



## DRAFT MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 7 March 2012

PRESENT:	Vicky Cole (Chair)	Parent
	Greg Cookson (Vice chair)	Parent
	Sally Cunningham	Parent
	Andrew Greathead	Parent
	Dave Neillans	Parent
	Donald Smith	Parent
	Kim White	Parent
	Mark Wyllie	Parent
	Kath Anderson	Staff
	Colin Dempster	Staff
	Sarah Ingham	Staff
	Linda McInnes	Staff
IN ATTENDANCE:	Janis Craig	Head Teacher
	Sheena Richardson	Local Councillor
	Tom Trotter	Local Councillor
	Mary Benson	Clerk

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Ian Smith and Derek Simpson.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, held on Wednesday 8 February 2012, were approved with one change. Item 10 - "Feeder primaries" to be changed to "Cluster primaries".

### 3. Matters arising

*Duke of Edinburgh Awards* – Mrs Craig has had a meeting with Kim White to discuss the way forward. Mr Lambert is to be the school co-ordinator and Mrs Craig will set up a meeting with staff interested in taking part. The scheme is open to pupils aged 14 upwards. Kim's group (Group 1), is full and will start next term. The staff group (Group 2), will begin after the summer. There are 7 places available in Group 2 and if there are more pupils than that interested, their names will be drawn out of a hat for a place. Vicky Cole expressed the PSP's thanks to Kim White and Mrs Craig for their efforts in this area.

*Curriculum for Excellence* – will be covered in the Head Teacher's Report.

*Road safety* – the new Tesco's manager has not yet been invited to the school, but this will happen in due course. The police and community wardens have been involved in school assemblies to reinforce the message.

*The Gideons International* – are happy with the proposals regarding distribution of their bibles in the school.

*A Taste of Scotland* –KASG’s event had to be cancelled due to lack of support.

#### **4. Chairperson’s Report and Action Points from last meeting**

*Staff Representative* – Vicky Cole has received 2 notes of interest from other staff with regard to being a Staff Rep on the PSP. Since Miss Anderson and Mrs Ingham have now been staff reps for 3 years (a full term of office), and the PSP’s constitution allows for 3 staff reps, there will be a ballot at the end of the meeting to determine who will be on the PSP. Mrs McInnes has offered to stand down to allow other staff an opportunity to get involved. Vicky Cole expressed the PSP’s thanks to Mrs McInnes for her valued contribution during her time as a staff rep and Mrs McInnes left the meeting.

*Feedblitz/MailChimp* – Ian Smith is attending the ELAPCM meeting this evening on behalf of Knox PSP, so this item will be carried over to the next meeting. **Action IS**

*Secondary Schools Management Review* – see Head Teacher’s Report2

*Departmental Reviews* - Mr Illingworth will attend the meeting on 2nd May to give his presentation.

*Careers event* – no progress since last meeting, therefore the item will be carried forward to the next meeting. **Action All**

**5. Pupils’ Matters** – none raised.

#### **6. School website – Mr Colin Dempster**

*This item was moved to first on the agenda at the meeting, to allow Mr Dempster to leave once concluded.*

Mr Dempster gave an overview of what stage of development the website was in when he last attended a PSP meeting, and talked about the progress made since then and the next steps to be taken in developing the website further.

Mr Dempster is planning to develop the website as part of a continuing professional development course that he is undertaking this year. Planned improvements to the website include:

*Email guidance* – an email link to the guidance staff for pupils who do not feel comfortable speaking to staff face to face.

*Frequently Asked Questions* – a page where key information is written in plain English. Mr Dempster will email PSP reps for ideas of what information should go on this page.

*News stories* – it is hoped that news stories can be published on the website as soon as possible rather than waiting for the Knox News to be published. It is anticipated that a tagging system will be set up, where an item is only posted once on the website, but will automatically be published on other appropriate pages on the website.

*Sporting achievements* – more information on pupil’s sporting achievements

*Information for P7 pupils transferring to S1 at Knox* Mr Dempster plans to speak to the current S1 to see what their main worries were during their transition to high school and what information they felt would be needed by pupils new to the school. This would be used as a basis for information for new S1 pupils.

*Pupil Council* – expand access to pupils to publish items on the website. This would be done in a controlled manner and would allow certain pupils (perhaps one from each year and/or each house) access to publish items or provide a mini-paragraph giving the pupil’s perspective on news stories. These items would go through a filtering process by staff before being published live on the website.

*Update to core content and structure* – to reflect the new management structure from June.

*Website navigation* - the main buttons at the top of the home page could be developed into drop-down menus and a site map could be provided at the bottom of the home page to aid navigation around the website.

*Subject information* - Although not all school departments have the same volume of information on the website, more teachers are coming on board to try to improve and develop the departmental information available online. It is envisaged that the specific departmental/faculty website information will evolve and improve over time.

*Access to school work during emergency school closure* – as previously discussed, teaching staff can access and update the website from home, should the school have to be closed during term time (e.g. during periods of adverse weather). It would therefore be possible for staff to provide work for pupils to do at home in such a circumstance. Not all teachers are able to post this information, but there is someone in each department who can do it and if there is a problem, Mr Dempster would be able to do it for them.

*Parental permissions* - It was asked if there could be a facility on the website for parents to give permission for pupils to attend school trips, rather than sending in a note. Mrs Craig advised that parent's signatures are required, so this would not be possible. Absence notes can, however, be emailed to school by parents. Another suggestion was to make the homepage more like a newspaper front page.

