

AQUINAS COLLEGE

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Date: 4 July 2023
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr L Byrne, Mr P Horton, Mr G Hynes, Mrs C Knights, Mr T P McGee, Mrs J Miller, Dr A Smith and Mr M Taylor.

Mr J Horton in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr D Pearson Principal
Mr A Bailey Vice Principal

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Mr Horton.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies was received and accepted from Mrs J Miller for her late arrival.

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 24 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the Agenda for the meeting.

6. ADMISSIONS 2022/2023

Mr Pearson felt that the Welcome Days for new students in September 2023 that had been held earlier in the week had been well received, 1301 accepted the Welcome Day invitation and 1239 students attended compared to 1118 in 2022. There were over 600 students on each day and the behaviour of the students had been good. Whereas at the Open Day for Year 10 students the behaviour had not been as good as those in Year 11 and the students seemed less mature. It was felt that since Covid students were less well behaved and compliant. Mr Hynes asked if it was necessary to have an Open Day for Year 10. Mr Pearson replied that it was not necessary but other colleges have them. Mr Bailey added that the year 10 students have nothing to lose, they cannot lose a place at the college and some may have no intention of coming to the college.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that 1377 students have accepted places at the college for September 2023 with 257 students undecided, 64 students who had declined a place and 525 students who had not replied to the offer of a place. The number of offers made was 2159 which include Category 2 students who were offered a place without interview. The number of students on the waiting list was 103 comprised of 61 from category 2 who were not offered a place following interview, 6 from category 2 appeals who were unsuccessful following interview and 36 from category 2 who were not offered a place and were not interviewed. Late applications were received from 97 students in category 1 and 176 students in category 2.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that for September 2023 the college is looking for a L6 of around 1320 students and an U6 of 1105. The total number at the start of the academic year could be around 2475 giving a total of 2425 students by the census date in October 2023. Mr Pearson reminded Governors that the number of students on roll on the census date determines the funding for the college for the next financial year. The college is likely to over recruit for September 2023 which could mean an increase in class size for some subjects. There are some specialist subject areas where it is not possible to increase the class size.

Many of those students who are shown as undecided did put the college down as their first choice.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that there were no major concerns and the college was on track to achieve the numbers outlined above. He added that he did not think there would be a need to go to the waiting list.

It is anticipated that for September 2024 the new build will be ready for use but there will still be a need to watch specialist provision.

Mr Taylor asked if there had been any complaints from parents as a result of the increased class sizes. Mr Pearson replied that in subjects such as psychology and sociology it was possible to increase class size with no adverse effect on the teaching. Mrs Knights asked if there had been any complaints about overcrowding in the canteen or library. Mr Pearson replied that the lunch period is between 12.30 to 14.30 and the canteen can only serve 300 students at any one time. The library is used for studies but it can be difficult sometimes to find a space. The college is efficient on how it uses the classrooms and the average class size is between 18-21 but there is a wide range. He added that some students use outside spaces when the building is crowded.

Mr Horton asked what happens about the 525 students who had not replied. Mr Pearson replied that the college chases them up and asks them to reply. He added that they are likely to have applied to other colleges as well.

RESOLVED: That the above strategies be noted.

Mrs Miller arrived whilst this item was being discussed.

7. PUBLICITY

Mr Pearson circulated sample of the ways in which the college publicises what it has to offer. These include the College Prospectus, Adult Education Prospectus and flyers, good luck and birthday cards, pens and pencils. College Website

Mr Pearson advised Governors that whilst the college website is compliant it has become outdated, a sure sign of this is that it has become more cluttered than sleek and has gathered more and more data over the past few years. A redesign, in conjunction with a strategic plan, will help to prune the site so the content is relevant and useful to our website visitors

A tender is being finalising for the development and marketing of a new website. The college is committed to providing an exceptional online experience that effectively showcases the college that will attract prospective students while reflecting its Catholic identity. The tender outlined our primary objectives listed below but will also include other website requirements including design, management, maintenance and accessibility. The cost of the new website will be in the region of £10,000.

