

BYFLEET METHODIST CHURCH – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary	
<p>Byfleet Methodist Church, part of the Methodist Church and the wider Christian community, has applied for capital funding of up to £33,000 to assist with roofing and electrical costs. The application stems from essential maintenance work the Church has undertaken to repair the roofs and wiring of its buildings. The extent of the work necessary has been greater than anticipated and as a result the Church is struggling to identify the funding necessary.</p> <p>In addition to its activities as a Methodist Church, Byfleet Methodist Church also seeks to provide opportunities for the local community to have a place for meetings, social activities and entertainment. A wide range of groups make use of the facilities, including Brownies, yoga, and a ballet school.</p> <p>The application represents a significant proportion of funding towards costs which may or may not be incurred after 1 April 2018. There is significant uncertainty about the work that would be needed after 1 April and it is not felt that the application has demonstrated sufficient justification or clarity for the Council to award funding of up to £33,000. In view of this, it is recommended that the application is not supported.</p>	

Recommendations	
Reasons for Decision	It is not considered that the application can be supported in view of the uncertainty of the nature of the work needed.
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That no grant be awarded.

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

Background Papers:

2018/19 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Byfleet Methodist Church is part of the Methodist Church and the wider Christian community. The original Wesleyan chapel in Byfleet was built in 1875 and the present church was built on a new site in Rectory Lane and opened fully in 1939.</p> <p>The aim of Byfleet Methodist Church is principally to bring people to Christ. However, the Church also seeks to provide opportunities for the local community to have a place for meetings, social activities and entertainment. Groups varying from soft play to Brownies to yoga, to slimmers, to AA, to Blood transfusion, to U3A, to a ballet school use the premises which are also used for social outreach by way of coffee mornings, socials etc.</p> <p>The Church has a Church Hall, Guild Room, and Parlour, all available for hire. Use of the kitchen for teas/coffees & snacks can also be included.</p> <p>The standard rates are:- Main Hall - £17 per hour Guild Room - £15 per hour Parlour - £11 per hour Kitchen Full use - £11 per hour</p>
1.2 Employees	None.
1.3 Volunteers	48, whose activities include keeping the buildings clean and tidy and making minor repairs and decorating within their capabilities, opening and closing the premises as required, making sure heating, lighting etc. is on. The volunteers also lead and help to run various activities on the premises, services, coffee mornings, social events, clubs etc.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>670, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 185 male 485 female 12 disabled 27 ethnic minority 500 resident in Woking 40 aged 0-5 132 aged 5-10 144 aged 11-18 227 aged 19-65 127 aged 65+ <p>Examples of users of the premises include Soft Play, NHS blood transfusion, Ballet School, Brownies and Rainbows, Slimming World, Yoga, NCT antenatal sessions, U3A, Dr Bobs, Badminton, Church activities.</p>

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1.5 Members	76, comprising: 19 male 57 female 7 disabled 49 resident in Woking 20 aged 19-65 56 aged 65+
1.6 Sum Requested	£33,000 (Capital)
1.7 Project	To complete repair of roof on community buildings and bring electrics up to date in community hall. The failure of the lighting due to squirrels chewing the cables which led to the discovery that the whole electric system needed repairs. Much of the work has already been completed but has greatly lowered the Church's funds and there is still some work needed.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	Roof - £30,000 Electrics - £3,000
1.9 Community Benefit	The applicant has advised that the work is needed to keep as many available premises for community activities in Byfleet as possible. The Village Hall, St Mary's and the Day Centre all provide such premises but the loss of any one would limit activities in the village.

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	At the time of the application, the Group held £23,000 in the bank. The sum of £11,000 is kept in reserve and the Church must pay its assessment (£9,000 a quarter) to its parent body (i.e. Wey Valley Circuit). The Group has submitted a budget for 2017/18 (rather than 2018/19) which shows an anticipated income of £62,873 against an anticipated expenditure of £60,809, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £2,064. Anticipated income includes the offertory (£9,600), planned giving (£7,836), gift aid (£5,000), gift day (£6,490), fundraising (£1,000) and rents (£29,000). Items of expenditure include circuit assessment (£37,500), cleaning, repairs etc. (£6,257), utilities (£5,007), insurance (£3,102), and heaters (£2,760).
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for 2016/17 which show an income of £84,764 against expenditure of £85,106, resulting in a deficit of £342. The sum of £12,221 was carried forward at the end of the 2016/17 year. Income included the offertory (£98,856), planned giving (£9,230), gift day (£6,825), fundraising (£13,023) and rents (£28,642). Items of expenditure included circuit assessment (£37,100), cleaning, repairs etc. (£5,759), utilities (£5,773), insurance (£2,809), roof repairs and electricity (£22,827) and heaters (£2,810).

