

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL LOCAL INNOVATION FUND "Doing things differently in neighbourhoods to make better places to live" WARD PROPOSAL FORM	
WARD SPARKBROOK	INNOVATION TITLE Balsall Heath Sparkbrook Social Action Hub
<p>Innovations have to meet the LIF priorities and add value to the City wide core priorities listed below.</p> <p>(Tick all those that apply)</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><u>City Core Priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children - a Great City to Grow Up In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Jobs & Skills a great City to succeed in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Housing a great City to live in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Health a great City to lead a healthy & active life <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><u>LIF Priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens' Independence & Well Being <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • New approaches to investment <input type="checkbox"/> • Active citizens & communities stepping up <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> • Clean streets <input type="checkbox"/> • Improving local centres <input type="checkbox"/> </div> </div>	
<p>What is your innovative idea and how does it show collaborative, partnership working and active citizenship?</p> <p>We are going to develop a partnership between Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath Forums in order to create a social action hub that uses deliberative democracy to activate and mobilise local people, co-produce community-led solutions to long standing complex problems, and develop sustainable community infrastructure.</p> <p>It is widely accepted that we need to do things differently; change is needed to cope with the rising demands and financial constraints of providing public services. The ward of Sparkbrook continues to suffer from a density of issues such as significant health inequality and a poor living environment.</p> <p>In 2016 an evaluation conducted by Professor Tony Bovaird and Dr Elke Loeffler by Governance International identified that despite dramatic improvements since the 1980's continued improvements were necessary for the area to avoid its designation as one of the most deprived areas in the country.</p> <p>Since the 1990's Balsall Heath Forum has been the vanguard of social mobilisation. During the 1970's the area was in serious trouble. Manufacturing had ended; white working class communities had been dispersed by wide scale demolition. New comers came from different backgrounds from all over the world. Prostitution was rife, spreading fear and isolation. Change came in the form of community activism. Balsall Heath Forum was formed to represent the areas voluntary agencies, street groups and the neighbourhood. By 2015 the foundations laid by this social mobilisation led by residents and supported by inter agency working has led to Balsall Heath as its Neighbourhood Development Plan states "from being one of the least desirable to become one of its best".</p>	

The Sparkbrook Neighbourhood Forum have been working tirelessly for many years to change the perceptions of Sparkbrook by changing the narrative of negativity to more positive affirmations and in doing so improve opportunities for residents of Sparkbrook. Recognising that the desired improvements cannot be achieved by the Forum alone.

The Sparkbrook Forum has committed to working together with Balsall Heath Forum more closely than ever before and acts as the Sparkbrook Neighbourhood intermediary on the partnership. Ensuring there is an opportunity of working in partnership with the purpose of making the change in the lives of local residents.

This idea takes collaboration and partnership to a new level in Sparkbrook, one where the two forums will work together sharing resources to build community resilience through joint-decision making and a joint voice. We have aspirations to design and deliver community-led services and to ensure there is much-needed community infrastructure in order to build the resilience of the local community.

Economic resilience is the capacity of an economic system to adapt to both short-term shocks and long-term change, while supporting the community to thrive.¹

Following 8 years of austerity communities in Sparkbrook are still trying to build their resilience and in 2017 the UK is again engaged in a major debate about how to rebalance the economy, this time focused on the need for “inclusive growth” in the aftermath of the EU referendum and the recognition that globalisation has not benefited all communities equally.

Our proposal will ensure that Sparkbrook and Balsall heath has community infrastructure that are firmly rooted in a sense of place and there for the long term, providing a central source of stability as the world changes around them.

The social action hub will also provide a source of capacity building for the community through the identification of physical and non-physical assets, building on and connecting these through community organising thus ensuring this investment is helped by the community and not with services that deliver to the community.

¹ Working definition adapted from NEF/Friends Provident Foundation
Appendix 3 Local Innovation Fund Proposal Form

Time Frame – Is it:-

One off event/programme

Implement and complete within 6 months (2016)

Implement and complete within 12 months (2017)

How will the innovation be implemented?

This partnership will be trained in an approach called deliberative democracy which focuses on people of Sparkbrook who care deeply about their communities and their country but worry about problems that endanger their future and that of their children. Sparkbrook has the highest rate of unemployment with no job opportunities or prospects and an ever increasing crime rate.

The Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook social action hub will give local people a voice allowing them a hand in shaping a stronger future rather than giving into despair and cynicism. We will use the Kettering Foundations deliberative democracy methodology by using a framework to put people at the forefront of deciding what is important to them by framing issues creating deliberation to reach some common ground for action.

What framing should do:

Things that concern people - reflecting on options for action.

Advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Consequences that may follow from each action to solve problems e.g. costs, feasibility.

The framework will also recognise unpopular points of view and will not prompt the usual conversations which should disrupt old patterns and open new conversations.

The Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook social action hub will use the following democratic practices that will give citizens a stronger hand in shaping their future.

1. Naming problems to reflect the things people consider valuable and hold dear, not expert information alone.
2. Framing issues for decision making that not only takes into account what people value but also lays out all the major options for acting fairly and with full recognition of the tension growing out of advantages and disadvantages of each option.
3. Making decisions deliberatively to move opinions from first impressions to more shared and reflective judgements.
4. Identifying and committing civic resources, assets that are often go unrecognised and unused.
5. Organising civic actions so they complement one another, which makes the whole of people's efforts more than the sum of the parts.
6. Learning as a community all along the way to keep up civic momentum.

The practices run by the Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook social action hub, are a response to the questions raised in every community facing troubling circumstances. People want to know how they can come together as a community despite their differences to sustain the Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook community.

This will encourage the communities to find their own answers, to look at opportunities, to do business as usual but differently.

This will enable us to treat the community as professionals, solving complex problems and in a feedback loop using our collective voice we will influence the way in which services are delivered. Our ultimate aspiration is to build our joint capacity to deliver services which are designed and delivered by the community ensuring the right service is delivered in the right way.

From establishing the issues using the deliberative democracy methodology we will frame "The Pillars to Success".

The pillars to success will be achieved through the creation of the Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook town council where local elected representative's voices will be amplified with strategic partners in the city.

Once extensive consultation has been carried out the neighbourhood will hold an major event followed by a referendum on a simple "yes" or "no" question on the creation of a town council.

Keep it local

in order to adopt the deliberative democracy methodology both organisations will be trained in the approach and we will hold regular community events and meetings to use the methodology to develop solutions and build on the assets already in the community.

The role of the capacity builder will create 'safe spaces' for commissioners and service delivery agencies to co-create services that meet the needs of the local community as defined by the local community. This role will also build the capacity of the 2 organisations as well as explore options for a more integrated community infrastructure across the area.

The community connector will be building from the ground up understanding the different assets in the community and helping to connect them to activate and connect citizens and building resilience. In line with the development of the social action hubs we think our community connector will benefit from training offered to Community Organisers. This will enable them to develop skills that can be passed on to other volunteer organisers thus ensuring that the investment is maximised.

Community events will act as a way of bringing the community together, developing a shared understanding between services and the community as well as different sections of the community. An important aspect of this model is the development of networks of support within the community. These informal networks support the health and wellbeing of local residents especially those who may be isolated. It is envisaged that these networks will build upon the local community infrastructure accessing those within the community who may be described as 'hard to reach' and will serve to support any service delivery in the future.

Wandsworth community empowerment network

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

1. Sustainable Community Infrastructure

The capacity building element of this proposal will ensure that Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath has a community infrastructure and a joined up voice that acts as a social action hub.

2. Community Networks of support

3. Active and Connected Citizens

4. Safe space for collaboration and joint decision making

The Balsall Heath Forum has developed the first neighbourhood development plan in Birmingham with over 22% of the electorate coming out to vote which equates to over 2,200 local residents who we reached through previous consultations. This is more than any council election or police crime commissioner election.

The Balsall Heath and Sparkbrook social action hub will reach out to 5,000 local residents during the early and latter stages of the consultation to develop a town council. This will include residents of all ages, genders and from all backgrounds which reside in the diverse Sparkbrook ward. This will capture what really matters to people who live in the locality with a clear proposal of action.

This will form the "pillars of Success", for Sparkbrook/Balsall Heath West and support our bid to form a Town Council.

Have you considered other sources of funding and whether the project can be used to leverage further funding from elsewhere (please specify funding sources)?

What resources will be required?

- Capital
- Running costs
- People power volunteers

£

Amount required from LIF £...33,000

Have you got any match funding – in cash or in kind?
Volunteer time will equate to several thousand pounds

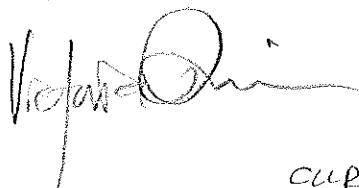
Contact person for proposal

Name Abdullah Rehman MBE

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E-mail abdullah.rehman@hotmail.co.uk

CAN'T SIGN BECAUSE I
DONT BELIEVE IT IS FINANCIALLY
VIABLE GOING FORWARDS
BASED UPON THIS OUTLINE
& ALL OTHER EXPRESSIONS OF IT,



CUR VICTORIA QUINN

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

Discussed at

Ward meeting 6th Sept 2017

Signatures of all 3 Ward Councillors

Name MOHAMMAD AZIZ Signature [Signature] Date 7.11.17

Name Signature Date

Name KENNEDY Signature [Signature] Date 7.11.2017

Internal use only

Received: Date

Go to Cabinet Committee – Local Leadership for decision: Date

Approved

Yes	
No	

