**Minutes of Marr College Parent Council Forum Meeting** 

**Wednesday 14th February 2018**

**Present** –Hilary Ramage - Chair/Secretary, Timothy Wight - Vice Chair, Graeme Hobson - Acting Head Teacher & Katherine Woodhouse - Minute Secretary

**Council Members** – Ady Allan, Alan Blackwood, Julie Cotter, Lindsay Campbell & Mark Fitzpatrick

**Forum Members** – Lindsay Connell

**Apologies** – Clair Milne, Jackie Harvey, Kate Dunn, Katie Atkinson, Lisa Rossi & Stuart Harris

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|  | **Action** |
| 1. **Welcome and Apologies**   Hilary welcomed those in attendance and apologies were noted from those unable to attend. |  |
| 1. **Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising**   The minutes of the meeting held on 17th January 2018 were approved by Alan Blackwood and seconded by Ady Allan and the action plan reviewed as follows:  Matters Arising   * Funding – Graeme advised that funding was received via ‘Troon Decides’ for Community Sports Leaders and Marr Radio, both receiving £1,000. * Radio mikes – Tim had spoken to Centrestage who have just upgraded their equipment and will have 2 sets of radio mikes available to hire. Their charges would be lower than commercial rates but he is hopeful they will be willing to lend. Tim will give them the dates of the show and the number of mikes required. * Programmes – Kate has given all the information to Copystop and is awaiting prices. She has also approached a couple of potential sponsors. * Fundraising – Graeme advised that Marianne has written a letter to Morrisons with regard to bag packing but has not yet informed him of a date. * Auditorium – Tim has made contact with the maintenance staff and will be looking round the auditorium after the meeting. * Communications app - Graeme will be following up on this. * Careers evening on 7th February went well with around 4-500 attendees. Alan felt it would be better to start planning this event in November in order to give further education establishments as much advance notice as possible. This had not been possible this time due to Elaine’s absence and the date not being confirmed until later. Graeme advised it would be held around the same time each year as it ties in with option choices. Next year it would be an idea to utilise the library area at the school entrance so that this area did not feel empty and Graeme suggested having a nail bar and serving coffees, etc. He also felt it would be useful to circulate the school events calendar to the Parent Council for their opinion prior to it being confirmed. * Budget cuts – Hilary sent out a template letter to parents and a letter to councillors from the Parent Council. She received feedback from most of the councillors who all seemed to say that the education cuts would not be as bad as expected. See below. * Scottish Government Consultation – due to a misunderstanding as to who was responding to this, no response from the Parent Council was submitted. Graeme felt that the main points were included in the response sent from the school. | TW  KD  GH  TW  GH |
| 1. **SAC Proposed Budget Cuts Report**   Tim attended a meeting at County Buildings with other Parent Council representatives and met with Cllr Campbell, Council Leader. He was very interested to hear from the Parent Councils and explained the reasons behind the cuts.   * SAC had been told by Edinburgh to reduce their budget by 3% across the council, however they have now been awarded additional money from the government therefore the cuts are reduced to £10m from £23m. * It’s planned to take out whole savings rather than taking small amounts off budgets. The maintenance of education is a priority therefore they are looking at school amalgamations particularly at primary level. This leaves them with £1m to find so they are considering other options. One such option is to have a centre of excellence at each school and Ayr Academy is being considered for sport. This would be something for the schools to drive. There are a whole range of categories for excellence, e.g. music, STEM, languages, art, etc. * It was also announced that Dolphin House and Duke of Edinburgh would both be saved from the cuts. * Final decisions on the cuts will be made in early March. Cllr Campbell would be happy to meet Parent Councils again before the budget at the end of this month and would like to meet twice a year thereafter. |  |
| 1. **Malawi Update**   Stuart Harris was unable to attend the meeting therefore Graeme provided an update.   * Graeme had asked Stuart to speak to some other local schools that have strong Malawi partnerships. So far he has been to St Matthews in Saltcoats and has a meeting with Alloway Primary. He has also spoken to Jamie Milliken, Minister at Portland church as they have links with Malawi too. * There are a group of very keen S5 pupils who meet once a week and they have identified, via a WhatsApp group with the teachers at the school in Ntenjera that their main priority is for classrooms. The commitment from Marr will therefore lie with construction and improving facilities. * There may be an opportunity for students to go out to Malawi but this will not be in the near future. * Next Tuesday Stuart and a group from S5 are going to the annual Malawi partnership at Hampden. * Stuart is looking for fundraising ideas which can be discussed when he attends next month’s meeting and he will provide a further update at that time. Graeme felt that Elaine may want to move this forward with Stuart on her return. |  |
| 5. **Captains’ Report**  Gigha and Eilidh provided an update on the captains’ recent activities.   * A road safety day had been organised for senior pupils which included a safety demonstration from the emergency services and a presentation on responsible driving. This proved very worthwhile and Graeme will ask them to repeat this exercise next year. * The barista bar will be launched on Friday at 10 am – this was trialled at the Careers evening and it proved a success. Rotary members and council representatives will be attending and Graeme asked whether any Parent Council members would like to come along as well. * The proceeds from the recent non uniform day will be split between 3 local charities and this time pupils were asked to wear different colours to represent the charity they were supporting. Almost £200 per charity was raised. * The Rotary quiz will be held at Marr in March with the seniors and P7s from cluster primaries. |  |
| 1. **AOCB**  * Fire alarms – Graeme has received correspondence from parents with regard to the malicious activating of the fire alarms. He knows that there are a number of young people who are setting the alarms off, but the difficulty is in catching them. However some of the culprits have been caught and have been excluded. There seems to be an agreement about not charging young people for setting off the alarms, although David Strang would be prepared to overrule this for anyone who is caught. All students have had a talk from the Fire Service about fire safety and they will return in a few weeks to speak to those who may have missed the talk the first time round. The school has now fitted ‘screamers’ to the fire alarm points so that as soon as the flap is lifted a high pitched noise is emitted before the alarm button is pressed. This will hopefully act as a deterrent to anyone trying to set off the alarm maliciously. Graeme will provide feedback next month to see whether the situation has improved. * Hilary outlined proposed school holidays for 2019/20:   **Option 1**  Close on Thursday 6th February 2020, in-service day on 11th February and re-open on 12th February.  Close on Friday 22nd May, in-service day on 26th May and re-open on 27th May.  **Option 2**  Close on Friday 7th February and re-open on 12th February.  Close on Thursday 21st May and re-open on 27th May.  Graeme confirmed that the SQA diet in May would still continue irrespective of holidays. After a show of hands it was decided to go with option 1.   * Hilary raised the issue of the Troon Round Table youth fund which is distributed to the youth groups in Troon. Graeme felt it would be the CLD (Community Learning Development) partners who this would apply to rather than the school and he will check to make sure they’re aware of it. * Graeme advised of a P7 transition evening on 14th March at 6.00-7.30pm at which the Parent Council usually has a presence to try and recruit new members. He asked if representatives could make themselves available in the barista area to chat to parents and give out information. Hilary suggested having a slot available in the evening where parents will have time to break for a coffee. Alan asked about how Parent Council members could be identified and wondered whether the school’s badge making facility could be utilised for this. * Graeme advised that Elaine would be returning to work on Monday and he will revert to being Depute Head Teacher. Fiona Young in turn will revert to being PT of SSPT. | GH |
| 7. **Next Meeting**  The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st March at 7pm. Hilary has messaged Catherine Owens to amend the times/dates of future meetings on the website. |  |