

**Hutchesons' Grammar School Association**  
**Minute of the meeting held in The Founders' Room on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

Draft Minute

***Present***

Kenneth Ritchie (KR) (Chairman)	P3 – Lizette Craig (LC)
P2 – Ingrid Jauhar (IJ)	P7 – Audrey Mathers (AM)
P4 – Julia Lavelle (JL)	S1 - Karen Nowland (KN)
S2 – Roy Amner (RA)	S3 – Mark Toma (MT)
S4 - Fazia Khan (FK)	
S6 – Judith Belmore (JB)	

**In Attendance**

Mr C Gambles The Rector (CG)	Miss F MacPhail (FM), Depute Rector
Miss K Chisholm (KC), Head of Careers	Miss Walker (RW), Chairman of The Board of Governors

***1. Apologies***

KR intimated he had received apologies from Mr. McBride (BM). He sought confirmation that all those present had received notification and minutes through their respective HGSA e-mail addresses: all had received these. In particular he was concerned that Mr. Cotton had not attended any meeting of the Committee but was advised that he had provided the names of consultants for the 4<sup>th</sup> Year Careers' Convention and that it could safely be assumed the e-mail link was operational.

***2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017***

**KR** noted that these minutes had been circulated amongst the committee members without precipitating comment and, thereafter, had passed to the Board of Governors at its meeting in December 2017

CG re-iterated that the minute need not be recorded in such detail. He opined that the length of the minute might make the document less accessible to parents.

He noted that some matters had been included in detail in the minute of the previous meeting which were potentially commercially sensitive and might be imprudent to publish on a site which was accessible. The Rector noted a paragraph within the minute which the committee agreed should be expunged prior to publication.

KR noted that his preference for detail as explained in the minute of 13<sup>th</sup> November persisted. He asked if the extract table of actions appended to the previous minute was useful and there being no dissent advised he intended to retain this appendix.

***Matters Arising :-***

**CG** noted from the previous action log that Founders' Day had now been confirmed as Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March and explained that the delay in publication was occasioned by a delay in confirmation of availability by the invited speaker.

**CG** noted that royal blue, red or plain black base layer garments were acceptable for pupils to wear beneath School sports' kit.

### ***3. Sub- Committee Reports: Careers' Convention Sub Committee***

At KR's invitation KC noted her sincere appreciation of the organization undertaken by RA in coordinating the responses from all The Committee members in respect of recruiting consultants for The Careers' Convention. At present there was only one consultancy unfilled and acknowledged that this BM hoped to be able to intimate to RA within a couple of days. She noted that, in her experience, this was the most advanced the list had been so far in advance of the event.

**KC** asked that all members of The Committee send e-mails to the consultants with whom they had made contact confirming their continued availability and reminding them of the invitation to dinner.

**KC** reminded The Committee of the need to establish which of those consultants who had participated in previous years but were unable to attend this year were content that their details remained on record within The School. Otherwise these details would require to be deleted to ensure compliance with the data protection legislation following the imposition of G.D.P.R.

**KC** hoped as many of the members of The Committee as possible might attend on 7<sup>th</sup> March. She advised that prefects would be available to undertake registration and would patrol the corridors to avoid compromising The School's Child Protection protocols in the event that any pupils were alone in classrooms with the consultants.

**KR** asked if parents were expected to attend in any numbers with their children as has occasionally been the case in the recent past. **KC** advised that this wasn't anticipated but that some parents might attend.

**KC** noted that the draft appointments for the pupils had been issued that morning but noted there remained three areas where the names of the consultants had yet to be provided. In respect of two of these **JL** advised that for The Armed Forces she was aware it was a lady but could not instantly confirm her name, **LC** noted she had a potential volunteer for physiotherapy but that she might only be available after 7.30 p.m. on the evening of 7<sup>th</sup> March.

It was noted that it was worth checking the spelling of the names of the consultants for any name badges or published lists. It was then noted that for Product Design a commitment had been received that a consultant would attend but as yet confirmation had not been received of his identity.

