

AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 20 November 2018

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Miss M Braithwaite, Mr L Byrne, Mr P Carter, Mrs C H Dove, Mr R Harris, Mr B Hickey, Mr J Horan, Mr P Horton, Mr A Martin, Cllr T P McGee, Mrs J Miller, Mr D Pearson, Dr A Smith, Mrs A Taylor and Ms E Urbancova.

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms C Vitti	Vice Principal
Mrs D Blackburn	Assistant Principal (Finance)
Mr T Conlon	Clerk to the Governing Body

Mr T Conlon in the Chair

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

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

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Mrs J Miller be elected Vice Chairperson for the ensuing academic year.

3. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Cllr T McGee.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Miss M Jarvis and Mr A Wood.

5. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

i) It was noted that Ms E Urbancova was the new Parent Governor. Ms Urbancova was welcomed to the meeting and for her benefit all of the Governors introduced themselves.

ii) The Chairperson reported that he had contacted Mr Michael Taylor who is member of Our Lady and St Christopher's church in Romiley. He is also a parent of two students at the college and two who have attended previously.

It was agreed that the Bishop of Shrewsbury be asked to appoint Mr M Taylor as a Foundation Governor of the college.

iii) Co-opted Governor

There is a vacancy for a co-opted governor and it was agreed that the skills matrix that governors had completed would be used to identify any skills gap. Mr Pearson would then write to parents to detailing the skills needed and asking if anyone was interested in the vacancy to contact the college.

6. 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.

7. 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.

There were no interests declared.

8. OPEN GOVERNMENT

RESOLVED: That 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.

9. CES CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GOVERNORS

The Chairperson reminded Governors that a sub group of the Governors had met on 23 January 2018 to review the Code of Conduct for Governors. The revised Code of Conduct, copies of which had been circulated previously did not address the concerns that the Governing Body had raised with the Diocese. The changes amounted to the deletion of 3 lines on page 2 comprising of 35 words out of 3027 in the code. A summary of the responses received from Governors on the revised Code of Conduct had also been circulated to Governors.

A full discussion took place on the revised Code of Conduct for Governors and the responses that had been received. Some Governors felt that there was nothing in the code that they were not already doing, whilst others felt that the revised Code of Conduct had changed very little and the concerns raised earlier still existed. It was noted that other Diocese had not yet circulated the Code the Conduct to their schools.

It was agreed that the Diocese be advised that Governors still have concerns about signing the revised Code of Conduct for Governors and that they would be happy to meet with representatives of the Diocese so that the concerns of the Governing Body can be expressed fully.

10. GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2018, copies of which had been circulated previously be, (a) approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record and (b) authorised for publication in accordance with the College Instrument and Articles.

11. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

i) Audit Committee – Minute 4 (a) (iii)

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the number of days for internal audit for 2018/2019 had been agreed at 18 days.

ii) Committee Membership – Minute 11

Vacancy for a Foundation Governor – Please see Minute 4 (ii) above.

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(i) Audit Committee	5 November 2018
(ii) General Purposes and Employment Committee	2 July and 9 October 2018
(iii) Resources Committee	6 November 2018
(iv) Teaching and Learning Committee	2 October 2018

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

13. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

a) Audit Committee – 5 November 2018

i) Draft Statutory Accounts – Minute 7

Governors noted that the College's Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2018 would be considered at this meeting.

ii) Internal Audit Annual Report for 2017/2018 – Minute 8

A Governor asked for clarification on the health and safety recommendation that had not yet been implemented. Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the auditors had undertaken a health and safety walk around college and identified a number of minor areas for improvement.

The report from RSM concluded that the college has adequate and effective risk management control and governance processes to manage the achievement of the College's objectives.

iii) Financial Statements Audit and Management Letter – Minute 12

Governors noted that the draft Management Letter from Mazars 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 2018.

