

Agenda

South Morningside Parent Council Meeting

7 November 2022 at 6.45pm Via MS Teams

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| 1 | Welcome, attendees and apologies | Co-chair |
| 2 | Review and approval of AGM & Mtg minutes 12 Sep 2022 | Bobby Pathak |
| 3 | Independent examiner of accounts vote | Bobby Pathak |
| 4 | Interim Headteacher's update | Gail Canning |
| 5 | Chair's report | Co-chair |
| 6 | Fundraising update | Elisabeth Quinn |
| 7 | Budget and finance | Alistair Haig |
| 8 | Subgroups' update | Various |
| 9 | AOB | Various |
- Brian Sharp has an extensive collection of goodies useful for the Winter fair and is keen to pass these on.

PC meeting dates:

- 7th November 2022 - **online**
- 16th January 2023 - **face to face**
- 6th March 2023 - **online**
- 24th April 2023 - **online**
- 19th June 2023 - **face to face**

Date of the next SMPC meeting is a face to face meeting on 16 January 2023

Supporting Papers

South Morningside Parent Council Meeting

7 November 2022 at 6.45pm via MS Teams

- 1 Draft Minutes of the Parent Council AGM & meeting 12 Sep 2022 (Bobby Pathak)
- 2 Clubs report (Alison Reeves)
- 3 Communications Update (Shelagh Halford)

South Morningside Primary School

South Morningside Parent Council AGM

Minutes of the SMPC AGM held on Monday 12 September 2022 at 6.45pm
Comiston Road Gym Hall

Total Attendees (31)

Parent Council members in attendance

Louisa Dall	Clair Forsman
Ange Robinson	Alison Reeves
Alistair Haig	Abigail Cabrelli
Bobby Pathak	Chris New
Shelagh Halford	

Parent Council members not in attendance

Dan Farthing	Ellie Maizels
Brendan Hyland	Reuben Carr
Emilia McMenamin	Stuart Herring
Helena Castro	Tatiana Tantarouda

Parent Council non-voting staff members in attendance

Michael Urquhart*	Elaine Jones*
Karen Richmond*	Nikki Write*

Parent Council non-voting staff members not in attendance

Pamela Ferguson*	
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Councillors in attendance

Cllr Neil Ross	
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Apologies (2) received in advance of the meeting:

- Ellie Maizels (Canaan Lane sub-group)
- Cllr Ben Parker

Parent Council made up of **18** Parent Members plus **5*** non-voting staff members

Parents, carers and guests (18)

Colin McRae	Elisabeth Quinn
Alison Reeves	Craig Fraser
Eilidh Stimpson	Andrew Leiper
David Pollock	Olga Arren
Eliza Lam	Moirra Gibson
Anneli Lenica	Kate Liversidge
Thom Kenrick	Muir Vidler
Gordon Brown	Alex Keightley
Jack Bruck	Joana Ferrao

- 1 **Welcome, attendees and apologies - Angela Robinson (Co-chair)**
 Ange welcomed the attendees and apologies were noted. The PC was introduced to newer attendees and the format of this combined AGM and meeting was introduced.

- 2 **Introduction to Parent Council - Louisa Dall (Co-chair)**
 Louisa provided an overview of the PC with PowerPoint slides. The structure of the PC was introduced starting with the three office bearing roles (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary). It was pointed out that the bulk of work is conducted through nine subgroups which currently include: Fundraising, Finance, Playground, Clubs, Accommodation, Transport, Communications, Canaan Lane and PVG signatories. It was stressed that while the PC is independent of the school it also enjoys the support of it and parents were encouraged not only to join subgroups but also suggest possible new subgroups to cover issues they are concerned with.

- 3 **Parent Council Membership - Bobby Pathak (Secretary)**
 - a) *Record of members standing down and membership status*
 There were 24 parent members prior to the AGM meeting. Nine voting members must now step down automatically from the PC as they have served for three years. Of these, six stepped down on 2 September, one on 13 September and one more will step down on 11 October 2022. They are: Brian Sharp, Chris Hebden, Elisabeth Quinn, Alison Reeves, Colin McRae, Lizzie Boyce, Eilidh Stimpson, Chris New and Alice Nelson. The PC thanked them for their commitment, efforts and support over the past three years.

 This creates 12 vacancies (after the appointments detailed below) with the maximum number of parent voting members being 30.

