

**Hutchesons' Grammar School Association
Meeting 9th May 2016
Founders' Room**

Minute

Present

Kenneth Ritchie (KR) (Chairman)
P1 – Lizette Craig (LC)
P3 – Martyn Campbell(MC)
P4 – Alan Hair (AH)
P5 – Audrey Mathers (AM)
S1 – Elaine Lonergan Black (EB)
S3 – Susan Redpath (SR)

In Attendance

The Chairman, HETS, Brian Williams (BW)
The Rector, Ken Greig(KG)
The Bursar, Iain Keter (IK)
Head of Primary Fiona MacPhail (FM)
Head of Careers Katy Chisholm (KC)

Apologies

Kathryn Storrie Chairman 1957 Group

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2016

Amendments to P1 last sentence para 2 – should read proposed meeting
P2 – 2nd last para, 2nd last line space required.

Matters Arising– None was identified which did not appear as a substantive matter on the current agenda

On behalf of the committee,.KR congratulated KG on his new appointment to Brighton College

3. Matters Raised by members

Sports It was suggested that there is an apparent anomaly between the opportunities afforded pupils to secure School Colours in rugby and hockey exacerbated by the regulations promulgated by the S.R.U. which determine boys' options according to their age rather than their ability, i.e. boys can only participate in the school First XV, which might attract colours, once they have passed their 16th birthdays. No similar restriction applies to those playing hockey. The Rector noted that the general principle is established and colours are only awarded for representing school at top level and that the participation in these two sports cannot be compared. “Half colours” ties are available to students from 4th year.

A question was raised about the prospect of more structured Winter training for athletics. It was accepted there appeared to be a significant “drop off” rate after 3rd Year in athletics. The Rector advertised the formation of a “Sports Strategy Group” established chaired by the Senior Depute Rector Mr. Martin to form a strategic plan which will assess all sports promoted in the school. This will also afford some scrutiny of the quality of facilities available and where improvement might be required. The Rector advised the expectation is that this group will report back to The Board of Governors in October '16.

GIRFEC The Rector was asked if The School will be legally obliged to implement a “Named Person Service” with the forthcoming implementation of the GIRFEC scheme.

The Rector confirmed this was required and explained that in The Senior School Mrs Ferguson, will be the Named Person for all pupils and that in the Primary School this will be a responsibility for Miss MacPhail.

The Rector advised that The School is ahead of most other schools in the independent sector and that it is intended an information letter will be sent to parents in June but that this may be delayed if the implementation of the legislation is postponed.

Music The Bursar advised that he had nothing further to report on the question of reclaiming V.A.T. on musical instruments for pupils. He reminded The Committee that this was a matter for the UK Government and that John Edwards had been pursuing this matter on behalf of SCIS but that no progress had been reported.

In respect of a suggestion that where a child failed to attend a music lesson provided by a peripatetic music teacher that this could be credited to the pupil at a later date he advised that the contract with most of the music tutors effectively meant that such a suggestion would mean the failure of a pupil to attend however legitimate the cause would mean a loss of earnings to the tutor.

In response to a supplementary question he noted that peripatetic music tutors were not full time employees of The School and whilst the opportunity to change this status had previously been discussed there was no appetite amongst the tutors for such a change.

Learning support In respect of several outstanding questions on Learning Support KR explained that although it had been agreed that this topic would not be raised again following the comprehensive statement made by The Rector at a previous meeting as a year had since passed and the questions arose from new correspondents these had been included for consideration.

The Rector reiterated that concern in respect of individual pupils should be raised with the pupil's Year Tutors and were not necessarily appropriate for this forum.

He noted that he had come to Hutchesons' form Pangbourne where a significant portion of the pupils had received learning support. He further noted that at the time of his arrival in The School there was considerable pressure not to spend money on learning support, but as a result of his previous experience he had introduced a lot of additional Learning support over the years, he was certain this will continue and that he continues, meantime, to review the staff provisions for Learning Support. He noted in respect of secondary pupils that an increased role for year tutors was envisaged and that they are responsible for the academic progress of the all the pupils within their respective year groups including those with learning support needs.