There were no management points that required to be drawn to the attention of Governors.

iv) Risk Management – Minute 13

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

v) Audit Committee Annual Report - Minute 14

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

b) Resources Committee - 6 November 2018

i) Health and Safety Report 2017/2018 – Minute 6

Governors noted that the main cause of absence was reported as Muscular skeletal disorder. The number of days lost had increased from 150 to 264 in the previous year and covered 6 staff with 1 member of staff being absent for 210 days due to manual handling. Two members of staff had been absent due to stress related illness for a total of 5 days compared to 61 in the previous year.

ii) Budget – Minute 8

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the college would compile options for the “little extras” for capital funding that had been announced in the recent budget statement. The college was awaiting confirmation of how much it would receive. Further information would be provided for Governors at the next meeting.

iii) Draft Statutory Accounts – Minute 9

Governors noted that the College’s Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2018 would be considered at this meeting.

iv) Financial Regulations – Minute 10

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the Resources Committee had reviewed the financial regulations and had recommended them to the Governing Body for approval.

RESOLVED: That the Financial Regulations be approved.

c) General Purposes and Employment Committee – 9 October 2018

i) Admissions 2018/2019 – Minute 5

Mr Horan advise Governors that Mr Pearson had been asked if consideration had been given to streamlining the admissions process for 2019/2020. A decision had been made to stay with the current process for another year.

Governors noted the information in relation to 317 students who had not been interviewed.

Governors noted that at the start of the term the actual number of students on roll was 2257. The latest figures are 2236 with a L6 was 1230 and U6 of 1006 which is 11 above

the target figure of 2225. There had been 26 students who had dropped out of which 20 were from L6, these students have probably gone back to their previous school.

With the introduction of linear subjects the college would expect to keep more students. There will still be a number of drop outs at the end of the first year due to a variety reasons including ill health.

ii) Admissions 2019/2020 – Minute 6

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the admissions process will be the same as the last 3 years after which a review will be undertaken.

Governors noted that the Open Day/Evenings had been very busy. A new prospectus had been used and the feed back on it had been very positive. The closing date for applications (which are online) for 2019/2020 is 30 November 2018. Applications from category 2 students who have submitted their application forms by 30 November 2018 will then be considered taking into account their school reference. Those student who have not completed the admissions process will be sent a reminder. Applicants who are to receive further consideration will be contacted by email by 20 December 2018 inviting them to attend an interview in January/February 2019.

Around 1100 category 2 applicants would be interviewed along with around 730 category 1 applicants. Last year there had been 1750 applications.

Mr Horan asked are the “hits” on the college website recorded. Mr Pearson replied that he will look at this and provide a postcode analysis.

d) Teaching and Learning Committee - 2 October 2018

i) Careers, The Gatsby Standard – Minute 6

Governors noted the introduction of 8 benchmarks which had to be met and these are known as The Gatsby benchmarks. In addition the college has to have a nominated link governor for careers and the General Purposes Committee had recommended that Dr Beatty be the link governor.

RESOLVED: That Dr Beatty be appointed as the link governor for careers.

ii) Results Overview – Minute 7

Governors noted that the college will look closely at those students whose average GCSE score is 7.0 - 7.5 and that there had been an improvement in Mathematics at AS level.

ii) Progress on Under Performing Subjects - Minute 6

Governors noted a) the courses that were causing concern in September 2017 and the progress that had been made, b) the courses that were causing concern in September 2018 and c) subjects that will be closely monitored.

14. GOVERNING BODY SELF ASSESSMENT 2018

Details of the Governors Self - Assessment returns for the academic year 2017/2018 had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.

The Chairperson thanked Governors for their support in completing the Self - Assessment Review form. He added that some of the points raised had recently been addressed with particular reference to the appointment of a Foundation Governor and the concerns raised about student governors.

RESOLVED: That the Governors Self - Assessment returns for the academic year 2017/2018 be received.

15. APPROVAL OF STATUTORY ACCOUNTS

A copy of the College's Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2018 had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. Both the Audit Committee and the Resources Committee had discussed these at their November 2018 meetings.

Members of the Audit Committee and Resources Committee had recommended that the Governing Body approve the Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2018.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that a note had just been received from Mazars (External Auditors) in relation to possible changes in relation to how pensions are treated within the accounts.

RESOLVED: That subject to clarification of how pensions are treated within the accounts, the College's Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 July 2018 be approved.

16. BUDGET 2018/2019

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that there were no changes to the budget position that had been reported to the Resources Committee on 6 November 2018. The budget would be reviewed in January 2019 and there will be regular re-forecasts during the year to ensure that the surplus reflects the latest information and cash flow is accurate as possible.

