **Simon Broadhurst** (Loretto RC Primary PC), **Alan Thomson** (Elphinstone Primary PC), **Carol Snow** (NPFA/Pencaitland Primary PC), **Claire Pedder** (Ormiston Primary PC), **Elaine Towler** (Haddington Infant PC), **Stella Smith** (Musselburgh Burgh Primary PC), **Lesley Steedman** (Musselburgh Burgh Primary PC), **Fiona McCaskie** (Saltoun Primary School PC), **Magi Mitchell** (Saltoun Primary PC), **Louise Kirkpatrick** (Musselburgh Grammar PC), **Angela Graham** (Aberlady Primary PC), **Gordon Allan** (Aberlady Primary PC), **Iain MacKenzie** (Dunbar Grammar PC), **Ian Smith** (Knox PC), **Jim Tait** (Preston Lodge PC), **Jo Argyle Robinson** (North Berwick High PC), **Jane Law** (North Berwick High PC), **C J Green** (King's Meadow Primary PC), **Dean Mack** (Yester Primary PC), **Karen Andre** (Campie Primary PC), **Gaynor Allan** (Campie Primary PC), **Gary McGregor** (Yester Primary PC), **Lindsey Mains** (Ormiston Primary PC), **Adalene Lammie** (Dirleton Primary PC), **Lorna MacLennan** (Minute Taker),

**Apologies:**

**Nat Spring** (Dirleton Primary PC), **Annete Walsh** ( Ross High PC), **Stella Smith** (Musselburgh Burgh Primary PC), **Mhairi Hastie** (Longniddry Primary PC), **Jenny Riddell** (Saltoun Primary PC).

		<b>Action</b>
1	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Ruth welcomed the group to the East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meeting. Ruth Introduced Scott Murphy, CfE Liaison Manager, SQA . who would be giving a presentation. Introductions were carried out round the table.</p>	
2	<p><b>Approval of minutes and matters arising</b></p> <p>The minutes were read and approved.</p> <p>4. Community based Management Schools – this was on the agenda</p> <p>5. Assessment – Fearghal would provide a copy of the presentation to be distributed with the Minute</p> <p>7. Mark Lucas, Chair of Gullane Parent Council and Parent representative on the Finance Advisory Scrutiny Group indicated he was not able to attend the next meeting and post meeting Stella Smith, Chair of Musselburgh Burgh Parent Council agreed to attend in his place.</p> <p>8. National Parent Forum – on the agenda</p>	
3	<p><b>Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)</b></p> <p>Scott Murphy gave a presentation on how the new SQA qualifications compare with the existing qualifications and the timescales involved. This information is available on the SQA website – <a href="http://www.sqa.org.uk">www.sqa.org.uk</a>. After the presentation [copy attached] there was a question and answer session.</p>	
4	<p><b>Curriculum for Excellence Update</b></p> <p>Fearghal Kelly had been out visiting schools on CfE. At the moment there was a lot of work going on within the areas of assessment and moderation. Fearghal provided copies of a sample moderation document and a copy is also attached with this Minute.</p>	