**KR** then drew the attention of The Committee to the two "pop-up banners which were displayed and would be deployed on 7<sup>th</sup> March at the registration desk. He noted that on one banner there was a glaring grammatical error, namely a misplaced apostrophe, but also noted the banners might require to be updated depending upon the revision of The Constitution. He explained to the committee that banners had been contemplated for some time but that it had been thought imprudent to incur any expense for items which might require replacement after a short time. Following a "touchline" conversation **R.A.** had kindly agreed to arrange for these to be made by a supplier from whom he had previously purchased similar items. **R.A.** noted that these had not been expensive and could be replaced as required and further noted his thanks to The School Office for provision of the crest with a resolution which allowed for successful photographic reproduction.

*[exit KC]*

### *Social Sub- Committee*

**FK** confirmed that at present there were approximately eighty people who had sought tickets for the forthcoming dinner and reported that this was a very good response given the lack of significant advertising to date. She hoped that The School would agree to send an e-mail directly to all parents as the appearance of an advertisement in the most recent newsletter had not generated any significant additional response.

**KR** noted that he had signed a contract with The Marriot Hotel for a minimum of one hundred guests but that he felt confident that this number would be exceeded and noted that the band had confirmed its attendance.

It appeared there had been some confusion about the best means of transmitting information for dissemination by The School and **CG** noted that all correspondence from H.G.S.A. should be directed to Mrs. Donaldson, The Bursar's P.A. who would then pass this to The School Office or Development Office. He further opined that anything which was to be published should be passed to Mr. Martin for his approval.

### *Constitutional Review Sub-Committee*

In the absence of **BM**, **KR** advised The Committee that the sub-committee had met and that **BM** was in the process of submitting to **CG** a consolidated list of comments on his response to the proposed constitution and hoped to submit these for his consideration during the week beginning 5<sup>th</sup> March.

**CG** noted that he had been trying to arrange a meeting and that following discussion with **KR** immediately prior to this meeting had tentatively agreed to meet with **KR**, it is hoped, on the morning of 28<sup>th</sup> March subject to the availability of **BM**. **CG** agreed with an observation that discussing this matter around the table was likely to prove better and more productive than a continuing exchange of written comments.

### *4. Items raised by elected members*

**CG** noted that any matter involving the health and well-being of pupils should be discussed directly with class teachers and thereafter if required with an appropriate member of the S.M.T.

It was noted that an item of business in respect of pupil welfare intimated in respect of some Primary Four parents should, more appropriately, be addressed by direct contact with **FM** in the first instance rather than discussed at The Committee.

**CG** noted the concern and confusion precipitated by the receipt of junk mail in some of the dedicated H.G.S.A. mail boxes and advised that he had raised this with I.T services. It was noted that this was an inherent danger in a "front facing" e-mail.

In respect of a question on The School's not allowing Sixth Year pupils to leave the confines of The School during free periods or lunchtime **KR** noted that this appeared to have been addressed in part by the Sixth Year Pastoral Newsletter of 19<sup>th</sup> February.

In respect of breaches of the then extant school rule which had resulted in a number of pupils being disciplined as a result of leaving school during the school day **CG** noted that this rule had been clearly

promulgated and that in particular for the sixth year pupils there was a concern about those who had passed their driving tests leaving with groups of friends during the school day and driving for pleasure whilst clearly under the aegis of The School

Whilst non-adherence to school rules, resulting in disciplinary action, was acknowledged and this rationale understood, it was noted that punishing sixth year pupils for transgression did not seem appropriate or beneficial particularly as, historically, this privilege of leaving school during these times has been afforded the S6 year group and the restriction had now been removed as noted in the Sixth Year Pastoral Newsletter of 19<sup>th</sup> February.

### ***October Holidays***

CG re-iterated his previous comment that in a straw poll the senior pupils had identified no adverse effect from the extended holiday in October and that with the appointment of the new manager for The After School Club it remained his hope there would be scope to provide structured activities for pupils of working parents during the October holiday in 2018.

