



**SEPTEMBER
2023**

STATE OF THE SABHA REPORT

*Prepared by the Sabha in collaboration with an External Consultant
Approved by the Executive Committee on September 02, 2023*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Panthic Committee ("Committee") has taken positive steps to address the issues noted within the Operational Audit report ("Audit"), published in December 2022. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Developing and implementing a Strategy that encompasses the Committee's objectives during its tenure.
- Implementing sub-committees that focus on key functional areas.
- Refining and implementing a new organisational chart that includes reporting lines for all paid staff.
- Recruiting an Operations Manager with further recruitment underway for positions such as a Safeguarding Officer.
- Successfully completing several development projects across all the Gurdwara sites - all aimed at using the Gurdwara facilities more effectively and efficiently for the Sangat.

In addition, earlier this year the Committee commissioned an independent Safeguarding report which re-iterated a number of key issues that have already been highlighted within this Audit i.e., implementing Safeguarding policies and procedures and overseeing Gurdwara affiliates (as noted in issue 6 of this report). It is paramount that the Committee begins to prioritise and address the Safeguarding related issues.

In order for the remaining issues (noted within this Audit) to be addressed in a timely manner, the Committee needs to assign delivery timelines against each open issue. It was noted that there is still too much reliance on a handful of dedicated Committee members and volunteers to drive the Committee's strategy.

As a result, Committee members must be held accountable against their designated roles and responsibilities and the delivery of projects, programmes and initiatives within the agreed timelines.

Due to the nature of issues highlighted within the Audit, a significant culture shift is required amongst the Committee members and the Sangat. A follow up review will be performed every quarter to track progress and to highlight any concerns.



ISSUE DETAIL

1. Strategy

Detail:

There is no detailed written strategy in place to define how the Committee is planning to achieve its manifesto goals and constitutional objectives (refer to Appendix A & B).

In the absence of a well-defined strategy, projects, programmes and initiatives are unstructured, unclear and implemented on an ad hoc basis. Furthermore, it is unclear how much time, resource (people and/or technology) and finances are required to implement key projects, programmes and initiatives.

As a result, there is a risk that the Committee is unable to achieve its goals and objectives and a risk that the Sangat's money is being inappropriately managed and utilised.

Action Plan:

Follow Up Assessment:

The Committee needs to create and implement a strategy which sets out how they are planning to achieve their manifesto goals and the Gurdwara's constitutional objectives.

A Roles and Responsibilities chart, for each function within the Committee, has been created, the chart includes projects assigned to each function as well as the five main strategic goals that the Committee aims to achieve during its tenure. These are an extension of the Committee's original manifesto goals.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for an extract of the Roles and Responsibilities chart.

Conclusion: Complete

The strategy needs to include (but not be limited to): a list of key projects, programmes and initiatives that the Committee want to implement, including timeframes, finances required, assigned owners and resources required (people and/ or technology).

As noted above, the Roles and Responsibilities chart includes projects assigned to each function. In addition to the chart, the Committee has also implemented a to-do list which lists out the key projects that the Committee are working on. Please refer to Appendix 1.

Furthermore, the Committee has allocated the Gurdwaras budget across "business as usual" activities and to key projects/ initiatives across the different functions. The budget allocation has also been reconciled back to the Committees manifesto to ensure that the Sangats money is being effectively and efficiently utilised. Any additional budget requests which are less than £2k are reviewed and approved by the Treasurer. Due to the confidentiality of the budget, the allocation will not be attached within the Appendices.

Although the key projects, programmes and initiatives are documented, there are no details, timeframes, or resources assigned to all projects highlighted within the Roles and Responsibilities chart. For example, within the Building sub-committee function, one of the projects is to "Advise on the Park Avenue Development Project". Through discussions with the Committee members it is understood that the Development Project includes many sub-projects such as (but is not limited to), building a dedicated funeral room, implemented a one way parking system, etc.

Conclusion: In Progress

The strategy needs to be reviewed and monitored at each Committee meeting, in order to track progress.

