Minutes of the Local Governing Body of Harrogate Grammar School
held in Room S03 on Wednesday 13th June 2018, commencing 6.15 pm

Present: Mr P Cotton (Chair), Mr J Godfrey, Mrs J Johnson (JJ), Mr R Sheriff (Headteacher) (RES), Dr T Stowell (Vice Chair), Mr I Sugarman (IS), Mr J Topping (JT), Mr S Howell (Finance Director) (SGH)

Also present: Mrs K Moat (KLM), Mr N Renton (NXR), Mrs C Bradbury (CLB) (Minutes).

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<td>The meeting commenced at 6.26 pm.</td>
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**LGB 1**

1. **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Mr D Hurcomb and Mrs J Watson.

Apologies were accepted.

2. **Additional Declarations of Interest**

There were no additional declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising**

The Minutes of the Full Governing Body Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 25th April 2018 were reviewed and accepted, subject to amendments which have been highlighted to Dr Stowell. Proposed by Mr Godfrey and seconded by Mr Topping. The Chair then signed the Minutes as a true and correct record.

Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.
4. Executive Headteacher’s Report

The Report had been issued to Governors ahead of the meeting.

Mrs. Moat went through the data dashboard with Governors. Big difference this year are the new specifications, feel confident English and Maths are stable, not sure what other areas will look like. A Governor asked in terms of the target for English and Maths for Year 8, there seems a discrepancy between the target of 90 and the current of 56? This is based on what they achieved during their CAT test at that particular time it is not an overall view, the next grade is based on the end of year exam. Another Governor asked for Autumn 1, Autumn 2 Spring they are all snapshots at that time, the test at the end of the year will test the work, so why would it be better? The snapshots are testing a small element, the staff, particularly for English and Maths, do not give the full range of grades, working with Faculty leaders at their next meeting on standardisation. A question from a Governor would you be more likely to give high grades in Maths and English if they achieve 40 out of 40? This is being talked about and working with Faculty Leaders to ensure they are using the full range of grades.

The Chair asked if Mrs. Moat and Mr Renton could give a brief update on the GCSE and A Level exams. Mrs. Moat confirmed the GCSE exams are nearly finished, they started a week earlier than normal and it has felt more condensed. Overall feeling is that they are going well and the students have been well behaved. There has been a good culture of strong revision and good attendance. A Governor stated what I have noted is that it is tiring, they are working hard. Do you think they really need so many exams, is there going to be a change? General impression widespread is concern about the length and number of exams, there is a big agenda around children’s mental health. Feedback will be given to Ofqual who are visiting the school next week, hoping to use the feedback across the Alliance. A Governor asked as far as the school is concerned, looking at EBACC, will universities take 8 rather than 11 GCSE passes, which way would the universities go? You need 5 for medicine, there are so many different universities, need to look at a body of work to look at the impact. The Headteacher has the opportunity over the next few months to find out more across the system, ask the questions Governors have and follow these up with Ofqual. The Governors then had a discussion around examinations in general.

Mr Renton then spoke about the A level exams. He stated they are in a similar position to the GCSEs. There has been feedback that wording is being made harder, assessment has been made more complex, the length of the papers has increased making students struggle to finish, and then clashes with exams being set in a small period of time.

The Headteacher then took Governors through the Staffing section of the report. He confirmed over the last 9 months there are 5 staff returning, and it is good to see people who have enjoyed their time here want to come back and contribute. There are significant retirees, including Miss Wood who retires after 38 years at HGS. There was the long service meal which took place last week for members of staff who have served at least 10 years, gives a chance to thank people before they leave, keeps the school be stable and values running through. A Governor asked there are four members of staff leaving who are all Foreign Language Assistants why is this? These are students and happens each year. Members of staff who are leaving HGS are attractive to other schools due to the strength of our training and development for staff.

The Chair asked about the Year 10 Pupil Premium report, these students are going to be the next year 11, is there anything we can do to help and put early measures in place? Already in the process of doing this, not just Year 10 but from year 9, various groups of students have been identified who will benefit from having a mentor. A group of 25 students have been mentored through Year 11 by staff including SLT members, operational members of staff. Brought this process further forward for a cohort in Year 9 and Year 10. Aim is to make contact with the child and parents before the summer break to give support and guidance over the summer.

