WEST LINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS' COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 14th September 2009

Present: John Barrie, Glenda Barton, Colin Gambles, Gill Gracie, Mary Gunn, Margaret Hogg, Gail Jackson, Claire Shaw, Monica Shaw, Chris Tate and Steven Whalley (Chair).

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

Apologies Tom Davidson and Sheila Warren.

2 Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th June were agreed and accepted.

3 Matters Arising

a) **a) Efficiency Savings –** Steven has drafted a letter of protest and requested comments from the PC. It was agreed that it was not strongly enough worded, so Steven will revise. Peebles High are holding a meeting on 30th Sep which would be worth attending. Steven will seek to arrange a date for councillors to return to West Linton School for a meeting on the subject.

b) Local Plan – The amended final version has been issued. There is no change for the new school build, but more new houses may limit playing space. Steven will write to query extra houses & if the size of the school is being increased. The plan is to be issued late September/early October with comments invited over the following 6 weeks.

4 a) Head Teacher's Report

Mrs Elliot reported on several staff changes which were detailed in the latest newsletter.

There was a meeting for Head Teachers about the likelihood of swine flu peaking this coming October/November with a contingency plan issued in the event of a major outbreak, eg classes being redistributed if several staff are affected at the same time. The school must send a weekly report to SBC of those with flu symptoms for the situation to be monitored. There have been no cases to date.

School Aims and Ethos Document was not completed before the end of June.

An overview of the School Improvement Plan was presented.

4 b) PTA Report

There is a balance of £1500 in the bank. The first meeting this term was held on 8th September and the minutes are to be posted on a PTA notice board which is hoped may be constructed by Mr Beards.

The School Centenary Committee propose the planting of trees at Baddinsgill, which may tie in with the PTA sponsored walk. Sally Bowie is exploring this possibility.

4 c) New School Group

Colin reported on a visit to Kingsland with Margaret & Hilary to look at their new school build. They also met with project manager Tony Gowlands. The West Linton school is likely to be 2 stories high and will have 14 classrooms and a nursery for 50 children per morning and afternoon sessions (includes ante as well as pre-school).There should be a lot of natural light, passive ventilation and IT wiring. The acquisition of the land is still in process. Tony Gowland offered to come back to discuss further. See attached description of the visit with points for thought arising from the visit. Colin to set up the visit to the PC by Tony.

Hilary stated that although the wiring for the New School IT will be in place, fundraising will have to happen for IT facilities such as Smartboards!

4 d) Communications Group

Gill Gracie addressed a working document entitled Parent Council Priorities 2009-2010 which is based on the PC constitution aims – communicate with parents, represent the views of parents, link in with the school improvement plan and influence SBC and Scottish Executive. The group recommend that class reps set up discussion forums with parents. Class reps are to be decided on for the start of each academic year rather than November. Steven will email around asap to arrange the class reps for this year.

4 e) National Initiatives

Steven mentioned the following - Curriculum for Excellence, a DVD on Partnership with Parents (see Parentzone website) and a PC newsletter.

5 AGM – Tuesday 3rd November 2009

The format for the joint AGM with the PTA will be reports from the PC, PTA and Head Teacher followed by the election of office bearers. Sandra Cameron is to be invited to speak about her year in Tanzania at the start, Hilary would like to mention high points of the year and there will be cheese and wine to finish. Denise will book the dining hall. The current office bearers are all happy to stay on. A joint newsletter will be issued and put in school bags at least 2 weeks beforehand.

6 We are working together, see the many initiatives in place.

7 National representative body for Parents' Councils

Steven reported that there is to be a National Parent Forum and that nominations were sought for 1 person from each local authority and that he would be interested in standing. He was duly nominated by Claire Shaw and seconded by Margaret Hogg. The first meeting is to be held on Sat 21st November 2009.

8 Homework Policy

Mrs Elliott suggested a consultation with parents and children based on a questionnaire to be devised by 2members of staff and 2 parents. Gill and Margaret volunteered to draft a questionnaire representing ideas of the PC and staff members.

9 AOCB

I. Colin expressed concern voiced by P1 parents that the there had been no School Handbook made available to new parents this year and there had been some confusion as to the identity of the P1 teachers on the first day. Mrs Elliott acknowledged this.

II. There is to be a PC table at the parents' meetings on the 10 and 11 November.

III. Colin agreed to attend interviewing training (in the case of appointing a new head teacher or deputy head) for Parents' Council members on Thursday 29th October from 6-8pm at Langlee Centre.

IV. Glenda thanked everyone for contributing around 70 school bags which were collected by "Mary's Meals" on 25th August.

V. We should ensure that the bagmail from the PTA/PC again tries to capture email addresses for parents as easy means of communicating with parent forum.

10 Dates of Next Meetings

AGM 3 Nov
Wednesday 25 November
Tuesday 12 January
Monday 22 March
Wednesday 26 May

All at 7:15pm