The Committee confirmed that the Roles and Responsibilities chart was shared with the Committee members on 15 April 2023. Refer to Appendix 2.

The Executive Committee meeting agendas include dedicated timeslots for each sub-committee/ function to provide an update. Please refer to Appendix 2 for example agendas.

However, it was noted that there is no dedicated agenda item to discuss the Social & Culture, Sports and Dharmic sub-committees. Furthermore, in the absence of timeframes being assigned to key projects, programmes and initiatives, Committee members cannot be held accountable to delivering their functional requirements.

Conclusion: In Progress



ISSUE DETAIL

2. Governance Structure

Detail:

Significant enhancements are required to the governance structure, specifically:

- The monthly committee meeting does not include updates from all key operational functions as defined by the Committee structure (i.e. facilities, sports, etc).
- There is no issues, incidents and/or complaints log which appropriately assigns, tracks and monitors the issues, incidents and complaints to closure.
- The Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall Constitution has not been updated since March 2010.

As a result, there is a lack of accountability amongst the Committee and a risk of key operational functions not being appropriately governed and managed.

Action Plan:

Follow Up Assessment:

Sub-committees need to be set up for each of the key operational functions with a requirement of the sub-committees to provide monthly updates to the main committee highlighting key updates, issues and/ or approval requests.

The sub-committee structure has been highlighted within the Roles and Responsibilities chart. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities for the HR, Finance, Safeguarding, Sports and Building Sub-committee have been documented within the Executive Committee Terms of Reference. Refer to Appendix 2. However, the roles and responsibilities for the Langar, Technology and Dharmic sub committees have not been documented.

Furthermore, each sub-committee will either share their minutes with the Executive Committee or the relevant Committee member, sitting on the sub-committee, will provide a verbal update. As noted in the Executive Committee agendas, each sub-committee/ function is given a dedicated timeslot to provide their updates. Refer to Appendix 2. However, it was noted that there is no dedicated timeslots for the Social & Culture, Sports and Dharmic sub-committees/ functions.

Conclusion: In Progress

The Committee meeting minutes should be uploaded to the Gurdwara website in a timely manner or made available (upon request) to ensure that the Sangat have full transparency.

The Committee have shared all Executive Committee meeting minutes on the SGSSS website. Refer to Appendix 3.

Conclusion: Complete

An issue, incident and complaints log needs to be created and actions need to be assigned to Committee members/ committed volunteers. The log needs to be presented at each Committee meeting and needs to be monitored to closure.

An incidents log has been implemented by the Committee and is maintained by the General Secretaries and discussed at each Committee meeting as a standing agenda item. Refer to Appendix 2.

A Complaints policy and procedure has also been implemented by the Committee and is available to view on the SGSSS website. The policy and procedure explains how a concern or complaint can be raised and how the complaint will be managed. Refer to Appendix 2.

Conclusion: Complete

Where appropriate, actions or tasks should be delegated to members of the Sangat who have the time, resources and skills to complete the required actions.

There have been instances of projects which have been successfully delegated and delivered by dedicated volunteers. These include the Norwood Hall Gardening project and the Summer Camp.

However, where appropriate the Committee needs to identify projects, programmes and initiatives which can be delegated to dedicated volunteers. This will enable the Committee to ensure that all projects, programmes and initiatives are delivered as promised.

Conclusion: In Progress



ISSUE DETAIL

3. Policies and Procedures

Detail:

There is a lack of defined policies and procedures in place, and where policies and procedures do exist (e.g., HR policies), there has been no implementation or embeddedness to ensure that the policies and procedures are understood (through regular training) and adhered to.

Policies and procedures are required in order for the Gurdwara to set standards of behaviour and conduct. Examples of robust policies and procedures that are needed and/or require embeddedness:

- Approvals Process
- Use of Social Media
- Organising Events/ Socials on Gurdwara Premises
- Vendors Vetting and Onboarding
- Reserve and Investment Policy

This has resulted in a lack of consistency and accountability, all of which exposes the Gurdwara to unintended reputational, legal and financial risks.

Action Plan:

The Committee needs to document a list of policies and procedures across all key areas of the Gurdwara.

