BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL LOCAL INNOVATION FUND
"Doing things differently in neighbourhoods to make better places to live"
WARD PROPOSAL FORM

WARD : Hall Green	**INNOVATION** **TITLE** Hall Green – Stronger Together

Innovations have to meet the LIF priorities and add value to the City wide core priorities listed below.

(Tick all those that apply)

City Core Priorities		LIF Priorities	
• **Children** - a Great City to Grow Up In	x	• Citizens' Independence & Well Being	x
• **Jobs & Skills** a great City to succeed in	x	• New approaches to investment	
• **Housing** a great City to live in	X	• Active citizens & communities stepping up	x
• **Health** a great City to lead a healthy & active life	X	• Clean streets	
		Improving local centres	x

What is your innovative idea and how does it show collaborative, partnership working and active citizenship?

Hall Green would like to put in a proposal to LIF for funding to support the development of Highfield Hall and Gospel Oak Community Centres and Hall Green United Community Church as the nucleus of a community network. These three hubs will be access points for advice and information, strengthening our communities and skilling up local residents to be more active and feel empowered through developing networks and a growing confidence in their use of IT.

Part of the funding will be used to augment the existing and future plant and IT training facilities, to revive the Community Bus in order to benefit those less likely to access the hubs (whether women, men, children, youth or those with disabilities), and to pool these resources in order to maximise their benefit.

Our idea will incorporate:

a) **Continuing development of the hubs and their infrastructure** as anchors in the community, providing places to meet (community dialogue/cohesion, consultations, public meetings), to learn together (developing ideas, local knowledge, tackling issues-speeding), to get help (health and well being, advice, signposting) and socialise (bringing diverse people together, events, celebrating our area/people). Each of the hubs runs and hosts a wide variety of activities, which have the potential to be replicated in another part of the Ward.

b) **Making the City's Advice Strategy accessible** (information service) to those without IT or telephone skills through the provision of a weekly 2-hour session in each hub, maximising coverage throughout the Ward. A pool of volunteers will be drawn from all sections of the community, educational establishments and business and trained in using GBAS (Gateway to Birmingham Advice Services), City Council and other

information sites.
c) **Providing IT access points:** we will up-skill local people to enable them to be more active and informed as well as combating isolation and encouraging independence (use of IT for recreation, information, advice, communication). We will also have times when the public can come in (HHCC) and use the computers for their own use with support as required (access emails) as part of the Hub offering free Wi-Fi .
d) **Community Bus:** This vehicle, previously owned by the City, is designed to be used as a mobile meeting place rather than a means of transport. It is designed to house built-in audio-visual and IT equipment. Re-investment in putting this resource back on the road and its availability within the Ward will provide the opportunity for innovative delivery of existing services by the 3 hubs and creativity for many other community groups.

The proposal will see the development of a network connecting people and organisations together with a culturally sensitive approach, where they can support people from three very different parts of the community with backgrounds needing specific support ie language, less affluent area, an older population. It will also unite the organisations in tackling issues together, showing a united approach/solidarity which will have a bigger and wider impact and give the people of Hall Green confidence in its local organisations.
The initiators of this proposal are working with many local groups (Hall Green Action group, WeAreB28), Health centres, churches, temples, mosques and also with MAC and Hall Green Arts to bring arts to a local level and encourage wider participation in this area.

Time Frame – is it:-

One off event/programme	
Implement and complete within 6 months (2016)	
Implement and complete within 12 months (2017)	x

How will the innovation be implemented?
a) Collaboration between the three hubs will be maintained by regular contact between the initiators in the first instance, but in due course could develop into a more formal structure involving other partners.
The prime innovatory aspects will be implemented in specific ways:
b) Information Service in collaboration with GBAS. The objective is for the service to be developed and managed by a volunteer working group representing the various ethnic, social groups in the Ward, plus the three community access points. The siting of the financial management of this part of the project is under consideration. The funding will support the purchase of hardware at 2 of the 3 hubs, including laptops and printers. Volunteers will be drawn from the different ethnic and social groups working, living and studying in Hall Green and trained in co-operation with the BCC Quality & Change Manager and using GBAS Advice Strategy criteria and web-based information. The service will be underpinned by membership of AdviceUK, its activity monitored and recorded through use of AdvicePro web-based case management system, and covered by indemnity insurance. Funding is being requested to underpin the first year of these costs.
c) Initially in one hub, but with potential development to a second, the laptops will be

available in an IT access point as described above, and also be used for IT awareness, particularly of older users. This will maximise the value of the investment.

d) The Community Bus will be equipped, serviced/insured and made fit for purpose so that it will be readily available to Hall Green Ward to utilise for the summer 2017. It will be based at Highfield Hall, whose management will also train 2 extra drivers, and provide road training, handling and risk assessments.

Overall, implementation of the innovation will benefit from the following:
All three centres will:

- Put in volunteers, using existing resources and offer 'work in kind' to get the project started and to make it sustainable.
- Contribute volunteer time to help /support where needed.
- Have qualified and able volunteers who can offer specialist skills in capacity building, IT skills, funding, community development, organising events.
- Provide publicity networks into the wider community to bring people together by holding events (issues based workshops, consultations, public meetings, social celebrations of events/days)

What outcomes will the proposal achieve? What will success look like and how will its impact be measured? How will you ensure legacy/ continuation and what learning will the project provide?

