

Chair Annual Report

It has now been a year since our Parent Council reconstituted following the resignation of the previous office bearers in March 2023. The Chair has a legal obligation to provide an annual report within 12 months which created a bit of a quandary as historically the Parent Council accounts have been signed off on 30th June and our 12 month deadline lands on 27th June, so I will report on as much as I can just now and the accounts and outstanding information will be updated in September. The annual Headteacher report will take up the majority of the September meeting, so it seems to make sense to do it this way.

Last June, the working group created a brand new constitution. During the working group meeting with PKC, it was commented that the old constitution was very much out of date, drawing on practices that existed during the time of school boards and it was time to modernise it in line with legislation and current guidance. The changes made were to reflect the statutory functions and objectives of parent councils as provided for in the relevant laws and establish its independence from the local authority by removing the staff and Headteacher as members, as Headteachers are already provided a statutory role. The working group priority was to establish parent led meetings that would allow as much time as possible for discussions relating to parent priorities which would allow us to provide representation if the opportunity arose. The new constitution was adopted, and 3 office bearers were elected along with 10 ordinary members and 2 co-opted members. The timely establishment of the new Parent Council allowed us to secure the funds raised through the efforts of previous parent councils and to ensure KHS parents had a strong say in how those funds were used to benefit pupils of the school.

In August we shared our newly written Parent Council handbook which lays out our code of conduct and procedures. We created a Linktree account so parents could access all Parent Council documents easily. This proved to be invaluable when the school website was out of action for the first term as allowed us to still share information to parents not on Facebook.

At the beginning of the year, we set out aims and objectives and in doing so the following actions were undertaken:

- We provided articles to Kinross Newsletter throughout the year to provide information to our local community and would like to thank the Newsletter for supporting us with this.

- Office bearers took a table at the parents open evening in September to talk with parents.

- We established 3 sub-groups in September to take forward careers, sport and fundraising initiatives. We had difficulties in being able to get communication to parents quickly and it is an ongoing issue in taking forward initiatives, particularly as the school year is so short. Any future Parent Council should consider how best it can directly contact the Parent Forum as a way of making the most of potential opportunities. The result was that we had to postpone the Fundraising and Careers events that we tried to plan for February and the beginning of March which was a real disappointment. I would like to take the opportunity though to personally thank all the sub-group members who have been amazing in their support and do hope that the initiatives can be picked up again in the future. The sport group has continued to work in conjunction with Cath Devanney to expand the extracurricular offerings to pupils and particular thanks must be given to Stuart and Cath for all their hard work.

- We were invited to CHAS Rachel House in December along with a cohort of pupils and staff from the school. This year's Parent Council were honoured to be able to provide a donation of books to be gifted to families of the children of Rachel House and we received the loveliest card of thanks from Lyndsay Stobie and the team.

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-In January, George contacted PKC to discuss the admin funds held by the Parent Council. It is normal for PKC to provide each Parent Council with funds to meet their annual running costs, usually around £750 per year. Over a number of years, due to covid and the lack of a continuous paid minute taker, the funds had increased to over £3000 (after the receipt of this year's funds from PKC). He established that any parent council can donate remaining PKC admin funds at the end of the financial year to the school to be spent in line with its current priorities. The Parent Council needs to be aware of this going forward to make sure that excess admin funds are not held in the future. The Parent Council with support of some ordinary members undertook its own admin and the office bearers provide for their own running costs. As a result, we have been able to donate £2,500 (including this year's £750 annual administrative money provided by PKC) directly back to the fundraising monies used to fund equipment and additional services for the school and its wider community.

-In February, we began our funding allocation process. Applications were received from a variety of departments, clubs and ventures linked to the school and we were delighted to be able to support initiatives across sports, music, literacy and sciences as well as pupil initiatives. A funding proposal document was shared with the full Parent Council and unanimously approved. All monies have now been shared to the successful applicants.

-In February, office bearers met with senior staff at PKC to discuss Parent Council consultation processes and these discussions are still ongoing. We also shared a draft of our parent survey with KHS Headteacher to allow school information to be included if required. This was then shared in April to the wider parent forum.

