

Hutchesons' Grammar School Association

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at Beaton Road on Monday 8th September 2008

Present

Mr John Kyle (Chair)
Mrs Elaine Lonergan
Dr Donna Corrigan (Minutes)
Dr Cherie Rodney
Mrs Julie Whitelaw
Mrs Lindesay MacFarlane
Mrs Sheila Galbraith
Mr David Barnes
Dr Sanjeev Chitnis
Mrs Susan Wilson
Mrs Karen McDonald (Primary School Rep)
Dr Lesley Russell (57 Group)
Mrs Jane Thomson (Senior School Rep)

Attending

Dr K Greig
Mr I Keter

Apologies

Mr A. K. Denholm
Mr A Ramsay
Mrs Patricia Crawford
Mrs Sue Fraser
Mrs Catherine Paton

1. WELCOME

Mr Kyle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as above. The Committee was sorry to hear that Mrs Sue Fraser was in hospital and sent their best wishes for her recovery.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes were read and agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting. Minutes accepted – proposed by Sheila Galbraith, seconded by Elaine Lonergan. It was requested that minutes are circulated by e mail and by post.

4. RECTOR'S UPDATE

New Staff

The Rector reported that the new session had started well. Following the retirements last term there were new staff in place who were settling into their new roles. Mr Mike Martin had taken up his role as the Senior Depute Rector.

Exam Results

The Rector reported that the exam results had been very good. There were many individual successes. The results for Highers taken in 5th Year were excellent and placed Hutchesons in 4th place in Scotland – although this may change as there were a lot of appeals awaiting an outcome. The results for 4th year and 6th year were also very strong. Most pupils had achieved their offers for university.

Website

The new website is progressing well and plans are in place to launch it at the AGM on 24th September.

OSCR

No results are available yet – now expected to report in October 2008. Discussion followed regarding the number of pupils receiving bursaries. Currently 54 pupils receive this support – mainly 100% bursaries. It was agreed that this is important for the ethos of the school.

Sports Development

Update by Mr Ian Keter

Plans for this development are well underway. The site investigation has now been completed and found to be satisfactory. The plans are due to go to the Planning Committee and a response is expected within 2 months. There had been a number of complaints from residents and a few of these were still outstanding. The plans are for an upgrading of current facilities and not a change of use. Pending the outcome of the planning committee it was hoped that the work could start after Easter 2009 and be completed for the start of the 2009-10 session. The appeal for funding was due to be launched at the HGSA AGM in September.

Other School developments and projects

The refurbishing of the Art Department is now complete and includes facilities for silk printing and for pupil's portfolios.

The upgrading of fire alarms was also completed. Other work addressing Health and Safety issues was still underway.

Matters Discussed:-

- Website – Lindesay MacFarlane. Discussion about when the exam results will be posted on the website. The Rector reported that the plan was to

wait for the outcome of the appeals which would be available later this month.

- Twilight Highers – Sanjeev Chitnis. The Rector reported that the previous timetable was based on pupils choosing 6 Highers. When the timetable was revised it was decided that most pupils choose to do 5 Highers and if the timetable was based on this then those pupils would receive more tuition per Higher. The chance to do 6 Highers remains but this 6th subject needs to be done as a “Twilight Higher”. This was felt to be fairer to most pupils whilst retaining flexibility for those who chose to do 6 subjects. It was noted that no other school offers 6 Highers.
- Kingarth Street Stage – Lindesay MacFarlane. The hall floor had been upgraded over the holidays. It was noted that the stage and steps need more work. Further quotes are necessary. The 57 Group is keen to raise money for this cause.

5. AGM – Wednesday 24th September 2008

This will be preceded by the Parents Open Evening. A draft of the letter to be sent out to parents was discussed and agreed. It was proposed that the evening would include a presentation describing the new sports facilities and launching the fundraising for this project. There would also be a demonstration of the new school website.

Pupils would also provide some musical entertainment for the evening.

It was hoped that the evening would be informal and a chance for parents to be involved. The AGM and elections would be at the end of the evening.

There was discussion regarding the vacancies on the committee to be filled. Mrs Catherine Paton has now served 4 years on the committee. Her work and experience with the careers convention was noted to be valuable. She had expressed a willingness to stay on the HGSA but her term of office had come to an end and it was hoped that she may continue her involvement with the careers convention despite not being on the committee.

Sue Fraser and David Barnes had indicated that they would not be seeking re-election. Donna Corrigan also expressed that she would be willing to stand in the absence of another parent coming forward but would also be happy to stand down. Susan Wilson indicated that she had only done 1 year on the committee and had another child in S2 so would be willing to represent this year rather than leave the committee. Mr John Kyle thanked those leaving the committee for their hard work.

Vacancies therefore exist for parent representatives from P1, P3, P5, P7, S4 and S6 and a letter seeking nominations would be sent out to parents.

6. CAREERS CONVENTION – proposed date 4th March 2009

8. SPRING SOCIAL EVENT – proposed date 21st March 2009

There was discussion that this date was rather close to the careers convention and may mean that not all committee members are able to be involved in organizing the event. The possibility of a date in the Summer Term or using facilities off site was discussed. Further decisions regarding the type of event and date were deferred until the new committee is in place following the AGM.

9. UPDATE FROM 57 GROUP

An update was provided by Dr Lesley Russell.

The year had been very successful with more than £17,000 raised by the 57 group at the end of the 2007-8 Academic year.

Plans were underway for the Quiz Night and committee members were encouraged to advertise the event and to enter teams.

10. AOCB

Other issues were raised were as follows:

I. Kingarth Street Stage- Mrs McDonald

There was agreement that further work needs to be done to improve the current stage and steps. The 57 group are keen to contribute towards this. Over the holidays there was not enough time for the work to be done and it was felt at the meeting that there should be consideration to redeveloping the stage and steps. Further quotes need to be obtained but it was estimated that this may cost in the region of £15,000

II. Traffic – Mrs Whitelaw

There was concern regarding the safety of children crossing the road by the Fotheringay Centre. Traffic comes from a number of directions and it is often congested. It was suggested that pupils should be reminded of the dangers of crossing the road whilst wearing headphones.

III. School Charity – Mr Kyle

The Rector announced that the school charity was to be the Childrens Hospice Association and that the charity was coming to speak to pupils about their work. John Kyle discussed the possibility of collecting old mobile phones as a fundraising idea.

IV. School Bags – Mrs MacFarlane

The situation regarding heavy bags seemed to have improved. Pupils are encouraged to leave text books at school.

V. Primary School Lunches – Dr Corrigan

Several parents had raised concerns that primary school pupils are provided with too much choice for school lunches and that there needed to be more direction to help young children choose balanced and healthy meals.

The meeting finished at 8.40pm.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

24th September 2008 – AGM – Fotheringay Centre
17th November 2008 – Founders Room, Beaton Rd