

## AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 24 June 2008

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

### GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr J Beckitt, Miss M Braithwaite, Mr L Byrne, Mrs C Calverley, Mr P Carpenter, Mr G Carty, Mrs C H Dove, Mr P Feehily, Mr D Fowell, Mrs P Lynch, Cllr T P McGee, Mr A Moss, Mrs E Rice, Prof A Trinci, and Dr A Smith (Principal).

### IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Hill	Assistant Principal
Mrs D Blackburn	Assistant Principal
Mr D Pearson	Assistant Principal
Mr N Lowe	Assistant Health and Safety Advisor
Mr T Conlon	Clerk to the Governing Body
Miss C Dutton	Vice Chair Student Council

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair.

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman welcomed Claire Dutton, Vice Chair of the Student Council to the meeting as an observer.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Bentley and Fr V Whelan

#### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda for this meeting. No interests were declared.

#### 3. GOVERNOR RESIGNATION

The Chairperson reported that Damian Cunningham had resigned as a Foundation Governor.

#### 4. (i) GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 4 March and 7 and 14 May 2008, copies of which had been circulated previously, (a) be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record and (b) be authorised for publication in accordance with the College Instrument and Articles.

#### 4. (ii) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not included on the Agenda.

5. (i) COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the following Committee meetings, copies circulated previously,

(i) Audit Committee	9 June 2008
(ii) Finance and Building Committee	10 June 2008
(iii) Remuneration Committee	16 June 2008

(a) be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record and (b) be authorised for publication in accordance with the College Instrument and Articles.

5. (ii) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

a) Audit Committee – 9 June 2008

i) Appointment of Internal Auditors

RESOLVED: That the recommendation made by the Audit Committee that the appointment of Bentley Jenison as Internal Auditors to the college be extended for a three year period commencing on 1 August 2008 be approved.

b) Finance and Buildings Committee – 10 June 2008

i) Charging Policy for Adult and Continuing Education Courses

RESOLVED: That the recommendation made by the Finance and Buildings Committee in relation to the fees to be charged for Adult and Continuing Education Courses for 2008/2009 be approved.

ii) Authorisation of the Three Year Financial Plan

RESOLVED: That the Chair of Governors be authorised to sign the Three Year Financial Plan on behalf of the Governing Body.

iii) Variation to contract and Delegated Authority

RESOLVED: That the limits approved by the Finance and Buildings Committee in relation to a variation in the contract and delegated authority be agreed.

iv) The Budget for 2008/2009 was a separate item on the Agenda for this meeting.

c) Remuneration Committee – 16 June 2008

RESOLVED: That the recommendation made by the Remuneration Committee in relation to the salary increases for the Principal and Vice Principal be approved.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Lowe, Assistant Health and Safety Advisor circulated a) the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 20 May 2008 and b) a summary of the points identified at the Governor Training session on 7 May 2008.

Mrs Calverley felt that the training session had raised the awareness of Health and Safety to the Governing Body. It was agreed that Mrs Calverley, Mr Hill and Mr Lowe would meet to determine how best to feedback to the Governing Body information in relation to Health and Safety, this could either be a broad overview or information on specific areas. It was agreed that Mr Lowe would attend the next meeting of the Governing Body to keep Governors informed on health and safety matters.

In response to a question on the reporting of accidents Mr Lowe confirmed that the Finance and Building Committee receive an Annual Report on the number of accidents that have occurred in the college in a twelve month period.

7. BUDGET 2008/2009

The Finance and Buildings Committee had considered the Draft Budget for 2008/2009 on 10 June 2008. The Finance and Building Committee had recommended the budget for acceptance to the Governing Body.

Mrs Blackburn and Dr Smith drew Governors' attention to the papers that had been circulated to Governors in relation to the proposed budget for 2008/2009. The papers contained a) a spreadsheet of cash income and expenditure b) the same converted into accounting format and c) a text summary.

The funding for 2008/2009 from the LSC has been confirmed at £8,718,000, which is up £120,000 from that reported to the Finance and Buildings Committee. This means that instead of a real terms increase of 2% the college has received a cut of 0.5%. This is based on 1823 fte students with no growth for A level 16-18 year olds. The allocation is based on funding methodology and it was originally thought the new formula would be good for sixth form colleges. In reality this has not been the case and it is not clear why this has happened.

There is likely to be a surplus from 2007/2008 of something in the region of £242,000 to carry forward into 2008/2009. This is more than anticipated due to the fact that costs on the major capital project have been less than anticipated and interest payments have been less. There is a modest contingency of £2,705 compared to £171,906 last year, which means that the college is planning to spend all the income it receives. Dr Smith advised the Governors that the following year is also likely to be a bad year; therefore, any slack in the 2008/2009 budget would be beneficial.

The Governors' attention was drawn to the Business Plan that had been circulated to the meeting. Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that she would report the underlying trading position of the college to Governors at their termly meetings and that she would check with the auditors the best way to present this. It was agreed that there was a need to differentiate between the accounts for the college in general and the building

programme. It was noted that because of the building development the college will have an accounting loss in 2008/2009.

RESOLVED: That the budget as presented be approved.

8. (i) PRINCIPAL'S TERMLY REPORT

The report of the Principal, copies of which had been circulated, was presented and discussed.

RESOLVED - That the Principal's report be received.

8. (ii) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S TERMLY REPORT

The Principal indicated that in order to assist Governors he had highlighted key words in his report.

a) Introduction

There is a consultation taking place with the proposal that sixth form colleges return to the Local Authority by 2010. However, there is no clarity on how it will work in practice with further education split between two government departments DCSF and DIUS. The intention is that sixth form colleges should be attached to the DCSF with general FE colleges attached to the DIUS. Funding will come from the DCSF for 16 -19 year olds and from the DIUS for adults. This should not cause any great problems for the college.