KR noted that there remained parents within The school who would not necessarily support the provision of additional staff for learning support where this potentially had an impact on the level of school fees.

The Rector rejected the suggestion that The School was only interested in those children who were capable of achieving good grades in five or six Highers in one examination diet. He noted that "a rising tide lifts all ships" and that the improving exam results precipitated a culture within the School which promoted improvement for all pupils and that the most recent QUIPE inspection report backs this up.

He noted that class teachers were aware of those children in their classes who might require additional support through unobtrusive notation in the period register.

Primary School Miss McPhail advised that unfortunately the "lollipop man", Mr. Gibson will not return this term due to illness. She anticipated there would be someone in place for August, but a difficult task to find a replacement.

The Rector asked if any parents were aware of suitable candidates who might undertake these duties.

She advised that the Kingarth Street S.M.T. undertook traffic control duties which had a significant ameliorating effect on the previous problem of dangerous double parking.

It was explained that there was no scope for moving the stations of the crossing patrols at Calder St. or Victoria Road as these were Glasgow City Council staff.

It was noted that the lack of proximity of a crossing patrol combined with more parents parking at a distance from the school occasioned the unfortunate logical corollary of a reduction in independence for younger pupils as parents were more likely to escort them to the school entrance.

4. Rector's report

The Rector noted that the inception of the S.Q.A. Exam Season was a key time of year for the school and that with the absence of a significant portion of the pupils it was also a good time for strategic thinking amongst the staff members. An example of this was the previously mentioned Sports' Strategy Group.

He reported that the development of the new website had made considerable progress with the launch anticipated for the end of May. One of the particular improvements was the reduction in the number of pages from 750 to 50 pages.

It was further noted that the new website was much more responsive and flexible and that this had been demonstrated when KR had requested that the link to the H.G.S.A. should appear in the parents' section of the site rather than the community section. The change had thereafter been instantly effected.

The Rector reported that the new virtual learning platform, "Firefly" .Staff members who had tried this were enthusiastic about its use throughout the school . It was expected that this would be introduced initially into the Primary 7 and 4th Year

The Hutchesons' Centre for Research is a unique project amongst independent schools and is pursuing many complementary strands of work at present

.From September a research fellow from Glasgow University will be looking at how teachers interact with children.

Individual research projects will allow 6th year pupils to choose a topic and research it in a systematic fashion.

1st to 3rd year pupils will be encouraged to begin thinking about independent learning

As a result of the success of the Junior Duke and Mini Duke schemes, The School was no considering a "Senior Duke" scheme for 1st and 2nd year pupils to promote continuity from the Primary school schemes and encourage progress to Duke of Edinburgh awards.

As this was his last meeting, The Rector then expressed his thanks to the group and parents for their support over the years. He acknowledged that here were further discussions likely to be required in the revision of The Constitution and noted that a strong and supportive Association was essential for the health of The School Community.

5. Primary Report

FM reported that the P7 show, The Lion King, was outstanding with Kingarth Street Transformed into Africa and opined that staff had really “raised the bar”

The Mini Bridge team won the southern district competition and are now Scottish Champions..

The Primary 7 team won the Glasgow Schools’ Quiz and were now in West of Scotland finals to be held in June.

FM reported the excitement which ensued when Leon Smith, The British Davis Cup Captain and FP had made a private visit to the school with Davis Cup, a substantial trophy standing almost five feet in height. He had engaged exceptionally well with the children and answered an eclectic range of questions. Thereafter he had briefly coached a group of pupils in basic tennis skills.

The Rector noted that the success of the visit was reflected in Leon Smith’s express wish that he make a return visit to Beaton Road later in the year to meet with the staff and pupils in the Secondary School.