CG re-iterated that it is believed beneficial, educationally, for the pupils to have a longer break at this point in the school calendar because of the length of the first term. He further noted that Mrs. Ferguson, The Depute Rector with responsibility for pastoral matters had opined there appeared to be reduction in the number of pastoral matters referred to her in the latter part of the term and that this might be attributable to the extended period of leave.

CG advised that he would, as previously noted, revert to The Committee when analysis of the available information was complete.

### ***Prelims***

CG explained that were the Prelim. exams. to be scheduled to take place prior to the Christmas and New Year Holidays this would have an adverse impact on the time available for course work during the first term. It would not be beneficial to lose two weeks of teaching time and consequently reduce the amount of the syllabus which could be examined in the prelims.

He noted that arrangements were driven by the needs of the 5<sup>th</sup> Year pupils and the three weeks' exam. leave afforded the 5<sup>th</sup> Year Pupils sitting SQA Higher examinations reflected this.

No exam. leave is afforded the 6<sup>th</sup> Year in advance or around their prelims. for Advanced Highers as there was a need for continuing course work and submission of pieces of work which would be disrupted by the significant absence on exam. Leave.

In respect of the 4<sup>th</sup> year pupils he acknowledged that this might be an option which could be considered but warned there could be significant logistical challenges in trying to schedule two different exam timetables and that there wasn't a strong case promoting this option.

The Committee recognised the preference and priority pursued to promote the performance of pupils undertaking their Higher examinations.

### ***P.E.***

CG explained The School's policy in respect of taking children out of school during a school day to P.E. events required to be more flexible than the organization of most other trips.

There had not been a practice of seeking specific permission for transporting children to and from sporting competitions and tacit consent had been assumed.

It was noted that such tacit consent was readily apparent when parents deposited their children at The School Bus Bays but CG agreed, whilst noting the range of correspondence used to alert parents of

sporting competitions, that there was perhaps scope for better communication where events had an impact on the timing for collection of pupils at the accustomed close of the school day. CG noted that there had already been much discussion with the P.E. Department to effect better communication and that these discussions would continue.

CG advised The School was not considering offering Higher PE to 5<sup>th</sup> Year pupils at present. It had been proposed by a parent whom The Committee was advised was herself a careers' advisor in another school that the higher could be offered as the sixth higher in 5<sup>th</sup> Year for the more academic pupils giving them an advantage over pupils only sitting 5 Highers.

As this higher is 60% performance based and only 40% is gained through the final exam., for pupils who are in the respective 1<sup>st</sup> X1 or 1<sup>st</sup> XV squads, the performance elements are likely to be very strong giving them a very strong chance of gaining an A grade.

Whilst acknowledging some less academic pupils might benefit as they could gain a potentially vital extra higher in Fifth Year which might improve their chances of entry into their chosen course, CG noted that any pupil undertaking a Higher PE course would do so as a "crash" higher as there was at present no National 5 P.E. course offered.

CG noted that P.E. was not the only subject which was viewed in this way and offered the example of Higher Psychology. At present he had no expectation there would be a change in The School's approach, which, he noted, was identical to his experience of the approach adopted in Robert Gordon's College, and that it remained a better option to continue to offer the P.E. Higher in sixth year.

CG explained the approach taken by The School in respect of allowing pupils to by-pass Maths examination at Nat. 5 and proceed directly to sitting the Higher exams.

He noted that it was accepted practice to by-pass the Nat. 5 examinations in History, Modern studies and Geography on the premise that affording pupils two years to study the topics in the higher curriculum in each of these gave them a more thorough understanding of these subjects and resulted in better performance and results in the Higher exams.

In respect of Maths whilst there was a bypass option this was more selective and determined by the anticipated performance of brightest pupils adjudged by the departmental staff. He re-assured The Committee that with the exception of one year, which he described as an "errant year", the option of choosing to sit the Nat 5 examination would not be denied any pupil.

It was noted that when O grade exams preceded Highers it had been common for pupils at Hutchesons' to avoid these exams and proceed directly to study of the Higher curriculum.

### ***Rector's Report***

CG advised the Committee of the sudden and tragic death of Mrs. Gillian Tooth, The School's events' Co-ordinator.

The Committee noted this with sadness.

