

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Advice and Support****St Hilda's East****Adv: Sandra Jones****Amount requested: £81,545****Base: Tower Hamlets****Benefit: Tower Hamlets****Amount recommended: £81,600****The Applicant**

St Hilda's East (SHE) has been providing a range of services to the local community since 1889 having evolved into a Centre providing fifteen different projects to a diverse community; including crèche and under 5's provision, youth work, and daycentre /older people's provision. There is a domiciliary care service funded by the local authority and specific services for young people with physical or learning disabilities. Services are provided at the Centre's main building in Shoreditch and at a satellite centre in Shadwell. Its high-quality work has been officially recognised with a number of awards; its legal advice service (which it provides in partnership with two leading law firms who operate pro bono) won a national award; whilst its work with Bangladeshi elders won the Queen Mother's Care of Older People Award.

**The Application**

In May 2016, your committee agreed a three-year grant to deliver a Community Food Project which included money and debt advice for those using the project. The initial funding covered the costs of 2 part time posts (a 4 day per week Project Co-ordinator and a 1 day per week Advice Worker), volunteer expenses, training and associated running costs. The organisation is requesting a further two years funding to continue the project.

**The Recommendation**

SHE has an impressive history of supporting local people through neighbourly action and projects responding to local needs in Shoreditch and the surrounding area. Over the last three years, your grant has allowed SHE to successfully deliver a project that offers cheap, fresh produce to local people, the opportunity to volunteer, and debt and benefit advice. A further two years' funding will enable the organisation to continue to provide a high quality advice and food service to local people **£81,600 over two further and final years (£40,200; £41,400) towards the costs of a 4 day a week Project Co-ordinator, 1 dpw Advice Worker, and associated running costs.**

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
24/05/2016	£117,000 over three years (£39,000 pa) towards the costs of a 4 day a week Project Co-ordinator, 1 dpw Advice Worker, and associated running costs.
18/03/2010	£93,000 over three years (3 x £31,000) for the salary costs of an Older People's Project Co-ordinator.

**Background and detail of proposal**

The area surrounding St Hilda's faces exceptional challenges, including high unemployment and overcrowded housing, with economic poverty affecting all ages. Many in work are on low income, and older people who live on their own with

increasing ill-health and isolation. In order to combat poverty and promote healthy living, the St Hilda's Food Co-op was established in 2005. In 2011 the charity was awarded a three year grant from Big Lottery Fund to develop further, making links with local food producers and source fruit and vegetables directly and increase the number of low income households accessing cheap fresh produce, which was picked up through your grant in 2016. The produce is sold at cost, making it affordable and allowing people to purchase fresh fruit and vegetable that they would otherwise not have. Quarterly healthy cooking and eating workshops are run to support this.

Funding will allow this project to continue, which includes an evening session for those people on low income who work during the day. The advice worker is available for 48 additional sessions per annum for those in need of debt and benefit advice. This project uses several volunteers and offers them training around induction to the project, food safety and emergency first aid.

### Financial Information

The organisation's income comes from a range of sources, with less than 50% from the statutory sector. The total reserves stand at £2.0m which includes the book value of the Community Centre property and the capitalisation of grants for the premises and vehicles. The figure for unrestricted reserves in the table below does not include fixed assets of £1.5m (2019 draft examined accounts), relating to the value of the property they own. In the case of real financial need it is possible that these could be released though selling the property or for borrowing against it. The deficit being incurred on restricted funds would need to be covered by unrestricted or free reserves, which would therefore reduce the amount they are over their target. This was agreed by trustees as a planned approach to address overly high rates of accumulated reserves. Once the target of 3 months free reserves is reached, the organisation will no longer run a restricted deficit.

Year end as at 31 March	2018	2019	2020
	Independent Examination £	Draft Independent Examination £	Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	1,390,536	1,597,109	1,594,319
- % of income confirmed as at 18/12/2018	n/a	n/a	92%
Expenditure	(1,508,027)	(1,738,957)	(1,686,820)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(117,491)	(141,848)	(92,501)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(59,718)	(30,013)	(121,803)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(57,773)	(111,835)	29,302
	(117,491)	(141,848)	(92,501)
Cost of Raising Funds	73,483	76,764	53,764
- % of income	5.3%	4.8%	3.4%
Total unrestricted expenditure	895,127	990,056	1,013,512
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	418,450	306,615	335,917
No of months of operating expenditure	5.6	3.7	4.0
Reserves policy target	223,782	247,514	253,378
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	194,668	59,101	82,539