Greenhills Primary School Parent Council

Minutes of Meeting 25th March 2019

Present: Elaine Johnston, Councillor Dryburgh, Councillor Gray, Scott McPhilemy, Anne Marie Kean, Carol Gallacher, Debbie Hutton, Megan Carvel, Joanne Gilchrist, Carrie Ann Burt, David Cunningham & Sian Flynn

Apologies: Kelly Carlin. Suzanne Campbell stepping down.

Introductions - Introductions were made around the room.

Minutes
Minutes of previous meeting were agreed by Megan Carvel and seconded by Anne Marie Kean.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

David Cunningham introduced himself to the group as one of The Community Participation and Empowerment team. This team has been set up to engage with Communities in SLC. They want to develop a community led action plan for change within the local area regarding issues that residents felt strongly about ie parks and litter issues. Both David and Sian have been introducing themselves to local groups and clubs within the Greenhills area. Debbie suggested that the parents from the school could be asked about issues affecting them in their own area. Councillor Dryburgh asked if it was only Greenhills area or if they would take on issues from surrounding areas for instance Whitehills. David said they would listen to any issues from Greenhills and surrounding areas. Debbie asked if they would liaise with the Police Problem Solving team. David said that they would, as well as liaising with other types of agencies. David gave out his email address until the team has their own set up. David asked if anyone would like to take part in the group and the PC members expressed interest. Councillor Dryburgh informed David that there is a lot currently going on in the area for example youth clubs and church groups etc and partnership working. David said it would be good to get a group together from all walks of life.

Trees – David Hinshelwood has agreed that that the Parent Council can go ahead with the trees but that it could be an issue come the summer time when the grass is cut as the new trees would have to be protected in some way. Anne Marie said they would all be planted alongside the hedgerows and tape could be used to cordon off the new trees.

Community – Mrs Johnston met with the Methodist Church Volunteers informing them that a link from a financial institution had been organised to come to the church group on 24th Sept to give advice on budgeting and saving and potentially run a course lasting three sessions if this could be facilitated. Carol has organised Routes to Work for the June meeting and a representative from Energy Scotland for the April meeting to discuss ways to be more energy efficient.

The Cost of the School Day

School Trips – Income affects friendships in the school – it was the general opinion that this did not affect children of primary school age and that they were too young to be affected by poverty-based bullying. Ace cards are available from the council. Children with these cards get into SLC run clubs and facilities eg swimming and ice skating etc for free. Card costs £25 per month with subsequent cards discounted. There is no tie in, and cards can be cancelled at any time. The first month is free so if paying for the summer then you only pay for one month. Mrs Johnston felt that primary children are not aware of how poverty affects them.
Mrs Johnston informed the group that most of the children in school go on a trip. P7’s go on a residential trip but only for 3 days to keep costs down. Some parents do not allow their child to go but not always for financial reasons. Fiona Gilchrist said she liked that the school give plenty of notice for the trip and that the payments are in instalments. Mr McPhilemy commented that the 5 days is no more stressful to children who feel homesick than the three days as by the time the third day comes around the children are settling in by then. Debbie commented that the Parent Council would have to be more pro-active regarding fundraising if they were to go for 5 days. Mrs Johnston pointed out that when the children are not allowed to pack their own case they have no idea what should be in it when they get there. This point has been added to the power point for next year. The school are buying several waterproof jackets and trousers of varying sizes for children to wear when they are away. Mrs Johnston asked if Debbie and Anne Marie could organise bag packing events for the P6’s to raise money for their residential trip next year which they both agreed to. Trips are subsidised as buses are very expensive.

PEF – This money goes to the children who are entitled to free school meals. We are expecting to receive this money for 5 years then it may be withdrawn therefore cannot be used to fund trips as this would not be fair to future pupils whose parents would have to pay for trip themselves. Office staff when booking trips continue to access grants and subsidies where possible for trips. This is the first year that clubs have been run in the school for all age groups. Councillor Dryburgh commented that having the tribute nights in the school helped as this saves money on travelling. The Manchester football trip was considered expensive but not by comparison to the cost of attending an ordinary Manchester football game. The basketball trip was very inexpensive at only £3.50 which meant that families could go as well as individuals.

Fun Events – As yet we have not logged who does and does not come to events but Mrs Johnston said it was something we could do. Joanne felt that the school is mindful of the cost of events for the children. Film nights were suggested as a way to raise funds. Children would be charged £2 or £3 per ticket. The P1-P3 pupils could stay straight after school for a film and then an interval before the P4-P7 pupils would come in next for a different film. It was suggested that the P7 pupils could do this as an enterprise. Mrs Johnston said that some children will not attend events if their parents have no money and Councillor Dryburgh agreed as she knows of schools where the children stay off when it’s Christmas Jumper Day as they have no money to buy a jumper. This means that the child misses out on a day of schooling. Mrs Johnston said that there must be a balance of not doing too many events and pricing. Mr McPhilemy commented that the comic relief day was only a suggested donation of 50p and the children could just wear something red so that it wasn’t too expensive. Friends of the Parent Council also commented that World Book Day was great as the focus was on books and not expensive costumes as the school had only asked for 10p to swap books and children came dressed in their pyjamas. Councillor Dryburgh said that it would be good if the schools could have a joined up approach but Mrs Johnston said that this can be very difficult sometimes.

Improvement Plan – Mrs Johnston talked about how the plan would be written in May, working with the staff and ‘How Good is Our School’ indicators and self-evaluation techniques and would like parental input for this year’s plan. Both Anne Marie and Megan volunteered to meet with Mrs Johnston about this on 14th May at 2pm. The plan will then be put into ‘child speak’ and put up around the school so that the children know what is going on.

2019/2020 – Mrs Johnston asked if we could decide on dates for the next years calendar. Arianna Grande tribute night is 13th Sept 2019 and Carol to email Pauline with times for the let. It was agreed that the last Monday of the month was still fine for the meetings and Mrs Johnston would put the dates on the year planner. Summer Fair will be on Sat 1st June 2019. Halloween disco on Tuesday 29th October 2019. Parent Council will consider dates for Christmas Fair. A Beetle Drive was suggested as a fund raiser.
At the next meeting both PEF spending and Standards and Qualities report will be discussed.

AOCB

Anne Marie received an email from Mrs McNulty (nursery teacher) asking if the Parent Council could donate any money for gardening. Mrs McNulty is planting flowers and vegetables with the nursery children and would like to do this with the whole school. They would need £100 to buy soil for all the beds. Joanne said she would ask in B&Q if this was something they could help with, but if not, it was agreed that the Parent Council would donate the £100. Shots Prison will make buddy benches for £25 and have invited the Parent Council to the prison to see the benches and other items that could be made for the school. Mrs Johnston mentioned that it would be good if the children had a reading chair.

The winner of the First Ministers Reading Challenge will be announced at the end of the month.

Mr McPhilemy asked if the Parent Council would contribute to the P7 end of term outing and this was confirmed by the group. The children will be allowed to decide what they would do from several options given to them. Councillor Dryburgh discussed the Space Camp in April and how there is a waiting list now. She has had a meeting with the Council regarding the summer clubs. The council will run their club for the first 5 weeks and the Methodist Church will run their own club for the last week. There will be limited spaces at these clubs.

The Methodist church is applying for the Service Level Agreement to deliver the breakfast club in the school from August. The volunteers will provide supervision but catering staff will provide the breakfast. Information will be in May's Newsletter.

Treasurers Report – Balance as of February’s Minutes.

Date of Next Meeting – 20th May 2019 (Debbie Hutton’s apologies in advance)