

**Hutchesons Grammar School Association**  
**Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016**  
**Founders Room, Hutchesons' Grammar School**

Minute

***Present***

Kenneth Ritchie (KR) (Chairman)  
P1/2 – Lizette Craig (LC)

P4/5 – Alan Hair (AH)  
P5/6 – Audrey Mathers (AM)  
S1/2 – Elaine Lonergan (EL)  
S2/3 – Saman Khan (SK)  
S3/4 – Sue Redpath (SR)

S 4/5 – Shahid Hanif (SH)

***In Attendance***

1957 Group – Kathryn Storrie(KS)

Fiona MacPhail (FM)  
The Rector, Mr Gambles (CG)  
The Bursar, Mr Keter (IK)  
Chairman of the HETS Board,  
Professor Williams (BW)  
Katy Chisholm (KC)  
Brian MacBride (BM)

***Apologies***

P3/4 Martyn Campbell

**1. *Minutes of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> May '16***

***Accuracy:***

Amendments to p2 in the paragraph entitled “Music” the line “noted full time employees” should read “not full time employees”

p5 – Careers’ Convention sub-committee: on the second line of the third paragraph there should be a space between the words “the” and “assistance” and “o” should read “of”

In the same paragraph the line beginning “AM suggested” should be followed by the word “that”

In the paragraph entitled “social sub-committee” there should be an apostrophe following the word “Leavers”

**2. *Matters Arising*** – The Rector noted that in respect of the previously asked question on “Named Person” the legislation was now awaiting further changes from government.

KC noted that there had been discussion of the possible alteration of the date of this year’s 4<sup>th</sup> Year Careers’ Convention but was uncertain this could be accommodated as the suggested date of 8<sup>th</sup> March fell in a week where there were already a significant number of School events. KC agreed to discuss this with Mrs Tooth and revert to KR.

It was agreed that a change in date which afforded a better opportunity for parents to assist in securing the consultants involved would be beneficial.

KR welcomed Mr Colin Gambles, The Rector to his first Committee meeting. He explained that no questions had been canvassed from the parents given the propinquity of this meeting to the start

of the academic year but was pleased to advise that The Rector would make some introductory remarks and would take any instant questions.

### **3. *Dates and frequency of meetings***

KR acknowledged with thanks that The School has confirmed accommodation will be available for the more extensive schedule of meetings dates agreed by The Committee. He further noted that The Rector had asked if attendance of the non-elected members from The School was anticipated for all meetings. It was explained that had the suggested Constitutional changes been made the elected parent representatives would be expected to attend all meetings, but School staff would only attend alternate meetings. BW intimated his preference to attend those meetings which followed Board Meetings in order that there might be something of substance to report and noted that the Governors' had reviewed the practice of including H.G.S.A. minutes amongst the papers circulated in advance of their meetings and had decided this practice should continue.

KR agreed to clarify with CG and BW those meetings where their attendance might be expected and would prove more useful.

### **4. *Rector's remarks***

CG introduced himself and briefly described his academic qualifications and his teaching career. His teaching discipline was in biology.

He noted in addition that he had previously been involved in extra-curricular activities coaching school hockey teams and leading jungle expeditions.

In his most recent post in Robert Gordon's in Aberdeen he had responsibility for pastoral care of pupils and for timetabling. A further area of responsibility and interest which he hoped to maintain whilst in Hutchesons' was the promotion of sustainability

He intimated that he had already met all staff and most of pupils, is very impressed with school, staff and pupils and grateful for the warm welcome he has received.

He has undertaken short staff surveys asking what respondents liked about the school and what they would like to change. These have been completed with complementary pupil surveys issued in the secondary school. Discussion on primary school surveys, undertaken in classes will take place with FM.

The Rector identified the need to improve and expand communication with the wider parent group and hoped that one of the rôles of The Association might be to help him develop "a web of knowledge" well as parent representatives identifying issues and themes for onward transmission to him and discussion at Association Committee meetings.

The Rector noted that he would consider additional means of canvassing parental opinion and meeting parents who are not regular attenders at school events or whom he might not encounter on the touchlines at Auldhouse. Amongst these options breakfast meetings with randomly selected parents as distinct from formally organized focus groups was one which was in contemplation. He emphasized the importance to him of understanding the parents' perspectives.

In describing his vision for Hutchesons' future The Rector noted that the pupils' academic results in S.Q.A. certificate exams. had been excellent this year with a 95% pass rate in the Higher

presentations, 68% of which had been graded at “A” with 57 pupils achieving five A grades with additional passes and 18 pupils achieving 6 A grades.

This notwithstanding, he opined that it was very important to assess how these successes were achieved.

He noted that he was impressed with Pastoral system already in place and that the co-curricular activity within The School was very broadly based.

He noted his intention to promote staff development in order to maximize the benefit which can accrue to staff and pupils alike from their inherent abilities.