Follow Up Assessment:

Some policies and procedures such as the Complaints, Tender, Safeguarding and Lettings policy have already been documented and implemented. Refer to Appendix 2. Specifically:

- Complaints are discussed and reviewed in line with the policy and where applicable are discussed at the Executive Committee. Refer to Appendix 2.
- The Committee has shown evidence of following the Tender policy when engaging with third parties on development projects. For example, a supplier tender bid form was completed by the Committee for the development of the Childrens library and appropriate due diligence was performed by the building sub-committee i.e., obtaining multiple quotes, for the development of the Park Avenue outbuildings. Refer to Appendix 4.
- A Safeguarding report has been performed by external experts. The review has noted a number of key issues that have already been highlighted within this Audit i.e., implementing Safeguarding policies and procedures and overseeing Gurdwara affiliates (as noted in issue 6 of this report).

The majority of the Policies and Procedures are currently still being drafted. Based on the initial review, it was noted that there are no policies and procedures (albeit in draft) for the following areas; use of social media, organizing events/ socials on gurdwara premises and reserve and investment policies and procedures. Refer to Appendix 5 for an extract of the policies and procedures.

Conclusion: In Progress

Policies and procedures need to be assigned to Committee members who will be responsible for the embedding of the policies and procedures and ensuring that they are kept up to date.

Conclusion: Not Started

Policies and procedures need to be embedded through:

- Ongoing mandatory training days for employees and committed volunteers;
- Workshop days for the Sangat; and
- Sharing policies and procedures on the Gurdwara website.

Conclusion: Not Started



ISSUE DETAIL

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Detail:

Gap Analysis

There has been no gap analysis performed across key operational functions to highlight areas of the Gurdwara which require permanent staff (e.g., Facilities Manager), additional paid staff (e.g., Cleaners), committed volunteers and/or external contractors. This has resulted in an over-reliance on the Sangat to perform key tasks which may lead to additional operational inefficiencies.

Specifically, examples of roles that require full-time paid staff/additional paid staff include (but are not limited to):

- Facilities Manager: Currently there is no one responsible for the maintenance of all Gurdwara Plant and Equipment (P&E) and the management of all service providers. The Gurdwara currently uses a "handyman" for quick fixes and repairs which has resulted in an overall lack of accountability whereby, the P&E is fixed only when it breaks/ requires urgent attention, changes to the P&E are made without updating the P&E blueprints, repairs are not in line with the current ascetics/design of the Gurdwara and constant issues are occurring.
- Cleaners: There are a limited number of cleaners across all Gurdwara sites resulting in a lack of regular cleaning, specifically the toilets, creating an over-reliance on the Sangat to perform these duties.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities have not been adequately defined across all key operational functions. There are instances of responsibilities being inefficiently assigned to staff members who do not have the required resources, time or expertise.

This has resulted in a lack of accountability, operational inefficiencies and key person/people risks.

Specific examples of where roles and responsibilities have not been appropriately defined include (but are not limited to):

- Langar: The Facilities Manager is responsible for placing all Langar orders, not the Langar staff. There is a lack of communication between the Office Manager and Langar staff in relation to the expected Sangat (based on events/ programmes) resulting in instances of over-/under-cooking.
- Security: The Security team do not manage the operation and maintenance of the CCTV cameras
- IT Systems: One of the many responsibilities assigned to the Office Manager is the management of IT. The Office Manager does not necessarily have the remit, expertise or skill set to manage all IT.

Action Plan:

The Committee needs to document all key operational functions which require permanent staff and/ or committed volunteers. This needs to be a collaborative process alongside the current employed staff to understand areas which may require additional resourcing.

Follow Up Assessment:

A resource assessment has not yet been performed to highlight areas of the Gurdwara which require permanent staff, committed volunteers and/ or external contractors.

Nevertheless, the Committee has onboarded a General Manager, albeit in an interim role, who is responsible for; daily operations & maintaining services, managing staff & sevadars, event coordination and facilities. Furthermore, there are a number of open positions currently being advertised on the SGSSS website which include: Safeguarding Officer, General Manager (to replace the interim General Manager), Cleaner, Librarian and Caretaker.

