

## **SOUTH MORNINGSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **SOUTH MORNINGSIDE PARENT COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Draft minutes of the SMPC AGM held on Monday 2 September 2019 at 6.45pm in the main hall at Deanbank.

#### **Total Attendees: (37)**

#### **Parent Council Members (17)**

Chris Hebden	David Davies
Shelagh Halford	Alice Nelson
Olly Headey	Peter Ness
Brendan Paddy	Andrew Leiper
Jeremy Balfour	Eilidh Stimpson
Joana Valdez-Tullett	John Cameron
Ellie Trotter	
Michael Urquhart	Karen Richmond
Yvonne Moore	Susie Morgan

Parent council made up of 27 Parent Members plus 6\* non-voting staff members

#### **Guests (20)**

Moray Tait	Alastair Haig
Nadia Cunden	Charity Trimm
Alison Reeves	Louise Beaton
Anna Carson	Lynne Barrie
Jing Lu	Reuben Carr
Blair Connor	Emilia McMeramin
Lizzie Kenrick	Elisabeth Geuther-Quinn
Gillian Spalding	Susan Regnart
Glenda Scott	Robyn Cameron
Fiona Kippax	Jill Dallas
Colin McRae	

#### **Apologies (8) received in advance of the meeting**

## **1. Welcome and Apologies (Chair)**

Olly Headey welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He explained that he, along with Brendan Paddy, had agreed to be Co-Chairs for the forthcoming year. Olly thanked Brian Sharp for undertaking the Chair role for the past 3 years.

## **2. Introduction from Michael Urquhart, Head of School**

Mr Urquhart introduced himself as the Head Teacher for the 3 sites. He said he and his team were there to answer any questions that have an educational slant.

Mr Urquhart said the teachers work in partnership with the Parent Council, the school's 500 families (which includes 700 children). He explained the school were using different means for feeding back and communicating and the Parent Council are one of the main feeds for that. The school and Parent Council work hard to ensure everyone can access all experiences on offer. They are also keen to offer individualised support for families who may not have opportunities to join in (which is called social inclusion, to ensure all children feel part of the community). Mr Urquhart said the Parent Council has a huge contribution to make to this including through the breakfast and after school clubs. He said the Parent Council also supports the classroom teachers to enhance learning, e.g. providing books and art from the fundraising efforts. Mr Urquhart said this also allows children to have enriching experiences such as Scottish Opera, which makes these experiences as wide and valuable as possible.

Mr Urquhart said there was a big push on tackling the fact that 1 in 5 children live in poverty. A new development officer role is leading this, whose practice was already held up in high regard in Edinburgh. As an example initiative, children are encouraged to have a 2-course lunch. Any leftover fruit is put aside and sits in fruit bowl for anyone to help themselves to, e.g. if they have forgotten their snack.

Mr Urquhart said the Parent Council has also supported the Onery since the school doesn't get a budget for things like clay. These sorts of things help to create a rich, creative environment.

Mr Urquhart added that playground development has also been a big thing and has already made a massive change to active play.

The Parent Council also sits on interviews to give a community aspect to the type of staff the school recruits.

Finally, the Parent Council has had input to plans for the new school since the existing school is instrumental in developing it. Mr Urquhart said the school want it to be the very best learning environment and the Parent Council work hard to support this.

### **3. Overview of Parent Council achievements in 2018/19 and looking forward to 2019/20**

Brendan introduced himself and explained he would talk a bit about achievements and what's on the agenda in the next year.

Brendan said fundraising is at the heart of what the Parent Council does. He said that the Fundraising team have done an amazing job but there has been turnover in the team. Last year, fundraising brought in £15,000 from the 2 school fairs to cover a number of the learning enhancements. He said parents wanted the focus on any spend to be health and fitness and wellbeing so the Parent Council has continued to support playground improvements. However, the money just pays for the committed spend items. Although there is about £9,000 in the bank, the balance needs to be closer to £20,000 to complete the planned work to the playground.

Brendan said the number of clubs which are run (19 last year) makes the school quite special. He explained that there had been a reduction in the number of clubs this year due to the building works at Comiston Road. The cut in janitorial services has made it all more challenging. Finally, the clubs team help to ensure the tutors providing clubs are PVG checked to keep children safe.