5	<p><b>Budget 2011 – 2012</b></p> <p>Don intimated that East Lothian were very fortunate with the overall budget position and that we compared favourably in relation to many Local Authorities throughout Scotland. There had been an increase in the Education Budget which would be used for front line services - schools were receiving an uplift to meet additional staffing costs with central services taking the cuts. There were several strategic measures being looked at such as Janitorial Services as well as school support staff who currently work 52 weeks per year who would be reduced to a sessional contract.</p> <p>There would be teaching positions advertised soon with some of these posts being permanent. Some of these jobs would be for early years (P1 to P3) so that class sizes can be reduced.</p>	
6	<p><b>Shared Services between East/Mid Lothian</b></p> <p>A Senior Manager from the Scottish Government has been seconded to work with both East and Midlothian to identify which central functions, if any, might be considered for shared services, and determine how shared services might operate. A final report/recommendation will be put to Council in late April with an interim report being produced sometime in February. Bad weather in December meant that the exercise was a little behind but it was hoped that timelines could be adhered to. All politicians across both East/Mid Lothian have given their approval for this to be considered.</p>	
7	<p><b>Community Partnership Schools</b></p> <p>Don stated that he had been to three cluster meetings in the past month where he had gone over the document, 'Community Partnership Schools', which had been sent out to all Parent Councils in December. There had been worthwhile discussions at each of the meetings and a positive response from the parents present as well as all political parties within the Council.</p> <p>Don was requesting all Head Teachers to share information such as statistics, attendance, exclusions rates, examination results, school budget with their Parent Council. There would be training organised for Parent Councils which would enable them to interpret the information provided. Many Head Teachers will find these times challenging with schools being encouraged to move to a more outward facing and transparent approach.</p> <p>A discussion took place around cluster funding. It was suggested that school budgets could be top sliced by anything from 2% - 5% and this funding put into a 'pot' and agreement reached for spending in line with a local plan based on cluster priorities. Individual Head Teachers would be required to engage in discussions but would have the opportunity to 'opt out' if they wished.</p> <p>The benefits of more community involvement/partnership were discussed and how best to maintain and build on expertise within the Parent Council, noting that parents are only eligible as parent members during the duration of their child's time at school.</p>	DL/VM
8	<p><b>Cluster Meetings</b></p> <p>This was discussed as above.</p>	
9	<p><b>Scottish Government Local Engagement Event – Consultation on School Handbook</b></p> <p>Members were reminded about the local engagement event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February at Knox Academy between 7.00pm and 8.30pm. There would be the opportunity to feedback what you as parents would like to see included in the handbook, as well as the format of the handbook. There is also the online survey which runs till the 14<sup>th</sup> March. There will be a report issued in the summer following the consultations which are taking place around Scotland.</p>	

10	<p><b>National Parent Forum of Scotland</b></p> <p>Carol Snow provided a brief update on the progress of the National Parent Forum of Scotland.</p> <p>Their recent Conference had been successful and had received good press. It is hoped this will become an annual event.</p> <p>Their next meeting is in March and the Agenda will be circulated to Parent Councils. If any Parent Council had anything they would like raised at this meeting they should contact Carol via the Parent Council inbox - <a href="mailto:parentcouncil@eastlothian.gov.uk">parentcouncil@eastlothian.gov.uk</a></p>	
11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Reminder of Financial Year End Procedures</b> Val reminded everyone that an email had gone to all Parent Councils detailing the financial year end procedures. Any unspent funds would no longer go to the school budget as in previous years and all expenses must have a receipt to enable them to be processed. All claim forms should be completed and signed off by the Chair - these need to be sent to Val by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011.</li> <li>● <b>What degree of flexibility is there in determining term time for schools</b> It was noted that Schools had closed on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 and not re-opened until Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2011, and this has presented some challenges for parents. Parents wondered what, if any, input they had on school session dates and they were informed that Parent Councils are consulted on an annual basis following a meeting with local authority representatives from East/Mid/West/Edinburgh City on this subject. Generally speaking East Lothian follow the session dates for Edinburgh.</li> <li>● Next training is 3<sup>rd</sup> March at Knox Academy; on Updating/Posting Information on Parent Council Websites/Edubuzz. All other training events have been well attended and received.</li> <li>● <b>Future Chair of ELAPCM</b> Ruth thanked everyone for taking the time to complete the questionnaire relating to future chairing of meetings. It was hoped that a positive outcome would be achieved and agreement reached as to the new Chair of the Association at the next meeting in June.  Don thanked Ruth for all her time, support and commitment to East Lothian over many years, from her work through the transition period from School Boards to Parent Councils and in particular for Chairing the Association which has developed and which continues to be so successful.  Ruth in turn thanked Don and Val for their continued work and commitment to parents in East Lothian.</li> </ul>	
12	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p>	
	<p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 June in the Conference Room 1 at the Brunton Hall (<b>please note new venue</b>).</p>	