

Minutes of exceptional PHS Parent Council Meeting 7:00 – 9:30 PM Tontine Hotel 12 December 2019

Present (being regular attendees of the Parent Council) : Glenda, Barton (Chair), Eric Nightingale, Clair Barrett, Brian Carlyle, Sarah Keen, Vicki Swan, Ali Hilton, Vanessa Rice, Susan Jarvis, Sarah Duncan, Catriona Bhatia (Guest Speaker), Ruth Doherty, Chris Knight, Tommy Davidson, Tristan Compton, Gordon Murray, Morven Smith, Margaret Kinahan, Muriel Foreman, Angela Dobie, Kirstin Worsley, Viv Leckie.

Glenda Barton (Chair), welcomed everyone, thanking them for their attendance and introduced Catriona Bhatia.

Catriona explained that she was happy to offer a contribution based on her experience as an SBC Councillor between the years 2003-17 and informed us her son was in S3 at PHS. Specifically Catriona informed us that she had previously held the role of Head of Education at SBC and had been involved in the recent new-build High School and Primary school projects within the region. Catriona has since agreed to be co-opted to the PC to help us.

Glenda explained that the aim on the meeting was to build upon the Parents meeting of the previous evening and we now wanted to get wider engagement of parents.

A schedule was circulated highlighting the enormous efforts by parents since the fire and what has been achieved. Glenda expressed her grateful thanks to people giving so much of their time and money to help the school.

Claire Barrett and Rachel Beaton (not present) had joined forces to help Vanessa Rice on the parental communication front and Claire on the fundraising side too as she was part of the Opportunity Pot team.

At this point Tommy Davidson explained that as a parent he didn't actually feel engaged at the moment because SBC decisions had been made without parent consultation.

Fund Raising

Glenda confirmed that at the time of the meeting approximately £15,500 had been raised in total from the recently launched Crowdfunding page and from the generous £10,000 donation from Glenrath Farms.

Sarah Duncan also informed us that she was also trying to set up a swap shop facility at the Rosetta road site to help children short of physical possessions.

Feedback to date

Glenda confirmed that the previous evening's meeting at Cardona (which replaced the scheduled parents' evening) had been very successful and a list of questions and issues raised have been written up and were posted on the wall for inspection. Our grateful thanks to Campbell Wilson, SLT, all staff and SBC for all they have done. Thanks were also given to both Cardona Hotel and the Tontine Hotel for hosting our events and Peebles Hydro for all their support.

Update from S4-6 Parents' Evening

Vanessa drew reference to Tracy Logan's main points highlighting:

- Conditions were very challenging and that there was a general satisfaction with the emergency teaching arrangements.
- 200 staff were at work within the SBC bunker highlighting the urgency of the situation.
- That the PHS site is still unsafe, so parents must ensure that children are kept away.
- PHS lockers were now being emptied and children will soon get the contents back e.g. notes.
- That Rob Dickson (SBC Executive) had explained the bunker priorities were:
 - o The return of property
 - o Getting children back in front of teachers
 - o Getting through the damage assessment process that was very time consuming
 - o Ensuring effective communication with affected parties e.g. sharing with us the explanatory map, highlighting damage to 26 classrooms saying that half were unusable.
 - o Attending to deep cleaning of smoke damage rooms
 - o Demolishing, that was due to start this week with the aim of rebuilding a large chunk.
- It was agreed that SBC had achieved a lot so far.

Prelims

We were reminded that Mr Paul Fagan had confirmed that prelim examinations would go ahead at the main PHS site between 13 Jan – 30 Jan 2020, including practicals and that

- SQA will take into consideration the impact of the fire disruption, more details to follow.
- Study leave will exist between 13 Jan and 30 Jan 2020

At this point Viv Leckie and Kirstin Worsley explained that availability of Laboratories and return of musical instruments was an issue.

Return to PHS Site

Glenda explained that at the moment the plan for a phased return of the children to the PHS site was unclear but she felt this would possibly occur between February and June with S1-3 having priority. Also her opinion was that SBC were trying hard, aiming to deliver an improvement on the facilities existing before the fire. Tommy Davidson explained he would need some convincing on that point based on his experience with the West Linton Primary School. Glenda reminded everyone that SBC was channelling all available resource into the solution, for example all road works had been put on hold.

Fund Raising

Viv Leckie raised a point suggesting whether SBC should be asked to match fund all parental donations and contributions. Tommy Davidson expressed concern stating that SBC should cover the cost of replacing teaching materials in full.

It was suggested and agreed that we needed to have a clear mandate for how the donations are expensed, communicated to parents. It was also explained that not all parents were aware of the Crowdfund especially if they hadn't got access to Facebook. Consideration was to be given to improve communication in this area.

Susan Jarvis proposed and it was agreed that:

- Donated funds should not be used to cover insured losses
- Don't want to double up buying what SBC are already paying for
- List of applications & approvals should be maintained by the Treasurer

Kirstin Worsley explained that the Lottery money remained unspent but Glenda Barton explained there were no immediate cash flow issues because of the amazing £10,000 already donated by Glenrath Farms.