 - b) *Appointment of new parent member volunteers*
 Parents interested in joining the PC (or being involved in a subgroup) were asked to note interest in the meeting signup sheet. These parents are to be contacted following the PC meeting.
 - Thom Kenrick put his name forward for membership of the PC, nominated by Ange Robinson and seconded by Louisa Dall.

- Helen New put her name forward for membership of the PC in lieu of Chris New who is stepping down, nominated by Louisa Dall and seconded by Ange Robinson.
- Andrew Leiper re-joined the PC, nominated by Louisa Dall and seconded by Ange Robinson.

4 Formal AGM business

a) Approval of Minutes of 13 September 2021 AGM - Bobby Pathak (Secretary)

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were approved

b) Approval of Minutes of 13 June 2022 meeting - Bobby Pathak (Secretary)

The minutes of the 13 June 2022 meeting were approved

c) Approval of SMPC Annual Accounts 2020/21 - Alistair Haig (Treasurer)

To be confirmed at the next Parent Council meeting

d) Approval of the draft SMPC Budget 2022/23 - Alistair Haig (Treasurer)

The draft budget was approved

e) Appointment of independent examiner of accounts 2021/22 - Alistair Haig (Treasurer)

There was some confusion over whether the independent examiner of accounts had in fact been formally voted by the PC. This will be checked and, if necessary, an online vote will be conducted before the next Parent Council meeting.

5 Introduction from the School - Michael Urquhart (Headteacher)

Michael thanked the PC for its work and announced that this would be his last meeting as headteacher given his upcoming retirement.

The school's aim to reach 95% attainment was reiterated and the acting leadership team was introduced:

- Maureen Murray – acting principal teacher who will be working on attainment.
- Nikki Write – acting deputy headteacher
- Elaine Jones – acting deputy headteacher

It was noted that Maureen, Nikki and Elaine are currently in their role as acting members of senior staff, as the new incoming headteacher will be expected to appoint their own senior leadership team. However, it was stressed that this would be a great team for the incoming headteacher to adopt.

Michael asked parents not yet involved with the PC to consider supporting it given the significant assistance it provides the wider school community. This includes financial support towards fieldtrips, science trips as well as theatre trips.

It was noted the move to Canaan Lane had not been easy, but having taken place, the focus now is on developing the Comiston Road environment. Given it has been 29 years since P1s were at the main school, this, it is hoped, should become a priority for the PC. Michael thanked the PC and wider community and with a little over four weeks left he reiterated that he had had a great time here.

The floor was opened to questions and Ange requested help during the upcoming curriculum evening. A call for help was also requested for the upcoming Christmas cards – this will be put on Classlist also.

Louisa said the PC would be looking to support the school in terms of helping children from Canaan Lane and Deanbank House move to Comiston Rd when that move does take place. In the meantime, the PC would help, where possible, with the start times and finish times of the various sites before the transition could be made to one location.

There is to be a Council survey in October to gauge whether older siblings at SMPS would like to move to Canaan Lane and, with enough movement to Canaan Lane, this would potentially free space at Comiston Rd.

Karen Richmond noted the older building of Deanbank house is slated to have completed its refurbishment August 2023, although it remains unclear if this deadline will in fact be met.

6 Overview of PC achievement and look forward – Ange Robinson (Co-chair)

It was reiterated that the PC is now looking to focus work with accommodation at Comiston Road with an aim to ensure the children at this site are offered an environment on par with the surrounding schools.

The PC Co-chairs have been involved in the hiring of the school's principal teachers, class teachers as well as with the deputy headteachers. It was noted that applications have now closed for a headteacher, but the post will be readvertised in order to recruit from a more diverse pool. It is common for schools to readvertise and accept second applications and an provisional Headteacher can also be appointed or then existing team can be used in the interim time.

The PC will be looking at clubs and funding which has lowered, mainly due to the effects of COVID related lockdowns, but is now looking to increase.

While the PC gave every teacher £4 per pupil for activities, this will be increased to £6 given the rising cost of inflation. The PC reiterated its commitment to financially supporting parents across a range of channels including access to clubs and £3,000 earmarked for library books, arts and crafts, sports day lollies and theatre trips etc. however, the PC is open to other suggestions from parents.

