

**Hutchesons' Grammar School Association**  
**Minute of the meeting held in The Founders' Room on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Draft Minute

***Present***

Kenneth Ritchie (KR) (Chairman)

P1 – Ingrid Jauhar (IJ)

P3 – Julia Lavelle (JL)

P5 – Sabbah Sheikh (SS)

S1 – Roy Amner (RA)

S3- Saman Khan(SK)

S5 – Faiza Khan (FK)

P2 – Lizette Craig (LC)

P4 – Martyn Campbell(MC)

P6 – Audrey Mathers (AM)

P7 – Karen Nolland (KN)

S2 – Mark Toma (MT)

S4 – Sue Redpath (SR)

S6 – Sarah Conroy

**In Attendance**

Brian MCBride (FP)

Fiona MacPhail (FM)

Katy Chisholm (KC)

The Rector (CG)

The Chairman of The Board (BW)

***1. Apologies***

The Bursar (IK), K Storrie (KS) S. Conroy (lateness)

***2. Minutes from 19.09.16***

***Two minor points of accuracy were noted***

Proposed by LC, seconded by AM

KR wished to record the Committees gratitude for the service of retiring members, namely Mrs Shafi, Mr Hair, Mrs Lonergan and Mrs Rankin

***2. Business Raised by Elected Members***

It was requested that a review of Primary Boys Uniform take place in respect for the age at which primary school boys might be allowed to wear long school trousers. At present, primary school girls cease to wear the “infant uniforms” at end of Primary 3 whilst the boys continue to wear short trousers until the conclusion of Primary 4. . It was noted that short trousers had until relatively recently remained the prescribed uniform for all primary school boys. KR noted that his sons had continued to wear short trousers until the conclusion of their respective primary school careers and FM noted that their remained a coterie of boys who would choose to wear short trousers until the end of Primary 7

The Rector suggested The School might undertake a survey regarding this suggested change but stressed that any survey should properly include the canvassed views of the pupils affected by any proposed change and that he and FM would consider how best to canvass the views of staff, parents and pupils.

Clarification was given on the prescription in respect of winter coats by FM and parents were reminded that they can access The School uniform guide via the website under the heading of the “Parents Toolbox, School Handbook, page 28.”

IJ noted that previously a copy of The School handbook had been distributed to parents at the P1 Meet the Teacher evening and FM explained that it was intended to dispense with the paper copy

JL suggested that it might be useful for P.1 parents if a copy of the uniform rules were e-mailed directly to them rather than expecting them to find this on The website and F.M. opined this might be considered but would probably be most effective immediately after the summer holidays

In response to a further suggestion that the boys be given the option of wearing shorts in winter months when the weather was inclement FM reminded the meeting that boys could bring jogging trousers to wear in the playground when the weather was cold.

School lockers provision.

The Rector explained that whilst there is a lot of spare capacity in locker space throughout the secondary school the apparent difficulty in matching this to perceived or reported need was these were just not in the areas most convenient for the children. He further noted that pupils need only ask the members of their year tutor teams who can assign them a locker if required.

The Rector noted that combining of Sandwich/salad bar with Hot food counter might have had a small effect on the time pupils required to wait but this by no means excessive and further reported that this had been monitored and queues are almost completely dispersed within 20/25 minutes.

SR noted that for children who wished to participate in lunchtime activities this remained a source of frustration .

The Rector noted that the Sandwich bar is now open at morning break for purchasing cold food in advance of lunch as well.

MT suggested there might be a hierarchy determining who is first to be allowed access to the sandwich bar and SR asked why the separate sandwich bar had been discarded.

The Rector advised that the new arrangement was more effective and efficient and that many pupils would choose to go away and play and then return to purchase lunch. He added that if pupils were not aware of these options to avoid queuing it might be a matter which could be advertised by their respective form teachers

Change to October Holidays

The Rector apologized that no general communication of this change had been sent to parents before the change was recorded in the calendar for 2017. He advised the decision had been taken prior to his appointment but that it was an arrangement to which he had been accustomed whilst teaching in Robert Gordon's. He noted that this decision was not made to afford more extensive holiday options but rather that it had been made to give pupils involved in SQA examinations a more significant break during a long first term and that his experience and that of others was this arrangement, balancing the term rendered the teaching time in the second part of the winter term more effective. It can only happen the years where the Christmas dates allow for enough teaching days in that first term and will be looked at annually.

MT noted that this additional week may cause difficulties in families where both parents are working and unable to secure extra leave to provide childcare. The Rector replied that he hoped, with 1 year's notice, parents would have ample opportunity to arrange appropriate childcare, emphasizing, once again, that the decision was primarily based on educational reasons.