OUTCOMES of 'Hall Green – Stronger Together'

1. Functional and equipped centres to support the community not just in LIF project time but over a much longer period of time and wider projects. (Measure: sustainability & breadth of activity)
2. A more productive/motivated team of workers/users/volunteers. (Measure: availability and turnover)
3. More sustainable 'working together ethic' and network due to support/advice on funding/managing & sharing resources/people. (Measure: Level of co-operation rather than competition)
4. Combating isolation in vulnerable people due to improved communication via IT/bringing people together: elderly, speakers of other languages, new settlers in our city (Measure: qualitative social/health assessments)
5. Accessibility to GBAS for those who may be excluded. Measure: Higher percentage of finalised assessments for benefits, housing, employment queries etc. Enabling people to deal with issues in a timely way to prevent escalation into crisis.

What will success look like:

1. Community Hubs that are well utilised by sections of the community and other groups / organisations that will benefit and contribute to the local people and area.
2. Users/people combating barriers to communication through basic skills in IT
3. Increasing numbers of people learning to use IT and interrogate 'the system' for

themselves, and finding quicker and more efficient routes to the most appropriate help.
4. More people having knowledge of each other and different cultures and beliefs
5. Groups/users being able to access and get funding for their work, with support in the better understanding of running groups and governance provided by HHCC centre management.
6. More active citizens who have knowledge of their own community and activities in their area.

To ensure legacy/continuation, effort must be concentrated into maintaining a steady flow of new volunteers over time, encouraging donation of time and expertise from the local population, colleges, universities and businesses. We must maintain a good marketing strategy and ensure that the Hubs/Community Bus/Road safety initiatives are known to the community in Hall Green and the wider community. Also continue to work together to address issues and strengthen the network, while maintaining feedback to local supporting community and faith groups. We will endeavour to develop capacity, depending on need and available resources.

Learning provided:
Quality and consistency in IT support offered will be achieved through the free online teaching tool provided by "Learn My Way" and mentoring/training from Advice CiC for all IT volunteers. Members of the public will learn to access information for themselves about managing bureaucracy and processes, and benefits and services available to them. Volunteers will learn to help people identify their needs and to assess the level of assistance required. This may be particularly valuable experience for students and those on internships.
All will learn about the values and life experiences of the many different groups and cultures that make up our community.

We are sure that this initiative for Hall Green will show how we are working together to address community issues, scarcity of resources, build a stronger community, revitalise its community buildings assets and at the same time empower its residents.

Have you considered other sources of funding and whether the project can be used to leverage further funding from elsewhere (please specify funding sources)?
The various aspects of this project have differing funding requirements.
- There is a need for IT hardware for two of the three hubs in order to support the various IT components of this proposal. Other grant funding has not been sought.
- In addition to IT hardware, the information innovation will require 1st year funding for software and insurance costs. Other sources of funding have not yet been considered.
- Funding to re-instate the Community Bus & for activities is being sourced .

The highest level of ongoing funding will be in connection with increasing accessibility to the Gateway to Birmingham Advice Services, principally in respect of mobile telephone contracts, room hire, use of a software package and indemnity insurance.

What resources will be required?
(See also the attached financial breakdown)

£

- Capital
- Running costs
- People power volunteers

35,000

Amount required from LIF £ 35,000

Sustainability issues

a) Continuing Development of the hubs – each of the 3 hubs has an existing infrastructure and dedicated volunteers as a basis for their activities which will underpin development through continued investment of time and existing plant at zero additional cost.

b) GBAS-linked information service – owing to the need for data security and indemnity insurance for volunteers, plus access to a mobile phone service there will be an ongoing annual budget implication of around £4075. Funding will be sought from sponsorship by local and national companies, and regular committed contributions from local organisations, faith groups and individuals.   Each of the 3 centres will contribute space free of charge.

c) IT access point – using space donated by the venues and voluntary assistance, additional costs will be minimal.

e) The use of the Community Bus will be sustained from hire to groups as our research over the past year has shown that there is a lot of interest from groups to hire the bus. We will also seek funding to run youth projects from the bus.

Ongoing publicity of all these services will be incorporated within the existing budgets of the 3 Centres.

Contact person for proposal

Name : Robina Iqbal

Telephone 07855328342

E-mail : robina@highfieldhall.org.uk

Which residents or community groups was the proposal discussed with and when (please give details of any meetings and which councillors attended)?

23 November 2016 Ward Meeting Cllrs Sam Burden and Kerry Jenkins (Hall Green United Community Church, HHCC, Gospel Oak)
25 January 2017 Ward Meeting Cllr Kerry Jenkins (Hall Green United Community Church, HHCC, Gospel Oak)
Community Workers' Lunchtime Meeting 17 January 2017 (Inc.HHCC)
Public Consultation during January/February 2017 - 77% of respondents identified need for more community activities and 45% a need for an information service. (Hall Green United Community Church, HHCC)
HHCC user groups: January/February 2017 Individual meetings to inform/update proposal and future working strategy.
Meeting with LIF advisors (December 2016, January 2017) HHCC
Hall Green Action Group: February meeting
Individual discussion with Cllr Barry Bowles
Meeting with Cllrs Jenkins and Bowles 10 March 2017

Discussed at

Ward meeting : Hall Green

Date : 25th January 2017

Signatures of all 3 Ward Councillors

Name ...BARRY BOWLES... Signature .... Date ..14. 3. 17.

Name ...Kerry Jenkin... Signature ....Kerry S Jenkin.. Date ..14/3/17...

Name .... Signature .... Date ....