

AQUINAS COLLEGE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 6 June 2023
Time: 4.30 pm
Venue: College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Miss M Braithwaite, Mr C Green, Mr P Horton, Mr T P McGee and Mr D Pearson.

Miss M Braithwaite in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr A Bailey Vice Principal
Mrs D Blackburn Senior Assistant Principal (Finance)
Miss E Bradbury Head of Adult Education (Item 4)
Mr T Conlon Clerk to the Governing Body

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Miss Braithwaite.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr B Hickey,

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. CHARGING POLICY FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES

Miss Bradbury introduced a paper that had been circulated prior to the meeting that gave details of the proposed fees to be charged for Adult and Continuing Education Courses for 2023/2024.

Governors noted the following:

- a) Access to Higher Education Diploma Pathway in Psychology with: Human Biology or Criminology is free for those aged 19-23 if this is their first or full level 3 qualification and is claimed from the GMCA budget. Those aged 19 and above who already hold a level 3 qualification will have to pay the full cost of the course. The Advanced Learner Loan continues to be available or students can pay themselves by instalments.
- b) The college are assessing if there is sufficient demand for Functional Skills: Literacy and Numeracy at Level 1 and Level 2 before deciding whether or not to offer the courses.
- c) GCSE English and Mathematics continue to be fully funded by the GMCA and are free for those students aged 19+ who have not yet achieved a Grade A* - C or 9-4. Others pay full fee.

d) GCSE Science Trilogy (combined) 50% of the fee is paid by the student and 50% is funded by the GMCA. Those on job seeker's benefits or low income would receive the course free i.e. the GMCA would cover the full course fee.

e) ESOL is fully funded

f) AAT Courses

i) AAT Access Award in Bookkeeping Level 1

ii) AAT Access Award in Business skills Level 1

iii) AAT Foundation Certificate in Bookkeeping Level 2

iv) AAT Certification in Accounting Level 2

v) AAT Advanced Certificate in Bookkeeping Level 3

vi) AAT Advanced Diploma in Accounting Level 3

For level 1 and 2 courses, 50% of the fee is paid by the student and 50% is funded by the GMCA. Those on job seeking benefits or low income benefits would receive the course free using the GMCA budget. For level 3 courses the Advanced Learner Loan would be available or students pay themselves by instalments.

f) Leisure Course fees are in line with other providers and are paid in full by the student with subsidised rate for those on benefits. The various language courses are offered at beginner, intermediate and advanced.

g) All courses must cover the cost of the tutor and provide a contribution to cover the central administration costs.

RESOLVED: That the fees as set for 2023/2024 be recommended for approval to the Governing Body.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7 February 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes that were not covered by the agenda for the meeting.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

Mrs Blackburn introduced the Health and Safety Report that had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. The report covered the period 1 August 2022 to 3 May 2023.

No accidents have been reported under the Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. Six accidents have been recorded, two members of staff have absent due to work related ill health, resulting in nine days absence. One case of absence

accounts for eight of those days. There have been no extended periods of absence caused by accidents or work-related ill health.

There have been no significant regulatory changes affecting the college. The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 came into effect on 23 January 2023 but do not have a significant impact on non-residential premises. A draft bill "Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill" was released on 2 May 2023 and intends to introduce new security measures for specified public locations including schools and colleges. The college is monitoring the process of this legislation and is planning ahead for its implementation.

8. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Mrs Blackburn introduced the Management Accounts for May 2023 which had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. A discussion took place on the May Accounts with particular reference to the following:

- i) There had been a trading surplus of £889,000 to date. The monthly results for May 2023 show a loss of £20,000. The forecast outturn for 2022/2023 is around £72,000.
- ii) The teacher's pay award has still not officially been agreed and but as an interim measure a 5% -8 % pay award has been paid (depending on scale point). Strike action is likely to continue until a settlement has been agreed.
- iii) Planning application for the new build has been submitted with a decision due by the middle of August 2023 and expenditure to date is £103,000. No tenders for the new build main contractor have been received yet. Mr Pearson added that the college will need to involve the Trustees.
- iv) The debate about changing the year end to 31 March continues the DfE have agreed that the current year end of 31st July makes more sense but they have to report this to the Treasury who make the final decision.
- v) The financial health calculations show that the college will be classed as Outstanding at the end of the financial year.

If Governors had any questions on the May Accounts they were asked to contact Mrs Blackburn.

RESOLVED: That the Accounts for May 2023 be received.

