

AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 25 June 2014

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr A Bircher, Miss M Braithwaite, Ms C Calverley, Mr P Carter, Mrs C H Dove, Mr B Hickey, Mr J Horan, Mrs P Lynch, Mr A Martin, Cllr T P McGee, Mrs J Miller, Mr D Pearson (Principal), Mr L Thomas and Mrs E Rice.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr E Moore	Vice Principal
Mrs D Blackburn	Assistant Principal
Mr T Conlon	Clerk to the Governing Body

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair

Before the meeting commenced the Chairperson advised Governors that Jack Holmes a student at the College had passed away during the half term break. He had suffered a seizure at home. As a mark of respect a moments silence was observed.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr L Byrne, Ms H Delahan, Mrs B Donovan, Mrs R Hewitt and Fr P Munroe

2. WELCOME TO NEW GOVERNORS

Opening the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Mr A Bircher and Mr L Thomas (Student representatives) to their first meeting of the Governing Body. For the benefit of Mr A Bircher and Mr L Thomas Governors members introduced themselves.

3. 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. However, Governors were reminded of the fact that there would be a confidential item on admission arrangements.

4. (i) GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 4 March and 7 May 2014, copies of which had been circulated previously, (a) be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record subject to minute 8 iv) Admissions 2014/2015, 2041 reading 2014 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 covered by the Agenda.

5. (i) COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

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| (i) Remuneration Committee | 9 June 2014 |
| (ii) Audit Committee | 9 June 2014 |
| (iii) Finance and Building Committee | 10 June 2014 |

(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) Remuneration Committee – 9 June 2014

Governors noted that the Committee had recorded their thanks and appreciation to Mr Pearson and Mr Moore for their hard work and commitment to the college.

b) Audit Committee – 9 June 2014

i) Review of Committee Terms of Reference – Minute 4 (i)

RESOLVED: That the changes proposed by the Audit Committee to their Terms of Reference be agreed.

ii) Strategy for Internal Audit 2014/2015 – 2016/2017 – Minute 7

Baker Tilly had submitted a Strategy for the provision of an Internal Audit Service for 2014/2015. The Audit Plan for 2014/2015 would consist of 18 days with the addition of contingency days as necessary. The fee for 2014/2015 would be £8,280 which is inclusive of expenses but exclusive of VAT.

RESOLVED: That the Strategy for the provision of an Internal Audit Service for 2014/2015 be agreed.

iii) Audit Review – Minute 10

Governors noted that the auditors had been very complimentary about the work of Debbie Blackburn, Assistant Principal (Finance).

c) Finance and Buildings Committee – 10 June 2014

i) Charging Policy for Adult and Continuing Education Courses – Minute 5

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 2014/2015 be approved.

ii) Health and Safety Report – Minute 6

Ms Calverley as Health and Safety Governor has asked for more information on risk assessment and advised Governors that it will be in the next report.

iii) The Budget for 2014/2015 and the Two Year Financial Plan were a separate item on the Agenda for this meeting.

6. BUDGET 2014/2015

The Finance and Buildings Committee had considered the Draft Budget for 2014/2015 on 10 June 2014. The Finance and Buildings Committee had recommended the budget for acceptance to the Governing Body.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that she would forward to them the budget papers in relation to the proposed budget for 2014/2015. The papers would contain a) a spreadsheet of cash income and expenditure b) the same converted into accounting format and c) a text summary.

The EFA and SFA have confirmed that the income from them for 2014/2015 will be £8,805,870 compared with £8,396,968 for 2013/2014 and is an increase of £408,902. The funding is based on 2054 students compared with 1933 for last year. There is also a fall in funding protection by £47,000 to £296,000 and transitional protection has now reduced to zero.

An increase in the number of high needs students supported by £72k; this element of funding provides the first £6,000 additional support funding per High Needs student. There are 37 students which is 12 more than in 2013/2014. The total income for the college is £9,698,453 which is an increase of £263,879.

The draft budget shows a contingency reserve of £118,422, which is a worst case scenario, whilst the trading surplus is £200,967.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that whilst the position on a national pay award for staff was uncertain one per cent had been included in the budget.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that by 2015/2016 the cumulative loss of funding to the college would be around £500,000. Many colleges have had to reduce provision and make staffing reductions. Cllr McGee indicated that the growth in student numbers last year has helped the college to overcome some of these problems but the college cannot continue to grow in numbers. Cllr McGee also referred to the position at Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College where the Marple Campus will be designated as the Sixth Form and to the position at Stockport College where no A levels will be offered. The college needs to be aware of any changes that take place and to maintain good examination results to retain its reputation. The two Student Governors felt that the college had a good reputation with students applying for a place at the college.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors of the increase in the number of students with "high needs". EFA Funding is given at £6,000 per student with the Local Authority providing a top up income for any additional costs over and above this sum. At the moment the Local Authority are not committing themselves to any level of funding but there could be as many as 51 students next year and there will be a need to recruit Learning Support Assistants. Dr Beatty asked if other colleges were in the same position. Mrs Blackburn indicated that they were. Mr Horan suggested that a joint approach by colleges to the Local Authority may be helpful. Cllr McGee felt that if the Local Authority cannot give a firm commitment then the college may have to review the position.

