

Kelso High School Parent Council Meeting

Monday 31st January , 7pm

High School Meeting Room



MINUTES

1. Present: Ian Fingland, Chair (IF), Peter Cooper, Vice Chair (PC), Lynn Forsyth, Treasurer ((LF), Sarah Miller (M), Barbara Thomson (BS), Lynn Young (LY), Drew Ramsay (DR), Alec Nicol, SBC (AN), Tom Weatherston, SBC (TW), Diane Blaylock (DB), Jane Norman (JN), Carol Gillie (CG), Judith Penman (JP), Andrew Armstrong (AA), Ruth Mackay, new Rector (RM), Charlie Robertson Rector (CR

2. Apologies: Alasdair Hutton, Jenny Earl, Martin Hadshar

3. Welcome to the new Rector: CR introduced Ruth Mackay who will take up her post on Monday 7th February. Ruth has spent just a couple of days in school alongside Charlie and has been to a meeting at Scottish Borders Council Education Dept

4. The minutes of the meeting: of 1st November '10 were taken by Peter Cooper. These were distributed and adopted. Matters arising: the creation of an email distribution group of parents/guardians/carers is being progressed and will be operated by Seemis (the software package used by the council's education department)

5. Treasurer's Report/Fundraising: LF presented the financial report as at 30/1/11. Funds are healthy and there is a good surplus available for use in suitable projects. CR commented on the success of both the Lottery and Easy Fundraising schemes. Report Attached. LR reminded the Parent Council that she will be leaving the post of treasurer in June and a new treasurer will be needed.
ACTION: AA to approach another possible parent

6. Rector's Report and 7. School News: CR expressed his delight and gratitude for his leaving gift and evening of entertainment and celebration put on by the Parent Council for his retirement.

He explained that RM has been in school for 2 days with him and has met all staff and many pupils.

As reported at the last meeting, the Head Janitor is due to retire at the end of February and the post was advertised, as per SBC current procedures, only on the Web on "MyJobScotland" and only 3 applications were received. This site advertises all local government jobs but CR does not think that this will reach most prospective applicants. An advert was therefore put into the Southern Reporter at the school's expense and 16 applications were received. However, the successful applicant will not be in place until after the current janitor has retired. A number of staff have applied for early retirement/severance packages. There is a temporary hold on recruitment for vacancies so that newly qualified teaching probationers can be placed for their first year.

Curriculum for Excellence. CR reported that this is working well for the 1st year's. Finance: the budget is not quite so badly cut; 2%, not 6%. £42K of the £50K reduction has been achieved.

Buildings: First meeting of the Options Appraisal for the future school is on 8th February and Ruth is to attend. A group of PC parents will be required. There is no cash available for refurbishment of the current buildings meantime.

The games hall roof has been damaged during the bad weather and is out of use for football at present until it can be repaired and a ceiling net installed.

The new building has been tested by the snow and has not been damaged but the old building has had some damage and water seeped through the walls. SBC is funding the repair of this.

Assymetric Week: The proposal for 3 long and 2 short days has been thwarted for the time being. Current bus contracts are in place using public busses, and any alternative would be too expensive. Although 90% of replies from the consultation over the whole of the Borders were in favour, the Director of Education has postponed the decision for one year. This is the decision that CR wanted and he thanked parents for emailing their opinions to the Director. The idea for the asymmetric week is to have all subjects taught in the same 33 period week in all schools. Currently KHS teaching staff have an additional 20 minutes non-teaching time and the 33 period week would eliminate this. Additionally, teachers and pupils at KHS are said to wish to retain the current lunch break, which would be shortened if the asymmetric week were to be adopted

Extra-curricular: All outdoor sport cancelled because of the weather. The senior hockey team reached the finals of the Scottish Schools Indoor Championships, only beaten by Merchiston Grammar.

Christmas Socials were very popular and the S6 panto was extremely successful. The Burns Supper was well attended with 83 people.

Weather matters: Despite the extraordinary amount of snow CR felt that a minimal number of teaching days were lost. The question had been asked about whether pupils in the town could have attended school (senior pupils in particular who were close to examinations). CR said that he would not have been happy to expect them to walk on the roads where the paths were not cleared of snow and ice. Senior pupils had been group-called to advise them to check the KHS web-site for work to do. In the future, teachers will be encouraged to post more work in this way as not all teachers were contacted to do this this time. Additionally, the programme 'Glow' (www.ltscotland.org.uk/usingglowandict/glow/whatis/index.asp) will be used but presently pupils are more familiar with accessing the KHS web-site

Cleaning Awards: Congratulations to the 3 KHS cleaning staff who won the British Institute of Cleaning Science Scottish Cleaning Championships.

8. School Estate: AN confirmed (as above) that the Options Appraisal has begun. All Options are being considered and this does include a new-build/site. Step 2 will be to invite tenders for quotations for surveys and at Step 3, a Design team will be appointed. Timing for any future works for KHS will still be dependent upon it's place in the Priority Queue and supply of money. A new build would be done in the Public Private Partnership scheme. IF pointed out the huge burden of repayments using this method. Discussion around the practicalities and possibilities of the various options. AN and TW expressed their own preference for a phased improvement of the current school, which would be funded with capital increments . CR made the final point which was that the fabric of the buildings still need to be improved now, regardless of the long term plan. Corridors in particular are in a very poor state.

Eco Schools: Not discussed

Any Other Business: RM thanked CR for his introduction and welcome and said she is looking forward to working with the PC. She would like to ask for ideas about how to engage with the wider parent body. One reply was that whatever the event put on, there is always a number of parents/carers who will never come and inevitably it is the case that the 'same' parents/carers attend and help at whatever event is arranged. A variety of suggestions were made and RM will set a date for a 'meet the Rector evening' and this may include an opportunity to look at the results of the Options Appraisal and or discuss a school dress code.

School Web Site: AA reported that the web-site plans are being worked on along with Ian King and some local companies. The Tom McConnochie fund may be used to fund this

Next Meeting: Monday 9th May, 7pm

Kelso High School Parent Council Financial Report as at 30/1/11

Balance as at 31/8/10

£2,172.12

Paid In

Interest	0.89
Easy Fundraising	76.02
Tait Hall Concert	253.50

2502.53

£2,502.53

Paid Out

Clerk's Honorarium	160.00
Postage-Lottery Letters & S1 Parental Info Evening	177.25
Refreshments S1 Parental Information Evening	13.10

350.35

Balance as at 31/8/10

From Fundraising Etc

1432.95

Admin/Grants

719.23

2152.18

£2,502.53

Easyfundraising next cheque due - £91.30

3 Number Lottery

£1,000 Winner in November. Prize Fund at 25/1/11 c/f to Jan Draw

£388.00

Expenses - Southern Reporter Notices -

£30.30

Lottery Licence Renewal

£20.00

Balance for donation to School

£1,798.70