AM asked if school could try and ensure it was not the same parents that get picked for school trips. FM opined that she did not think that this was the case but if it had been so it was not a deliberate decision on the part of staff.

Governors Remarks

BW noted the appointment of Mr. Colin Gambles and that this information had been shared, first with The S.M.T. and staff and thereafter the pupils and parents. He confirmed negotiations were underway in respect of his proposed starting date set at present for Jan 2017 but with some prospect of an earlier starting date dependent upon the speed with which Robert Gordon’s School was able to secure a replacement for Mr. Gambles.

The Chairman noted the frequency of The Board meetings as five times over the course of the academic year.

In response to the question “How often do Governors meet without the Rector? He advised that This never happened but that The Chairmen’s Committee can meet without the Rector if required and can do so as a matter of urgency within 24 hours should the need for a meeting be pressing.

6. *1957 Group Remarks*

In the absence of Mrs Storrie KR noted that the need for more members as , at present they have only six on the committee. KR reminded the Committee of the particularly useful role played by the ’57 Group

8. *FP Remarks*

BM advised that an FP Dinner is to be held 10.12.16 at House for An Art Lover. Negotiations are progressing with the FP Club, the venue and the streaming company who will provide the technical support for a “virtual dinner” linking up with various locations worldwide where groups of FPs will gather.

KR asked if the School representatives wished to remain for the sub-committee reports and when this was declined presented The Rector with a quaich and a bottle of Arran Malt whisky as a token of the thanks of The Association for his support over a number of years. The Rector wished the Association

well and hoped that it would continue to play a significant role as he perceived it to be a vital element of the Hutchesons' Community.

9. Sub Committee Reports – Careers' Convention

KC asked if the timing of this event on the chosen evening might be brought forward without too great an inconvenience and this suggestion was endorsed by The Committee. This should still afford ample opportunity for those who wished to do so to eat in advance of the starting time.

This year catering had been provided for approximately 100 consultants and Committee members

It was noted that the persistent difficulty in securing a bio medical scientist may have been resolved as a parent had volunteered to fill this gap ex post facto of this year's convention and might reasonably be anticipated to volunteer for next year's event.

In respect of the suggestion that The School, being responsible for the up to date database of willing consultants should take responsibility for the initial contact with consultants and seek the assistance of The association only when the gaps had been identified KC responded that this would not be realistic as it would entail her assuming the role of an event co-ordinator which would be too time consuming given her teaching duties.

KC further noted that for each member of the committee there would be approximately ten correspondents whereas if she were co-ordinating she would be required to collate and monitor responses from over ninety individuals.

KR speculated that the work might be shared amongst careers staff but that further discussion would be appropriate at the start of the next academic year and that this would remain an agenda item in interim. SR suggested that there must be a technical solution which would allow instant correspondence with all those on the database in an easy and effective way.

KC noted that the anticipated date for the next convention was 1st March 2017.

BM opined that the FP Club would be happy to be actively involved in seeking consultants from amongst its ranks, that he would raise this with The Club and that he would anticipate there would be enthusiasm to work collaboratively with H.G.S.A. in respect of this matter.

AM suggested that there should be some revision of the range of jobs and careers identified and KC noted that there was consideration amongst the careers staff of data trends which might help to determine the most useful and popular consultants to find. AM suggested that a useful starting point for such a review might be the "destinations" listed for sixth year pupils and KC noted this information was taken into consideration.

Social Sub-Committee

The "Leavers'" dinner has been booked in The Grosvenor Hilton Hotel for Friday 3rd June. Over one hundred parents and sixth year pupils were confirmed as attending.

Entertainment will be provided by group of 6th year and recent former pupils who were providing their services, on this occasion, with parental encouragement, free of charge.

KR noted that the move to a larger suite within The Hotel would allow for the sale of further tickets and suggested that those members of The Committee who were not attending, having no children in the year groups targeted might consider forming a table and attending

It is anticipated the dinner will be a success and that this relatively modest experiment had already demonstrated that there was an appetite amongst parents for such an event.

