

**MEETING: 27/07/2017**

**Ref: 13972**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive**

**Park Theatre**

**Adv: Julia Mirkin**

**Amount requested: £82,074**

**Base: Islington**

**Benefit: Islington**

**Amount recommended: £68,650**

**The Charity**

The Park Theatre (PT) opened in May 2013 and is based near Finsbury Park. It is a purpose-built venue with two performance spaces, one with 200 seats and the other accommodating an audience of 90. PT presents 25 productions per year, attracting approximately 100,000 visitors - including café users and attendees of PT's learning programme, comprising a reminiscence group for older local people; an adult ensemble group; youth and children's activities and work in local schools. The learning programme, along with PT's subsidised ticket offer, demonstrates PT's commitment to embedding itself in its community and making its work accessible. This proposal aims to build on this commitment through targeted programming for disabled audiences and an upgrade to PT's facilities.

PT describes itself as 'a neighbourhood theatre with a global ambition'. The launch of the venue's first accessible season in 2017 is an important and central means of realising this aim. Addressing accessibility through programming and complementary capital development, therefore, is consistent with the organisation's wider aims and strategy.

**The Application:** The delivery of a three-year access performance/participation programme with training to integrate access throughout the organisation.

**The Recommendation**

The application includes the costs of Parent and Baby friendly performances, which falls outside of your Making London More Inclusive criteria. The budget also included a contribution to subsidised tickets, which is beyond the specific focus of your funding. To replace this line, your officer recommends including a 10% contribution to core costs, which is included in the recommended amount below.

**£68,650 over three years (£29,250; £21,900; £17,500) for the delivery of accessible performances for disabled audiences; access training; the installation of evacuation chairs; website adaptations and a 10% contribution to core costs.**

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
25/09/2014	£2,000 to match CEP funding towards the wage costs of 1 Apprentice for 1 year. The national minimum wage must be paid.

**Background and detail of proposal**

PT proposes to develop a programme for audience members who are deaf, visually impaired, on the autistic spectrum or who have conditions that make them anxious in a theatre environment. In May 2016, 10,640 people in Islington were claiming Disability Living Allowance (Islington Council's 2016 annual report). Being on the border of Haringey and Hackney further increases PT's potential catchment for disabled people. To accommodate the accessibility needs of the local population, PT proposes to programme captioned, audio described and 'relaxed and Dementia

Friendly' performances. This involves consulting with visiting theatre companies about modifications to make their productions more accessible, for example, by providing written pre-show notes or making the lighting and sound less extreme. Specialist captioning or audio description equipment will be hired for the season and specialist technicians from Vocaleyes (the leading agency for accessibility in the arts and heritage sector) will be hired to support and train PT staff in its use. Audio description scripts will be compiled and 'touch tours' will be planned and scheduled for blind audience members before shows; specialist captioning and audio description training alongside general safeguarding and awareness-raising training will be delivered for staff working throughout the building. The costs associated with implementing accessible performances, such as those outlined above, make up the majority of the request; in addition, PT proposes to employ a part-time Manager to oversee this work and requests that costs for staff training and accessible website adaptations are covered by any potential grant. The proposal also includes a contribution to the costs of installing evacuation chairs around the building to ensure an increasing disabled audience can be accommodated safely and comfortably.

### Financial Information

Income and expenditure relating to the café-bar is included in the total figures presented. Income of £465,463 was generated by the café-bar during 15-16 (34% of turnover) and a net profit of £16,436. Therefore, the charity includes the costs of running the café-bar in the cost of raising funds. After deducting income from the café-bar, PT's income was £888,860 in 15-16.

The 16-17 forecast income is lower than that achieved in 15-16 due to that raised at a gala dinner celebrating the theatre's 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Similarly, income in 17-18 is budgeted to increase due to fundraising activity with Sir Ian McKellen, which is anticipated to raise approximately 60% of budgeted income for the year. The low level of secured income for 17-18 is attributed to the fundraising to support this, which is scheduled to take place the week commencing 03/07/17.

PT has also been encouraged to submit a Grants for The Arts application by Arts Council England, which it intends to do this financial year.

Year end as at December	2015-16 Examined £	2016-17 Forecast £	2017-18 Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	1,354,323	1,196,704	1,428,900
- % of Income confirmed as at 29/06/17	n/a	n/a	9%
Expenditure	(1,429,023)	(1,170,286)	(1,332,102)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>(74,700)</b>	<b>26,418</b>	<b>96,798</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(6,385)	-	64,957
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(68,315)	26,418	31,841
	<b>(74,700)</b>	<b>26,418</b>	<b>96,798</b>
Cost of Raising Funds	449,027	441,121	476,243
- % of income	33.2%	36.9%	33.3%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds excl Café spend)	950,613	708,829	897,102
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	120,070	146,488	243,286
No of months of operating expenditure	1.5	2.5	3.3
Reserves policy target	200,000	200,000	200,000
No of months of operating expenditure	2.5	3.4	2.7
Free reserves over/(under) target	(79,930)	(53,512)	43,286