RESOLVED: That the budget position be noted.

17. GOVERNORS ATTENDANCE RECORD 2017/2018

Details of the Governors attendance at both Governing Body meetings and Committee meetings during the academic year 2017/2018 had been circulated to all Governors 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 2017/2018 be approved.

18. PRINCIPAL'S TERMLY REPORT

The report of the Principal, copies of which were circulated, was presented and discussed. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the autumn term report provides an opportunity to review the previous year's performance and focus on the future.

RESOLVED: That the Principal's report be received.

19. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S TERMLY REPORT

Mr Pearson reported on the following:

a) Examination Results – Mr Pearson advised Governors that with the introduction of linearity it is difficult to compare results with previous years. Once again over 52% of grades at A Level were at the highest grades level of A* - B and that BTECs had over 92% of grades were at D* or D, equivalent to A* or A. BTECs account for over 20% of the college's provision. These vocational courses are in the process of being reformed in a similar way to A levels.

The staff governors felt that linearity was more difficult and it had benefits and challenges. Mrs Miller felt that with GCSE being linear the transition to A level would be easier. Cllr McGee added that at the Catholic Colleges conference a discussion had taken place on the legacy/ new specification of BTECs. Cllr McGee said that at some point the college will have to move to the new specification for BTECs. Mr Harris added that discussion were already taking place in the college. Mrs Taylor asked will T levels, where a student follows an academic route, that are being piloted in 2020 be a success in the long term. Mr Pearson replied that the DfE wants 3 routes for students to follow, which are academic, apprenticeships or technical (T levels). Cllr McGee added that the national position is that post 16 colleges will offer A level or T levels, sixth form colleges (93), which are different from sixth forms in a school will offer the academic route. In T levels the student is committed to a particular course of study.

Mr Pearson indicated that employers will not be able to differentiate between the old and new qualifications. Outcomes are guaranteed to be the same for the next 2 years. Applied General subjects will be more challenging.

Mr Horan left the meeting whilst this point was being discussed.

b) Staffing - Mr Pearson reported on the resignations and appointments that had been made to the college from September 2018.

c) Adult Education – Mr Pearson reported on the current education curriculum offered by the Adult Education section of the college. Governors noted that it covers a wide range of academic and leisure courses and that the number enrolled was similar to last year. An update from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has been received giving more detail on the devolution of Adult Education funding from ESFA to the Combined Authority. There is uncertainty about whether or not the college will receive funding in 2019/2020 to offer academic course.

d) Mission and Ethos Day

The College held a Mission and Ethos Day in July and started with a presentation where staff members past and present, explained what the college mission statement meant to them, the importance of mission day and other comments relating to the college ethos. The other part of the day allowed staff to undertake a variety of activities organised by the college.

e) Euroweek

The report also covered the various activities that take place during Euroweek 2018 in Belgium. Eight students from the college represented the UK.

f) Trips and Visits

The report also covered the various trips and visits that had been undertaken by Modern Language Students, Earth Sciences and politics students.

g) Departmental Activities

The report also covered the activities that had taken place in the Art and Design Department, Dance Workshops, Film and Media Department, Performing Arts and PE Department.

Mrs Miller asked for clarification on the PGCE course that is run at the college. Mr Pearson replied that the course is a day time provision and covers 14 - 18 age range. The college works with the University of Bolton and it is now in its third year. He added that the college has employed someone from each cohort of students.

The Governors thanked Mr Pearson for his informative report.

20. RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

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 standard item on the Audit Committee Agenda. Governors noted that the college has had clean audit reports from both Internal and External auditors.

RESOLVED: That Risk Management Annual Report for 2017/2018 and the amended Risk Management Policy be approved.

21. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Governors were advised that the Audit Committee had considered its Annual Report for the financial year 2017/2018, a copy of which had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.

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

22. CHAIRPERSON'S ACTION

This had been reported in Minute 5 - Committee Membership in relation to the appointment of a Foundation Governor.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was brought forward for Governors consideration.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governors were reminded that the Certificate Evening was on Monday 17 December 2018 in the Sports Hall at the college at 7.30pm. The Chairperson encouraged Governors to attend.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19 March 2019.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____

Terry Conlon
(Clerk to the Governors)