

Minutes of Trinity Academy Parent Council 29th November 2021

Mike Nicholson (Chair) opened the meeting by welcoming all, reminder that all PC meetings open to anyone in parent/carer forum to attend.

Headteacher update:

Staffing: Mike noted recent media coverage relating to covid staff absence issues in education and shortage of supply teaching staff. Mr Burge noted staffing end Nov best level it has been since early Sept 21.

Across Edinburgh normally 10-20 requests for supply per day, currently requests exceeding 100/day due to covid and related absences. Notes however TA has not had very high covid rates in staff. English Dept currently 90% staffed, maths 100% staffed and recent permanent appointment to replace Mr Beard.

Several familiar supply staff in on rolling basis Mon/Tues/Wed – policy to prioritise specialist teachers for certificated classes doing exams.

Bangholm : 16/5/22 revised completion date. Infrastructure/substation issues cause of minor delay. Change of timetable beg June – important for school Bangholm meets this deadline for new classes June 22. Pitches ready end July/Aug 22. Current scoping for natural boundary rather than fenced.

Phase 2: current issues being looked at for the main site include phone masts on top of the tower (telecoms companies control siting of these, not local authority). Difficulty in aligning eco/sustainability to passivhaus standard with Victorian building – expensive restoration and retrofit to do this. Mr B currently spends around 3-5 hours a week on phase 2 work, complex project with ongoing discussion and consultation, hoping for concept to emerge ?Jan 22. Needs now to take account of City of Edinburgh 20 minute neighbourhood model.

Jim Campbell, Cllr, noted that council has aspiration to become carbon neutral across the estate and that CoE views TA as next big project. Capital funding is costed and appears secure/on plan.

I-pads: Sept/Oct roll-out postponed to Aug/Sept 22 - wifi upgraded by then.

Mobile Phones in School: following feedback from staff - mobiles will not be banned in class – this was felt to be backwards step.

Digital school: S4/5 now have ipads, as well as 27 pupils with SFL needs. TA staff are well ahead with digital training and prepared for whole school roll-out in due course.

Duke of Edinburgh award: Peter Hunter new DoE coordinator after Mr Blevins retired. Mr Hunter works as PSA and therefore has little non-contact time. Mr Nelson is supporting in this role.

Funding Requests for PC: Mike notes PC used to take requests for help with funding at AGM annually, keen to move away from this to more dynamic model throughout year depending on needs that arise. School have come up with some:

‘Live N Learn’ – half day sessions provided to help with study skills and time management for pupils, helping them take control and personal responsibility. Planning this after round 1 of prelims, around time of parent consultations. REQUEST £1200 to help with this initiative.

Cost of School Day: remains a big focus for school and council. For example sports club and kit, previously annual fee to pupils for this, also maintenance eg goalie kit, trips eg hockey first X1 coach to Aberdeen. Previous charging of families doesn't align with Edinburgh's work in addressing poverty / ease of accessibility for all. The total cost of this programme is between £2500 - £3500 annually depending on a range of factors. This year the programme has a pupil footfall of approximately 320 pupils per week. Moving forward, the school would like to trial the funding of this programme through three main streams: Annual Parent Council contribution, School fund contribution, Annual fundraiser

REQUEST for this year £1500 for session 2021/22.

The meeting approved both requests

ACTION: Dave Henderson to arrange cheque from PC to school to cover the total of £2700

Vision and Values Review: 82 responses so far, wide ranging. Will analyse common themes and consider review groups/coming back to PC for further discussion.

Curriculum Review: staff responses already happened – only 20 pupil responses so far. Expect to hold back major reform whilst awaiting input re expected SQA major reform 2023/24 onwards. Will in long run incorporate pupil views, entitlements etc.

Mike pointed out course choice centre a v good resource, longer term picture not always clear at outset eg availability of some subjects very temporary if no teacher available/course not scheduled as insufficient numbers, year by year can be difficult.

Mr Burge notes aim will be to broaden experience, eg NPA photography. Distribution of time/periods an issue. Many schools have 2 periods/week for wider achievement awards, at TA full columns with Highers doesn't allow for this. Bryan C leading on this review.

1:5 Poverty: Lynne Liddall gave outline of previous PC input and the context for the 1:5 initiative (estimated 1 in 5 children in Edinburgh live in poverty). Lynne had prev attended training with Jane Liggat and PC worked w school to identify needs and ways in which PC could help. Pencil pots, PE kit, travel card are examples of this. Clothes bank was another initiative that came out of this work. Some future ways in which PC might help inc cost of DoE awards, breakfast club, cost of S6 prom etc. Lynne noted she is happy to continue this work for one further year and if anyone else interested to get in touch. Mr B thanked Lynne and will follow up with her re this work/cost of DoE. Notes school help with offsetting cost of leaver hoodies for some. Food bank donations coordination ongoing.

ACTION: follow up 1:5 work/cost of school day Lynne Liddall, Mr Burge

Mike thanked Mr Burge and moved on to final section of the meeting.

Volunteer Update for PC:

In advance of meeting Mike sent out note to 32 people who had previously indicated they could offer time/help to PC – 6 definite positives responded so far. Includes parents on a 'bank' who can be called on to input or consult as needed. So far one offer to do the minutes (MR has done for 5

years), notes jobs like this could be split or done on rota basis. Mike intends to step down after 21-22 as his younger son will be entering S6. Dave Henderson has agreed to continue as treasurer this year but his daughter will leave school June 22 so will also be seeking new treasurer. If anyone interested in taking on any PC role/helping please contact Mike. Communication and next steps for PC will be renewed focus moving into 2022.

ASN meeting planned – PC comms could be emailed out by SFL to parents/carers via group ASN electronic mail invite.

ACTION: email Mike if interested in helping with PC and/or taking on a specific role in the PC

Dates of future PC meetings: 19/1 (later revised to 26/1), 7/3, 27/4, 6/6. Mike intends to put out bullet point summaries shortly after meeting for wider parent forum.

Thanks to all – meeting closed.