Conclusion: In Progress

The Committee also needs to consider their own strategy (i.e., proposed projects, programmes and initiatives) in order to assess operational functions which may require permanent staff, additional staff and/or external contractors.

A resource assessment has not yet been performed to highlight areas of the Gurdwara which require permanent staff, committed volunteers and/ or external contractors.

Conclusion: Not Started

Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined for all permanent staff and reassessed following the gap analysis to ensure that roles and responsibilities are appropriately and effectively distributed.

The Roles and Responsibilities for the Committee members have been documented within the Roles and Responsibilities chart, as noted in Issue 1.

However, the Committee has not reviewed the Roles and Responsibilities of the current staff to ensure they are fit for purpose, accurate and complete.

Conclusion: Not Started



ISSUE DETAIL

5. Employee Oversight

Detail:

There are no defined reporting lines in place to ensure that paid staff members and committed volunteers are being adequately monitored and reviewed, through regular performance reviews. This lack of accountability has resulted in instances of paid staff not fulfilling their responsibilities, not working their agreed hours and generally underperforming.

Furthermore, there are no Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks performed on paid staff and committed volunteers, specifically those working with children and vulnerable individuals. As a result, the Gurdwara is at risk of legal, financial and reputational damage should a member(s) of Sangat be victim to any harm or misconduct.

Action Plan:	Follow Up Assessment:
The Gurdwara's organizational structure needs to be redesigned in line with the intended Strategy and Governance Structure (as noted in Issues 1 and 2).	<p>The Roles and Responsibilities chart, as noted in Appendix 1, highlights all the sub committees, including the members, which report into the Executive Committee.</p> <p>Furthermore, an updated organisational chart has been implemented as of July 2023 which highlights the key operational areas and staff that the Head of Operations oversees. Refer to Appendix 6.</p> <p>Conclusion: Complete</p>
Reporting lines need to be implemented across all paid staff members and committed volunteers.	<p>As noted above, reporting lines have been implemented for all paid staff members, however, reporting lines have not yet been implemented for committed volunteers. A Safeguarding Officer role is currently being advertised by the Gurdwara and it will be the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to oversee all committed volunteers.</p> <p>Conclusion: In progress</p>
The Committee needs to compile a list of committed volunteers to ensure they are also overseen on a regular basis and are appropriately vetted.	<p>The Committee has compiled a list of committed volunteers who are responsible for Langar related duties. The volunteers have all undertaken first aid and food safety training. In addition, DBS checks have been performed on the volunteers and they have all been issued with ID badges. Due to confidentiality, the evidence has not been attached to the Appendices.</p> <p>The Committee has highlighted that they will continue to compile lists of committed volunteers across all operational functions.</p> <p>Conclusion: In progress</p>
DBS checks need to be performed on all paid staff and committed volunteers. The checks need to be updated on a regular basis.	<p>The Committee have performed DBS checks across all paid staff. In addition, as noted above, the committed Langar volunteers have also been DBS checked.</p> <p>The Committee will continue to perform DBS checks for all committed volunteers once the respective list has been compiled across all operational functions.</p> <p>Conclusion: In progress</p>
An assessment needs to be performed across all paid staff members and committed volunteers to determine whether or not they are capable or qualified for their role. Where appropriate, personal development training should be offered.	<p>Conclusion: Not Started</p>
Performance assessments need to be performed for all staff members and committed volunteers on a frequent basis to ensure that assigned responsibilities are being appropriately and adequately performed and fulfilled. Any issues and/ or concerns need to be escalated to the respective Committee (sub-committee or main Committee) to determine the appropriate actions that need to be taken i.e., further training, formal warnings, etc.	<p>Conclusion: Not Started</p>



ISSUE DETAIL

6. Oversight of Gurdwara Affiliations

Detail:

There is no onboarding process or ongoing oversight performed over individuals/ groups who are affiliated with the Gurdwara, for example; sports clubs, social clubs, educational groups, charities and workshops.