Kim White and Vicky Cole both thanked Mr Dempster on behalf of the PSP and noted the huge amount of progress and work undertaken since the last time this matter was discussed. The proposals for the development of the website were felt to be excellent.

*Mr Dempster left the meeting.*

## **7. Head Teacher's Report**

*Curriculum for Excellence* – Mrs Craig had a very positive meeting with Phil Denning, HMIE, on 20 February. Sarah Smith, from the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate also visited the school on 5 March and was equally positive regarding the school's progress in preparation for the change to Curriculum for Excellence next session. Curriculum for Excellence is a Scottish Government initiative, which the school has to implement. It involves a complete change of mindset, and this change can take a while to understand; however the school now feels confident in the way forward, as positive feedback is being received from objective people. Vicky Cole and Dave Neilans thanked the school on behalf of the PSP, and applauded them for taking this forward in a positive manner and doing their best to prepare for the change in curriculum and make it work.

*Budget* – This financial year's school accounts are being finalized. Next session's timetable is having final revisions to reflect next financial year's budget.

*Events* –

KWN submission – now accessible through the school website.

Seabird Centre visit.

Junior drama club – cabaret

S4/5 information evening

Easter concert – 27 March

Curriculum for Excellence evening for S2 parents – 20 March

*Secondary Schools Management Review* – Mrs Craig gave a presentation about the planned change in management within the school for the benefit of the PSP.

All six secondary schools in East Lothian have been going through this process. The new management structure will involve fewer promoted teaching posts within the school. This is to reflect changes in budget and curriculum. The review aims to redistribute management within the school and break down barriers between departments, so that staff become more part of the whole school rather than simply subject specialists.

Knox's planned new management system is very structured and rationalized and reflects the house system within the school. The three Depute Head Teachers will each be responsible for one house within the school (ie Traprain, Lammerlaw or Garleton). Each Depute Head teacher will be supported by two Principal Teachers. Each of these Principal Teachers will be in charge of a Faculty. Each Faculty will be staffed by unpromoted teachers and will comprise of related subjects (eg chemistry, physics and biology; art, drama and music; or geography, history and modern studies). Principal Teachers will be responsible for whole school leadership, curriculum development and operational management, and will also have a support role. Each promoted Principal Teacher's post is job-sized and paid according to responsibilities.

East Lothian Council's Human Resources team has been involved in the management review, as has the Council's Finance Department and the Trade Unions. There will be no redundancies and every effort will be made to match existing Principal Teachers to the posts available under the new structure. Some eligible teachers may be offered early retirement. Other Principal Teachers may be offered promoted posts in other schools within the Local Authority. Any existing Principal Teachers for which there is no promoted post available within East Lothian will return to full time teaching under the new management structure; however their salaries will be protected for 3 years, or until 2016, depending on circumstance. The interview process for the Principal Teacher's posts is ongoing.

The new management structure will be in place from 5 June 2012.

This change in management should save money in the long term and this will be closely monitored. Knox has been moving toward a faculties system in recent years anyway. There may be a possibility for flexibility in the coming years since the management structure has been pared back now.

Mrs Craig noted that all staff at Knox have handled this proposed management change very professionally. Vicky Cole thanked all school staff on behalf of the PSP for dealing with this issue positively and professionally, and acknowledged how difficult this process must be for them.

*Councillor Tom Trotter and Provost Sheena Richardson left the meeting.* This will be the last Knox PSP meeting that Sheena Richardson will attend as Provost / Local Councillor. She was thanked for her valued contribution to the PSP and to Knox.

## **8. Staff Member's Report**

Mrs Ingham distributed a copy of an evaluation report of the Tots and Teens playgroup to all parent reps. The scheme has been very successful and there has been local and national interest in extending it out to other schools. Dr Richard Jennings (ELC Head of Education) visited the school on Monday and confirmed to Mrs Craig that there would be funding available for the playgroup to continue next session, with a possibility of extending the playgroup opening hours. Mrs Craig invited parent reps to visit the playgroup if they were in school on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday morning. Mrs Craig paid tribute to Mrs Ingham who was instrumental in setting this scheme up

## **9. Parent's Matters**

*School buses* – Vicky Cole raised the issue of school buses and whether pupils were worried that if they took time at the end of the school day to visit their locker, they would miss their school bus home. Mrs Craig did not feel it was a problem, but will raise it with Ross Prentice and confirm that buses wait for a reasonable time after the end of the school day before leaving.

**Action JC**

**10. Correspondence** – has been distributed to all via email.

**11. Election of Staff Members – see also Item 4**

Copies of staff statements and nominations were circulated. A ballot paper was issued to all and the following staff were elected as Staff Representatives – Mrs Sarah Ingham, Miss Kath Anderson and Mr Colin Dempster.

**12. Any Other Council Business – none raised.**

**Date of Next Meetings:**

2 May and 30 May 2012.

Action points	Who	When
Liaise with Colin Dempster to find out if Feedblitz subscribers can be imported into MailChimp.	Iain Smith	For the next meeting.
Discuss careers event ideas to find a way forward.	All interested parent reps.	Before the next meeting.
Speak to Ross Prentice regarding school buses	Mrs Craig	For the next meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson) Date: 2 May 2012

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Clerk) Date: 2 May 2012