

**MEETING: 28/01/2016**

**Ref: 12918**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive**

**Havering Road Methodist Church**

**Adv: Sandra Jones**

**Base: Havering**

**Amount requested: £70,000**

**Benefit: Havering**

**Amount recommended: £59,000**

**The Charity**

The Havering Road Methodist Church (HRMC) is situated within a large residential area north of Romford town Centre. It provides premises for a wide range of local groups. Activities that take place include: a mother and toddlers club; adult study classes; after school club; dance classes; children's uniformed groups; badminton; coffee drop-in sessions; and, during the winter month, a weekend night shelter. A number of organisations have recently asked to use the Centre, as the only other community centre in the area has been sold by the council to a private company and the prices have increased to a level unaffordable by small local groups.

**The Application**

The Church plans a general refurbishment of its buildings which, including improved access, is estimated to cost £477,000 in total. Access work has been identified through an independent access audit and includes the provision of an accessible wet room / toilet; redesign of the site to make flooring level and, where that is not feasible, to install ramps and railings; and changing the entrance and doors to be wide enough for wheelchair use. New pathways will be needed and part of the car park will need to have suitable surfacing to provide accessible disabled parking bays. The charity has also requested funding to provide solar panels.

**The Recommendation**

In order to make the building fully accessible, HRMC commissioned an independent access audit, funded from its reserves. All recommendations from that audit have been incorporated into the proposed building works. The organisation has thought through how the buildings need to be redesigned to ensure that all spaces are accessible to disabled people, which is not the current position. The application also included the costs of installing solar panels, which falls outside your criteria for support and is not included in the recommendation:

***£59,000 towards the cost of providing an accessible toilet/wet room; improved level flooring and ramps; accessible doorways; and to tarmac the car park and pathways to enable full access.***

**Funding History**

None.

**Background and detail of proposal**

The current HRMC buildings are joined through internal link corridors and doorways throughout the site and are small, tight and all have some lip or step making them inaccessible, including a ramp that is too steep but within a space that will not allow for a suitable alternative. One space at the back of the building is currently totally inaccessible to disabled people, and the refurbishment would remove this restriction.

Level access in all areas is a key feature of the refurbishment with the necessary door, path and corridor widths. The narrow corridors and sharp corners will be replaced using more open areas with the revised doorways being suitable for wheelchair access.

As identified in the access audit, external access is important. Although tarmac throughout was not an option as drainage to prevent flooding is necessary, the strip of the car park nearest to the building will be surfaced to provide disabled parking space. New pathways will be built, without lips, to enable access to wheelchair users and those with mobility issues.

The main toilet facilities are to be totally redesigned as the current toilets cannot be adapted to make them accessible. By making the new accessible toilet a wet room it will increase the ability of HRMC to offer a safe and beneficial facility to local disability organisations.

### Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year 2015/16 is £55,433, of which £31,100 (56%) had been confirmed by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The forecast comprises only revenue costs and excludes the capital being raised for the 'Big Build'. The total cost of the Big Build has been estimated as £447,700, of which £151,000 (34%) has been secured.

Expenditure for 2014/15 was £23,874 (43%) higher than the previous year, which the charity advises is due to expenditure on the building renovation.

The cost of generating funds for the organisation is stated as zero because the centre is run by volunteers who also undertake any fundraising.

Year end at 31 August	2013/14 Independently Examined Accounts	2014/15 Forecast Outturn	2015/16 Current Year Budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>			
Income	58,101	54,081	55,433
Expenditure	55,271	79,145	58,069
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(50)	(7,360)	(774)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	2,880	(17,704)	(1,862)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	2,830	(25,064)	(2,636)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	4.9%	(46.3%)	(4.8%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	0	0	0
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Unrestricted reserves held at Year End	37,661	30,301	29,527
How many months' worth of expenditure	8.2	4.6	6.1
Reserves Policy target	27,635	39,572	29,034
How many months' worth of expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	10,026	(9,271)	493