Pupils should be encouraged to make the most of all opportunities and staff should try to encourage pupils’ interests in different topics and activities whilst recognising that this would manifest itself in different ways in the primary and secondary parts of The School.

The Rector noted that he had met with all the prefects.

He reported that he considered The School roll to be healthy but noted the importance of two forthcoming open days to attract new pupils.

The Sports’ review intimated to The Committee by his predecessor has still to be concluded. He noted that this had been led by Mr Martin who had offered to attend this meeting.

The Rector was excited by the “Firefly” system which is now being used and is keen to see how this is received. He noted that his previous experience in Robert Gordon’s was of a 1:1 system where all pupils were expected to have an i-pad or similar device.

Returning to the S.Q.A. results The Rector noted that the model which had been promoted at Hutchesons’ was not one followed by many schools given the potential “danger” of some pupils’ grades dropping where they were studying more than five Higher courses.

He acknowledged that for some pupils personal triumphs need not mean they were achieving A grades and that there should be proper acknowledgement of effort and achievement beyond the lists of A grade passes.

He listed the departments in the School whose pupils had achieved 100% A grade passes this year.

The Rector told The Committee that he would be delighted to speak about his vision for the school at HGSA AGM on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at Beaton Road.

KR explained that he had not included a Primary school report as an item on the agenda given the very few days which had elapsed of the new academic year but invited FM to make any introductory remarks to the new session.

FM New P1s settling in well in addition 30 intermediate entrants have also started in the Primary School.

She intimated four new staff appointments in the Primary School namely

Miss M Pirie – who will be secretary to FM, Mrs Moffat who will teach Art,

Mrs Murch, formerly Miss Sherry, who will replace Mrs Stevenson in the Primary School Music Department,

Mrs Smith and Mrs Massie who will take up the rôles of Classroom Assistant. Mrs Massie will also provide support in the After School Club.

KR noted that whilst discussing staff changes he wished to record and transmit the condolences of The Association to family of Irene Martin who sadly passed away after a protracted period of illness.

Mr Gibson Lollipop man will not return due to ill health position advertised.

#### **5. *Governors Remarks***

BW initially advised that there had not been a meeting of The Board but was reminded that as the Committee had last met in May there had been a subsequent Board meeting in June. BW noted that the principal announcement from this meeting had been the appointment of Mr Colin Gambles.

He endorsed The Rector's comments and noted that all the governors were delighted with exam results, advising that a detailed breakdown of these was now posted and available on The School website.

BW thanked all staff and congratulated all pupils on this achievement.

The Rector interjected and advised the Committee of the newly appointed staff at Beaton road namely Miss S Baxter in the Maths. Department, Mrs Prentice, the newly appointed Head of the Geography Department and Miss Valdelievre in the English Department

#### **6. *1957 Group Remarks***

Mrs Storrie advised that at present the 1957 Bank Balance was £19,965.66

She opined that despite better weather than the previous year the Primary Sports' Day had proved slightly disappointing and amount raised was only £477.08. It was noted that date always clashes with Scottish Schools Athletics in Grangemouth and it was hoped that this might be taken into account when determining the date of future Sports' Days.

The June Uniform sale raised £6487 and Mrs Storrie wished to record her thanks for all donations made by parents.

KS advised that there are only 6 members of the 1957 Committee at present and whilst she is aiming to increase this to 9 or 10 there would be no Winter Fayre again this year.

FM advised that given this confirmation, the Primary School may extend the informal seasonal event which had proved popular last year and to which parents will be invited.

#### **7. *FP Remarks***

BM re-iterated that the FP Dinner is to be held on 10.12.16 at The House for An Art Lover and reminded The Committee that this will be a "virtual dinner" linking with groups of FPs around the globe.

He noted there has not yet been a meeting of the FP Council and one was scheduled for Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August.

#### **8. *Sub Committee Reports – Constitution***

BM noted that comments from Dr Greig, The Bursar and The Chairman of The Board have now been incorporated and further comments generated as a result of discussion amongst the

members of the sub-committee are now being considered. He advised that Fresh draft (FD)No7 should be ready for circulation in next 7-10 days and that this would be circulated to all elected representatives

KR had advised him that The Rector has a copy of draft No 6.

BM remained optimistic that the work will be concluded and the proposed document will be available for circulation to the parent body for consideration prior to its presentation to parents at the forthcoming A.G.M.

### **Social Sub Committee**

KR advised that what became the “Leavers Dinner” for parents had attracted 100 parents and sixth Year pupils and had proved a great success. He opined that this should be used to promote a similar event in the summer term this academic year and hoped that The School might become more actively involved. As soon as the A.G.M. has confirmed the Committee membership for the forthcoming year, the social sub-committee need to begin planning an event for the summer of 2017.

