

Hutchesons' Grammar School Association

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at Beaton Road on Monday 22 November 2010

Present

Mrs Lindesay MacFarlane (Chair) (LM)
Mrs Anita Simmers (AS)
Mrs Claire Macaulay (CM)
Mrs Susie Rodgers (SR)
Mrs Elaine Lonergan (EL)
Mrs Audrey Mathers (AM)
Mrs Rohma Akram (RA)
Mrs Fiona Godsman (FG)
Mrs Alina Zahoor (AZ)
Mrs Lynda MacBride (Minutes) (LRM)
Mrs Fiona McCrae (FM)
Mrs Sheila Galbraith (SG)
Mrs Helen Smith (HS)

Attending

Mrs Christine Haughney (CS)
Mrs Catherine Keddie (CK)
Mr David Dobson (Chairman)
Dr Ken Greig (Rector)
Mr Iain Keter (Bursar)
Mr Brian MacBride (BM)

Apologies

Mrs Rhona Gann (1957 Group) (RG)

1. WELCOME

Mrs MacFarlane welcomed previous committee members and newly elected members to the meeting. A copy of the Constitution was offered to new members. Several of the members requested a copy. LM agreed to email additional requests.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as above.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 13 September 2010 had been circulated beforehand, and were approved as follows:-

Proposed: Fiona McCrae

Seconded: Claire Macaulay

4. MATTERS ARISING

Dr Greig advised of the continuing traffic problems around Beaton Road and that a 'parking supervisor' had been appointed at Kingarth Street. CH has made an approach to Glasgow City Council who have agreed to fix the road markings. AS advised that a group of parents had discussed the possible installation of a Zebra Crossing but guidelines for installation will require to be investigated.

LM advised that the HGSA Committee Minutes which are posted on the Kingarth Street Infant Notice Board be removed and replaced with a note directing parents to the HGSA page on the School website to view the up to date minutes.

5. RECTOR'S UPDATE

Dr Greig advised that work has started on the construction of the Drama Studios. The Bursar confirmed that the work programme would take some 40 weeks and is due for completion late August 2011. Fit out would be during September and October and occupation likely towards the end of October 2011. Ground works should be complete by the end of April, with the construction being wind and weather tight by mid June. Three studios will be available with Studios 1 and 2 capable of being combined to seat 100 people. Dr Greig confirmed that there would be no construction work during prelims.

Dr Greig had attended the S1/S2 production of The Wiz and commented that this was an excellent production a view endorsed by LM who thought that there had been a number of outstanding performances.

The Rector advised that the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme had once again been popular with approximately 100 pupils showing interest this year. The format being offered this year was being reduced. The activity to attain the Silver Award would now become walking only. The Gold Award would retain the variety of outdoor activities. The Rector explained that this change was to reduce the cost to parents and to minimise the interruption to other School activities. Several members of the committee voiced their concerns over the reduction of activities for the Silver Award.

The Rector further expressed his view of the completion rate of the Service and Voluntary aspects of the DoE Scheme. Committee members voiced their comments regarding the increasing cost, while the majority endorsed the scheme. FM advised the committee that she had been disappointed that the additional activities had been withdrawn as her daughter had gained great benefit from the full range of activities previously offered. The Rector stated that the cost

of the Silver Award last year was approximately £1000. This could be reduced to approximately £750. The Rector confirmed that he is keen to retain the DoE Scheme as it delivers so much to the pupils. LM advised of her concerns over the Service of the DoE Scheme aspect as not all pupils fulfil their commitments. The Rector acknowledged this concern. The Rector suggested an alternative may be to offer a kayaking activity for those pupils interested in expeditions only.

Dr Greig advised that applications to Universities were ongoing and to date 29 pupils wish to study Medicine, 2 Dentistry, 1 to study Veterinary Medicine and 14 have applied to Oxford/Cambridge.

6. CAREERS CONVENTION - Wednesday 9th March 2011

CK advised that S4 pupils had been handed out career options' forms to indicate which consultants they would prefer to meet at the Careers' Convention. These should be returned to her by 3 December 2010. On the form there were formerly 90 available job types but this has now been streamlined to 68.

It was agreed generally that the contact list is outdated and it was further agreed that this would be completely updated once new consultant contacts had been established. In the meantime, we should use the existing list and each member of the committee would take responsibility to contact a number of consultants. Last year's Careers Convention was a tremendous evening and it was felt that overall the pupils really appreciated the effort made.

It was agreed that a sub committee headed by Fiona Godsmen would meet in January 2011 to arrange the organisation of contacting Consultants for the Careers Convention.

7. AGM – Wednesday 6th October 2010

LM gave a roundup of the AGM. Presentations had been given by Dr Greig and Mrs Haughney. There was no quorum at the meeting as there had been less than 50 parents in attendance. An amendment to the HGSA Constitution is required. How this can be achieved should be addressed prior to the next AGM in October 2011.

