

Grindon Parish Hall

Registered Charity Number: 1187353 Company Number CE020293

Trustee Meeting 27 January 2025	
Report Title:	Proposed Strategy 2025/26
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Action Required:	The Trustees are asked to approve the Strategy 2025/26 and to monitor its implementation at Trustee meetings.

Background

In accordance with the GPH Constitution, as approved by the Charity Commission, the objective of Grindon Parish Hall ("GPH") as a charitable incorporated organisation ("CIO") is:

- i. to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Thorpe Thewles and the surrounding district without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, by associating together the said inhabitants and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and other leisure time occupations with the objects of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.
- ii. to establish or secure the establishment of a community hall and to maintain and manage the same in furtherance of these objects.

The purpose of the proposed Strategy is to define specific activities and outcomes to help achieve the CIO objective and for which the Chair and Trustees will be accountable to users and other stakeholders.

The 2024/25 Strategy

Last year's strategy had five (5) activities. The activities were not discreet and had an element of dependency and overlap between them.

The 5 Strategic activities were:

1. Invest in the fabric of the building;
2. Secure grant funding;
3. Promote the Hall;
4. Attract volunteers; and
5. Hold prices at current levels.

Trustees received an update on progress against the Strategy at the October 2024 meeting. The delivery of the planned activities within the 2024/25 strategy combined with a forensic review of all expenditure and income headings and a review of all contracted arrangements has substantially improved the annual budgetary and financial position.

This enables an incremental approach to the 2025/26 Strategy.

Proposed Strategy for 2025/26 (and the Medium Term)

It is proposed the Strategy be strongly aligned to the two core charitable purposes of the CIO; and be aimed at securing financial stability with a balanced budget in year.

It is proposed the Strategy be titled **Safeguarding the Future**, as Trustees have a core responsibility to safeguard the future of the Parish Hall for future generations.

It is further proposed the strategy to Safeguard the Future will have two key strands:

1. **Investing in the Fabric of the Building**; and
2. **Investing in the Community**

This provides a strong alignment to the two core charitable purposes of the CIO and has been a successful themed approach in securing the grants received in 2024/25.

Success in above should lead to increased utilisation and a balanced budget for the medium term.

Investing in the Fabric of the Building

Purpose: to ensure the Parish Hall continues to be well maintained to serve the needs of the community.

Strategic Objectives: A number of investments were made as part of the 2024/25 Strategy; however, it is probable that further investment may be needed to respond to community needs and to maintain / improve the fabric of the building.

The proposed deliverables in 2025/26 are to seek to further invest in the fabric of the building.

Pending the availability of funding the following areas of investment have been identified

- Internal repaint to the main hall; kitchen and toilet areas.
- Furniture and equipment to maximise the multi-use functionality, particularly to the meeting room and the main hall (e.g., soft play matting).
- Additional equipment to enable increased events and activities to be held, for example a dishwasher / glass washer would facilitate cleaning up after events and equipment such as barista style coffee machine would meet changing customer expectations – the nature of spend would depend on user requirements.
- Soft landscaping (e.g., bulb planting, border planting and planters).
- Refresh to some items (e.g., glasses, linen).

Further expenditure may be needed as a result of increased use of the Parish Hall and the potential direct provision of community space facilities for residents.

How will we measure success: Schedule of investments made against the identified areas above and in response to additional needs identified by users and community groups

Investing in the Community

Purpose: to provide a community facility to support social welfare of residents and other users of the Parish Hall.

Strategic Objectives: The establishment of the Youth Club and imminent Warm Space have been the first steps in the CIO directly delivering its charitable objective in this respect. Although demand has been low in numbers, primarily due to the resident population, the activities have been well received by those attending and their families. The Youth Club has been established the longest and has established a group of regular attendees, supported by parents and guardians.

The deliverables in 2025/26 are to seek to expand support to the community by direct provision of community space activities or by enabling activities to take place.

Pending the availability of funding the following areas have been identified

- Continue providing a Youth Club after initial grant funding has ended.
- Continue providing a Warm Space facility after initial grant funding has ceased.
- Extending community use such as a parent / toddler group or an open community multi-generational session to help build community engagement and cohesion.
- Hold community events during the School Holidays. A number of regular events have breaks in the school holidays, so the Parish Hall is quieter. Additionally, the availability of community space may be a welcome offer in these periods.
- Seek to subsidise courses / events, particularly where these may become sustainable in the future and/or engage the community.
- Explore the opportunity of bringing in specialist resources to run groups; courses; talks and provide advice (e.g., first aid courses).

Dependent upon future activities to be held and the demand arising from such it is expected further expenditure on equipment may be needed, for example, soft play mats and equipment for toddler groups.

How will we measure success: Through the number of activities (and number of attendees) introduced and feedback as to their impact.

Next Steps

- The GPH Trustees agree the Strategy 2025/26, with any approved amendments.
- The Chair to lead implementation with support from other Trustees, as required.
- The Chair to present the strategy at the Annual General Meeting.
- The Chair to seek funding to enable delivery of the Strategy.
- The Chair to report progress at each Trustee meeting.