

AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 11 November 2008

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

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

Mr T Conlon in the Chair.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Hill	Assistant Principal
Mr W Spencer	Assistant Principal
Mrs D Blackburn	Assistant Principal
Mr T Conlon	Clerk to the Governing Body
Miss C Dutton	Student Vice President

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED - That Cllr T P McGee be elected Chairperson for the ensuing year.

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED - That Mr L Byrne be elected Vice - Chairperson for the ensuing year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs M Bentley, Mr P Feehily and Mrs E Rice. The Governors extended their best wishes to Mrs Bentley for a speedy recovery from a recent operation,

4. APPOINTMENT OF FOUNDATION GOVERNORS

All the Foundation Governors had been re-appointed and the Chairperson welcomed Mrs H Kelly (Headteacher of St Anne's RC High School) as a new Foundation Governor replacing Mr D Cunningham. All the Governors and staff introduced themselves.

5. CO-OPTION OF GOVERNORS

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Ms C Calverley and Prof A Trinci be appointed as Co-opted Governors until 31 August 2012.

6. NOMINATED GOVERNOR

It was noted that Dr P Beatty had been nominated by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council as their representative on the Governing Body. The Clerk advised the Governors that the position of Local Authority Governor did not exist under the proposed revised Instrument and Articles of Government, however, the transition arrangements allowed the appointment to continue.

RESOLVED: That Dr P Beatty be appointed as the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council representative on the Governing Body.

7. DECLARATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTER OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Governors were asked to complete the Declaration of Eligibility and Register of Pecuniary Interest Forms, that had been circulated and to return them to the Clerk at the end of the meeting.

8. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items included on the Agenda for this meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

9. REVISED INSTRUMENT AND ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT

A copy of the proposed revised Instrument and Articles of Government had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. The revised Instrument and Articles of Government made a number of changes and the Clerk to the Governing Body outlined the changes. After a full discussion it was

RESOLVED: That:

- i) the revised Instrument and Articles of Government for the college be approved.
- ii) the Governing Body would continue to adopt the Open Government policy: Governing Body meetings and its committees would be open to the public, subject to the exclusion of observers for confidential items.
- iii) the minutes of the Governing Body meetings and its committees would be published on the college website within 10 working days of their approval by the Governing Body.
- iv) the number of Foundation Governors on the Governing Body be eleven.
- v) the number of Staff Governors on the Governing Body be two and each may be a member of the academic or non academic staff, nominated and elected by all staff.
- vi) the number of Student Governors on the Governing Body be two.
- vii) the number of Parent Governors on the Governing Body be one
- viii) the number of Co-opted Governors on the Governing Body be three to include the appointment of a representative of the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council on the Governing Body under the transition arrangements.

10. (i) GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 24 June 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.

10. (ii) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

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

11. (i) COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(i) Audit Committee	13 October 2008
(ii) Finance and Building Committee	14 October 2008
(iii) General Purposes and Employment Committee	7 July and 21 October 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.

11. (ii) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

a) Audit Committee – 13 October 2008

i) Appointment of Internal Auditors

The Governing Body was asked to approve the recommendation that Bentley Jennison be appointed as Internal Auditors to the college for a three year period commencing on 1 August 2008.

RESOLVED: That Bentley Jennison be appointed as Internal Auditors to the college for a three year period commencing on 1 August 2008.

ii) Financial Statements Audit Summary

Governors noted that the draft Management Letter from Chadwick LLP indicated that subject to carrying out a post balance sheet events review there will be an unqualified opinion on both the Financial Statements and Regularity Audit for the year ended 31 July 2008. There were no management letter points that required to be drawn to the attention of Governors.

iii) Audit Committee Annual Report

Governors noted that the Audit Committee Annual Report would be considered at this meeting.

iv) Risk Management

Governors noted that the Annual Report on Risk Management would be considered at this meeting.

b) Finance and Building Committee - 14 October 2008

i) Building Issues

These would be considered as part of the Principal's Report.

ii) Governors noted that the College's Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2008 would be considered at this meeting.

iii) IT Acceptable Use - Policy Review

The Finance and Buildings Committee had reviewed the IT Acceptable Use policy and there were still some issues to clarify before the Governing Body could approve the policy.

RESOLVED: That the revised IT Acceptable Use policy be referred back to the Finance and Buildings Committee.

c) General Purposes and Employment Committee –21 October 2008

i) Admissions 2008/2009

The total number of students in the College is 1875 and Dr Smith advised Governors that it had been necessary to recruit a modest amount of additional staffing to accommodate students and their curriculum choices although this amounted to no more than one full time equivalent. Rooming is an issue because accommodation is extremely tight. The work on the new building had a minor impact on the operation of the college on a day to day basis.

Some places had been offered to late category 1-4 students on the waiting list who came to the induction courses in July. Places were also offered to students with particular difficult circumstances and "looked after children". However, because of the pressure of numbers we offered uniquely few such places this year.

