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Our Forum is a group of elected people who represent everyone connected to the school. We listen, understand and collect your views and opinions. We then use our powerful influence to make Cotham better for everyone.
”

CO-OPERATIVE FORUM MEETING MINUTES

7pm on Thursday 8 May 2014, Cotham School Library

Attendees

Parent Reps: Becky Chapman (BC, Chair), Adam Rehin (AR), Grace Emmerson, (GM) Rob Mitchell, Simon Wilks (SW), Gabby Chelmika (GC), Gino Raymond, Penny Beeston (PB),

Staff Reps: Abi Allender (AA), Katherine Clune (KC), Katie Hughes, Mark Shutter (MS), Ross Geoghegan (RG), Katie Hughes, Alan Rofey, Bev Meredith, Kate Armstrong,

Community Reps: Nancy Copplestone, Hugh Thomas (HT)

Student Reps: Jessica Barber (JB), Gabriel Osborne

School Governors: David Yorath, Claire Grocott

Also Present: Malcolm Willis (MW), Geraldine Hill-Male (GHM), Thursa Swindall

Apologies: Ana Kronschnabl (AK), Dick Willis, Julie Nottage, Dave Martin, Catherine Stevens, Danny Dignan, Kelly McDonagh, Catherine Stevens,

1. Welcome to all and apologies

Parent rep Sarah Wangermann has resigned. Parent Reps have invited Emma Wheeler to be co-opted onto the forum until December elections

2. AOB

Venue Forum meeting **GHM**

3. Agree minutes of the previous meeting

GC proposed and PB seconded; the minutes were agreed.

4. Feedback from each constituency group

Staff: RG Role of school counsellor which Cotham currently does not have discussed with MW, and now staff are considering how to proceed. The shortage of teaching rooms has been addressed as plans have been drawn up for new building work to provide 4 more classrooms. **RG**

Students: **JB** outlined the different developing roles of the student reps, and how this is being consolidated into key areas of discussion. Some of the student reps are visiting Clevedon School to learn about their house system and see if there are ways to integrate this more widely at Cotham. Currently it is only used for Sports day. They are also going on an overnight trip to Manchester to find out about the origins of the cooperative movement and to visit the cooperative HQ. They have no issues for the Forum at present. **JB**

Parents: The parent group met last week to discuss communication with parent members: The parents need a resource/online message board which is easy to use. AR and AK are going to meet with the forum communication group to ask for more information on the management and plans for the school's online presence as a whole. MW clarified that the website will be redesigned as part of the school rebranding and that MS is on the branding subgroup and could help answer questions; he said that the parent perspective would be useful and could be an item on the next Forum agenda or as a separate meeting beforehand. **GM**

Community: Community: Following a meeting of the four community reps, Hugh Thomas and Nancy Coplestone met with MW and GHM to discuss how the school can develop links with the wider community. Hugh Thomas has been in contact with staff regarding the use of a community and business led yr 9 programme that explores how to cope with stress and what can be achieved with a happy, successful and balanced life. Action Forum reps encouraged to view www.buildmyfuture.tv for a video about the programme. **NC**

n.b. The flow diagram of communication processes is progressing for each constituency group, final versions of which will be brought to the Forum at a later date.

5. Action groups

The action groups now have folders to keep their notes in, with action plans of priority tasks. Including timelines for discussion, how to progress, who will take issues forward, details of responsibilities. Groups were invited to make proposals for the whole forum to vote upon each meeting. **BC**

Behaviour/relationships: **AA** said they discussed some actions from previous meetings and tried to prioritise them in order to move forward. No proposals to bring to the Forum at present.

Curriculum/teaching: **GC** PB and **KC** are going to put together a questionnaire about homework, to be sent out over half term; they expect to get some responses by the end of June. No proposals to bring to the Forum at present.

Communication: **SW** said they discussed the actions in relation to appointing a consultant for the communication strategy. The parent portal of Frog is to be trialled with Year 8 parents. Action **KC** and **MS** requested feedback from parent reps regarding the website, particularly when struggling to locate information on there. No proposals to bring to the Forum at present.

6. Fiesta update and discussion

GHM said that **KH** has been putting things together with the help of a group of parents, including food, stalls and student performances. Adverts are going to be placed in local papers and flyers will be distributed to engage members of the community. The Forum has now linked with Future First, which is sponsored by the DfE, to set up an alumni network similar to those in private schools. **GHM** asked for anyone interested in helping to come forward. The Fiesta is 12–4pm on 14th June.

7. The branding of the school and how the Forum feeds into this process

PowerPoint on the rebranding presented: the issues of communication and identity were just as important as the school brand itself; the school doesn't want to stifle creativity, but doesn't want to have a chaotic image either. The results of the school name poll will go as a recommendation to the

Governing Body, but the identity work (design brief and interviewing agencies) will take time. GHM said that the branding group would feed into the communication group every Forum meeting. **KC**

8. Building links with the Governing Body

GHM will meet with Governors soon to consider the following:

Appointing partner organisation (max 6) for September

Developing community members before the community governor elections.

Communications between the Governing Body and the forum and vice versa.

Communications between constituency governors and the members

9. How will the group look in September?

Forum agreed that this discussion be postponed to the next meeting, and Forum members asked to consider the matter in the meantime.

AOB

Vote on venue for Co-op forum meetings: the results were main hall 3 votes, Charnwood 6 votes and Library 10 votes

Date of Next Forum Meeting: Monday July 7th 7pm School Library