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2.3 Support over the past five years	The Council awarded a capital grant of £30,000 towards the costs of refurbishment and building works at the Church in 2000/01. No further applications for financial assistance have been received in subsequent years.
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3.0 Assessment of Application																									
3.1 Key Information	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 50%;">○ Constitution</td><td style="width: 50%;">Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Registered Charity</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ VAT Registered</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Equal Opportunities Policy</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Safeguarding Policy</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Reserves Policy</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Quality Mark</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Other funding sources pursued</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Other support by the Council</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Fundraising</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Two quotes</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Regular monitoring provided previously</td><td>N/A</td></tr> </table>	○ Constitution	Yes	○ Registered Charity	Yes	○ VAT Registered	No	○ Equal Opportunities Policy	No	○ Safeguarding Policy	Yes	○ Reserves Policy	Yes	○ Quality Mark	No	○ Other funding sources pursued	Yes	○ Other support by the Council	No	○ Fundraising	Yes	○ Two quotes	Yes	○ Regular monitoring provided previously	N/A
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3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Officer Comment</u></p> <p>There is no doubt that the Church plays a significant part in the life of the local community and therefore having a building which is fit for purpose is important.</p> <p>However from the application it is unclear what works will be undertaken, and the fact that a considerable amount of work has already taken place means that it is unlikely to meet the grant criteria.</p> <p>I would not be supportive of this application.</p>																								
3.3 Assessment	<p>Byfleet Methodist Church has applied for funding to cover the costs of a project to undertake roof repairs and electrical work to the Church's community buildings. The Applicant has made it clear that this project has already been taken forward by the Church but has reached a stage where the Church no longer has the funds to complete the project. The Church estimates that an additional £33,000 is needed, comprising £30,000 towards the roof and £3,000 towards electrical work.</p> <p>The Church has not applied elsewhere for financial support but hopes that the Church Circuit (i.e. the Layer above the local church) may eventually be able to help. Some fund raising has been undertaken, including concerts, a Flower Festival, coffee mornings, quizzes, book sales and cakes stalls, individual giving, sales of work and a jumble sale.</p> <p>The Church has to-date spent £12,300 on roofing and £16,000 on electrical work since the beginning of 2017. The works that have been done have been completed though the applicant advises that the work is not part of a single project but a series of repairs that can be done</p>																								

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piecemeal. It is noted, for example, that the building continues to suffer from leaking roofs and the emergency lighting does not work.

In regard to quotes for the work, the applicant has advised that they have a quote by the electrician for £22,000 to make the fire alarm system compliant within the work he had undertaken on renewing the electricity systems. This followed concerns about emergency lighting, in addition to which the Church is paying for a fire risk assessment from Paragon Fire & Security systems.

The Church's roofer has given a revised quote of £44,000 for the remainder of roofing work originally required including some extra work that has emerged and a figure for checking and repairing the roof and guttering of the Church tower with some of the Church roof for another £40,000. This latter is work that the Church had not considered before on cost grounds.

The applicant has explained that one of the reasons the Church has had to apply for a grant is the sudden and heavy drain on its funds by the electrical work that emerged unexpectedly after inspecting damage caused by squirrels and a dramatic overload in the mains input. Nevertheless the Church expects that, with its fundraising efforts, it will be able to match any funding the Council could provide.

The Church is open to all, offering coffee mornings, social events, monthly lunches and concerts to which all who can be accommodated are invited. The buildings are also open to a variety of groups including ballet school, soft play, Brownies, U3A, AA, slimmers and NCBT. The two biggest users – ballet and soft play – use the premises on a daily basis but the rest come on a weekly or monthly basis.

The Church was advised that the Council would consider the grant applications in December, with any funds awarded only be available for work undertaken after 1 April 2018, and was asked whether this fitted in with the timetable of works by the Church. The applicant has indicated that, although the intention had been to complete the works by winter 2017, the availability of funds means there will still be work to do next April, such as the work on the Church tower. There is also the possibility that some of the other roof repairs will be outstanding at that point, together with any work identified through the fire risk assessment.

The application represents a significant proportion of funding towards costs which may or may not be incurred after 1 April 2017 to assist the Church in completing work to repair flat roofs. There is significant uncertainty about the work that would be needed after 1 April and it is worth noting that the Council's criteria specifies that:

“Grants will not normally be awarded for projects designed purely for places of worship. Consideration will, however, be given to applications for assistance towards Church Halls and other Community Halls where use and/or hiring is open to all.”

Work to the Church tower is therefore unlikely to qualify for support from the Council in light of the criteria.

It is not felt that the application has demonstrated sufficient justification or clarity for the Council to award funding of up to £33,000 towards the costs of works which have yet to be fully identified. It is noted that the costs of the works currently being undertaken have

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been higher than expected and have therefore had an impact on the finances of the Church. However, the Council cannot assist where works have been entered into before the Executive has had the opportunity to consider the application.

In view of the above, it is recommended that the application is not supported.

REPORT ENDS