

**Madras College parent Council Minutes**  
**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013. Kilrymont 7pm**

**1.Chairman's opening remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2.Apologies**

**Present:** Rory MacLeod, Sally Walker, Cllr Keith McCartney, Dawn Waddell, Andy Primmer, Callum MacLeod, Bruce Sinclair, Rebecca Trengove, Paul Brown, Scott Wilson, Rachel Naismith, Debbie Cumming, Susan Simpson, Hugh Watson, Cllr Bill Connor, Jane Pettegree, Cllr Brian Thompson, Barry Millar, Ian Jones, Cllr Tim Brett, Sam Byers

**Apologies:** Charlotte Kirby, Emma Henderson, David Rickman

**3.Minutes of Previous meeting**

These were accepted.

**4.Matters Arising**

**School Policy re politics:** Query had been raised previously regarding impartiality due to the presentation to pupils by a brother of a former pupil who currently works for the SNP. The Rector investigated this and confirmed that this had been an initiative instigated by the pupils and that the policy of the school was to ensure a proper balance, however on this occasion an external speaker only spoke for Independence. The outcome of the mock vote was 80:20 against.

**Curriculum for Excellence:** Note of thanks and praise to Madras SMT for their guidance during the consultation periods relating to the number of subject choices for Senior Phase. The balance of 6 appears to be the correct number with other Schools previously choosing 7, reducing their structure accordingly.

**5.Treasurer's Report**

Since the last meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October a further £78 has been received on behalf of the 50/50 Club and a very substantial Bank Giro Credit for £325.32 has been received from 'Easy Fundraising'. [Debbie Cumming pointed out that the total raised from Easy Fundraising to date is £824.37.] The Current balances are: cash in hand - £1.92; bank £6472.68.

As previously agreed a cheque for £5,000 was handed over to the School for items agreed with the teaching staff in each department. (The cost of the dyslexia software, a commitment which has been carried forward for several meetings, will be met from the £5000). A cheque for £34.20 was handed over to Sam Byers to reimburse her for the cost of the renewal of the Website host/domain name.

**6.Secretary/Webmaster's Report.**

Successful hand over of tasks to Sam Byers with support in place in order to learn the website protocol.

## **7.Fundraising Group Report – Debbie Cumming**

New year for the 50/50 so please encourage as many people as possible to sign up. Would be nice to have a £500 prize as opposed to £20.

**New Fundraising initiative** : QuadFest. Music event in the Quad. Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013. Doors open 6pm, events from 7-10pm. Planned Hog roast and vegetarian alternative and licenced bar. Kenny Anderson to head the event. Raffle planned. Any donations or recommendations for donors gratefully received as are helpers before, during and after the event.

## **8.Rector's Report**

### **Information Systems**

Proposed replacement of Parentmail with Group Call system. (to be streamed and phased in with permission sought from parents by the end of the session).

Benefits are an automated email and text system which will facilitate the management of the absenteeism system. Texts can be sent directly to parents first thing in the morning should a pupil not be in attendance. Emails are free, texts are costed on a package basis. Issue will be the buy in by parents, however there is a current take-up rate of 80% by parents currently.

### **Staffing**

Number of staff left at Christmas. Whilst it is always disruptive, it is also very positive as each member of staff who continued within teaching has secured a promotion within their new role.

Mr Ewan Reid is now Principal Teacher Support for Learning

Mr Hugh Watson is Acting Depute Head having taken over from Mrs Elizabeth Smart who is now DHT at Waid.

Jennifer MacLaren is now Acting Principle Teacher Guidance?

Currently recruiting for Support for Learning vacancy.

### **Accommodation**

In September a spreadsheet containing 377 separate items was created highlighting all issues relating to the fabric, maintenance, structure and internal resources for both buildings.

The Rector discussed the findings with Louise Playford -Estates, Education and Learning Director and A Cummings the Business Manager. The list was analysed and triaged into 3 separate categories

**Category 1:** Essential health and safety = 85 items and an immediate commitment for rectification has been given.

**Category 2:** Requests for work to be undertaken but has not yet been agreed or commenced = 40 items

**Category 3:** Lesser importance items = 252 items.

At the moment the timescales for completion of any of the tasks is not known, or whether or not there is a willingness to remedy those items falling within category 3.

Member questioned if there were a budgetary leeway internally for the school to take on some of the issues: Rector confirmed this was being addressed with internal resources being utilised to replace whiteboards etc where possible.

Cllr Thompson provided an update from Louise Playford following his meeting. A cleaning issue had been raised separately and this was being looked into. Additional minor and major items outwith categories 1-3 above were also being shortlisted for rectification. Toilet facilities being a further separate issue.