The Headteacher explained to Governors about alternative provision to help support students rather than punish. Developing the idea of the Nest. This will be used for students who are struggling in main school provision. They will have a bespoke programme, will still be part of school.
Will be available for children between years 5 and 8 and then up to Year 11 later on in the day. An expert team will be put together who can plan provision.

There were no further questions for the Head on the report.

### 5. Chair of Governor's Report

The Chair gave a verbal report to Governors.

He thanked the two Governors who attended the Permanent Exclusion Panel meeting which took place this week. The Headteacher’s decision to permanently exclude was upheld. Behaviour remains a high priority for the Senior Leadership Team. A Governor asked where do they go now? They become the care of the Local Authority, support and change required for the child.

### 6. Finance – Approval of Budget

The CFO took Governors through the paper which had been issued prior to the meeting. All schools are currently under cost pressures. Balanced budget not quite achieved, there has been good support from the Senior Team. From the commentary, this year the situation is slightly better than thought with £79,000 of surplus. This year will finish with £380,000 of reserves which is above the 4% baseline which Trustees have confirmed should be aimed for. There is an in year deficit showing for next year of £57,000 and this is repeated for 2019/20. It has been agreed that the Trust staff who are currently in HGS will remain here for the time being, as they bring a contribution back into the school for occupation of space. The Trust Core team will re-locate to the Children's Centre at Rossett Acre. Can find some savings in the iPad administration area and also charge a small levy to parents when trips are paid for. Some modelling needs to be done in an equitable and ethical way to look at bringing contributions back in.

A Governor had tabled some questions ahead of the meeting. First point is, what are we doing? SLT are very focused on this and will take opportunities as they arise. Discussion in a year's time re the Headship arrangements, this would possibly bring savings in year 2. A further question It looks like the NEST plan loses £30k in year 1 - when does it break even? There is a cost to HGS as there is to Rossett High School and the primary trust colleagues. The Governor is right to point out the cost to HGS, however feel this is a provision which is required. Pagabo was also referenced by the Governor, Very good to see Pagabo loan being repaid and dividend coming through. This is a business that HGS are equity shareholders in. By the end of next year investment monies would have been returned, anything after this would be a bonus. A further question what is the plan for on-site services and plan to improve utilisation of resource? Investment has been made in an electrician, joiner, plumber and the vans, disappointed in the trading this has brought in, but there are some positive ideas to work on, and the focus is on the site team, as it is on every area including catering, ICT, learning support etc.

The CFO asked for approval to move the budget forward to Trustees when all budgets are consolidated and approved. He asked for any further questions.

A Governor stated I am delighted to see all the supporting detail, understanding the impact of the way the MAT services are impacting the Grammar School and charges coming through, how that compares a few years ago under the LA Support and whether there is saving coming through, going forward expansion of the MAT and service charges would you think these would reduce as they would be shared over a wider range of schools? £700,000 is the cost of running the central function, cost of finance, HR, insurance and some systems. When TNLP join it will nearly double. Some of this has been earmarked for staffing purposes, but there will be some headroom. A question back to you would be do we give that headroom back to the schools and reduce contribution or do we develop for the benefit of the MAT? Need to make sure the schools are getting real value and benefit, would like school improvement to be at the heart of this, efficient
back office including good reporting. The Headteacher added we have gone through a developing phase, from LA to becoming an academy in 2011 and then a Trust. We are in a position where we can control our costs, if we feel they are not where they should be we can do something about it.

A Governor asked being linked into the Maths Hub and the residual income which the school benefits from, is that a contracted arrangement or an agreed arrangement? This is grant money, there are 34 Maths Hub in the country, it is special to have the hub for this region, the money comes with grant obligations, within it there is a budgeted amount which comes back to school to cover staffing costs. The Maths Hub link governor stated school benefits in other ways by having the Maths Hub hosting events, attracting talent. They are assessed on a regular basis rated green every time. The Heads from the Maths department recently came into to talk to the SLT, reporting on the impacts being seen in the classrooms, results etc. There has been an improvement in Sixth Form over 60% of students do a Maths qualification so there definitely has been an impact.