KR indicated that he would attach the brief report he prepared for the School website to be attached as an addendum to the minute of this meeting and reminded those present that a number of photographs taken at the dinner were available on a “flickr” album on The School website.

### Careers Convention

Date needs to be agreed. Association has asked if the school could accommodate 8<sup>th</sup> March instead of 1<sup>st</sup> March. This is to allow for some time after the February mid-term holiday to identify and fill any gaps in the list of consultants. KC advised that w/c 6<sup>th</sup> March was a busy week in school but as noted above she will ask Mrs Tooth and advise KR in due course. KC noted that Mr David Campbell, Depute Rector, writes to all parents of 4<sup>th</sup> Year pupils advising them of the Careers work undertaken during that year and each pupil is given a pack in which there is a yellow A5 slip which can be completed and returned indicating if the parent wishes to offer his or her services as a consultant at the Convention in March.

## **9. AGM**

It was confirmed that the A.G.M. will take place on 13<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm at Beaton Road. Although it has been custom to alternate between the Primary and Secondary Buildings the potential for a larger than usual turnout to hear The Rector’s presentation persuaded all present that this year should, once again, be held in Beaton Road in the Assembly Hall.

KR advised that he would forward information to be published on the School website but it was noted in general discussion that the information should also be on e-mail.

KR advised this had been the case in previous years.

All info to be email to parents prior to AGM.

It was agreed that LC should meet with FM to provide a list of vacancies for elected representatives amongst the Primary School year groups which could be included in the information disseminated at the “Meet the Teacher” Meeting scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> September.

## **10. AOCB**

IK advised a decision should be made in relation to the Association's Bank account, which stands at £2065.

KR noted that the decision in principle to retain a distinct and discrete bank account for The Association had been taken two years ago but this would naturally require some further consideration after the changes had been made to the Constitution.

IK confirmed that both he and Mrs Biggart in The School Development Office remain at present signatories to The Association bank account.

(Exeunt BW,CG,FM,IK,KS)

*Further discussion took place in respect of preparation required for the A.G.M.*

The lack of visibility of H.G.S.A. was raised once again and it was noted that this contributed to the number of vacancies and uncontested positions.

The elected members identified the years in which there would be vacancies on the Committee. Those willing and eligible noted their willingness to continue to serve.

P1 – Vacant

P2 – Lizette Craig (Jason P2C)

P3 – Vacant

P4 – Martyn Campbell (Chloe P4B)

P5 – Vacant

P6 - Audrey Mathers (Toby P6)

P7 – Vacant

S1 – Vacant

S2 – Elaine Lonergan (Oscar)

S3 - Saman Khan (Abbas)

S4 – Susan Redpath (Sophie)

S5 - Shahid Hanif (Hamzah)

S6 – Vacant

There followed some discussion on the order of business for the A.G.M. It was conjectured that the constitutional changes could be the first item of business to allow this to govern the subsequent elections as otherwise there would be potential anomalies instantly created in the years open to election.

It was hoped that the Constitution could be published on The website immediately after the next Committee meeting to maximise the period of consideration of the proposals by parents.

KR undertook to clarify this matter with reference to the current constitution under which this A.G.M. would be called.

#### **11. *Date of Next Meeting – Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September***

#### **Addendum (Report on the “Leavers’ Dinner”)**

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June The Hutesons' Grammar School Association held a dinner for parents of pupils in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years at the Hilton Grosvenor Hotel. These parents were joined by pupils from this year's sixth year.

At the start of this academic year The Association formed a sub-group which worked over the course of the intervening months choosing a venue and menu to be supplemented in due course by entertainment.

From the first discussions it was decided this should be a relatively informal event with the emphasis on relaxed conviviality

Our sincere thanks must be recorded for the work undertaken by Mrs Faiza Khan, Mrs Lynn Rankin and Mr David Hadden in organization of this event translating our early aspiration into splendidly successful and enjoyable reality.

As this was The Association's first foray for quite some time into such an undertaking and as we had already determined we would avoid formal after dinner speeches, we were extremely lucky that we were able to call upon the talents of a number of pupils and former pupils who provided outstanding entertainment.

Guests were piped into dinner by Hector Ritchie (class of '15) but the undoubted highlight of the evening for most of the guests was the music provided by Alexander Maxwell, Rachel MacKenzie, Ross Hadden and Michael Haine.

Gentle, unobtrusive jazz music between courses was followed by a lively set which in the absence of a dance floor precipitated spontaneous occupation of one corner of the room by those inspired to take the floor.

Natasha Khan had printed tickets with the names of all the diners which were drawn in a free raffle for which a range of prizes had been generously donated by businesses and individuals.

Testament to the success of the evening was the number of inquiries from the company about the prospect of a similar event next year. It was particularly gratifying to be approached by parents of children in sixth year asking if they would be allowed to attend next year.

This augurs well for a 2107 dinner and is indicative of the continuing strength of parental affiliation to the School.

Roll on next year.