Mrs Rice asked if there would be any saving from examination fees and if the college had been affected by the growth of sixth forms in schools. Mrs Blackburn replied by saying that there would be no savings in examination fees and that the college had not been affected by the growth of sixth forms in schools. Miss Braithwaite felt that sixth forms in schools could not offer the breadth of curriculum that sixth form colleges can.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that nationally out of 93 sixth form colleges 19 would be setting a deficit budget for 2014/2015. Mr Horan asked if the problem had been highlighted

in the national press. Mr Pearson said that there had been more publicity this year. There is likely to be spending review after the election in May 2015.

The budget for 2014/2015 is very tight and costs will have to be controlled.

RESOLVED: That the budget as presented be approved.

7. TWO YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the two year financial plan has to be submitted to the EFA by the end of July 2014. In previous years the plan had been for three years. The plan includes the outturn for 2013/2014, the budget for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the plan would show an accounting loss of £150.00 in year 2 but there are still some adjustments to be made.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson be authorised to sign the Two Year Plan on behalf of the Governing Body.

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

a) Introduction - Mr Pearson drew Governors attention to the ejournal that had been sent to Governors prior to the meeting. The newsletter gives Governors a flavour of what has been happening throughout the college.

b) Mr Pearson advised Governors that the contribution by students to the life of the College has been exceptional. He drew particular attention to the India Trip, Leavers' Assembly and Leavers' Ball

c) Staffing - Mr Pearson reported on the resignations and appointments that had been made to the college. Particular reference was made to the resignations of Mr Wood (Head of Physics) and Ms Bruce (Human Resources) who had given many years service to the college. Governors were invited to at the end of term celebrations on Friday 11 July 2014.

d) Finance Issues – This had been dealt with under the budget for 2014/2015.

e) Adult Education – The Adult Education Centre provides both academic and non academic courses to around 1100 students each year. The budget from the SFA has been reduced over the years and for 2014/2015 it is £59,000 a fall of £51,000 from 2012/2013.

f) Technology Update – An overview of the IT provision undertaken by Fid Bleasdale (Head of Support Services and Learning Resources and Andy Moss (IT Manager) had identified challenges and opportunities in order to move technology forward in a sustainable and feasible way, in light of the current financial position A number of areas had been identified which included the establishment of Technology Group in college, a new Technology Strategy, delivery of a planned programme of training for staff including subject specific training and workshops and CEOP accredited e-safety training. In addition a successful bid for improvement in IT infrastructure resulted in the college receiving £62,000 towards upgrading the wireless network, which had been identified by students as a priority to support their use of personal devices in college. The Student Governors commented on the difficulties that students had in connecting with WiFi in the college. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the college needed a greater broadband capacity and that discussions were taking place with Virgin Media to resolve this issue.

g) Trips and exchanges – Governors noted the various trips and exchanges that had taken place.

9. CHAPLAINCY REPORT

RESOLVED: i) That the Chaplaincy Report that had been included in the Principal's Report be received and ii) that all the staff involved be thanked for their hard work.

10. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson reported that Dr P Beatty had been re-appointed as the Local Authority's representative on the Governing Body.

11. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Chairperson introduced a paper that had been circulated prior to the meeting that gave details of the proposed changes to the committee structure. It also outlined the constitution of the various committees.

After a full discussion it was RESOLVED:

- i) That a new Teaching and Learning Committee be established.
- ii) That the Finance and Building Committee be re-named Resources Committee
- iii) That the membership of the committees be as follows;

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Membership 5	Quorum 3
3 Foundation Governors	At least 1
2 External Appointees	At least 1

GENERAL PURPOSES AND EMPLOYMENT

Membership General Purposes 8/9, Employment 7/8	Quorum 4
4 Foundation Governors	At least 2
1 Co-opted Governors)
1 Staff Governor) At least 2
1 Parent Governor)
1 Student (GP only))

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Membership 4	Quorum 3
Foundation Governors	At least 3

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Membership 7/8	Quorum 3
4 Foundation Governors	At least 2
2 Co-opted Governor)
1 Staff Governor) At least 1
1 Student)

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Membership 7/8	Quorum 3
4 Foundation Governors	At least 2
1 Co-opted Governor)
1 Staff Governor) At least 1
1 Student)

12. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2014/2015

The Governors were asked to consider which Committee they would be interested in being members of for 2014/2015 and to advise the Clerk to the Governing Body by 7 July 2014. They were also asked to indicate if they wished to be considered for the post of Chair of any of the committees.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons would be appointed once the membership of the various committees had been finalised.
- ii) That Ms Calverley be appointed as the Health and Safety Governor.
- iii) That Mrs H Dove be appointed as the SEN Governor.
- iv) That Ms C Calverley be appointed to serve on the JCC.

13. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2014/2015

A schedule of meetings for the Academic Year 2014/2015 had been circulated to all Governors for information.

RESOLVED: That the schedule as circulated be approved.

14. CHAIRPERSON'S ACTION

The Chairperson advised Governors that i) he had written to a family in Marple whose child had not been allocated a place at the college explaining the college's admission policy and ii) he had received a letter from Pat Lynch in which she tendered her resignation as a Foundation Governor to take effect from the end of the academic year.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was brought forward for Governors' consideration.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairperson thanked all Governors for their service to the college.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

18 November 2014 at 4.30pm.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____