The Chair asked just before we approve please can you outline the consequences of the school having a deficit? The bottom line is it is 4 years as a whole, there is a very slight surplus if you aggregate the numbers. Based on this and SLT turning the deficit around, the consequence is our reserves will diminish over the next 2 years. A Governor asked on the other side as a Parent Governor, if you do not employ teachers over the next 4 years you may not make a loss? This is being run as efficiently as possible, looked as a team over the last 5 years with the CFO’s advice to get as efficient as we can. Most of the costs are not inefficiency, they are pay awards, pension contributions etc. Not yet aware of what the teachers’ pay award is for next year. There was a further question in regards to TNLP at the stage they do join, how would they feel about HGS having a deficit? They have carried out due diligence on RKLT and are comfortable with the position. The Chair asked will we have an overall surplus? There will be reserves of £300,000 which is not as much as we would like.

There were no further questions and all Governors were asked to approve the Budget as tabled. All in favour – unanimous.

The CFO took Governors through the School Condition Allocation for HGS. The first thing is to improve the catering facilities which are cramped. He had a question to Governors about procurement. Procurement around the glazing, would like to take the route of a negotiated tender and engage YASS who are a glazing supplier. Normally we would go out to several companies, however they were successful in a formal tender for Rossett Acre, and time is limited so would like Governors agreement to appoint YASS. A Governor asked how much would the cost be and I assume the work in Rossett Acre was successful? In the region of £30,000, and the work at Rossett Acre is nearly finished. The Chair advised I would be comfortable if the Chair of the Audit Committee was involved. It was agreed that the procurement could be secured with the Chair of the Audit Committee having an overview.

Other work that the funding can cover would be replacing the windows, replacing all of the windows at the back of main school and within the quads.

7. Consideration of Emerging SDP Key areas for 2018/2019

The emerging SDP Key Areas had been issued ahead of the meeting. Most of these have been touched on already in the meeting, Nest alternative provision, budget efficiencies, productivity and reading. Priority at the top this year is maintaining outstanding behavior and improving teaching. Big Picture has been in place for a couple of years, one thing is to review provision, develop further and have this across all year groups, with well-being to ensure this is covered both for staff and parents.
### 8. Link Governors and Visits to School

There were three reports issued, Safeguarding, Alumni and Maths Hub.

The Link Governor for Alumni went through his report. The Alumni Platform has now been set up, and he took Governors through various screen shots to explain the functionality of the system. A Governor asked *is it via an app or the website?* It is both, can be connected to your phone. Can connect through Facebook, LinkedIn. *Can we edit it to stop someone putting derogatory comments on?* Yes, it sends an email to approve the user joining. The platform has been shared with the Year 13 leavers already and it is hoped that there will be a project to approach past students. A Governor asked *will there be a link to donate money?* We have asked the question so will report back. Can also have an area for merchandise. A Governor asked *in the report you commented as a result of GDPR 180 were lost, are these trickling through?* Some of these will be old contacts and some will have unfortunately passed away.

The Chair thanked all Governors for their time and reports.

### 9. Policy Approval – Anti-Bullying, Cover, SMSC, Substance Misuse and Working with Young People

The Chair asked for any questions, comments or observations on the Policies.

A Governor asked *on the Cover Policy, I presume this is in line with other schools, are all the Policies made up from scratch?* The Policy is based around school teachers pay and conditions policy, use that guidance for using teachers for cover, keeps costs under control by how we approach it. We have got very effective diary planning, with good use of Line Managers and the occasional use of teaching staff when they have gained time, there are good relationships within school with the Trade Union representatives. The Policy was tabled at the recent Union meeting.

On the SMSC Policy a Governor highlighted *on page 6 – HGS reject comments in terms of racism and homophobia – this should say LGBT issues instead.*

On the Bullying Policy a Governor highlighted the section for Parents *do you think many parent/carers know about this policy do you get many parents coming to you?* The Policy is referenced on the website, could check to see how many people actually click through. In anti-bullying week information is included in the Parent Bulletin.

There were no further comments or questions and all Policies were proposed with the amendments by Mrs Johnson and seconded by Dr Stowell. All Governors were in favour – unanimous.

### 10. Health and Safety

Health and Safety was covered in the Head’s report. There was nothing to report in terms of Health and Safety issues. The Headteacher advised there was an incident where a student had made a very stupid mistake. He explained the incident which resulted in him writing to the Chief Constable, a copy of the response is included in the correspondence section. A Governor thanked the Headteacher for his response after contacting him, it was handled very well.

### 11. Correspondence

Three letters were tabled:

Letter from the ESFA regarding an Independent Admission Appeal panel matter – no further action.