In the absence of a robust onboarding process and regular oversight, there is a risk that the Gurdwara may be affiliated with individuals/ groups who may not adhere to the Gurdwara's policies, procedures and standards (e.g., DBS checks, health and safety standards, non-Sikh activities, etc). Furthermore, this may expose the Gurdwara to unintended reputational, financial and legal risks.

Action Plan:

Follow Up Assessment:

Compile a list of all clubs, educational groups and workshops that are using the Gurdwara to facilitate their work.

The Committee have onboarded an intern to compile a list of all clubs, educational groups and workshops that are using the Gurdwara to facilitate their work.

Conclusion: In progress

Implement contracts/ agreements in place to ensure that the affiliates operate in line with the Gurdwara's requirements and expectations.

Conclusion: Not Started

Assign Committee members/ committed volunteers to retrospectively perform a due diligence checks to ensure that the affiliates are aligned to the Gurdwara's standards and requirements.

Conclusion: Not Started

Oversee the affiliates on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating in line with expectations, as per the contract/ agreement.

Conclusion: Not Started



ISSUE DETAIL

7. Finance & Cash Management

Detail:

There is no approved overall finance strategy that is periodically reviewed to assess appropriateness. As a result, is not possible to assess whether finances are spent in line with Gurdwara strategy and goals. In addition, the management and handling of cash at the Gurdwara requires significant enhancements. Specifically:

- There is a lack of budgeting and forecasting to ensure that the Sangat's money is being appropriately utilised.
- The Treasurer(s) do not oversee the management and handling of all cash. As a result, there is a risk that the Gurdwara's finances are open to mishandling and/or inappropriate management or use.
- There is no accounting system in place to document and log cash payments which are non-Golak related (i.e., non-congregational cash offerings). Instead, paper receipts are manually created for cash payments. As a result, there is a risk of cash being mishandled and for potential misconduct to occur.

Additional issues were noted during the audit, however due to security concerns the issues were not explicitly documented, instead they were verbally shared and discussed with the Committee.

Action Plan:

Follow Up Assessment:

The Treasurer(s) need to develop, obtain formal approval of, and implement a periodically reviewed financial plan in line with overall Gurdwara strategy and goals.

As noted in issue 1, the Committee has allocated the Gurdwaras budget across "business as usual" activities and to key projects/ initiatives across the different functions. The budget allocation has also been reconciled back to the Committees manifesto to ensure that the Sangats money is being effectively and efficiently utilised. Any additional budget requests which are less than \$2k are reviewed and approved by the Treasurer. Due to the confidentiality of the budget, the allocation will not be attached within the Appendices.

Conclusion: Complete

Develop and implement a secure way to transport cash from the sites to the bank that includes appropriate oversight processes.

The Finance sub-committee meets every 6-7 weeks albeit the documentation to evidence the meeting minutes needs to be improved.

Nevertheless, the Committee confirmed that they are currently in the process of setting up a cash collection service from G4S/ Loomis. Refer to Appendix 7.

Conclusion: In Progress

Where possible, the Committee need to implement cashless payments for all non-Golak related payments.

Conclusion: Not Started



ISSUE DETAIL

8. Use of Gurdwara Facilities

Detail:

The current use of the Gurdwara's facilities and space needs to be reconsidered and reviewed to ensure it is being utilised in the best interest of the Sangat and is fit for the 21st century. Specifically:

- There are currently no private breastfeeding facilities in place.
- There are no unisex baby-changing facilities. The current facilities are limited to the Women's toilets, which are not always clean.
- The Gurdwara premises are at risk of being used for personal businesses, gains and promotions, which is not in line with the Gurdwara's constitution (Refer to Appendix C).
- The Gurdwara stage has previously been used for political agendas.
- The library is currently out of use and the books have been moved to the second floor. There is currently no oversight, maintenance and management of the library.
- The notice boards are not updated in a timely manner, do not always provide relevant information and in some cases are out of date and no longer relevant.

Action Plan:

The Committee needs to strategically evaluate the current facilities and space by setting up workshops with the Sangat to understand what is required to develop the Gurdwara.