The primary objectives are as follows:

- a) Develop a visually appealing, user-friendly, and mobile-responsive website with a clear and concise overview of the college's mission and values.
- b) Create a compelling online presence that effectively communicates our college's strengths, study programs, extracurricular activities, outstanding facilities, student life, and achievements to engage prospective students and their families.
- c) Ensure the website design effectively conveys our Catholic values.
- d) Provide tools and functionalities that enable all users, including prospective and current students, parents, to easily navigate the website and access relevant information.
- e) Integrate news and social media platforms and develop strategies to engage with prospective students effectively.
- f) Robust search function that allows users to easily find the information they need.
- g) Incorporate analytics and reporting features to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the website.
- h) A user-friendly content management system that allows our staff to easily update and maintain website content including media resources.
- i) Accessibility

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dr Beatty advised Governors that this could be his last meeting, he has decided to step down as a Governor but would continue until a replacement Co-opted Governor had been appointed. He thanked Governors for their co-operation and understanding over the years.

Mr Pearson thanked Dr Beatty for his contributions to the governance of the college and felt that he had brought a balance to the Governing Body's discussions and deliberations.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10 October 2023 at 4.30pm

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____

AQUINAS COLLEGE
EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Date: 4 July 2023
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

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Mr J Horton in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr D Pearson Principal
Mr A Bailey Vice Principal).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

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5. EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Mr Pearson advised Governors of the following:

- a) There is one case that may end up at an Employment Tribunal, if that is the case it is likely to be in 2025.
- b) There is one support member of staff are on long term sickness and may not return to work, if that is the case the contract will be terminated.
- c) Four members of the teaching staff are leaving and have already been replaced. Two teachers are retiring.

6. RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

Dr Smith asked if the college was experiencing any difficulty in appointing staff. Mr Pearson replied that there is a national shortage in certain subjects such as science. He added that recruitment is not usually a problem for sixth form colleges, however, the college recently had difficulty in recruiting a teacher for Accountancy/Business Studies. In other subject areas the short lists are not as strong as in previous years. There had been 6 applicants for a senior tutor post, in previous years it would probably been around 15 applications.

Dr Smith raised the issue of succession planning in relation to middle and senior managers. Mr Pearson replied that this had been discussed at a recent Remuneration Committee meeting. He added that it was proposed to broaden the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) next year.

Mr Hynes asked if the college had good relationships with universities. Mr Pearson replied that the did have good relationships with universities but it had decided to pause the PGCE course run at the college in conjunction with Bolton University.

It was felt that teachers were undervalued in society. The starting salary of a newly qualified teacher will rise to £30,000, but up to 30% are leaving teaching within 5 years. Mr McGee added that the college is some 3/4 years behind other colleges who have felt this pressure earlier. Mr Pearson added that Multi Academy Trust can move staff from one school to another within the Trust. In some cases, teachers are returning to industry, an example of this is in the building industry where they can earn more than in teaching.

7. GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

Mr Pearson introduced a paper that had been prepared by Mrs Blackburn and had been circulated to Governors. \the paper had been considered and approved at the Governing Body meeting held on 21 March 2023.

Governors noted that it is now a statutory requirement for any employer who employs more than 250 staff to undertake an annual gender pay gap analysis. The college had 220 staff including invigilators and the split was 145 (66%) females and 75 (34%) males. The college has a teaching staff split of 65% female and 35% male. Females on average earn more than males due to the fact that there are more females than males on management points. The snapshot date for the public sector was 31 March 2021. The College needs to report on the following:

- 1) The mean gender pay gap
- 2) The median gender pay gap
- 3) The mean bonus gender pay gap
- 4) The median bonus gender pay gap
- 5) The proportion of males receiving a bonus payment
- 6) The proportion of females receiving a bonus payment
- 7) The proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band

The college does not pay bonuses to any staff. The support staff are entitled to an annual standards payment of £320 pro-rata depending on hours worked. This is paid in December and so is not included in the March figures. It does not fall into the definition of bonuses for the purposes of Gender Pay Gap and is immaterial to the statistics. Therefore, the categories 3, 4, 5 and 6 above are not applicable.

The college has a fair and transparent recruitment and selection process and advertise a wide range of job vacancies. Applications are invited from those who wish to work either full or part time, including some posts with significant management responsibilities, in order to encourage both males and females with caring responsibilities, who do not wish to work full time, to apply to work with us. The college believe in appointing the person who we feel to be the best candidate for each job vacancy regardless of gender. All staff, irrespective of gender, are eligible to apply to take part in funded external staff development and our internal staff development programme is available to all staff.

Staff surveys are undertaken bi-annually as are staff exit interviews.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hope that they had a good summer.

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