

Hampton Prep & Pre-Prep/Hampton Prep Neighbours Association

Minutes of Liaison Group Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Held at: James Hall, Hampton Prep School, Gloucester Road, Hampton

Present for HPNA:

Trevor Alldridge (Co-Chair), Pauline Alldridge (Treasurer), Kay Oliver-Waddell (Secretary)

Present for Hampton Prep & Pre-Prep School:

Tim Smith (Headmaster Hampton Prep and Pre-Prep), Andrew Munday (Hampton School Governor and Hampton Prep Liaison), Ms Verity Moria (Deputy Bursar Hampton School)

Apologies:

Nigel Kingsley (Co-Chair HPNA) and Cllr Suzette Nicholson.

It was proposed that TA take the Chair for this meeting – agreed by all

1. **Ratification of minutes from last meeting.** These were approved with one amendment. TS pointed out that point H under item 3 is not correctly recorded (i.e. Nothing special done for new parents). He wanted it clarified that as soon as a child is being considered for the school an email is sent to prospective parents. When children are admitted as new in Year Three or in other Year groups prior to the Academic Year starting, there is a “Come and Meet” morning in June when it is stressed that parking near the school should be “Legal, considerate and safe” The ideal situation would be not to bring the children by car. They are told to park as far away from the school as possible. In September, there will be an evening presentation for Years Three to Five and the school aims to inform neighbours. Year Six will be on a separate evening. VM underlined that the school is trying to educate the parents “as best as we can.”
2. **Matters Arising.** Distribution of School Newsletter. TS on feedback – one neighbour had asked that they put more in on what they are doing about parents and parking and the school will do that in future editions. TA said there needs to be a firm, clear message. TS said the school will re-invigorate the message for September when 36 new families join the school at the Prep end. They intend to produce a poster about legal and

considerate parking and will incentivise pupils. VM said last December they did this for the Christmas Fayre to encourage ride and stride with great success. They are trialling coming up with incentives to make parents park further from the school on a regular basis. VM said that when clubs close at 4.50 pm they have a staff member on the gates of Carlisle Park but clearly in the deep Mid-Winter months the park is closed. They are collecting data to establish if it has made a difference.

3. **Travel Plan.** TS said that A boards were, on reflection, not an option and unlikely to happen. Positioning of such boards would be challenging and might pose more of a health and safety/obstruction problem than they sought to solve. VM said that the Parking Marshall jackets are now with the school and mean a visible presence. TS confirmed he had confronted one consistent bad parent parker!

The school is asking that neighbours behave in a reasonable fashion and keep their side of the bargain. TA said that the HPNA feels that a recent message from TS in the school bulletin, as displayed on the Hampton Prep website, in connection with neighbours and parking for an event at the school, was not conveyed in a suitable way; being more likely to inflame the situation than calm it.

The co-chairs had written to TS stating this and saying the note appeared to have a sarcastic tone. Some neighbours had asked the HPNA to take the matter up with the Board of Governors but it was felt better to discuss it in the liaison meeting first. AM felt the letter was an over-reaction, but TA reminded everyone that during the original planning process there was a lot of bad feeling about the size of the building. "We want a better school not a bigger school!" Whilst people may have moved on from the building, the roads (congestion and parking) have always been seen as a problem. This is why there is always an underlying tension and why the HPNA is bothered about anything that might appear to neighbours as sarcastic. AM said that the School does not want to cause any further animosity, saying "We would never incite or inflame this delicate situation." VM said she felt we should have dealt with it here (in the liaison meeting).

TS responded by saying that it was certainly not intended to be sarcastic or inflammatory, but rather a genuine call for parents to park and stride. He provided some background:

TS explained that the tone of his note to parents merely reflected the views he hears from some neighbours, who send rude emails and make abusive phone calls to the school. He said that he listens to all complaints and said he could name three people in particular who are extremely aggressive towards the school. He expressed concern that the tone of the messages is also “this is my street” and when asked “what would you like me to do?” one has said “I just want you all to go away!”

AM said that he knows from his own experience that certain neighbours can be volatile and cause a nuclear reaction. He had engaged with a neighbour who used bad language and stressed that inflammatory language is wholly inappropriate. He talked about a complaint from a resident in Wensleydale gardens and said it was challenging having to deal with such difficult people. In this context he said, “I am a volunteer dealing with liaison matters.” He is very concerned about one neighbour who is campaigning against the school coach having a parking bay on Wensleydale Road. He stressed that the Headmaster WOULD NOT set up parents to “cock a snook” at the neighbours.

TS said that he likes to communicate with the parents *his way*, “but around matters to do with parking I note that neighbours are monitoring the bulletin.” He said it was his intention to keep everything orderly. They are aware that this is a sensitive situation.

TA said most people do address issues through the HPNA and only a very few resort to direct communication in the way we have heard. He thanked the school for clarifying the situation, he said that now we know how seriously this is being taken he hopes we can move forward.

**3.2 Access only** -TA raised the issue. Noting that residents are understood to not be currently minded to progress such an initiative, AM stressed that the school will not interfere “We are a charity and we can’t introduce such a scheme!”

VM asked about the impact on the area of Carlisle Infants School. PA said there was slow traffic that often got gridlocked on Broad lane at school drop-off and collection times. VM said that it feels like Hampton Prep is being targetted for complaint, when they may not be the only source of traffic locally. PA reminded her that Cllr Nicholson revealed at a recent meeting, as a councillor, she gets more complaints about Hampton Prep

than any other school around here. AM suggested that we should look at the impact on traffic from all the schools around here. He believes there should be a joint approach to improve things. TS remarked that CPZ worked very successfully in his place of residence. He was not here when the plans went through for the new school building. TA made the point that we (HPNA) need to see that parents are making an effort with, for example, Park and Stride, no parking across driveways and consideration for neighbours who still have worries about traffic congestion “We need to keep chipping away to make things better.”

Seeking to understand the reach of the HPNA, TS asked how many members the HPNA has. TA answered around 100 members and that between 25 to 30 people attended our last public meeting. TS underlined that London life is busy and this is a busy area with more construction (not Hampton Prep) taking place in Hampton Hill.

4. **Travel Plan** latest: VM said that the plan is with an external consultant and they are chasing for the result. TA asked to see a copy before it was submitted and AM said “Yes, we can take account of your views.”
5. **Future liaison group meeting dates.** VM to inform HPNA and they will host the next meeting. Originally set for 7<sup>th</sup> November, this was subsequently changed to 28<sup>th</sup> November.
6. Meeting closed at 20.35 hrs.