



Hawick High School

Parent Council

Minutes of AGM—Tuesday 23rd October 2018

Hawick High School Staff Room at 18:30

present Keith Morgan (Vice-Chair), Andy Maybury (Chair)

Alison Short, Lesley Nichol, Kerry Mitchel, Karen Copeland, Louise Potts,
Julie Adamson, Neil Richards, Susan Green, Morven Brown, Laura Melville,
Lisa Welsh, Ally Ratcliffe, Alison Haig

Vicky Porteous (Head Teacher), Duncan Taylor, Graeme Cockburn

apologies Coreen Knight, Helene Jaffray, Sean Page, Michelle Mitchel, Lyndsay Hodgins,
Wendy Paterson, Cllr George Turnbull, Sheila Cline, Ailsa Green, Evelyn Chelley

Chair's report

A busy year

Last session was a busy year for the Parent Council. We held five regular meetings with attendances up to more than 30 parents plus SBC staff, Councillors and others. We struggled without a secretary but generally managed to communicate with the parent forum in a timely manner on important issues.

We decided to close the website as we were not able to maintain it and have instead set up a page on the school website that is managed by Ronald Yule. This has proved to be adequate although updates are not always made as quickly as we would like.

To help establish our identity, we have produced a logo and this has been useful in 'branding' our contributions to discussions like the campus debate. Thanks to Cindy Stirrat for producing that.

We discovered that we did not have a recorded constitution for the organisation and we have pulled one together based on models available and how we actually operate. This has been circulated to members in various drafts and looked at by a small team of interested parents. The developed constitution was circulated at the last meeting and we will vote on accepting that constitution today.

Our bank account is healthy but we have not spent money on anything significant and this is an area that would be worth looking at this year.

Supporting the school

Our main task is to support the school in the education of our children and through the year we have done this in a number of ways.

The 2017 session began with significant behaviour challenges in the school and with Vicky Porteous newly in post as Headteacher. Scottish Borders Council provided significant resources to tackle the issues at various levels. Specialised learning packages were developed for the

youngsters that required something outwith the standard classroom environment; additional staff posts were created to enable better management of behaviour and support to the teaching staff; training was provided for staff to better equip them and improve relationships with the pupils.

It was recognised that issues within the school are a reflection of the wider community issues and challenges facing young people and that there were cultural issues within the school that had been developing over many years. The school has set up a 'inclusion bases' as safe places to manage those youngsters that struggle with various issues. There is also a system set up to reward good behaviour although this has received mixed reactions.

Pivotal Education consultancy was brought in to assess the situation and provide training for teaching and leadership staff. Their training included de-escalation strategies, 'growing in confidence', 'meet and greet' and 'fresh start'.

A major focus in the middle of the session was the possibility of a new building for the school. The Parent Council had various discussions about this and in particular what community resources could be included within the new campus. The PC hosted a display at the consultation drop-in event in March enabling people to vote for various possibilities. About a hundred members of the public participated in the vote along with over 200 of the school pupils. A small team of parents worked on various aspects of this. One particular need that was recognised is for a safe place for teenagers to meet with each other in the evenings and at weekends.

Towards the end of the session, focus was brought on the Developing the Young Workforce programme. We are fortunate in Hawick to have a wide range of trades and international businesses and longstanding relationships between the school and many of these. Traditional 'work experience' is changing and options like modern and graduate apprenticeships are now available. The programme aims to ensure that each child knows what options are available and has the information and support necessary for them to pursue the employment of their choice. There is a particular focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects, developing skills that are and will be useful in our technology-focused work environments.

Staffing at the school is always a concern of parents and it is acknowledged that all schools across Scotland are struggling to find sufficient qualified staff to fill all of the posts available. Last session, as mentioned already, there were additional staff taken on including two new youth workers and an increase in the number of deputy headteachers to five. This session sees eight newly qualified teachers join the staff and they are being supported and trained by the other staff to ensure the best outcomes.

Conclusion

So, last session was busy and much was achieved both in terms of supporting the school and in our own development as an organisation. Although the school is not without its challenges, these are no different from what most schools face and there is a strong leadership in place to tackle the issues. The School improvement plan has been revised and simplified so that it can be thoroughly implemented. Our children are learning in a safe environment and hopefully we will have already seen improvements.

We look forward to working with Vicky and her staff throughout this session and will do all that we can to support the school and represent all of the parents as we engage with the headteacher and other members of staff.

Treasurer's report

In the absence of Carna, Andy presented the accounts for the 2018 – 19 session.. The finances are healthy but still underused. This session we may expect to pay a scribe for taking notes of our meetings as well as spending an appropriate amount on refreshments for meetings.

Started with £745

£415 SBC funding

Meeting expenses £40

Prize for school prize giving previously £20 increased £25 – All voted unanimously for this.

Constitution

The constitution has been developed over the last year and the latest draft circulated at our last meeting and issued with the notice of the AGM. There are no amendments to consider. The Constitution as drafted was voted on and accepted unanimously.

Office bearers

The voting for officials was carried out as follows:

Chair

Andy Maybury is continuing as Chair for this year.

Vice-Chair

Keith Morgan was willing to continue in this role. Keith was accepted as Vice Chair.

Treasurer

Johnny Short

Secretary

Andy suggested the role could be shared again but with no volunteers the result was Andy nominating Becca Anderson to stand as Secretary for this year, to which she accepted.

Summary of officers

post	name	email	phone
Chair	Andy Maybury	andymaybury@mac.com	375750
Vice-Chair	Keith Morgan	keithm@pingeurope.co.uk	
Treasurer	Johnny Short		
Secretary	Becca Anderson	anderson.becca@outlook.com	

Conclusion

The AGM concluded around 18:55 and the meeting proceeded into a regular meeting, which is recorded separately.