-The office bearers took a table at our local community Better Place to Live Fair in March. As usual, this was a fantastic event, and we were delighted to be able to speak with a number of parents on the day. It was great to be able to make ourselves available to speak to parents and future Parent Council may wish to consider similar 'drop-in' opportunities.

-I attended PKC Chair meeting in March and Fiona Brand, one of our co-opted members has attended all the PKC ASN Parent Forum Focus Group meetings on our behalf and fed back on these at our ordinary meetings. We believe our Parent Council to be the first to have a specific Additional Support Needs representative and that other Parent Councils are now encouraged by PKC to do the same. We are extremely grateful to Fiona as her representation has been invaluable in keeping our parent forum up to date with the transformational approach being taken forward by PKC within the planning and support for Additional Support Needs.

-Two applications were submitted in March to Kinross Newsletter Trust by the Parent Council, and we are awaiting a response from the trust. If accepted, this will take the fundraising achieved by Parent Council this year to £3300, three times our initial target set.

-The previous year's accounts were submitted to PKC in March by George and £750 running costs were received for the year 2024-5.

-I attended the KHS Prize giving service in May to represent the Parent Council and again want to congratulate the pupils on their amazing achievements. The school are very lucky to have such outstanding pupils.

-Throughout the year, the Parent Council provided for open discussion times within our meetings. We sought to gather parent views on issues they told us were important to them. We had a Facebook poll on vaping, a survey on the various methods of communication used by KHSPC and

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raised parent views regarding the school mobile phone and school uniform policies. At the last meeting we put forward parental request for the installation of vaping alarms within the school toilets. It became clear throughout the year that what mattered to our parents was being mirrored across the rest of the country with vaping, phones and attendance regularly featuring in our daily news.

-We have been lucky to have been supported by Cllr Dave Cuthbert at meetings as a co-opted member and I would like to thank him for his invaluable support. We also want to thank our other local councillors. Cllr Richard Watters, Cllr Wullie Robertson and Cllr Neil Freshwater for taking the time to support this Parent Council in its work involvement and for the support they provide individually to the parents that contact them.

-Our Facebook admin team have worked hard all year to provide for careful monitoring of the page. In previous years, there have been issues with spam and fake accounts trolling our members and the page continues to receive these types of requests. It is through their diligence that the page has remained a safe space and it is vital that this continues as Facebook remains our main direct source of communication to parents. We now only accept accounts that have a means of verification.

-In line with good governance, at least 2 office bearers, usually the Chair and Treasurer have been involved in all external communications and meetings on behalf of the Parent Council and regular updates on these have been provided to the ordinary members and where required the wider parent forum with summaries provided for within the ordinary meeting minutes.

-We have maintained a Parent Council of 3 office bearers and 9 ordinary members this year, achieving quorate status at every meeting.

-This year has been about trying new things and pressing the reset button. We all have busy lives and finding a way to be actively involved in the school can be challenging during a working day when juggling so many other commitments. It is unclear, at a national level, how the role of parental involvement will continue within schools. There has been loss of funding to the National Parent Forum established to support Parent Councils and a long-promised change to government guidance on the roles of parent councils seems imminent. At the beginning of the year our working group set out with one clear goal, to improve the experience of the young people of Kinross High school and I hope that parent councils will be allowed to continue in the way that they were set up to do, to achieve just that for years to come.

-Our AGM will take place on 10th September. Any parent/carer wishing to stand for election as office bearer or who wishes to become an ordinary member, please email Kinross Parent Council before 23rd August and let us know how you wish to be involved.

-We would like to thank all Parent Forum members who have taken the time to support and contact us throughout the year, for your contributions to healthy debate and for taking the time to raise issues that matter to you and your young person. I would like to thank Mrs Brown for listening to those parent concerns at our meeting and providing a school perspective and finally, I would like to give particular thanks to those ordinary members who have supported the work of the Parent Council office bearers.