



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KELSO HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2014

1. Present: Chris Mowat (Chair), Kerry Innes (Treasurer), Ruth McKay (Headteacher), John Bassett, Tom Weatherston (Councillor), Alec Nicol, Barbara Thomson, Andrew McEwan, Richard Armitage, Colin Henderson and Alastair Martin.

2. Apologies: Simon Mountford (Councillor), Kay Burton, Fiona James, Morag Thomson, Diana Blaylock and Gillian McFadyen (Parent Rep for SBC Meetings).

3. Minutes of last meeting: Approved

CM shared an email from Gillian McFadyen with a report from the equestrian team competition that was held over the weekend:

“8 Kelso High School pupils and 9 ponies travelled to Addington Manor in Buckinghamshire at the weekend (minimum of 8 hours each way!). There were over 800 people taking part in 3 days of incredibly high standard of competition. The quality of ponies and riders was amazing! There were also over 4000 spectators! Our teams and individuals rode amazingly well over some very technical and big courses and we were delighted to have some top 10 placings! Unanimously both parents and riders agreed the trip was very worthwhile and worth the time, effort and financial outlay! A huge thank you to Parent Council for supporting the team.”

4. Chairman's Report:

Dyslexia Policy Consultation – there is a draft available on the SBC website and a Kelso HS Parent Consultation meeting scheduled for tomorrow jointly with primary schools. Roger Barrow (Principal Educational Psychologist) and SFL staff from both High School and Primary Schools will be in attendance. The last dyslexia policy was completed in 2002 and there have been many changes since then, things have moved forward therefore was necessary to review the existing policy.

Parent Council Training Events – there have been lots of events cancelled however a session on Parent Council Essentials has been arranged on Tuesday 11th November at KHS. CM confirmed he will seek representation.

CM had invited David Ferguson from BSLT to attend the meeting to discuss Friday afternoons. As David is no longer Chair of BSLT, Neil Innes, Active Schools Co-ordinator has attended in his place.

Discussions took place regarding the donation on behalf of Rev Tom McDonald to Dr Grahams Homes, Kerry to arrange cheque.

CM confirmed that Kay Burton wishes to resign from the Thomas Maconochie Trust, she will attend the meeting on Thursday 20th November but this will be her last.

CM read out an email from Lynne Young advising of her decision to resign from the Parent Council. CM to check procedures with Lisa Anderson.

CM also confirmed that as of the AGM he will be standing down as Chair due to work commitments.

5. Treasurer's Report:

Report since last meeting 14/09/14

Main Account:

No activity

Balance carried forward as at 28/10/14 is £3091.76 (subject to bank statement confirmation)

3 Ball Lottery Account:

Activity since last meeting:

September Receipts - £212.00

October Receipts - £303.00

Balance as of 07/10/14 is £2511.76

There has been no winner since April; the current prize fund is £819.50.

The draw before Xmas will have a prize fund of £1000 and there will need to be a winner, Kerry to arrange to keep drawing until a winner is picked. There are currently 89 people involved in the lottery. Kerry suggested publicising the draw and having a presentation with a big cheque and take photos for the website / update.

It was agreed that Kerry would attend the S1 Parents' Information Evening on Wednesday 12/11/14 to publicise the lottery and hand out lottery mandate forms to try and drum up interest.

6. Headteacher's Report:

Staffing Changes:

Hilda Adams, PT Pastoral for Bowmont House and a long serving member of KHS staff will retire on 14/11/14. Interviews for the post of PT Pastoral were held on Friday and the

preferred candidate is Ms Gemma Hope was selected. The interview process was very competitive, attracting applications from all over Scotland.

We have not yet made an appointment to our DHT post following Mrs Brotherton's retirement. This post has been re-advertised and short leet interviews are being held on 31/10/14.

In Music, Mrs Catherine Thomson, PT Expressive Arts, has been acting up into the post of DHT and Mr John Borthwick has been absent following surgery. We have therefore had 2 specialist Music supply teachers covering since mid September. Mr Borthwick will return to KHS in the first half of November.

RM expressed her thanks to CM for his work with the PC and suggested that she write to parents regarding opportunities for parental involvement.

RM handed out information on the MVP (Mentors in Violence Prevention) programme which has been developed by Police Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit. This has already been piloted in Peebles High School and has been very successful. KHS is lucky enough to be next in line for taking part in this programme which is said to be very engaging, positive and powerful for those involved. There are training opportunities available (25 places); they are looking for a wide range of individuals from across the community who would be willing to take part. In response to questions, Ruth explained that the programme adopts an innovative bystander approach to combat violence and aggression at all levels and in all forms. There is a particular emphasis on gender-based issues and homophobia. RM recommended a very powerful speech by John Carnochan that is worth having a look at. (See

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/video/w/SLF14JohnCarnochan.asp?strReferringChannel=slf&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-842101-64&class=12+d215953>)

KHS is very fortunate to have the opportunity to run this programme.

Colin Henderson stated that he would be interested to see what the response is to this and to other things, he feels that PC not really getting the results / interest / help required.

Barbara Thomson asked if other schools have the same issues getting responses, RM confirmed it varies from school to school and can affect other school events as well.

Holly Young, Community Learning and Development Youth Worker, provides an invaluable service to KHS and its pupils benefit hugely from her – pupil parliament – she is also involved in drawing together the community plan. There is a lot going on throughout Kelso but working independently of each other, they all need to get together and start talking and put a plan in place.

It was stated that parents are not keen to attend meetings and get involved in the PC. RM suggested changing the wording and how we approach asking them to get involved. Having specific items / topics for each meeting may draw more people in rather than meetings being general.

It was agreed that the PC needs to engage a wider group of people. It was suggested that the Head Team / representatives from S6 attend meetings to give feedback from a pupils. It was suggested that each member bring along a friend to the next meeting, offer tea/coffee and biscuits, mince pies.

7. Fundraising:

Deferred to a later date.

8. BSLT / Friday Afternoons:

Neil Innes from BSLT attended the meeting and gave us an update on how BSLT had found Friday afternoons since the change to school day.

NI confirmed that events are not well attended; they have a much better response for events held during lunchtimes or at weekends. Rugby and hockey events are very popular as it frees pupils for the rest of the weekend. It was acknowledged that Friday afternoon fixtures means that some parents are unable to attend. It would be helpful if there was a fixture list for rugby games, RM to explore with Jammy.

9. Asymmetric Week:

RM intimated that implementation of the new structure has been smooth from a school point of view. Alec Nicol advised that parents feel the costs saved by schools from moving to the 4.5 day week has been passed to parents for childcare or giving up work. Pupils like it as they have extra time at the weekend and they get to do activities such as rugby / hockey.

Andrew McEwan suggested paying for advertising to promote events / clubs / activities to reach a wide range of people. By using social media (Facebook) feedback would be received via clicks and likes.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 2nd December at 7.00pm