

AQUINAS COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Meeting: 24 June 2015

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr L Byrne, Miss M Braithwaite, Ms C Calverley, Mr P Carter, Mrs B Donovan, Mrs C H Dove, Mrs R Hewitt, Mr B Hickey, Mr J Horan, Miss F Insoll, Cllr T P McGee, Mrs J Miller, Fr P Munroe, Mr D Pearson (Principal) and Dr A Smith.

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Cllr T P McGee in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ms H Delahan, Mr A Martin, Mrs E Rice and Mrs B Donovan for her late arrival.

2. WELCOME TO NEW GOVERNOR

Opening the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Miss F Insoll (Student representative) to her first meeting of the Governing Body. For the benefit of Miss Insoll Governors 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 10 March and 13 May 2015, 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 covered by the Agenda.

5. (i) COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(i) Remuneration Committee	9 June 2015
(ii) Audit Committee	15 June 2015
(iii) Resources Committee	9 June 2015
(iv) Teaching and Learning Committee	16 June 2015

(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 2015

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

RESOLVED: That the pay increase recommended by the Remuneration Committee be agreed.

b) Resources Committee – 9 June 2015

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

RESOLVED: That the recommendation made by the Resources Committee in relation to the fees to be charged for Adult and Continuing Education Courses for 2015/2016 be approved.

ii) The budget for 2015/2016 and Authorisation of Two Year Financial Plan were separate items on the Agenda for this meeting.

c) Audit Committee – 15 June 2015

i) Audit Review – Minute 3

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

ii) Strategy for Internal Audit 2015/2016 – 2017/2018 – Minute 8

Baker Tilly had submitted a Strategy for the provision of an Internal Audit Service for 2015/2016. The Audit Plan for 2015/2016 would consist of 18 days with the addition of contingency days as necessary. The fee for 2015/2016 would be £8,532 which is inclusive of expenses but exclusive of VAT.

RESOLVED: i) Baker Tilly be appointed as Internal Auditors for 2015/2016 and that with effect from 26 October 2015 they would become part of RSM International and ii) that the Strategy for the provision of an Internal Audit Service for 2015/2016 be agreed.

d) Teaching and Learning Committee - 16 June 2015

i) Linear A levels – Minute 5

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the AS would not contribute to an A level qualification.

Mr Hickey arrived whilst this item was being discussed.

ii) Changes to assuring Quality – Minute 6

Governors noted that the changes to the system for assuring quality were being reviewed and that it was an on going process.

iii) Inspection Framework Minute 7

The Chairperson advised Governors that the college could be inspected from September 2016 and that the Governing Body and the college need to be ready for an inspection.

iv) Appointment of a Vice Principal

The Chairperson advised Governors that Mr Moore had tendered his resignation as Vice Principal to take effect from 31 August 2016. Mr Moore has been at the college for 35 years and there will be an opportunity to thank him for his services to the college at a later date.

It was hoped that a new Vice Principal could be appointed to start in January 2016 or Easter 2016 at the latest to provide an overlap. There will be a need to establish an Appointments Panel with a representative from the Diocese on the Panel. In addition the Remuneration Committee would need to meet to determine the salary level. The Chairperson undertook to co-ordinate the appointments process.

6. BUDGET 2015/2016

The Resources Committee had considered the Draft Budget for 2015/2016 on 9 June 2015. The Resources Committee had recommended the budget for acceptance to the Governing Body.

Mrs Blackburn drew Governors' attention to the papers that had been circulated prior to the meeting in relation to the proposed budget for 2015/2016. The papers contained 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 2015/2016 will be £8,966,664 compared with £8,805,870 for 2014/2015 and is an increase of £160,794. The funding is based on 2077 students compared with 2054 for last year. There is also a small increase in funding protection of £3k to £299k; this will reduce to nothing in 2016/2017. An increase in the number of high needs students from £240k to £252k; this element of funding provides the first £6,000 additional support funding per High Needs student. There are 42 students which is 5 more than in 2014/2015. The total income for the college is £10,060,688 which is an increase of £192,053.