The college has more students than it is being funded for in 2008/2009, but this will help in the discussions for 2009/2010, although it is not clear what will happen with transitional funding.

ii) Admissions 2009/2010

Governors noted that the Admissions Policy for 2009/2010 would remain unchanged and that telephone applications would be made on 6 December 2008 for category 5 students. Governors were invited to attend. It was noted that the number of category 5 offers would probably be slightly less than in previous years, but this would depend on the number of category 1-4 applications that are received.

d) Employment Committee – 21 October 2008

i) Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

Members of the Committee had looked at the revised Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and recommended some amendments which would be considered at its next meeting in the Spring Term.

ii) Policy Reviews

Members of the Committee had looked at the revised Equality and Diversity Policy and Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure and had recommended some amendments which would be considered at its next meeting in the Spring Term.

RESOLVED: That the revised Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and the revised Equality and Diversity Policy and Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure be referred back to the Employment Committee.

12. APPROVAL OF STATUTORY ACCOUNTS 2007/2008

A copy of the College's Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2008 had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. Both the Audit Committee and the Finance and Buildings Committee had discussed these at their October 2008 meetings.

In view of the fact that the college had been funded on a plan led funding basis and no separate certificate was needed there was no need for a Special meeting to approve the accounts at a later date. Members of the Audit Committee and Finance and Buildings Committee were asked to recommend that the Governing Body approve the Report and Financial Statement. This approval was given.

RESOLVED: That the College's Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2008 be approved, subject to the Final Certificate being received from the Learning and Skills Council.

13. BUDGET 2008/2009

Members were reminded that the LSC Income budget of £8,720m for 2008/2009 would not change because it is now based on plan led funding. There had been a slight increase in staffing costs because of increased student numbers.

The major impact in the coming year will again be the capital build. The budget already includes estimates of the costs for the year, but this will fluctuate month by month as the project progresses. The total project costs to date are £6.6m and short term borrowing of £306m have been used to fund these costs. LSC capital grants received to date total £2.1m and just over £4m has been claimed but not yet paid.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the budget would be re-calculated in January 2009.

For 2009/2010 the LSC will compare actual delivery in 2008/2009 with the funding position. In view of the fact that the college has slightly more students than it is being funded for in 2008/2009 it will help in the discussions for 2009/2010. At the moment the LSC software is not working so it is not possible to make any predictions on funding levels.

RESOLVED: That the budget position be noted.

Dr Smith advised the Governors that the LSC officers who visited the college at the same time as the Ofsted inspection had stated that in their judgement the financial management of the college is outstanding.

14. GOVERNORS ATTENDANCE RECORD 2007/2008

Details of Governors attendance at both Governing Body meetings and Committee meetings during the academic year 2007/2008 were circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chairperson thanked all Governors for their support at the various Committee meetings and at the Governing Body meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report on Governors attendance for the academic year 2007/2008 be approved.

15. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Governors were asked to consider which Committee they would be interested in being members of for the 2008/2009 academic year. After full discussion it was

RESOLVED: i) That membership of each Committee be determined as per the attached paper to these minutes.

ii) That the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be as follows:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairperson</u>	<u>Vice Chairperson</u>
a) Audit Committee	Mr P Carpenter	Fr V Whelan
b) Finance and Buildings Committee	Miss M Braithwaite	Mr J Beckitt
c) General Purpose & Employment	Prof A P J Trinci	Mrs E Rice
d) Remuneration Committee	Mrs H Dove	Mrs E Rice

iii) That Mr A Martin and Mr A McCarthy be co-opted on to the Audit Committee.

16. (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.

16. (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) Ofsted Inspection

A copy of the draft report from Ofsted following the two day inspection was circulated to all Governors. The college had been given three weeks' notice of the inspection. The college had replied to the draft report and Governors were reminded that the report was confidential at this stage. The final report would be published soon. The Governors noted the excellent results that the college had achieved with 4 grades classed as outstanding (grade 1) and the remaining 2 classed as good (grade 2) and that the overall judgement was that the college was outstanding. Mr Spencer added that the college had hoped for a grade 1 for Capacity to Improve instead of a grade 2 that had been given by the inspectors. He drew Governors attention to paragraph 21 of the report where it stated that governance at the college was outstanding.

Dr Smith advised the Governors that all members of the senior management teams at the college had contributed significantly to the inspection. It had been a remarkable effort by all concerned to finalise the 2008 SAR in two weeks instead of two months. Having the 2008 SAR available to inspectors had been hugely beneficial in the outcomes of the inspection.

RESOLVED: That the Governors record their appreciation to staff and students for their commitment to the college.

Whilst the inspectors had looked at many aspects of college, Dr Smith felt that they needed to recognise the danger of Ofsted concentrating primarily on examination results and similar quantitative data.

b) Admissions – The number of students on roll on 1 October 2008 was 1,875, which is a little higher than anticipated and the college had been funded for about 40 fewer students.