Letter from the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police which was referred to in the previous
Letter from The Wave Project regarding the monies which had been raised following the recent fund raising event.

The Headteacher also raised the correspondence received from a neighbor of the school. He has requested permission to trim the trees of West End Avenue, and had asked for clarification as to where the boundary is. It was confirmed that the trees are the property of the school and residents are not free to cut them down. The Headteacher advised Governors that he would like to negotiate with the residents asking to share the lease of land so they have legal right to use the land and in return the school would receive the income and invest into a proper fence which would go all around school. He asked the Governors if they would be happy for this to be pursued. There were a couple of questions from the Governors do we lease it to them? No, this should have been brought up when the conveyancing of their own property was done. How many people are we talking about? About 80. What sum are you proposing to charge? £1,000 say for the lease over that period, to cover the upkeep on the stream which causes drainage systems for us. Is there an issue if some people choose to and some don't and then there is no access to these chunks of land? We would need to obtain advice to establish access to the land. There was further discussion regarding this matter and it was agreed as an action point to report back on this at the next meeting.

12. Any Other Business

The Clerk explained to Governors that a Safeguarding refresher email has been sent out.

The Headteacher mentioned Red Kite Day 5 to Governors which takes place on 6th July. As regards the report from the Teaching School, it may be worth asking Mrs Lewis to attend the next meeting to talk about the Alliance further. A Governor suggested it may be worthwhile asking Pat Sowa to attend one of the meetings to talk about mental health, the Headteacher confirmed she is a speaker at Red Kite Day 5.

A Governor raised the matter of removing sugar drinks is this something that is going to happen? It was confirmed that all drinks should have under 5% sugar content, the drinks in school are all compliant and within the guidelines. A Governor asked are they vending machines mostly, and can you limit their thumb? They are mainly vending machines but the thumb cannot be limited, however parents can have an insight as to what the children are purchasing and you can limit the total spend. This led onto a question what are we doing environmentally regarding plastic bottles? A sustainability group has been created to see what can be done to eliminate plastic. Need to get it right between safe and hygienic. The Governors had a further discussion regarding this matter.

There was no further business, and there was then a break at 8:30 pm.

13. Development Focus – Academic Productivity Progress, Profiles and Reporting to Parents

The meeting recommenced at 8:37 pm.

The new reporting proposal was tabled to the Governors. The report is an ideal opportunity to bring all things together and give parents’ an idea of students’ productivity. Would like it to be more holistic. Hoping the report will be a positive experience and something that they can celebrate.

The process would be for the student to self-evaluate by asking some very targeted questions. This will take place during Big Picture sessions led by the Form Tutor with guidance from Jane Hinkins and their Year Manager. It will cover school values, learning and what they are doing. Would like the student to be able to show where they have demonstrated the school values.
The parents will also see this report and will hopefully form the beginnings of conversations at home. From a Form Tutor and Year Manager perspective can pick up the students who are not engaging in anything. Can link Homework4 to this, where they can see what sits behind as well as statements they have made compared to the year group.

A Governor asked *I can see where this is coming from in terms of positivity, I don’t understand attitude to learning, there is going to be a great deal of subjectivity about what the child will say, how do we know these answers are truly objective?* They will receive attitude to learning grades from the teacher and receive teacher assessment later on.

The Chair asked *how many times will they receive this?* Because this is more detailed, once at the end of a term. Every half term the parents can expect attitude to learning grades which then gives staff a whole term to complete the final assessment at the end of that term, along with the CAT test.

A Governor asked *are they completing this for every subject?* No it will not be subject specific.

The report can also cover attendance, punctuality and positives and negatives. There will be the scope to identify where the negatives and positives are, categorised in Classcharts – behaviour, home learning, uniform etc., there is the potential to develop it so it shows why they received the negatives.

The final page of the report is the CAT assessment data. This won’t change in terms of how the data is captured. A Governor asked *if I was a parent looking at this Autumn 1 CAT, would I be looking at the low academic productivity?* This is the grade and new reporting system in Year 7 and 8 so that is their CAT grade, this is assessment data not academic productivity.

The Governors were then asked for their feedback.

It is hoped to go live with the first report in December, but would like to show parents ahead of this so they are aware of what is changing.

The Chair thanked Mrs Moat and Mr Renton for their input. The Clerk to include the presentation slides with the minutes.

The Chair thanked everybody for their input to all meetings over the past year and the meeting closed at 21:13.