CG noted that The Scottish Government had accepted the recommendations of The Barclay Review in respect of removing the current rates relief for Independent schools with charitable status.

Whilst this was disappointing it had not come as a complete surprise and a statement had been issued by The Rector and The Chairman of The Board of Governors to all parents assuring them that all reasonable steps were being considered to mitigate the impact that this might have on future school fees.

CG noted a number of events which had taken place since his most recent report to The Committee.

The 1957 Group Jingle Bells and Bows afternoon tea in December '17 had been very successful and had raised £3,500. This had been followed in February '18 by the annual Quiz Night which had generated a further £1,000

CG added that he intended discussion with KS using some or all of the money generated by these events to support the Fitness For All initiative in funding new equipment for the extension to the School gymnasias and that an option which might be considered on completion of the project might be occasional access to the gyms for parents at times when they are leaving or collecting pupils from sporting and other events.

30 new, former pupils from the Class of '17 had attended an event to promote maintaining contact with The School. This was not for the purpose of fundraising but afforded an opportunity for those who attended to reflect on their time at school and on what aspects of the teaching they experienced best prepared them for their current experiences at university

Continuing the theme of events to promote and maintain contact between The School and those no longer actively involved on a daily basis there was a successful and enjoyable staff reunion which CG hoped would be repeated in the years ahead

CG noted that The Hutchie Hubs were becoming a more regular and popular feature of The Calendar for The Hutchie Community.

These had recently been organised on both thematic and geographical bases with a Business Hub addressed by Kevin Sneader during his visit to receive the G&T award, a Law Hub bringing together a selection of pupils, staff, recent and more experienced former pupils to discuss careers in Law . CG emphasised these were much more than simply events to promote careers' advice but combined this with valuable networking opportunities.

CG noted that despite poor weather and the propinquity of prelims the Fitness for All weekend had raised £3,000 which would contribute towards the cost of acquiring new equipment for the extended gymnasias. CG advised that work would begin in the near future, in approximately 6-8 weeks on the extension but assured The Committee that this would not disrupt the SQA exams. in May.

CG enumerated further, recent events in The School calendar including a Talking Points presentation by Eddie Hawthorn from Arnold Clark Ltd. Although there had been relatively few questions following the presentation CG noted he had been heartened by the number of questions which were being raised when the pupils joined the speaker in a more informal setting for refreshments after the presentation.

There had been visits to The School from pupils from Schools in Argentina and Australia the latter being a group involved in an extensive drama tour.

The School has been awarded Green Flag status for a further period in recognition of its commitment to ecology.

Pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> Year participated in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative in association with local charities. . Such was the success and the impression made on the sponsors that each team participating in this competition to gain funding for its partner charity was awarded a prize and the winning team's presentation was recorded as an exemplar for future promotion of this initiative.

CG noted certain changes in staffing. Miss Struthers has been appointed to a two year post as a senior teacher for RME in Kingarth Street. He advised that in the near future he intended appointing to a vacant position in the P.E. Department and that a temporary replacement had been employed to cover the imminent maternity leave for Miss Carey in RMPS.

Marketing of the pre-school was proceeding with focused promotion targeting particular areas and making full use of all the media at disposal of the school. Prior to this whilst there had been a prominent advertisement on The School website the other social media had not been fully utilised.

The School hosted a model U.N. conference involving 150 delegates from 10 other schools

In respect of the oft raised question of communication CG circulated copies of three proposed draft questions for inclusion in the forthcoming parental questionnaire. CG noted suggested minor alterations which The Committee considered would make the responses more focused and more constructive. Rather than asking parents if they know who their respective class representatives in H.G.S.A. might be it was considered more significant to ascertain if parents knew how to make contact with their representatives and to ensure that there was clarity in respect of the types of issues most appropriate to raise through H.G.S.A.

It was noted there might be merit if possible in tracking the number of occasions on which documents held on the website were being opened in a fashion similar to that which is used at present to record the numbers viewing the “flickr” albums available.