It was suggested that next year a more extensive parent group might be afforded the opportunity to attend and it was noted that parents of children in 1st year might enjoy this given that many new

arrivals join The School from a variety of different Primary Schools across Glasgow and beyond and that social events afford excellent opportunities to meet a range of parents.

It was further suggested that we should consider a 6th year leavers event to include parents and pupils and suggested that Mrs. Biggart might be a useful contact within The School.

AM noted that the small response from parents of 5th year pupils, whom she described as generally quite an active social group, might be a result of marketing this event as a “leavers” event as many of them would anticipate attending next year rather than in 2016.

In respect of a social event for 1st year parents EB noted that last year the 1st year Year tutors arranged a Burns’ night for parents and pupils. This or perhaps a games night might prove popular?

KR noted that The ’57 Group already hosted a Quiz Night and that we should avoid any event which might inadvertently undermine those already established.

Constitutional sub-Committee

It was noted that a meeting had taken place on 29th March involving BW, KG, IK, KR, MC and DH. Unfortunately, BM as Chairman of the sub-committee had been unable to attend but had been provided with extensive notes. From these BM had determined that of 25 clauses raised as matters requiring discussion, 21 were almost directly copied from the extant 2011 Constitution.

KR noted that this may reflect the School’s position that this revision should be used as an opportunity for changing elements of the 2011 Constitution which were anachronistic.

BM noted his intention that the sub-Committee meet again within the next few days to respond to nine areas where there remained some contention and asked that if any member of The Committee had any observations that these be sent to him within the next few days.

In respect of the reservations about the retention of information by H.G.S.A. KR noted that The Rector had cautioned that the responsibility which arose from the retention of data was not appropriate for a body such as H.G.S.A. and not in the best interests of parents. He had further opined that whilst the present committee might have within its ranks members able to deal with subject access data requests that this might not always be so.

BM noted that he had made contact with the office of The Information Commissioner and had been advised that the nature of The Association was such that the only requirement which might arise would be a payment of £35.00 each year for membership of the “I.C.O.” scheme.

BM hoped to convene a meeting of the sub-committee on 19th May to address the outstanding issues and make any further amendments which might allow matters to proceed before the end of term and The Rector’s departure.

It was suggested the sub-committee should check if there was a similar document published for parents’ use at Robert Gordon’s as this would afford some insight into the expectations Mr Gambles might bring with him.

10. A.G.M. - Adjourned Meeting

KR noted that it might prove very difficult to schedule a meeting to encompass the business adjourned at the time of the A.G.M. in October ’15 given the propinquity of the end of term, the signal number of other commitments already noted in the School Calendar and the final planning required for the forthcoming dinner.

11. A.O.C.B.

KR was asked to make contact with Kathryn Storrie to ascertain if the '57 Group intended holding The Winter Fair this year. KR reminded The Committee that the '57 was reduced to a committee of six and would probably require assistance.

BM indicated that he might be able to join the '57 Group and KR noted that he anticipated any such offer would be particularly well received.

12. Dates and frequency of future meetings: proposed dates for meetings in 2016/17

KR submitted a draft schedule of meetings for the forthcoming academic year.

It was noted that the proposed date of 26th September was a public and school holiday and that the meeting should be held on the 19th September instead.

There was some concern that a proposed meeting on Monday 20th February would be on the first school day immediately following a school holiday and that on the basis of this year's experience this should be avoided.

It was noted that to move the meeting to the following Monday would put it too close to the proposed date of the Careers' Convention if that remained on 1st March '17 but that even 20th February remained uncomfortably close if there remained a number of outstanding gaps to be filled.

KR was asked to write to KC or to Mr. David Campbell, The Depute Rector responsible for Careers to ask that the Careers' Convention be moved to 8th March to afford the best possible contribution by The Committee members.

KR suggested that the date of the next meeting be left in abeyance pending confirmation from The School that accommodation would be available.