In respect of the question of appropriate communication RA noted that the change had passed unnoticed amongst a significant number of parents and that when he had introduced this change

to other parents on the touchline at Auldhouse it had provoked vigorous discussion and much adverse reaction.

It was suggested The School could notify OSCARS, Clydesdale Hockey club and other local, commercial providers of holiday activities of this change in the hope that clubs may offer extended provision during this longer holiday. RA noted that he had already brought this to the attention of the local ski club.

JL opined that it was already difficult for some working parents if not themselves on holiday at the close of the summer holidays when the local authority schools began and commercial activity providers reduced the options offered.

RA noted that this could be particularly acute for parents who were self-employed or for families where both parents were doctors and asked if the holiday now advertised for October 2017 could be treated as a trial.

The Rector noted that whilst he was not resistant to the suggestion this be a trial he would wish to qualify this by addressing more thoroughly the potential benefit to the children and wondered how best this could be advanced through involvement of the year representatives.

MT opined that it would be more effective for a consultation to be advertised to the whole parent body with the option of directing responses via the year representatives.

RA noted that parent contact lists had been shared and that it was unfortunate that this practice had stopped as this would have afforded another option for the year representatives to canvass opinions.

JL noted that it should be a relatively simple thing to design a survey which would allow parents to respond.

#### Website Feedback

LC opined the Calendar on the revised website is less useful than the version previously available inasmuch as if you click on specific date it takes you to month not that date alone.

AM agreed with this and added that The School social media needs to be reviewed and checked for accuracy as spelling and other mistakes appeared to be occurring more frequently.

KR thanked the Rector and FM for responding to the items raised and invited The Rector to continue by presenting his report.

### 3. Rectors Report

The Rector reported on various general matters regarding the school including the following. The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice has been chosen as the charity to be supported by The School this year. It was felt that this was a particularly good choice given the fund-raising at present was to be directed to the construction of a new building situated in Bellahouston Park. Trips have taken place to both the WWI battlefields of Belgium and to Barcelona.

S6 Tutors have recently held a parents' evening to explain the process the pupils require to undertake when making their applications for university through the UCAS system.

Mr Stirling has completed the grueling Iron Man challenge.

Leon Smith, a former pupil,

has visited the school, both Kingarth Street and Beaton Road bringing with him the Davis Cup on both occasions. These visits generated significant excitement amongst the pupils and, as FM confirmed, amongst the staff.

Alan Bisset had given The John Buchan Memorial Lecture.

S6 pupils studying biology went to Millport on field trip.

Pupils have been afforded the opportunity to participate in the Model U.N. conference. The New Head teacher and two pupils from Hutchesons' partner school in Nitti in India have visited school

Group of ten primary school head teachers from The Netherlands have visited the school  
Cultural trips had travelled to Florence, New York and four unaccompanied Sixth Year pupils had participated in an exchange programme with a school in Denver Colorado.

The School's girls' team won gold at the Scottish Schools Road Race, both S5-6 and S3-4 girls' teams won gold, with S1-2 girls taking silver. He reported that in hockey, 2 pupils had been selected for the under-18 women's training programme, and that Struan Walker had been selected to play for the Caledonian Cougars in the Futures Cup,

One of the matrons from Beaton Road undertook a skydive to raise money for a breast cancer charity.

S5 Parents evening has taken place with parents receiving information on the pupils progress towards their forthcoming Higher prelims.

The Rector noted that he had appointed Anne De'Ath as Library Assistant at Beaton Road. Mrs Lyall would cover Mrs Stewart's maternity leave in Modern Studies

and Miss Beadham would temporarily assume Mrs Stewart's duties as an Assistant Year Tutor

The Rector noted that The Sir Alexander Stone Memorial Lecture had been given by Sir Harry Burns. This was a particularly thought provoking presentation from a most engaging speaker and was warmly received by those attending.

Min Song Sam, a First Year pupil had designed the mascot for the Homeless Football World Cup which was held in Glasgow. The Rector noted that this event gave significant food for thought for Hutchesons' pupils when it was explained to them that the teams participating in this event were all homeless people who, after two weeks at the event would probably revert to their homeless condition in their respective countries of origin.

The Rector advised that the SMT had recently participated in an "Away Day" to discuss strategy for development and improvement in both the Primary and Secondary Schools

The Rector noted finally that he had attended The School Remembrance services and had found these very moving experiences.