EL suggested that the election process could be improved. It was unsatisfactory to expect P1 parents to vote for unknown candidates. FM suggested returning to the previous procedure of candidates supplying information about themselves. LM offered to investigate a more suitable approach.

8. SOCIAL EVENT

EL suggested that a Family School Ceilidh be arranged. The date suggested is 26 August 2011 to be held in the main hall at Beaton Road. No dining facilities would be required and a small offering of juice and crisps could be made available. It was agreed that EL should be the Convenor for this event.

9. 1957 GROUP UPDATE

RG was unable to attend tonight so LM provided an update. The Winter Fair raised £6,400. The 1957 Group were delighted that such an amount had been raised. The 1957 Group recorded its sincere thanks to parents for their donations. The iPad had been won by a P6 pupil and Mr Russell won the hamper.

It was noted that only one S4 pupil turned up to help. The Rector advised that Mike Martin, Senior Deputy Rector, had spoken to all S4, S5 and S6 pupils asking for their help.

10. AOCB

1. Catering Facilities at Beaton Road on a Saturday morning were discussed and Dr Greig confirmed that an approach to Clydesdale Cricket Club had been made but to date there had been no reply. The committee enquired if parents and pupils could manage a facility to provide healthy snacks as only sugary snacks were available from vending machines.

EL suggested that the school should look at the costs of bringing a portakabin onto site with parents involved in running the hospitality. The Bursar advised that he thought Planning Permission would be required for such a structure. As an alternative, he suggested that the school's catering staff provide catering from the rear of the Assembly Hall.

2. Hospitality at Auldhouse was discussed again and HS advised that HGS is one of the very few schools which offer such poor hospitality after rugby matches.
3. AS advised that she had a number of points to raise, namely :-
 - (a) She suggests that many first time HGS parents believe that a letter being sent out to them prior to the commencement of the school term in August, addressing a number of basic matters, would be beneficial to remind parents of what is happening in the first few weeks of term.

- (b) PE and Music – there does not seem to be a timetable available to parents – might it be possible to circulate a monthly email?
- (c) Lunchroom Facilities – although there has been a letter inviting parents to come and visit, the times offered are not always suitable as the letter is sent out the same week of the suggested visit. Would it be possible for parents to pre order food if weekly menus were available? CH advised that she is looking into the way in which the lunchroom is run and the plan is to relaunch the menus at a later date.
- (d) The yellow reading record is not always clear as to what feedback is given by the teachers.
- (e) The Photo gallery still depicts children from the 2009/2010 session. Could this be updated on a more regular basis? CH is aware of the problem and this will be updated at a later time.

CH confirmed that all these points would be investigated.

4. SR advised that as some children have gym first thing in the morning, they travel to school in their gym kit. There are no trousers in the school sports kit. For these children who travel a distance to school, might it be possible for them to wear plain navy jogging pants in the winter months? Dr Greig advised that it was not easy to make uniform changes. FM suggested a uniform review. Dr Greig said that the uniform policy has evolved over many years but he will discuss the points raised with CH.

The inconsistencies of the uniform rules were mentioned e.g. in P4 the girls move from wearing pinafores to wearing skirts but the boys are in shorts until entering P5.

5. LM reported a new initiative by form tutors at the Senior School. At the beginning of term parents were contacted by email with news for that term. It was agreed that this was a good means of communicating with parents.
6. AS suggested an email list should be established to have information sent this way. CH advised that all letters are on the website for parents to view. Some committee members suggested that when new material is available for reading, a text message could be sent. The Bursar advised that mobile numbers and emails change regularly and this would be difficult to keep

updated. Could a parent be sent a text if their child did not turn up at school? Again the Bursar advised that parents do not always complete the form with all their contact details.

7. CH asked how the parents contact their representative on the HGSA committee. LM advised that each representative contacted their own year group. There were many disadvantages to this method and the committee regularly discuss how to improve accessibility.
8. A query was raised by LM with regard to obtaining a set of Accounts for Hutchesons' Educational Trust. The Bursar advised that a copy of the Trust's Accounts were available from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The Bursar further advised that copy Accounts could be requested online at the OSCAR website or alternatively a copy can be obtained from the Trust office at Beaton Road.
9. CH discussed the bringing in of birthday cakes to Kingarth Street. Some weeks the lunchroom has to deal with 7/8 cakes and she would like this practice to be stopped as the staff are too busy to deal with cutting up cakes! The school is trying to send a healthy eating message to children and endless cakes does not support this message. EL also noted that some children come home from school with sweets received from a 'lucky dip'. Again CH wants to stop this practice as it has been going on for years. There is lot of work to be done.

LM thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

The Careers Convention sub-committee met briefly after the full meeting finished and a future date of 17 January 2011 was agreed.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 28 February 2011