Physical donations will soon be handled by Lesley Monro at the Rosetta Road site.

Morven Smith suggested that a Triage system be introduced to prevent unfair distribution. Glenda Barton explained that she has asked Principal Teachers for feedback as they have highlighted difficulty at the moment in having a lack of physical resources. Explaining that the next phase needed to capture current needs.

Split out session

Time was now spent looking at wall charts displaying key issues and a key statement was highlighted and agreed. "We want all students together, located in Peebles with own teachers and full curriculum including all subject choices"

There was agreement that work streams were required to handle the process.

Catriona Bhatia explained that we, as a community, can contribute by support the thinking for SBC and influencing their decision, therefore it was important to form a list. In addition we shouldn't lose this opportunity for getting a new school, e.g. we could build a whole new school on the rugby pitch. However it might be that the best bits of PHS would be kept e.g. Sports Hall & Millennium Wing etc. This has not been confirmed by anyone. We were informed that the next funding bids for a new school would be in the summer of 2020.

Catriona explained that our approach to SBC should be to work as partners rather than head on conflict.

At this point Tristan Compton explained that on the previous evening he had a conversation with Tracy Logan and she explained quite categorically that "we are not building a new school because the insurance claims will not cover the cost of a new school." Tristan was informed that it we were more likely to get the best bits of the old school plus new build.

Morven asked Catriona what the timescale would be for a new school and we were informed that the planning, tendering and positioning of funding would possibly take at least 6 months. If we did obtain a new school we were told that it would probably resemble

Kelso rather than Earlston. Also if this went ahead it would push back the Galashiels / Hawick new builds.

Key Issues

Glenda then encouraged discussion of the key issues poster highlighting:

- We still need a solution for all students and staff on one site.
- Quality of Education Provision now for all
 - o Seniors loss of lesson time for their exams, don't have full timetable
 - o Blanket need for SQA Involvement in allowances at exam time not just sub groups of students
 - o Juniors back to full curriculum on one site
 - o Supplement teaching asap – local community council help, Easter schools
 - o Study leave tuition
- Practical way teaching happening now in Galashiels
- Travelling to Galashiels
- Return of property
- Managing our fundraising efforts

Further discussion provided an extended list of concerns, summarised as:

- We need a P1-3 parent presentation too.
- Additional needs children are not to be ignored and parents of such children should be allowed to influence the solution.
- On-line home learning should be given more emphasis and be extended to S1-3.
- Support for helping children with lost revision notes. (Glenda agreed to liaise directly with SBC)
- Require classrooms for practical tuition, including music.
- There are a lack of sporting facilities, how can community clubs help?
- Emotional support for children as well as reassurance over future safety especially as event was arson in possible return to existing site.
- Require mid and long term building plans.
- Pupils / staff getting mixed messages at different times.
- Pupils needs require greater prominence.

Work Streams

There was general agreement to develop work streams as follows:

Work Stream	Remit	Volunteers
1.	Planning for a new school / one site solution / New temporary village	Tommy Davidson, Vicky Swan, Susan Jarvis, Sarah Duncan, Brian Carlyle, Muriel Foreman, Catriona Bhatia.
2.	Quality of education Provision for all (SBC feel we will get close to gold standard).	Kirstin Worsley, Viv Leckie, Tristan Compton, Gordon Murray, Angelie Dobbie, (John Levine, Ed Craig assist)
3.	Managing Fund Raising Efforts: immediate requirements, including management & impact of temporary solutions & Gaps	Eric Nightingale, Gail Jackson, Claire Barrett, Susan Jarvis, Glenda Barton.
4.	Pupil Emotional Support & Feeling of Safety	Lillian Halyrood,
5.	Sports & Exercise	Morven Smith

How to structure and format work stream ideas, how to share those ideas and timescales for reporting are still to be confirmed. Although Tommy Davidson felt he would be able to provide a preliminary report for work stream 1) by early January 2020.

Fire prevention

There was general agreement that because the fire was suspected to be of deliberate intent concerted effort and action needs to be taken to reduce the risk of repeat attacks. No suggestions were considered at this point.

Other Issues

- Concern was expressed that staff well-being may be an issue, requiring additional support.
- It was thought perhaps pupils could be offered a visit to a film show at Eastgate theatre, whilst the staff enjoy a coffee and cake at Costa Coffee as a gesture, at the expense of the Parent Council. Perhaps parents could also be asked to provide cakes for staff too.
- Tommy Davidson suggested that a formal thank-you should be sent to all staff leaders and cleaners and perhaps Mr Wilson could provide a distribution list.
- Chris Knight offered to deal with general Parent Communication if the information was sent to him directly, but it needed to be specific and written in plain English.

The meeting closed at 9:30 PM and Glenda expressed her thanks for the contribution provided by all present.