It was noted once again that the issuing of a leaflet capable of being attached to a cupboard door or fridge listing events and fixtures remained one of the more effective means of advertising these to parents although it was acknowledged that this relied on pupils making these available to their parents.

KR thanked CG for his report

### *Primary School*

FM noted the range of events which had taken place in Kingarth Street since the previous HGSA meeting. As part of the study of the history topic of WWII there had been a themed V.E. Day party complete with songs of Vera Lynn and spam..

Pupils in Primary 1 had performed a traditional Nativity play and enjoyed a Christmas Party including a visit from Santa Claus.

Pupils had performed in two concerts, one for the older primary pupils and one for younger.

\there was a very successful Primary 7 dance which was enjoyed by pupils and teachers.

More than £4,000 had been raised in Kingarth Street for this year’s chosen School charity, Callum’s Cabin, with contributions coming from The Winter Fayre and the annual toy sale. In addition almost £2.000 had been raised for the Children in Need Appeal.

The first part of the second term had already been filled with activity with a Primary 1 ceilidh and The Scots Verse and Music Competition. The Scots verse was judged by Mr. John Chapman D.L., a member of The Board of Governors whilst the music was judged by Claire Hastings a former Young Traditional Musician of The Year. KR noted that a substantial part of the finals of the scots Verse and Music competition

The annual “Granny Afternoon Tea” based on the Katy Morag stories for the pupils of Primary 2 and their guests had been enjoyed by all who attended.

This year’s Primary 7 show will be Mary Poppins and rehearsals had already begun under the direction of the Primary 7 staff members.

FM re-iterated the appointment of Miss Struthers to the newly created post of Senior Teacher in RMS in Kingarth St. and also noted that as Mr MacLeod was retiring at the end of the academic year that she would be interviewing candidates the following week for his post.

In response to an inquiry FM advised that the CD “A Very Hutchie Christmas” had not been re-made for a number of years.

KR noted that a substantial part of the finals of the Scots Verse and Music competition was available through The School website and commended this to The Committee given the very high standard and variety of the performances.

FM noted as an adjunct to this that Daniel Ogilvie in Primary 7 who had achieved notable success in The Scots Verse and Music competition had been placed 2<sup>nd</sup> equal in the Senior School Music Competition which was outstanding for a Primary school pupil.

In response to a suggestion that H.G.S.A. might consider instituting an award in recognition of such an achievement FM noted there were already means for identifying and recognising outstanding achievements.

It was noted that the Primary 5 boys had performed very well in a recent athletics competition and further noted that the achievements of Primaries 5,6 and 7 had been reported in The Evening Times.

It was requested that posters within Kingarth Street which featured pupils in uniform carry what were described as a floral pink bag and a Nike branded bag be removed given these, it had previously been established did not conform to the published provisions in The School handbook.

KR thanked F.M. for her report

### ***Governors' Remarks***

RW noted once again that the opportunity to meet with parents and listen to the items which they had asked to raise was beneficial and interesting.

She advised The Committee that a Staff Governor Engagement Group had been established and hoped that this conduit for information sharing between The Staff groups in both Beaton Road and Kingarth Street and members of The Board of Governors would prove more effective than the former Joint Consultative Committee which had not now met for some time.

### ***1957 Group Report***

**KR** noted that KS was unable to attend but had no particular item of business she wished raised other than to note that the next events for 1957 Group are Primary School Sports' Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> June and the Uniform shop which will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June.

### ***8. Former Pupils' Club***

**BM** had intimated his apologies for absence from the meeting that afternoon but had no specific item he wished raised on his behalf.

### ***A.O.C.B.***

There being no further points of business KR thanked those present and advised that the date of the next Committee meeting would be **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7 p.m.** but that in interim there would be a meeting of the elected members on 19<sup>th</sup> March to consider the items of business which could be transmitted in advance of the meeting for the attention or action of CG.

<b>Action required</b>	<b>By whom</b>
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CG to meet with BM, KR and other members of the Constitutional sub- committee ON 28/3/18	CG, BM, KR
CG to present analysis of the benefits identified from the extension of the October School Holiday	CG ( when information becomes available)
FM to meet with Primary 4 parents	FM, JL