Brendan said on the comms side, the team have kept Facebook live. He explained this is a good place to start to find out about what's happening. He said there is also a new newsletter parents can sign up to and that the website has been updated recently.

Brendan said lots of work was going on at the new school site and at Comiston Road. He said the Parent Council had been talking to the school about that and trying to influence Edinburgh City Council to minimise the impact on our children. He explained that the Parent Council had put in a formal objection to the new school (not because it objects to it but to ensure concerns about travel and health and safety were listened to and actioned upon).

Brendan explained that being on the Parent Council is not the only way to help out, that there are lots of people behind the scenes who have done a huge amount without sitting on the Parent Council.

Brendan said that a survey on travel to and from school has been done and from that, plans for a walking bus were in train.

He said that going forward, the number one priority is making sure there are people to take over from the current fundraising team. He said that the Parent Council needed to raise the money required to do not only the routine things but also to support initiatives such as the playground development. He said most of the committed spend is paid for through monies raised at the school fairs, which were put together by a team of people but more people were required to volunteer to ensure the fairs could continue.

Brendan said that building works on both sites would continue through this year. He said the Parent Council continues to be in dialogue with the school and the Council to minimise the impact.

Brendan said the Parent Council wants to keep parents connected and involved, to ensure no one misses out and that everyone is included. He also said it was important that teachers weren't putting their hands in their pockets.

Brendan said that none of it would happen without more volunteers and that if parents/carers want to get the most from their childrens' education, they needed to get involved. He explained that the Parent Council was looking for expressions of interest at this stage.

Olly talked about the purpose of the Parent Council: to create a welcoming school which is inclusive, to identify, seek and represent the views of parents and families, to promote links between the school, parents, pupils, nursery providers and the wider community and to oversee and account for monies raised. He talked about the Parent Council structure and its subgroups (communications, playground, clubs, finance, accommodation, transport and fundraising).

#### **4. Subgroup activities, role and how to get involved!**

##### **a) Playground (Karen Richmond)**

Mrs Richmond explained that she was the sole member of the playground subgroup. She said it had been difficult to progress playground works due to red tape. However, last year, they finally managed to do things and have spent the money raised by the Parent Council on the area that had been left abandoned after the huts in the playground were removed.

Mrs Richmond explained that the trim track was being condemned and wasn't safe. She added that over the last year, they have identified ways to improve the area through a new stage, outdoor classroom with seating and areas of planting. Resurfacing and removal of trim track also cost money. There is no money left to do anything else.

Mrs Richmond explained that children would like to improve the sports facilities. She added that there is a sports area but it's a rough surface and that the vision/plan is that this is the next area to improve though introducing a multi use games areas (MUGA) for football,

basketball and fencing around it, allowing different sports to be played in the area.

Mrs Richmond said it would be good to have others in the Playground subgroup but it would depend on raising additional funds. She explained initial costings suggest £20-25k is required to do the next phase, if the Parent Council is supportive.

#### **b) Finance (update provided by Brendan Paddy)**

Brendan introduced the Finance group and said it looks at requests for money and makes decisions on expenditure. The group would welcome new members.

#### **c) Fundraising (Fiona Kippax)**

Fiona said the yearly goal for fundraising was £15k and explained where the money is spent, e.g. P1 nativity, P7 leavers ceilidh, sports day lollies library books, football goals. Fiona explained how people could help raise money – Christmas cards, winter craft fair and summer fair. Fiona said she was stepping down as she has helped run the fairs for the past 7 years but new owners were needed for the summer and winter fairs. Fiona said organising the fairs was a 'to do' list with small and bigger jobs to do. She said there are still lots of experienced parents doing it at the moment, who are all willing to continue. Fiona said that the winter fair is on 30 November. Without parents and people they know helping out, it doesn't happen.

Fiona said there were other ways money could be raised, e.g. a fashion show, year party, car boot sale, Halloween Party and that any amount raised is beneficial.