Cllr Tim Brett confirmed his support to helping seek rectification of the accommodation issues.

### **Supported Self Evaluation**

Rector pleased to announce the completion of the School Review by the team of education officers who visited the school to provide an internal audit, similar to an external HMIE visit.

The outcomes were very positive confirming that the school was accurate in its self-assessment against the standard HMIE criteria for both positive and critical analysis. (the report can be seen on the web).

### **Curriculum for Excellence CfE**

Mr Millar provided an update.

- All course choice booklets have now been completed and were in the process of being delivered to S1 pupils, having distributed Senior Phase to S3. Guidance team interviews were underway with S3 pupils, moving onto S5 then S1 refinement process.
- New structure for next year Senior Phase 35 period week – 6 subjects, 5 periods per week per subject with additional 5 periods per week for Health and Well Being.
- New Session S5 & S6 (not CfE) will continue with 5 subjects of 6 periods /week. and health and Wellbeing for 5 periods
- All teaching staff are being given adequate CPD time to develop their understanding of CfE and SQA training.
- There have been 2 separate review process – the Supported Self Evaluation (as above) and the Council Broad General Education review. The results of this were also very favourable.
- The Curriculum Rationale will be published by Easter.

Member – Query re mix of classes and involving different year groups? It is not possible to mix current S5/S6 with new CfE S4 as the structure differs. However once the new Senior Phase is in place then it will be possible in the future for S6 to sit with S4 to be taught a one year National 5 subject on the basis of timetabling. This will become the new 'norm'.

Member – Thank you to the SMT for their comprehensive guidance, feedback, availability and help during this process. Echoed by all members in the committee.

Member – what happens when subjects clash? The box is there for any issues you have with timetabling subjects. Please put them in there and they will be discussed.

## **9. Report from Working parties and sub groups**

**Home Study Working Group** – Paul Brown, Jane Petegree, Susan Simpson, Hugh Watson.

Thanks given to Mrs E Smart who was the powerhouse behind this committee. Since left and recently replaced by Mr Hugh Watson.

- Plans to put an information pack on the web (estimated timescale end of March) with a list of points for parents/pupils and teachers. Essential to highlight the importance of the planner as a means of communication.
- A service agreement is to be created for communications between all parties, however the analysis of the information flow is still in its infancy.
- The team feel that this is a constructive partnership with very positive support and input from the school. Jo Regan's input has also been greatly appreciated.

## **10. New Madras**

Consultation period has now begun with 2 public meetings planned for 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February. Exactly the same procedures would now occur as last time.

Chairman confirmed that he had received a large document which was due to be completed by the council as part of the process. Questions therefore should be i) are we all up to speed on where the process is and ii) would it be useful to agree that the council works towards an opinion which could be shared by the council.

Cllr Brian Thompson provided an update: Pipelands favoured site and the formal consultation began on 21/01/13 with closure on 08/03/2013. The Council is currently progressing the planning permission in principle with a design team having been re-employed to create a design for application. As this is a sensitive sight, the likelihood is that this will be deemed a 'major' decision and therefore go to Full Council (78) members to determine the future. The Scottish Government could also be involved. Earliest completion date could be during 2016.

Much discussion as the best approach for the council. Agreed that people should go to the meetings and then discuss at the next meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

Cllr Tim Brett commented that he would encourage the council to put their views in. A new school is needed desperately and the school required the full support of the council to enable this to happen.

## **11. AOCB**

Expense Policy for council members: Currently not in place. Agreed that where a member is attending a meeting on behalf of the council then reasonable travel costs will be met in line with current school expense policy of 35.4p/mile at present. Receipts etc must be provided and claiming the expenses would be at the discretion of the individual and agreed by the Chair.

Sally walker attended the PT Council Conference and confirmed that it was well attended and the feedback to her presentation was very positive.

Final vote of thanks to Mr Mackenzie – Biology teacher from all the parents of S3 rugby pupils for his continued support and training of such a small pack of boys. It is greatly appreciated by all.

**12.Chairman.**

With deep regret, due to personal reasons, has to step down from the role of Chair. He has enjoyed this role enormously and is saddened to have to leave. His final meeting will be on 6<sup>th</sup> March and volunteers for the role are requested to email Rory in advance of this meeting.

Rector acknowledged the Council and staffs full appreciation for the support and guidance Rory had given to this role in a challenging time at the Council. This was echoed by all council members.

**Date of next meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013. Kilrymont. 7pm**