The next admissions round would again be critical in getting the numbers right. There is a drop in Year 11 pupils in Stockport Schools of nearly 400 and this drop will impact on the numbers for 2009. There are several other factors that could impact on the college and these include, Stockport Academy, Reddish Vale applying for Trust status.

c) Staffing – Dr Smith reported on the resignations and appointments that had be made to the college for September 2008 and indicated that the new members of staff had settled in well at the college.

Mr P Beatty left at this point.

d) Premises Issues

i) Existing Building – The establishment of the main building compound, installation of security fencing and the relocation of storage cabins and Music Studio have had some minor impact on the operation of the college on a day to day basis. The amount of space has been reduced and parking could become a problem later on.

ii) The access to the campus for some students and staff may involve crossing the route of site traffic, the health and safety of students and staff is very important and the college's Health and Safety Adviser and a member of the AAP team responsible for CDM compliance have checked to ensure that all precautions are in place.

iii) Classroom Block - An offer in the region of £12,000 has been made by Zurich Insurance as a settlement figure for legal costs incurred by the college. This is short of the original valuation and Hague Lambert have suggested that the college make a counter offer of £13,500, which splits the difference and is about £1,000 short of the original valuation. Mr Hill was pursuing this option.

e) Examination Results – Annex B to the report showed the examination level results for 2008, whilst Annex C showed the A level Performance System (ALPS), value added for the college in the A and AS level examinations. Annexe C also includes the GCSE and other examination results for daytime 16-19 students.

Dr Smith advised Governors that Contextualised Value Added analysis will be published for the first time in the national league tables in January 2009. This measure ignores the volume aspect and, introduces an element which causes students who do large numbers of A levels to be regarded less and less favourably in the value added measurement. As a result of these factors it is anticipated that the CVA measure will be rapidly discredited.

Father Vin Whelan left at this point.

16. BUILDING PROJECT

Mr Hill advised the Governors that the main contract with Norwest Holst had now been signed and that the purchase of Stockport Sunday School had been completed on 25 September 2008.

The remediation of the ground took less time than scheduled so the contractors were able to bring forward the start date for the piling work, which is nearing completion. The main building work is on programme after initial delays which were caused by the time taken to discharge the planning conditions. Work on the sports ground was delayed because of the time taken to complete the purchase of Stockport Sunday School. The project has started and will take approximately 16 weeks so it should be completed before Christmas 2008 with landscaping taking place later.

The newly acquired land has been vested in the name of the Trustees of the Shrewsbury Diocese to be used in the interest of Aquinas College.

The college continues to keep local residents informed of developments. The last meeting involving three local councillors and neighbours was held on Monday 10 November 2008. A group known as the Heaviley Action Group are monitoring activities on the site closely. A small number of complaints have been received and they have been dealt with as quickly as possible. The planning officer from the local authority is in contact with the college.

A Clerk of Works has been appointed by the college to monitor the building work for quality and accuracy. He will liaise with the main contractor and report to the college and the project manager each week.

The target date for completion of the project is May/June 2010.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

A copy of the Risk Assessment Annual Report for 2007/2008, which had been circulated to all Governors, was discussed. Mrs Blackburn outlined the key elements of the report to Governors. It was noted that the risk management process was well established in the college with regular reports to the Senior Management Team. In addition risk management was a standards item on the Audit Committee Agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Risk Management Report for 2007/2008 be approved.

18. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Governors were advised that the Audit Committee had considered its Annual report for the financial year 2007/2008, a copy of which had been circulated previously to all members of the Governing Body.

RESOLVED: That the Audit Committee's Annual Report be received.

19. INSPECTION OUTCOMES AND SELF ASSESSMENT REPORTS

A report that summarised the Cross College Self Assessment Report for 2007/2008 had been circulated to all Governors.

Mr Spencer outlined the process whereby all teachers in a department are observed in a particular week by a team of three observers. In terms of consistency this has been an extremely valuable exercise and provides the college with an excellent data base.

The Quality Review Meetings are now in their third year and the contribution made by Governors has been very much appreciated. For the first time this year it has also involved senior colleagues from the consortium of colleges and their contribution has been invaluable, particularly in ensuring of consistency of grades.

The Self Assessment Report was considered by the Management Group and an Action Plan has been drawn up. The report will be available to Ofsted and the LSC. It is anticipated that the college will be inspected in this academic year and that it is likely to be a two day inspection with three inspectors, one of whom will inspect the Catholic ethos.

The college has undergone a Sector Survey to investigate the effectiveness of Level 3 provision in the college. The provision was judged to be outstanding and the letter from Ofsted as a result of the visit is Annexe A to the Principal's Report.

RESOLVED: That the Cross College Self Assessment Report for 2006/2007 be received and noted.

20. CHAIRPERSON'S ACTION

The Chairperson advised the Governors that there were no actions since the last meeting.

21. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was brought forward for Governors consideration.

22. A.O.C.B.

a) Governors were advised that the Certificate Evening would be held on Monday 15 December 2008 at 7.30pm at Stockport Town Hall. Governors were asked to make every effort to attend.

23. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

a) Spring Term meeting – 3 March 2009 at 4.30pm

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____