

KELSO HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

MEETING held on Tuesday 6th May 2008 in Kelso High School.

Minutes

PRESENT: Vanessa Henderson (Chair), Lynn Forsyth (Treasurer), Charlie Robertson (Rector), Jenny Earl, Jessica Osbourne, Kathleen Richie, Councillor Alasdair Hutton, Jane Norman, Georgiana Dune, Alma Elliot (Clerk).

APOLOGIES: Colin Stockdale, Jill Freshwater, Margaret Riddell, Jacqueline Bates, Karen Gray

1. MINUTES: The minutes of the March meeting were approved.
2. OUTSTANDING ACTION POINTS from 18/03/08:
 - ? Due to the poor attendance by adults to the school's Drama Evenings wine was only offered on the last evening resulting in the total sum of £16 profit to the funds.
 - ? Homework Policy - very few replies to our request for feedback.
 - ? Colin Stockdale's Disclosure is in progress.
 - ? Consultation Evening – Invitations and copies of the abridged version of the SBC Consultative paper was sent out to every parent in the KHS.
 - ? Parental Handbook – The Arts department have submitted a selection of photographs for back and front covers. Kelso Graphics produced a draft copy of the final selection and design which was very well received.
 - ? Staff/ Pupils Co-opted Members – Charlie Robertson advised holding back till new term starts. Vanessa will contact pupils re co-opting on to council a few weeks into the new session.
 - ? Congestion on Bowmont Street – Charlie described how the narrowness of part of Bowmont Street near the school produced problems and felt that, to make it all one way, could increase the possibility of a dangerous situation occurring. Instead of parents picking children up after school from the roadside they could pick them up inside the grounds at the front of the school as children were no longer allowed to play in this area during the school day.
Alasdair Hutton mentioned that the Planning Dept is consulting on a possible rearrangement of Kelso Town centre. An element of this was consideration of a one way system up Roxburgh St. and down Bowmont St. but no decisions have been made. It was suggested that parking on one side of the road only would help. Because the school uses Croft Road as a pick-up /drop off point for the buses there could be a problem if the planned system encouraged all and sundry to use this road as a shortcut There are problems at the present with the width of Croft

Road at bus times.

- ? **Holiday Dates/ School Week Consultation** – At the meeting on 29th April PC representatives decided the letter should be posted to every parent and for adverts to be placed in the Southern Reporter. The cost was £200 and this will be taken from the £700 Additional Funding we were allocated.

From the 553 invitations sent out only three parents came along. Vanessa had displayed an enlarged version of the option forms with the inclusion of the Broomlands option – four in total. It was pointed out that if parents wished to retain the current arrangements then this must be registered as such as it is not likely that non responses will be taken as ‘vote’ for a status quo.

Lessons to be learned from this exercise: 1. it had been expensive and unproductive to target every parent separately. 2. The original questionnaires were too complicated for many parents and the abridged ones were still too convoluted. 3 It is very difficult to get a response from parents – Given how busy modern lives are we need to think of ways to make it quick and easy for parents to have their say.

The motivation behind the change of holidays was the idea to give parents a better choice and prevent so many children having time off during term time.

Vanessa took note of the views of those present and these will be sent to the Region. It was decided the asymmetric week was a non-starter.

A message (by Group Call) is to be sent to parents asking them to please reply to the questionnaire as soon as possible as the date for returns is 15th May.

A query was brought up re St Andrew’s Day now being a recognised public holiday – Councillor Hutton will make enquiries and refer back to the PC.

There is one change to this year’s casual holidays - we had requested the usual two days and one inset day together. Now the inset day has been moved back and the two casual holidays will be one week later. This decision was outwith the rector’s control

In the past it was the School Boards who took decisions on casual holidays. Mr Robertson had noted that this responsibility had not been transferred to the PC by the Act. He suggested that it would be useful for the PCs in the Kelso Cluster to assume this role in conjunction with HTs. It was noted that this is not included in the SBC guidance. Councillor Hutton to take this back to the Education Committee. Vanessa will also raise the question with Leona Bendall.

- ? **Parental Handbook** – Vanessa had the copy example of front and back covers designed by Kelso Graphics from a selection of photographs portraying school life. The cost for the printing will be £277.00 plus VAT. Payment via the High School will render it VAT free.
The original option designed by a senior pupil unfortunately proved to be too expensive to reproduce in the format we wished.