It was anticipated that the college would have been inspected in the current academic year, but it will now probably be early in the next academic year. Dr Smith expressed concern at the way inspections were impacting on colleges behaviour in ways which were not in students' best interests. To illustrate these points examples were given following the interviews for two heads of departments.

b) Admissions

The Induction Programme for new students will take place on 30 June and 1 July 2008. The General Purposes Committee meets on 7 July 2008, which is after the induction days. This will enable judgements to be made on the basis of the most up to date information.

c) Staffing

Dr Smith reported on the resignations and appointments that had been made to the college and indicated that several long standing members of staff would be retiring at the end of the current academic year. In addition other members of staff were moving on to new professional challenges.

The Chair of Governors undertook to write to staff on behalf of the Governors thanking them for their dedication and hard work that they have given to the college.

#### d) Building Issues

i) Classroom Block – An offer of £75,000 compensation from the insurers representing Pannone has been accepted. A sum of £15,000 will go to FirstAssist the college's insurers who funded the early legal action with the remaining £60,000 being paid to the college. In addition reasonable legal costs will be paid, the costs incurred to date have been in the region of £13,000 but these still need to be finalised and agreed.

#### e) THREE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

It was noted that The Three Year Development Plan (non financial) was not yet complete and that it had to be submitted to the LSC by 31 July 2008

RESOLVED: a) That the Chairperson be authorised to agree any amendments or adjustments on behalf of the Governing Body before it was submitted to the LSC. A copy of the revised Development Plan would be issued to all Governors.

### 9 BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS

Greg Hill and Mr Pearson advised Governors on the latest developments in respect of the new building project with particular reference to the following:

a) Mr D Pearson, Assistant Principal gave an update on the developments since the Governors last meeting. Governors noted that full Council of the LSC at its meeting on 4 June 2008 had formally agreed to the funding of the new building at a total cost of £41,458,000. This is a fixed agreed price for the project. A letter of confirmation had been received by the college from the LSC. The cost will be spread over three financial years starting in 2008/2009 at a cost of £13m each year. If the work progresses quicker than anticipated the LSC can be asked to increase funding in any one year due to special circumstances.

A letter of intent had been signed by Cllr McGee and Dr Smith on behalf of the college and has been issued to cover the intervening months before full approval was received and LSC funds became available. An extension to this letter of intent will need to be issued and a contract drawn up with Norwest Holst, this has been drawn up by AA Projects, who are the project managers. This will include the costs of the development of the Sunday School land and will total £1.2m and will cover the period up to 31 July 2008 when the full contract will be issued.

Work on the project started on 16 June 2008 with enabling work lasting until the end of July 2008. Phase 1 – Preparation of the site, remediation and drainage will take between three to four months and should be completed by October 2008. The final completion date is scheduled for 14 May 2010; there will then be a 4 week period for decanting from the old building into the new one in preparation for the new academic year.

On 9 July 2008 at 1.00pm there will be a breaking of the ground ceremony and arrangements have been made to invite the local press and to prepare a press release.

A letter would be sent to the parents of next year's students to keep them informed of the building work and to advise them that the impact on their children would be minimised.

#### b) Planning

Planning permission had been granted subject to certain conditions, which were in the main standard planning conditions, whilst some were site specific. It was noted that all the conditions would be met.

#### c) Stockport Sunday School

The purchase of the Stockport Sunday School is taking much longer than anticipated. Mr Hill has been pursuing the Trustees to finalise the details of the contract. The Sunday School is insisting on some clauses being included in the contract relating to any future sale of the land at a profit.

The milestones for the agreement had been identified but it was not possible at this stage to provide dates of when they would be achieved. In order to complete the sale, terms of agreement have been reached on three documents, which are i) the sales contract, ii) the lease agreement for the college to use the annexe and iii) the lease agreement for the Sunday School to use the Joseph Meyer building. Agreement on all three is very close.

To avoid delay to the programme the college has negotiated an agreement on a license with the Sunday School to enable the contractors to get on the Sunday School playing field site from 23 June 2008.

#### d) Shrewsbury Diocese

Once the sale of the land and buildings are completed the newly acquired assets will be vested in the name of the Trustees of the Diocese to be used in the interest of Aquinas College.

#### e) Freedom of Information Request

The college had received a Freedom of Information request from Mrs Sheila Oliver and she and two neighbours of the college had visited the college to review minutes of the Governing Body and associated papers for the last 3/4 years. A Freedom of Information request has also been made to the LSC to see the documents submitted by the college in relation to funding.

#### f) Meeting with Neighbours

The college continues to keep local residents informed of developments. A meeting with the three local councillors and neighbours was held on 18 June 2008 at the college. The Chair of Governors along with Dr Smith and other college staff attended and the meeting was chaired by a local councillor. Local police community officers and local authority highways officers also attended. The local residents were advised of the temporary parking restrictions that are

planned and they shared their concerns related to the building process. The meeting was the first of a series of monthly meetings planned throughout the building programme. It was felt that the meeting had been a positive one.

Prof Trinci felt that the neighbourhood newsletters were very good and thanked the members of staff involved in producing them.

10. CHAPLAINCY REPORT

RESOLVED: That the Chaplaincy Report that had been included in the Principal's Report be received.

11. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2008/2009

A schedule of meetings for the Academic Year 2008/2009 had been circulated to all Governors for information. The schedule was approved,

12. CHAIRPERSON'S ACTION

The Chairperson advised the Governors that he along with the Principal had signed a letter of intent on behalf of the college to cover the intervening months before full approval had been received from the LSC and funds received.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was brought forward for Governors consideration.

14. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Autumn Term meeting - 11 November 2008 at 4.30pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Terry Conlon  
Clerk to the Governors