

AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 16 June 2011

Time: 6.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Mrs M Bentley, Mrs L Bernola, Miss M Braithwaite, Mr L Byrne, Ms C Calverley, Miss H Donelon, Mrs C H Dove, Mr D Fowell, Mrs P Lynch, Cllr T P McGee, Mrs E Rice, Prof A Trinci, and Mr A McCarthy (Audit Committee Co-opted Member).

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr D Pearson Principal
Mrs D Blackburn Assistant Principal
Mr T Conlon Clerk to the Governing Body

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Dr P Beatty, Mr P Carpenter, Miss T Hunt, Mr A Moss and Fr V Whelan.

2. PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

The Chairperson advised Governors that the purpose of the training session was to alert them to the difficulties that the college would be facing in the next few years as a result of the current economic climate and the reductions in public services expenditure.

The aim would be to safeguard jobs and avoid compulsory redundancies where ever possible. However, it must be noted that the staffing expenditure at the college is a high percentage of the total budget.

3. PRESENTATIONS

a) Mr Pearson gave a presentation that outlined the action that the college was currently undertaking to review expenditure across the college. He reminded Governors that the college has many strengths, it is well run, has a new building and is in a good position to meet the challenges it faces but it cannot be complacent.

Mr Pearson outlined the main challenges facing the college which he identified as the following:

- i) Funding Cuts
- ii) Local Reputation
- iii) Admissions
- iv) Poor Performance
- v) Quality
- vi) Staff Turnover

A discussion took place on each of these areas with particular reference to Added Value and the changes to the management structure of the college.

b) Mrs Blackburn gave a presentation on the changes to the funding methodology that the college is facing. Mrs Blackburn's presentation covered the following areas:

- i) Standard Learner Numbers
- ii) Provider Factors
- iii) Funding Rate
- iv) Retention and Achievement
- v) Guided Learning Hours
- vi) Contact Time

Governors noted that the funding rate had remained the same for the last three years. The college is funded based on the actual student numbers in the preceding year. The census date is 6 weeks after the students official start date. This means that for 2011/2012 financial year the college is funded on the number of students at the college on the census date for 2010. It is important that the admission numbers are carefully managed.

There has been a reduction in the funding for the core curriculum and the effect of this is that it would have meant a drop in funding of 10% or a loss of approximately £700,000 over the next 3 years. There is transition relief which reduces this to £575,000. It is not clear if the transition relief will continue after 2011/2012.

Details of the areas that the college is currently looking at to save monies was shared with Governors, but Mrs Blackburn reminded Governors that pay is by far the largest element of the budget.

The Chairperson asked the staff representative if staff were aware of the difficulties facing the college. Mr Fowell confirmed that staff had been made aware at a staff briefing by the Principal.

4. SUMMARY

The Chairperson thanked everyone for attending the training session and expressed the view that the Governors need to be supportive of the Principal and his management team as they face a challenging time for the next 3-5 years. It is important the Governors understand why changes are being made and the rationale for the changes. It was stressed that staff need to be kept informed of developments.

Governors expressed the view that the training session had been very informative and that it would be useful to have a training/update meeting maybe once a term. It was agreed that the Principal in consultation with the Chairperson would look at this and report back at the next Governing Body meeting.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that copies of the slides used in the presentations would be emailed to Governors. Those not on email would receive a paper copy.

If Governors had any questions after the meeting they were asked to contact either Mr Pearson or Mrs Blackburn.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____