The draft budget shows a contingency reserve of £68,526 compared to £199,000 last year, whilst the trading surplus is £131,544. It is anticipated that there will be additional income for students with high needs but additional costs will also be incurred. This should be cost neutral.

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that there would be an increase in the employer's contributions for national insurance from 10.4% to 13.8% and teachers pension 14.1% to 16.48%. These increases amount more or less to the additional income for the college.

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.

Cllr McGee advised Governors that the college had just received its Dashboard which gives a comparison of the college's financial health. It is outstanding at the moment but is predicted to be good. The college budget is very tight but not a deficit budget. Some colleges may have to merge or close.

A copy of the Key Financial Performance Indicators for the college that had been received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) was circulated for information. Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that some of the information was factually incorrect. The college's financial health score for 2013/2014 was 240 which places the college in the outstanding classification. However, it is likely to fall for future years, the Chairperson advised Governors that most sixth form colleges were either outstanding or good.

The budget for 2015/2016 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 2015. The plan includes the outturn for 2014/2015, the budget for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

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.

Mrs Donovan arrived whilst this item was being discussed

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

- a) Re Structure of post 16 education and training sector – Confidential Item
- b) The college is exploring the possibility of running a franchised PGCSE course for trainee teachers.
- c) Locally the other colleges are feeling the impact of the funding cuts more than Aquinas. Strategic discussions are taking place with the Local Authority on the future of post 16 education within the borough and much will depend on student recruitment in September. Mrs Miller asked if there was a voice for post 18 students. The Chairperson replied that there was a concentration on apprenticeship. Mr Horan suggested that the CBI may be interested in what is happening to post 16 education. Mr Pearson advised Governors that General FE Colleges were in a more precarious position. There had been an article by Nick Bowles in the TES recently and Mr Pearson undertook to forward it to Governors. Mr Hickey advised Governors that sixth forms in schools were being subsidised by funding from the lower school.
- d) Adult Education – i) the Centre had been issued with a Notice of Concern by the SFA and the college had put in place an action plan to improve the situation. The centre is awaiting a final response from the SFA to the plans that have been put in place. ii) The Local Authority has asked the centre to cover the courses previously taught at Stockport Academy and iii) The Adult Education Art and Craft Exhibition had been a great success.
- e) 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
- f) Staffing - Mr Pearson reported on the resignations and appointments that had been made to the college. Governors were invited to at the end of term celebrations on Friday 10 July 2015.
- g) Finance Issues – This had been dealt with under the budget for 2015/2016.
- h) Technology Update – An update of the IT strategy was provided by Fid Bleasdale (Head of Support Services and Learning Resources and Andy Moss (IT Manager) it highlighted the changes that had been made in 2014/2015 i) infrastructure, improved purchasing decisions, evaluation of resources and ii) the developments planned for the summer2015.
- i) 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. GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS

The Internal Auditors had recommended that the Governing Body formally assesses the effectiveness of the Governing Body and its committees. It was agreed the Chairperson, Principal and Clerk to the Governing Body draw up a proforma for Governors to use.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2015/2016

The Governors were asked to consider which Committee they would be interested in being members of for 2015/2016. A copy of the Committee Membership for 2014/2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting for information.

RESOLVED:

- i) That in view of the fact that a new Committee structure had only been introduced from September 2014, the Committee membership remains the same as 2014/2015.
- ii) That the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Committees remains the same as 2014/2015.
- iii) That Ms Calverley be appointed as the Health and Safety Governor.
- iv) That Mrs H Dove be appointed as the SEN Governor.
- v) That Ms C Calverley be appointed to serve on the JCC.

12. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2015/2016

A schedule of meetings for the Academic Year 2015/2016 had been circulated to all Governors for information.

RESOLVED: That the schedule as circulated be approved subject to the date for the Governing Body meeting in November be amended to 24 November 2015.

13. CHAIRPERSON'S ACTION

The Chairperson advised Governors that there had no action since the last meeting.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was brought forward for Governors' consideration.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairperson thanked all Governors for their service to the college but particularly to Mrs Donovan who was attending her last Governing Body meeting as a parent representative.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

24 November 2015 at 4.30pm.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____