

# WEST LINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS' COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Present: Glenda Barton, Emil Berthelsen, Catherine Bisset, Sally Bowie, Moira Brown, Tom Davidson, Colin Gambles, Margaret Hogg, Gail Jackson, Michael Pryor (Chair), Claire Shaw, Chris Tate, Sheila Warren, Steven Whalley and Alastair Young.

In attendance: Hilary Elliott, Denise Halcrow (Clerk).

Apologies: Mary Gunn.

## **1 Minutes of the last meeting held on 17 June 2008 were amended and accepted.**

## **2 Matters Arising**

- I. SBC cuts update – Michael will draft a letter to SBC seeking reassurance that there will be no further budget cuts in advance of next year's budget setting process, which commences shortly. It was suggested that a newsletter could be drafted to encourage parents to write in similar terms. Tom reported that the community council is to consult 40 organisations in West Linton in order to assess community needs. The results of this survey are to be collated by January 2009 and circulated round all homes.
- II. New School – SBC's project manager, Tony Gowland, is to be asked about progress with the purchase of the land for the new school and what would happen to the site of the present school. A group set up to save the Village Nursery is looking into erecting a building on the land earmarked for the new school as a temporary solution to their lack of accommodation from October 2009. This is to be confirmed by 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Mrs Elliott agreed that it was the ideal site for the Village Nursery, as long as the land would still be available for the new school. Yvonne McCracken is to be invited along with Tony Gowland to address the PC the week starting 17<sup>th</sup> November.
- III. PTA – Sally reported that there have been 6 new volunteers to join the committee, but still nobody to take over as chairperson. Fundraising events for the autumn term, including the shopping for the Christmas Bazaar have been organised. Social events will be left for the new committee to arrange. Colin suggested the possibility of 2 people sharing the Chair.

## **3 Plans for the AGM**

A joint PTA and Parents' Council AGM with cheese and wine will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November.

## **4 Appointment of Parent Council Office Holders – Potential Candidates**

Michael wishes to stand down as Chair and Steven is happy to take over, pending appointment at the AGM. Chris wishes to stand down from the role of secretary. A new vice chair is also required. Margaret agreed to continue in the role of treasurer. Class reps are also to be appointed at the AGM.

## **5 Parents' Council Business for 2008/2009**

The following issues have still to be considered:

Safe Routes to School  
Promoting Best Practice  
Support for Boys  
New School (ongoing).

Glenda suggested consulting on possible topics with the Parent Forum, as last year, and providing the opportunity to reply by email, as well as through a tear-off reply on a flyer.

## **6 Transforming Children's Services Consultation**

Michael considers this to be very challenging to for parents to respond to, considering the highly detailed and technical nature of the information. Some recommendations are laudable, such as head teachers not having class responsibilities, but the method of implementation is unclear. The proposed reduction in Principal Teachers gives rise for concern and there is no mention of Deputy Heads in primary schools. There is also concern about Additional Needs provision being allocated on the basis of a Social Deprivation Index and for a fixed period of 3 years, given that the majority of learning needs are unrelated to social deprivation.

Michael will collate PC comments and circulate a formal PC response via email, to be submitted to SBC by the end of October. .

## **7 Other consultations**

Composite Classes Policy – for individual responses by 17<sup>th</sup> November – to be included in PC newsletter  
Sponsorship Policy  
Recruitment of Head Teachers and Deputies

More to follow

## **8 Head Teacher's Report**

There have been several changes to Additional Needs allocation due to a change in circumstances, resulting in Mrs Horrocks losing all her hours.

Mrs Elliott informed the PC that the P5 residential trip will not be taking place for this years' P5 group and that there are no plans to reintroduce the trip in future years. Parents of P5 pupils had been informed of the reasons for the decision in a letter and Mrs Elliott had spoken with P5 pupils during a Circletime discussion. She explained briefly that a combination of factors had contributed to this decision and requested opportunity at the next PC meeting to outline these in more detail. It is proposed to investigate the possibility of offering two day visits to the Berwickshire Coast in order that pupils will be able to participate in many of the activities usually undertaken during the residential visit.

Alastair was unhappy that the PC had not been consulted on this matter, but Mrs Elliott insisted that the decision on whether to offer any residential visit was entirely her decision and that of school staff/management team. She pointed out that staff participation in residential visits was

undertaken on an entirely voluntary basis. The PC agreed that Alastair head a PC working group to explore possible solutions for Mrs Elliott's consideration of a P5 residential trip in future.

## 9 Dates of Next Meetings

- I. Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November Parents' Council AGM and PTA AGM
- II. Open Meeting with Tony Gowland (Project Manager for the New School) and Yvonne McCracken week commencing 17th November.

Both at 7.15pm