

AQUINAS COLLEGE
RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 5 November 2019
Time: 4.30 pm
Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Miss M Braithwaite, Mr P Carter, Mr P Horton, Cllr T P McGee, Miss K O'Callaghan and Mr D Pearson.

Miss M Braithwaite in the Chair.

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms C Vitti Vice Principal Mrs D Blackburn Assistant Principal (Finance)

Mr T Conlon Clerk to the Governing Body

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Ms M Braithwaite

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Mrs A Taylor.

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.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2019 copies of which had been circulated previously, were agreed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a) Budget 2018/2019 – Minute 9

i) Miss Braithwaite asked if the college had received the additional £196,000 from the ESFA for Mathematics, English and Core Mathematics. Mrs Blackburn confirmed that the college had received the £196,000.

ii) Miss Braithwaite asked if Stockport MBC had agreed the £247,000 for students with high needs. Mrs Blackburn replied that the figure will be around £320,000. In addition East Cheshire Council owed the college £18,000 for high needs students which is still under negotiation.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

Mrs Blackburn introduced a paper that had been prepared by Neil Lowe, Health and Safety Adviser, which had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. The report covered the academic year 2018/2019 and the main points were as follows:

- a) There have been no significant regulatory changes affecting the college.
- b) Health and Safety legislation will be subject to minor amendments following the exit from the European Union as “The Health and Safety (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018” will come into force the following day. The Government has committed to maintaining current health and safety legislation following an exit from the European Union.
- c) The college was subject to a statutory fire safety inspection from the fire and rescue service in May 2019. The inspector had been very complementary of the condition of the building and its processes. There were no actions required as a result of the inspection.
- d) Accidents reported for the period 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019 were summarised by cause. The number of accidents was 12 which was two more than the previous year. Two incidents had been reported under RIDDOR i) collapse of equipment and ii) contact with powered machinery.
- e) Work related ill health – Governors noted that the main causes of absence was reported as stress. The number of days lost reduced from 150 in the previous year to 90 and covered 6 staff. 88 days (5 members of staff) were lost due to stress. 2 days were lost due to migraine. Mr Horton asked if the stress was directly related to work. Mrs Blackburn replied that it had been disclosed as work related ill health and that the college is proactive in managing stress.
- f) Four departments, Art and Design, Facilities, Kitchen and Science were classed as high risk. Whilst IT, Physical Education, Performing Arts and Pathways were classed as medium risk. All departments classed as high risk and medium risk have been evaluated in October 2019.
- g) Benchmarking data had been provided that showed that the college was performing well in comparison to other colleges and that the college is a safe place to work and study.

Mr Carter added that things seemed to have levelled out. Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the college is managing health and safety better. Mr Pearson added that the number of incidents was small considering the number of staff and student who are in the college at any one time.

RESOLVED: i) That the Health and Safety Report for 2018/2019 be received.
ii) That the Governors record their appreciation to the staff involved in the fire safety inspection.

7. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Mrs Blackburn introduced the Management Accounts for September 2019 that had been circulated to Governors. Mrs Blackburn added that there was little to report.

A discussion took place on the September 2019 Management Accounts with particular reference to the following:

- a) The trading surplus is £97,000
- b) The forecast outturn is £101,000
- c) The number of students on roll on the census date for this academic year will be around 2254 which is an increase of 11 students which will mean an increased budget for 2020/2021.
- d) The first tranche of the grant to cover the increase in the employer's contribution to the Teachers Pension Scheme has been received. It is anticipated that the total grant will be about £18,000 short of covering the actual additional cost. However, at the end of the financial year a reconciliation will be undertaken and it is hoped that the college will receive the shortfall.
- e) Cllr McGee advised Governors that there was some uncertainty about pay awards for teaching and support staff. The teaching associations were asking for a 2.9% increase. In addition the increase in the Minimum Wage from April 2020 means that Unison is looking for new pay scales to be introduced for support staff.
- f) The college's 3 year contract for gas and electricity had come to an end and a new contract has been agreed through Stockport MBC who are a member of a consortium consisting of some Greater Manchester Local Authorities (STAR). Mrs Blackburn had contacted the Diocese and advised them of the proposed new contract. The Diocese had indicated that it was a good deal. The additional cost to the college will be in the region of £50,000.
- g) The financial health of the college remains good.

If members had any questions on the September Accounts they were asked to contact Mrs Blackburn.

RESOLVED: That the Accounts for September 2019 be received.

8. BUDGET 2019/2020

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the changes to the budget had been covered whilst discussing the September 2019 Accounts. She reiterated that the budget for 2019/2020 was very tight. An updated report will be provided for the Governing Body meeting on 19 November 2019.

9. DRAFT STATUTORY ACCOUNTS 2018/2019

Mrs Blackburn introduced the draft Statutory Accounts for 2018/2019 that had been circulated previously to Governors. It was noted that the Audit Committee who have a corporate governance role in considering the draft Statutory Accounts had discussed this at its meeting on 4 November 2019.

A discussion took place on a number of points included in the draft Statutory Accounts for 2018/2019 with particular reference to the following points:

- i) The college had exceeded all its targets.

- ii) The changes in the cashflow to separately identify the element of cash put on deposit to generate interest.
- iii) The Trade Union Facilities disclosure note.
- iv) The changes in the operating surplus as a result of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund.

In addition all members were asked to check the draft Statutory Accounts for any mistakes or typing errors and to advise Mrs Blackburn accordingly.

The accounts remain draft until they are approved by the Governing Body and signed by the Chairperson, Principal and the auditors.

RESOLVED: That the draft Statutory Accounts for 2018/2019, subject to any governor amendments be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

10. FUTURE FUNDING METHODOLOGY

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the rate per student will increase by £188 to £4,188 from 1 August 2020, which is a 4.7% increase. In addition the college will receive an additional £400 per student for those who are studying at least 2 subjects from the list of subjects that qualify for the additional funding. Additional funding will also be paid for students studying Mathematics and English. Whilst Governors noted the additional funding that the college would receive they felt that the core funding per student should be increased.

Mr Horton advised Governor that National Governors Association were putting pressure on the Government to increase budgets for all schools and colleges. Cllr McGee advised Governors that the Autumn Statement that had been announced was for 1 year only and that after the forthcoming General Election there is likely to be another financial review. He added that Nationally there is pressure on the High Needs Block of funding. An added complication is the fact that the college financial year runs from 1 August to 31 July, whereas schools budgets run from April to March.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) College Financial Letter – Dashboard

Mrs Blackburn circulated a letter and a paper that had been issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The paper gave details of the college's financial health, underlying financial health, financial control, financial intervention and college dashboard information for October 2019.

Based on the financial plan the college's financial health is:

Good for 2018/2019 (the latest outturn forecast year), and
Good for 2019/2020 (the current budget year).

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that staff costs for the college were 77% of income compared with the sector average of 66% for the plan year of 2020/21, which appears high although there is some doubt about the 66% comparison as that has dropped from 74% in the previous year. In addition borrowing was high at 25% compared to the average for the sector of 5% but that is a result of the capital funding regime when we built the new college. In addition, £1,300,000 can be paid off without penalty but is placed on deposit. The college still owes £3,000,000 in total on the building and has 14 years in which to pay it off.

If Governors had any questions they were asked to contact Mrs Blackburn.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11 February 2020 at 4.30pm.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____