KR thanked the Rector for his report and in the absence of any further questions invited Miss MacPhail to present her report on Primary School activity.

#### 4. Primary Report

FM noted that Miss Leoni Urquhart had been appointed as the new part time teacher of ICT at Kingarth Street

Celebrations to mark the centenary of Roald Dahl's birth, including "BFG food" took place organised by Mrs Peebles

The P4 show, "Goldilocks and 3 Bears" was presented to an enthusiastic audience.

A "Spooky Spectacular" at Halloween raised approx. £600 for this year's school charity

Clare Balding had visited the school promoting her new career as an author with her book "The Racehorse who wouldn't gallop". FM explained that this visit had been arranged by Miss Struthers who was a school friend of Miss Balding's.

FM was pleased to advise that for a second year a "Winter Fair" will take place in Kingarth Street on 9<sup>th</sup> December between 2pm and 4pm in the main hall. There will be stalls, choir singing, mince pies and crafts. FM noted that parents would be welcome to attend.

#### 5. Governors Remarks

Professor Williams advised that a Sports Strategy Group had been working together for the past year with the goal of improving participation, performance and personal development of pupils through sport. He

with the hope that Hutchesons' strong record of academic excellence could eventually be matched by The School's sporting achievement with sporting excellence transferring the skills from team sport into more general personal development. He opined that the overall strategy might require a cultural or attitudinal change which might take up to ten years to establish in The School.

He advised that the Group, chaired by Mr Martin was promoting a vision that 'fitness and health for life for all @Hutchie', and that 100% of pupils would participate in a sport or fitness activity which suited them. He told the meeting that it was important to increase the provision of different sports while aiming to be a leading school for rugby and boys' and girls' hockey.

He advised that the most immediate needs being considered by The Board of Governors were 2 new all-weather hockey pitches, the reinstatement of the tennis court area so that this can be used for both tennis and netball. Additional changing rooms are required at Beaton Road, would be supplemented by the installation of 2 new gym areas. One of these would specialize in fitness and one as a strength and conditioning facility.

A sprung floor would benefit those wishing to train in contact sports such as Judo and karate and eventually a climbing wall might be considered.

In respect of Auldhouse he told the meeting that installing an artificial 3 or 4G pitch would be of great benefit as this could be used for either rugby or football,. He acknowledged that there was a need to improve the clubhouse at Auldhouse and that a stand would be considered although he noted wryly that the previous stand had been maliciously burned down.

He noted that this strategy would be pursued by The Board in a measured fashion once greater detail was available about the costs involved and the benefit which can be accrued but recognized that independent schools in England were "weaponizing" their sports' facilities as part of a strategy to maximize the benefit from their extra-curricular provisions.

AM asked where the hockey pitches were likely to be located and The Rector advised there was a range of options was under consideration

RA noted that it might be worthwhile for The School to make contact with G.H.A. as there was a plan to develop a 4G pitch which might be rented by The School. In response the Rector noted that he understood the bids by The Club for funding for this development had not been successful.

Professor Williams noted that the strategy required further detailed consideration and had only been presented to The Board for the first time two weeks before.

MT noted that he was delighted at the prospect of improved facilities for training and playing rugby. KN noted that the coaching for hockey teams appeared to be better elsewhere but noted her frustration in respect of the coaching for swimming where there was a significant difference in the confidence and performance of Hutchesons' pupils when compared with some of the other independent schools and further noted that there were no apparent quick fixes .

RA opined that there appeared to be fewer teams per year group in some sports and it was noted that this was a recognised problem but that some of the schools against which Hutchesons' regularly competes are no longer able to field sufficient teams to match ours.

It was noted from parents that coaching must be reviewed to complement any enhanced sporting facilities. It was noted that the performance of School teams was dependent on the competency, enthusiasm and commitment of the coaches available.

KR noted that it should not be forgotten that a number of staff from outwith the P.E. department regularly committed personal time and effort to supporting teams outside normal school hours and at weekends. This was endorsed by The Rector.

LC asked if a document could be produced by PE department to give out to Primary Parents informing them of what sports/teams are involved in matches, the approximate frequency of matches and at what stage children are expected to be involved. It would be most useful if this were to be done at the earliest possible juncture in order that parents might have the opportunity to avoid or to reschedule commitments to privately arranged, sporting activities and clubs.

Professor Williams noted that The Governors are also regularly looking at HR/Finance/Property issues through its sub committees. At present there is a plan for each of these to contribute to a wider, general strategy with the planned intention of reporting in 2017. In this he noted a significant contribution is anticipated from the SMT.

