

MEETING: 25/07/2019

Ref: 15447

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital

St Gabriel's Parish House Trust

Adv: Ciaran Rafferty

Base: Westminster

Benefit: Westminster

Amount requested: £100,000

Amount recommended: £100,000

The Applicant

St Gabriel's Parish House Trust is the separately registered charity responsible for running the community hall of St Gabriel's Church in Pimlico. The Hall is quite separate from the Church and is located on the Churchill Gardens Estate – a large 1960's block of social housing comprising 1,600 homes and an area of high deprivation amidst the Regency houses of Pimlico village. The sole trustee of the charity is the Parochial Church Council of St Gabriel's Church.

The Application

The brick-built Hall dates from 1901 and is typical of its day, looking like a Victorian school building in many respects and with all the access problems that go with a building from that era – multi-level rooms and floors, stone steps everywhere, narrow doorways. Having said that, the facilities are superb and heavily used by a variety of community groups. This application is for the cost of works related to making the Hall more accessible, largely through the installation of a lift within a new extension, for which planning permission has been granted.

The Recommendation

The proposed works have been informed by an independent access audit and subsequent review of the architect's plans. The only feasible way of supporting access to all the rooms and levels is to install a lift onto the side of the building (rather than within it) and within a new 2-storey extension which will also contain accessible toilets and additional facilities to meet the growing demand for usage. The full cost of these works are estimated at c.£900,000, of which £365,000 has been raised so far. Your support is sought and it is believed a grant from you would help trigger funding from other trusts (eg Garfield Weston). A grant is advised:

£100,000 towards the costs of access works at St Gabriel's Parish House, subject to the balance required being raised.

Funding History

None in past ten years.

Background and detail of proposal

The Hall is currently used extensively for a wide range of community and charitable activity. The main hall hosts a range of community sports groups as well as theatre and music rehearsal groups; the rooms below that host scouts, dance groups and older people's activities; and there are small rooms and a kitchen used by local groups on a daily basis. Hire fees are charged on a fair and affordable basis and these fees constitute the biggest source of income for the Trust and which are then used to keep the facilities in good repair. For many years the Hall had no money

spent on it which saw the fabric deteriorate considerably over time. In the past 10 years the management committee undertook to accumulate income where possible and to use that to firstly make essential repairs where needed and then to improve what facilities it could. To this end the Trust has spent in the region of £1m over recent years and is now committing £300,000 from its reserves to the proposed works.

St Gabriel's is very much rooted in its community and strives to meet the many needs currently present. There is acute poverty within the neighbouring estate in particular (the Churchill ward is amongst the 10 most deprived in the country) so the new facilities will house more satellite services, such as for advice, food-banks, support for the local homeless and services for the elderly. There will also be better provision for a wide range of arts and cultural activities.

Financial Information

Until the current year the organisation's entire income has been unrestricted. Over the years it has accrued unrestricted reserves above its operational reserves target (£65,000 pa) and then used these surpluses to fund repairs and improvements to the building, as the organisation does not undertake such works until the funds are in place. It is currently building its free reserves again for the purpose of contributing to the forthcoming major structural improvements referred to in this report, hence the sum currently held being above its regular policy target.

Year end as at 31 December	2017 Examined Accounts	2018 Draft	2019 Budget
Income & expenditure:			
Income	199,841	234,140	357,748
- % of Income confirmed as at 21/8/19		100%	52%
Expenditure	(132,333)	(122,705)	(81,317)
Total surplus/(deficit)	67,508	111,435	276,431
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	0	55,000
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(67,508)	111,435	221,431
	(67,508)	111,435	276,431
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	132,333	111,435	81,317
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	183,671	281,158	502,589
No of months of operating expenditure	16.7	30.3	74.2
Reserves policy target	65,000	65,000	65,000
No of months of operating expenditure	5.9	7.0	9.6
Free reserves over/(under) target	118,671	216,158	437,589