9. BUDGET 2023/2024

Mrs Blackburn introduced a set of papers in relation to the proposed budget for 2023/2024 that had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. The papers contained a) a spreadsheet of cash income and expenditure b) the same converted into accounting format and c) a written summary.

The ESFA have now confirmed that the income from them for 2023/2024 will be £12,157,985 compared to £12,069,692 for 2022/2023 and is an increase of £88,303. The funding is based on 2,396 students compared with 2,413 for last year a decrease of 17 students. The funding band increases for 2023/24 at 2% are now giving a top rate of £4,642 compared with £4,542 for 2022/2023. 97 % of students are at that rate. The ESFA funding above contains £342k for 57 students; this element of funding provides the first £6,000 additional support funding per High Needs students who need one to one support.

In addition, the college has still to evaluate the cost of new High Needs students to the Local Authority. This covers the assessment of the additional costs over £6k. The college estimates that the cost of moving from L6 to U6 for continuing students with high needs at £320,000. They are about to submit claims for new students starting in September 2023. The cost could rise to £500,000.

The Teacher's Pension Grant will continue until 31 August 2024 and is confirmed at £465,103.

The draft budget shows a contingency reserve of £81,606 compared to £189,491 last year, a decrease of £107,885. Whilst the initial trading surplus is £130,000.

All aspects of staffing and non pay costs will be monitored to ensure the running of the college as efficiently as possible.

Mrs Blackburn drew Governor's attention to the Financial Health calculated from the initial budget where the overall outcome is that it is classed as Good at 200 within the range 180 to 230.

The college is experiencing supply issues in relation to the purchase of IT equipment and to secure some of the hardware equipment it may arrive before the end of the current financial year and be accounted for in the fixed assets for 2022/2023. This is simply a cash and depreciation effect.

RESOLVED: i) That the draft budget for 2023/2024 as presented be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

ii) That approval be given to the purchase of the IT equipment which will stay within the overall budget for 2023/2024.

10. NATIONAL FUNDING POSITION

Governors noted the increases that are detailed in the budget for 2023/2024. The SFCA are continuing with their Raise the Rate campaign.

Mr McGee informed Governors that the teacher unions had wanted a pay rise above 10% but had agreed that 5% be paid as an interim measure. He added that there is unlikely to be a resolution. The Teachers Pay Review Body are likely to recommend a 6% -7% pay award.

11. AUTHORISATION OF TWO YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Mrs Blackburn advised Governors that the two year financial plan has to be submitted to the ESFA by the end of July 2023. The plan includes the outturn for 2022/2023, the budget for 2023/2024 and the forecast of 2024/2025.

The plan may be ready for the Governing Body meeting scheduled for 27 June 2023. If not, the Chairperson would need to sign the two year Plan on behalf of the Governing Body.

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

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i) Capital/Sustainability Funding

Mr Green introduced a paper that had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. The paper covered two streams of funding that the college had received.

a) Further Education Reclassification Capital Allocation – The college had received £367,940 which is for capital projects, prioritising condition improvement of the college's estate. The money must be spent by 31 March 2025.

b) Additional Devolved Formula Capital – The college had received £103,536 with an expectation that the money be spent in the 2022/2023 financial year. However, the normal terms of devolved

formula capital funding apply, meaning that the college will have two additional financial years to spend the money. The money should be spent on capital projects, prioritising projects that improve the college estate's energy efficiency.

The college had looked at four options for this money to be used:

- a) Option 1 - To install photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of both buildings to generate electricity for use by the college. The cost would be in the region of £250,000 plus VAT but would produce a saving in the region of £65,000 per year on electricity
- b) Option 2 - Reinstate the two Herz biomass boilers in the main building. The cost for recommissioning the boilers would be £5,000, but it is now once again cheaper to operate on gas.
- c) Option 3 - Replace the gas boilers in the sports centre with air source heat pumps (ASHPs). This would cost in the region of £100,000 to complete. The current boilers are fairly reliable with few repair issues, however, they are old and inefficient.

Option 4 – Replace the 6x Hamworthy gas boilers in the main building. These boilers are 13years old and inefficient, they break down occasionally, however repair costs are minimal.

It was agreed that Options,1, 2 and 3 be further investigated and that Option 4 be delayed pending the outcome of the local authority feasibility study in using water sourced heat pumps.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 7 November 2023 at 4.30pm, subject to the Calendar of Meetings being agreed by the Governing Body at its meeting on 27 June 2023.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____