#### **d) Clubs (Joana Valdez-Tullett)**

Joana explained that she was new to Clubs. She explained that the Parent Council runs about 19 clubs with a range of activities that are accessible to all children. Parent volunteers mostly run the clubs. She said there was a variety to hopefully appeal to all children. Joana said the clubs are very popular (a full list of them is on the website) including judo, drumming, and chanter. Last year, they mostly ran in main school. However, due to refurbishments at the Comiston Road site, they have had to move. Most clubs are able to run this coming year (although there are some issues still) in venues such as Greenbank Parish Church, Morningside Library and Deanbank. She said more parent helpers were needed to support clubs.

#### **e) Communications (Eilidh Stimpson)**

Eilidh explained that the role of the Comms subgroup is to communicate from the Parent Council to parents, the school and the community and vice versa. The main way the Parent Council communicates is via the website, which has had a huge overhaul with content updated in time for the new school year.

Eilidh said that Comms also keep the Parent Council knowledgebase up to date although a bit more work was required on this.

Comms also use Facebook, which has quite a good reach (580 likes). Eilidh explained that it's not ideal because not everyone has Facebook but those who do are encouraged to like the Parent Council's posts.

Eilidh explained that Comms are now doing email updates, which parents can sign up to receive. The first one was at the end of last term to try to engage parents a bit more with what the Parent Council does.

Eilidh encouraged parents to get in touch with comments/feedback and to sign up to the email updates. Comms are particularly keen to hear from anyone who can help to keep the website updated.

#### **f) Accommodation (Andrew Leiper)**

Andrew said that the Accommodation subgroup was heavily involved in consultation about the new school and works at the existing school. He said the accommodation group engage with all groups including school management and the wider parent body.

Andrew said that overcrowding was an issue and that through the new school, the idea is to go from 3 stream to 2 stream. Andrew said the Parent Council were keen to support development of the new school but wants to ensure the Council are addressing transport and health and safety issues. If anyone has expertise or and interest in the accommodation subgroup, they are welcome to join.

#### **g) Transport (David Davies)**

David explained the Travel Plan had been updated following on a survey to parents. The Transport subgroup is working their way through this. The Transport Group are working with the Council on all aspects of the local area in relation to travel to and from school, for example, looking at crossing points to get some improvements to these. New initiatives, such as walking once a week, are also being looked into.

The Transport subgroup is also hoping to get a walking bus up and running after half term. He explained that volunteers were needed to run it and set up rotas (about 20 people have volunteered so far). The walking bus will run from the main school to Deanbank every morning.

### **5. Parent Council Membership**

a) Record of members standing down and membership status (Secretary)

There were 27 parent members and 7 staff members prior to the AGM meeting.

4 voting members of the parent members must now step down automatically from the Parent Council as they have served for 3 years. They are: Howard Kippax, Nina MacFarlane, Emma Cunningham and Helen New. The Parent Council thanked them for their commitment, efforts and support over the past 3 years.

This creates 7 vacancies.

The maximum number of parent voting members is 30.

One non-voting member of the Parent Council has retired.

b) Appointment of new parent member volunteers (Secretary)

Parents interested in joining the Parent Council (or being involved in a sub group) were asked to sign up on the sheet provided to express interest at this stage and the Secretary would be in touch.

c) Appointment of office bearers (by voting members of the newly formed PC) (Secretary).

**Chair:** Olly Headey and Brendan Paddy put themselves forward for election as Co-Chair  
Nominated by Eilidh Stimpson, seconded by Alice Nelson.

**Treasurer:** Jill Dallas put herself forward for election as Treasurer.  
Nominated by Chris Hebden, seconded by Andrew Leiper.

**Secretary:** Shelagh Halford put herself forward for re-election as Secretary.  
Nominated by Olly Headey seconded by Brendan Paddy.

## **6. Formal AGM Business**

### **Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 3 September 2018 (Secretary).**

The minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved (proposed by Olly Headey and seconded by Eilidh Stimpson).

## **Annual Accounts**

The Accounts were prepared by Chris Hebden and independently examined by Mark Macefield. See Accounts Report for details.

The Parent Council accepted the annual accounts.

Chris confirmed that Mark Macefield had been appointed as independent examiners of the accounts for 2019/20.

## **7. AOB**

None.

## **Date of first PC Meeting of the session 2018/2019**

Monday 7 October 2019 at 6.45pm in the staff room at Comiston Road