3. Treasurer's Report:

£1867.42 in account. Alma and Liane are to be paid for their Clerk Duties. A pro forma may be available. Lynn and Vanessa will investigate. The billing from the High School should be changed to Lynn so that bills are not delayed. Charlie will advise Fiona Bryson. The fundraising at the Drama shows took in £16.00 profit. We were delighted to be given the advert in the Southern at a reduced rate of £42.00

4. School News

Staffing: Mr Hay, PT Art - retiring

Mr Oldham, PT Geography – moving to Aberdeen

Ms Baker, PT Pastoral – moving to Edinburgh

Mr Playfair – moving to Berwickshire HS

Mrs Petrikova ALN – moving to Edinburgh

All these posts need to be filled but will only be advertised as temporary contracts which is concerning.

Mrs Tansey is back from maternity leave

Curriculum: New timetable for next session will commence in two weeks.

SQA Exams are now in full swing.

Finance: The rector has had a meeting on finances but no budget as yet.

Buildings: Some progress on the new entrance.

Access along with entrance should be finished during summer recess.

Work on the Rugby Club gates has not yet gone ahead.

No progress as yet on the RE huts.

The repainting which was badly needed in the Music Dept. and the Dining Hall has been done.

Developments: Transforming Children's Services – delayed, publication due in June.

Numeracy and Literacy groups – established groups with compulsory exams in 3rd and 4th year.

Feuerstein Methodology – looks at ways young people learn. Staff have been trained. There is to be a pilot in S1 Maths, English and RE.

Extra-

Curricular: Rugby Tour Plate Winners – won the final by a conversion.

Hockey Tour – 2nd year are preparing for their tour.

Football League – Girls and Boys are taking part in a Border League.

Coca Cola Sevens – Girls' team made the national semi-finals.

News: A new management information system called SEEMIS (instead of Pheonix) will be in place from August piloting electronic ordering.

5. Consultation on Development of a Strategy for Parental

Involvement in the Borders:

Ian Finland, Vanessa and Jane involved. Vanessa will collate any replies and return form to Region by 9th May.

6. A.C.O.B:

- Music Dept – refreshments are requested for the 24th June – **volunteers required** .
- PC National conference takes place on 07.06.08 – anyone interested in going please get in touch with Vanessa.
- A celebration of Parent Carers will be held in Langlee, Galashiels on 10.06.08 This will be a drop in session advertising the range of help available locally. If anyone is aware of parents with caring responsibilities please contact Vanessa. The School will also identify and invite parents.
- Parent Council now has an e-mail address – details will be given to clerk and to vice chair. Information is strictly confidential.
- Vanessa has been invited to an SBC Budget Meeting on 10th June. Transforming Children's Services and a Borders wide PC conference will also be on the Agenda.
- PC contribution to Newsletter: this could include websites parents can access for information on parenting and educational issues e.g. at exam time. Kelso Life can also be used to publicise information for parents
- CBAH have not managed to disperse all their funds. School to think of ways they could use extra money and apply to CBAH next year.
- Charlie suggested it would be beneficial to set a programme of meetings for next year. This would be decided at the next meeting
- The P7 parents evening is on 10/06/08 at 7pm. As previously the PC will attend the meeting and provide refreshments for parents from 8 pm. **Volunteers required.**

7. Date on Next Meeting:

To be held on 17th June 2008 at 6.30p.m. in the Meeting Room at KHS.

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

KHS PARENT COUNCIL MEETING 06/05/08

Person	Action required
All	? Volunteers for 10/06/08 to help with refreshments ? Volunteers for 25/06/08 to help with refreshments Reply to Vanessa
Vanessa	? Contact pupils for co-option after new term starts ? Holiday Dates Consultation – respond on behalf of KHS PC ? Parental Involvement Consultation respond on behalf of KHS parents ? Consult with Leona Bendall on legislation/guidance involving PCs in the setting of casual holiday dates.
Rector	? Group Call to parents asking for immediate replies to the questionnaire already sent to them as date for return is 15/05/08. ? Identify staff members for Parent Council
Councillor Hutton	Take back to HQ the position regarding legislation/guidance to enable PCs to consult and determine dates of casual holidays. Check whether St Andrew's day is a statutory holiday