7 Subgroup updates – various Treasures update – Alistair Haig

Jack Bruck, the PC's new treasurer was introduced and the draft budget was approved which has gone up by 15% in order to be adjusted for inflation. It was reaffirmed the PC remains committed to cover the cost for parents who can't afford school trips etc.

Although fundraising has been lower, the accounts remain in a healthy position.

It was noted that there may be an increase in the cost of the imagine science festival to cover possible coach costs etc. and it was requested that the school should aim to contact the treasurer ahead of time for budget requests where possible.

Fundraising update – Elisabeth Quinn

Help is needed to assist with the Christmas and summer fairs, the Halloween disco as well as the Christmas calendar. Help is also needed from parent volunteers to run stalls at the Christmas fair.

Parents interested in finding out more are encouraged to come to the fundraising meetings which are trilled to be on the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the Merlin pub.

The question was raised over whether to use Greenbank church or the school as the venue for this year's Christmas fair. It was pointed out that while it is nice to be able to come back and use the school as a venue, the convenience of not having to clean up the church space has proved very welcome.

Communications – Eilidh Stimpson

New parent volunteers are always welcome to help with the communication between the PC, school and parent community. The main medium used is Classlist, Facebook and the PC's newsletter following meetings. All interested parent volunteers were encouraged to get in touch with the comms team.

Clubs subgroup – Alison Reeves

It was stressed that every club has its own team which pulls together the day to day running, administration and organising of the various SMPS clubs provisions. With that in mind, everyone helping with the clubs were thanked. Greenbank church was also singled out for the PC's thanks.

Lots of parents have offered to help this year and this remains very welcome; however, volunteers to help with safeguarding also required to help out.

Given the expertise within the subgroup, anyone looking to come in to help for the first time would not find it difficult however, it was noted that there may be an operational need for club admins to be PC members.

Accommodation – Andrew Leiper

It was reiterated that the focus of this subgroup would now move toward Comiston Rd. Regarding the refurbishment of Deanbank House, with a change of contractors on site there, members of the accommodation committee are having to rely on the goodwill of the previous contractors to pass on parents' concerns.

Transport committee – Thomas Gordon

The transport committee has been focussed on the safety of children walking and cycling in the area. With a Council survey coming out regarding road safety concerns, the transport

committee have put together a list of recommendations for inclusion into the survey. Parents are requested to add to this via Classlist before submission.

It was suggested a WhatsApp group of parent representatives with an interest in transport concerns may be useful.

It was noted Comiston Rd pollution monitors are in need of checking.

8 AOB (Various)

Michael was thanked for time as headteacher.

Louisa Dall closed the meeting at 20:30

Clubs Update

We're back into the routine of Clubs again this term, after a few Clubs missed a week due to the additional holiday at the end of the October holiday. There are two additions to this term's offer. Spanish Club has been resurrected with a new Convenor (thank you Helena Castro) and the previous tutor and meets on a Monday at Comiston Road. We started the club with smaller numbers than hoped but are sure this will grow. And Ski Club are delighted that they have been offered a full year's worth of sessions from now on by Midlothian Ski Centre and will be back to meeting all year round. Thank you to the convenors for their incredible effort of getting another full class list together when they thought they were done for the year!

There are a few things to sort out about how Clubs are using the school building, particularly over how we enter the building when school has ended. I hope to speak to the school and Lets about how this might work better for everyone in the next few weeks and then re-brief convenors and tutors before the end of term. Also, thank you to the treasurer(s) for dealing with some refunds. I will clarify with convenors some things around requesting payment from parents including the 'no refunds' policy before they plan for January start.

There were a few offers of possible support for clubs following the curriculum evening, which I'm following up. But it is important now that there is a parent council member on the Clubs sub-group as I have now finished my term. Any PC member without a role on a sub-group who could be the connection between PC and the sub-group would be appreciated. Mostly just keeping an eye on what we're doing, no leg work required!

Look out for some of our musical Clubs performers at the Winter Fair! (I am hearing Little Donkey a lot in my house...)

Alison Reeves, Clubs sub-group

Communications Update

We're still looking for volunteers to help out with the comms subgroup and particularly help with posting updates on the SMPC Facebook page and writing a brief newsletter after PC meetings. Our website has been updated with subgroup information for this year but if there's anything else you'd like to see or anything you notice is out of date or if there is any support you need from comms, please get in touch! comms@sm-pc.org