



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL GRANTS COMMITTEE AT THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MARKET HARBOROUGH

27th January 2026 – 4:30 pm

1 Participants

Jenny Balme	Chair of General Grants and Trustee
Wendy Hempson	Charity Secretary
Kerry Merryweather	Trustee
Linda Pentland	Finance Officer
Dr Sarah Hill	Trustee
Tony Walters	Trustee

Apologies

Daniel Ashford	Trustee
Chris Davies	Trustee
Iain Miller	Trustee

Jenny thanked everyone for attending this rearranged meeting and thanked them for their feedback via email which she had noted.

2 Conflicts of Interest

Sarah and Tony informed the committee that they knew the applicant from Market Harborough Bridge Club, but this was not perceived as a conflict of interest. The remaining Trustees present declared they had no conflicts of interest or loyalty but would declare it if one came up during the meeting.

3 Election of Chair of General Grants Committee

Jenny was unanimously re-elected as Chair of the committee.

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting on 6th November 2025

The draft minutes of the meeting of the General Grants Committee on 6th November 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

5 Actions from previous meetings

The actions from previous meetings were noted as completed.

6 Matters arising not on main agenda

There were none.

7 Budget for 2026 - £120,000

Trustees noted that the committee's budget for 2026 was £120,000.

8 Charity Secretary's Report

The updates and reports in the Charity Secretary's report were noted.

9 Project Applications

9.1 The Methodist Church – 2026-P1

An application for £100,000 (out of £212,000) for a refurbishment project at the Methodist Church. Trustees requested clarity over how any funds granted would be divided between the church and community use and more detail regarding utilisation rates of the building. The February 2026 Board meeting would be asked to reaffirm the Charity's strategic priorities and help determine if the General Grants committee should continue to assess this (by forming a contact group) and other large refurbishment projects, while the Charity's was engaged in its own large projects.

Action: Request utilisation and footfall rates for the community use facilities at the church, and information on how income they generate is divided between church and community use – Charity Secretary

9.2 Market Harborough Bridge Club – 2026-P2

An application for £20,000 to fund alterations to rental premises in Market Harborough from where the bridge club could offer both day and evening bridge classes and events. Trustees were not in favour of supporting this project, given the momentum behind the Charity's own community hub project.

Action: Inform Market Harborough Bridge Club that it was not possible to support the application, as it was not aligned with the Charity's current priorities – Charity Secretary

10 Grant Applications

10.1 HCYC Young Carers Group – 2025-G22

Following correspondence with the applicant, Trustees reconsidered this application for £5,370 (out of £21,482) to provide short-term support for the Young Carers group in Market Harborough. The amount applied for had been prorated to reflect the number of young carers in the Charity's Area of Benefit. Trustees decided to grant £5,000 with the proviso that the funds should not be used for salaries.

Action: Inform HCYC that Trustees had decided to grant £5,000 to HCYC's Young Carers Group, and that the funds should not be used to pay for salaries – Charity Secretary

10.2 Market Harborough Fixers PAT Training 2026-G1

An application for £440 (out of £641) to train six volunteers as PAT testers to enhance the Fixers' ability to repair items brought in by the public. Trustees were in favour of supporting the application with a grant of £160 as only 25% were within the area of benefit.

Action: Grant £160 to Market Harborough Fixers towards training volunteers as PAT testers – Charity Secretary

10.3 Market Harborough Baptist Church Electrics 2026-G2

An application for £17,000 (out of a total of £35,000) to fund urgent repairs to the outdated electrical wiring of the 33-year-old church. Trustees requested clarity over how any funds granted would be divided between the church and community use and more detail regarding utilisation rates.

The February 2026 Board meeting would be asked to reaffirm the Charity's strategic priorities and help determine if the General Grants committee should continue to assess this and other large refurbishment projects, while the Charity's was engaged in its own large projects.

Action: Chase the annual accounts, itemised quote, last electrical survey for the Baptist Church and request utilisation and footfall rates for the community use facilities at the church, and information on how income they generate is divided between church and community use – Charity Secretary

10.4 HCYC The Cube Training 2026-G3

Regarding HCYC Cube's application for £395 for a member of The Cube's youth team to do an accredited AIM course in teaching relationships and sex education, Trustees considered the accounts submitted to be in a strong position with no evidence of need. Trustees also discussed the fact that sex education was covered by the national curriculum and decided not to support the application.

Action: Inform HCYC The Cube that Trustees had not granted the application – Charity Secretary

11 OGS Film Project

Three strong proposals had been received for the OGS Film Project, for consideration by Trustees, two of which were based locally. The proposals were:

- Proposal by Harborough Story Centre
- Proposal by Rising Frog Production
- Proposal by Market Harborough U3A

While the applications were all strong and had different strengths and merits, only the Harborough Story Centre proposal fulfilled the Charity's brief to "involve local actors, schools, and community groups". Trustees therefore decided to invite Harborough Story Centre to present their proposal to the Charity. A smaller Contact Group for the project would also be formed.

Trustees agreed that the film produced would need to be futureproofed so it would stand the test of time. A clear plan for how the film would be divided, distributed and marketed would also be needed.

12 Review the Charity's Risk Register

Trustees had reviewed the Risk Register and there were no comments from the General Grants Committee.

13 Any other business

An enquiry regarding the possibility of funding a staff position at Robert Smyth Academy for two years was considered by Trustees but rejected on the basis that the Charity did not fund salaries.

14 Any matters for the Board

Trustees decided to seek guidance from the Board at the February 2026 meeting, regarding whether applications for large grants should be put on temporary hold while the Charity determined its strategic priorities for the year, with specific regard to the community hub project.

15 Dates of meetings in 2026

- Tues 10th March – new date
- Tues 7th April – new date
- Thursday 14th May
- Thursday 25th June
- Thursday 6th August
- Thursday 24th September
- Thursday 5th November