Follow Up Assessment:

As noted in Issue 1, more details need to be provided for the projects listed within the Roles and Responsibilities chart. Nevertheless it was noted that the following developments are currently underway:

- Park Avenue Gurdwara developments:
 - Funeral Room: one of the outbuildings at Park Avenue Gurdwara is being converted to a dedicated funeral room.
 - Car park: the Park Avenue car park is currently being expanded, an ANPR system and a one way parking system will be implemented to tackle the current traffic issue.
 - Educational facilities: the Park Avenue outbuildings are currently being utilized for educational classes such as the Gurbani Sangeet Academy.
 - Reception: the Park Avenue Reception has been moved to the ground floor for better visibility, accessibility and safeguarding.
- Guru Nanak Road Gurdwara developments:
 - Domes: the Gurdwara domes are being renovated. The domes have not been cleaned and treated since the development of the Gurdwara resulting in water leakage issues which have not been treated or managed in a timely manner.
 - Children Library: a custom-built children's library has been developed.
- Norwood Hall – the projects have been successfully delivered by dedicated volunteers with minimal involvement from Committee members. The projects include:
 - Gardening project: the space at Norwood Hall has been utilised as a community garden project.
 - Summer Camp: the space at Norwood Hall was successfully utilised for a children's summer camp and sports week.

Conclusion: Ongoing

The Committee need to implement a plan in place which considers timeframes, finances requires and resources (people/ or technology) to ensure that the Sangat's money, time and resources are being effectively utilised.

Although budgets have been assigned to key projects, programmes and initiatives, there are no details, timeframes, or resources assigned to the respective projects, programmes and initiatives as highlighted within the Roles and Responsibilities chart.

Conclusion: In Progress

The Committee needs to ensure all decisions are made in line with the Gurdwara's constitution. Any deviations should be documented in the Committee meeting minutes.

Conclusion: Ongoing



ISSUE DETAIL

9. Property and Asset Utilisation

Detail:

The Gurdwara's properties are not utilised effectively and not in-line with the Gurdwara's objectives i.e., to be used for education and social projects etc. Specifically:

- There is no strategy in place to effectively manage the Gurdwara's portfolio of properties.
- There are instances of properties being used for general storage and parking. This includes (but is not limited to) outbuilding, sheds and lodges.
- There are instances of building space being occupied by unknown sevadars (volunteers).

As a result, there is a risk of lost opportunity whereby the Gurdwara can generate passive revenue which can subsequently be reinvested into projects to benefit the Sangat e.g., education and social projects etc. In addition, a lack of oversight over the Gurdwara properties may result in the buildings being inappropriately used leading to potential legal, financial and reputational damage.

Action Plan:

For the portfolio of homes owned by the Gurdwara, the Committee needs to implement a robust lettings strategy.

Follow Up Assessment:

A Letting Policy has been implemented, refer to Appendix 2.

In addition, as noted in the September 2023 Executive Committee meeting minutes, the Committee have agreed to provide a minimum London Living Wage to all staff so that they can rent/ purchase their own homes and not be reliant on the Gurdwara's accommodation. Refer to Appendix 8 for the detailed proposal.

Conclusion: Complete

For all other buildings owned by the Gurdwara (e.g., outbuildings, sheds and lodges), the Committee needs to implement a strategy to ensure that the buildings are being appropriately utilised in line with the Gurdwara's objectives.

Please refer to the update in Issue 8.

Conclusion: Ongoing

Where necessary, any unauthorised occupants of the Gurdwara's houses and/ or buildings need to be removed immediately.

The Security team are responsible for performing daily checks on all Gurdwara properties to ensure that no unauthorised individuals are living in the Gurdwara properties. Refer to Appendix 8.

Conclusion: Complete



APPENDIX

Supporting information:

- Roles and Responsibilities Chart
- Extract of the Committee Kanban
- Executive Committee Terms of Reference
- Extract of the 15 April 2023 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- June and September Executive Committee Agendas
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Tender Policy and Procedure
- Lettings Policy
- Safeguarding Policy