### **1957 Group**

In the absence of KS, KR reported that although there would, once again, sadly be no Winter Fair, there would be a Christmas raffle. This was running at present and the intention was that the draw for prizes would take place on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016 when it was expected the “Strictly Come Dancing 2” competition would take place.

KR noted that he had approached KS to ask if the ’57 Group and in particular KS and KN as members of this committee might assist in the organisation of some complementary charitable fund raising activity during the anticipated H.G.S.A. Dinner in the summer term of 2017.

### **8. *FP Remarks***

KC agreed that an electronic copy of list of consultants sought for the 2017 4<sup>th</sup> Year Careers’ convention be sent to BM.. He in turn will distribute this to FP council Members in the hope of generating some support and participation.

BM noted that, unusually, this year three George & Thomas awards are being presented on three separate occasions.

Leon Smith had, as noted above, attended his presentation on 4<sup>th</sup> October, Intiaz Dharker was scheduled to attend on 18<sup>th</sup> November and Gaby Lewis may not now be able to attend but would have his award presented remotely.

### **9. *Sub Committees***

KR noted that in terms of The current, 2011, Constitution there required to an annual election of the chairmen of the sub- committees

He noted that the two remaining chairmen of these , namely MC and BM had indicated a willingness to remain as chairmen of the Careers’ Convention sub-committee and Constitutional sub-committee respectively.

KR noted that given the large number of newly elected members if there was any other who might wish to assume these positions then the chairmen would be a simple vote. These were elected unchallenged by acclamation.

KR noted that the chair of the Social sub-committee was vacant but that Mrs Khan had volunteered to take on this responsibility. KR asked if there were others interested in assuming this position but opined that Mrs Khan had been a significant moving force in promoting successfully the dinner in June 2016. Mrs Khan was elected unchallenged by acclamation.

KR explained that there was an expectation all elected members participate in the activity of the Careers' Convention but that volunteers would be warmly welcomed for the other two sub committees. KR said he would send an e-mail reminding members about participation in the committees. MT volunteered to join the constitutional committee.

KR noted that whilst it had been the practice recently for the school staff and The Chairman of The Board to withdraw from the meeting at the point when the sub groups were reporting it might be useful if, on this occasion, they might remain. All did so.

## **Constitution**

KR noted that all present were aware that an insufficient number of parents voted for the change to The Constitution to be effected and that in subsequent discussions The Rector had suggested producing a tabulated document with the provisions of the current constitution in juxtaposition with the corresponding amendments and with an additional column for rationale for changes.

BM noted that of 27 the provisions of the proposed constitution identified as points of concern at the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> March '16, 19 were identical to existing provisions

BM produced the document which had already been composed in this style and indicated this could be sent to The Rector who can then annotate comments in respect of any remaining points at issue and, once completed, this document can be returned to the sub-committee.

It was agreed this appeared constructive way to proceed and that it would be better if possible that consensus be achieved prior to any subsequent E.G.M . failing which that the points at issue be clearly advertised and debate be narrowed.

## **Careers**

KC advised that following the previous discussion The School had identified Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 7pm – 9pm as the optimum date for this year's convention. KR thanked her and hoped that the change in date should lessen the need for significant, last-minute remedial activity to secure consultant f

For the benefit of the newly elected members of The Committee KC explained that a list was issued from which pupils choose up to 6 careers. KC would then give members a list of required consultants at January meeting. Last year there had been 61 different career choices within the list and over 100 consultants had attended

KR asked for clarification on the presence and participation of parents accompanying the children at this event and KC explained that whilst parents can attend they are encouraged not to go to every interview as these interviews are a valuable part of the anticipated experience for the pupils.

KC gratefully acknowledged the prospect of further involvement from members of the FP Club

In response to a question from SR, KC noted that she would provide the updated list for the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January but that there were amendments required to update the database.

10. ***A.O.C.B***

JL – Asked about The School’s Business Continuity Plans and in particular how The School communicates with parents in the event of an emergency which might require collection of the pupils from The School. The Rector indicated that there were several, different elements which required consideration in such circumstances and that he would report to next meeting with updated information on this topic for parents.

MT noted that provision would also be beneficial in circumstances where adverse weather might precipitate closure or partial closure of the school.

KR thanked all for attending and for participating in very lively wide ranging discussions

11. **Date of next meeting – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 7.30pm** All elected members were expected to attend as it would be at this meeting that a significant amount of the planning and preparation for The Careers’ Convention would take place. It was also hoped this could be used to prioritise the matters of interest and concern sent to The Committee members for onward transmission to The Rector.