

## Initial Outcome Proposal to the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board – FY2023/24

### (Stage 1 Proposal)

<p><b>1. Name of Project/activity that will deliver the outcome(s)</b></p> <p>Launch of the Grundisburgh Tech Hub</p> <p><b><u>Our Mission:</u></b> Increasing digital inclusion and reducing isolation whilst keeping the community safe online</p> <p><b><u>Our Vision:</u></b> To provide digital literacy and help with fraud prevention through education and support services to all Grundisburgh &amp; other Carlford and Fynn Valley community members whatever their personal economic status.</p>
<p><b>2. Key outcome(s)</b></p> <p>Quarterly Workshops open to all (whatever their personal economic status)</p> <p>Provision of “in demand” technical support services that are cost effective to the community members and is available to all (whatever their economic status).</p> <p>Training modules that include “Mobile Banking, Password Management &amp; 2 Factor Authentication” plus others as directed by the needs of the community.</p> <p>Connection with Higher Education Bodies who provide IT A-Levels/ Degrees to support our work with the elderly whilst giving their students real world experience and possibly the idea of apprenticeships. To be explored.</p> <p>Purchase of some devices in support of the training &amp; workshops.</p>
<p><b>3. How has the need been identified?</b></p> <p>A survey was put out in Aug 2023 which received a favourable response, a pilot workshop was run “free of charge” in Nov 2023, 40+ people turned up from a variety of backgrounds and ages ranging from widowed ladies who had little knowledge to retired couples who are now anxious because of fraud. We collected feedback forms from the event encouraging us to do more - a 100% positive response. A high level of anxiety and disenfranchisement from society and life was evident amongst the elderly. Rural needs and sense of dislocation are different from those in towns and cities and require a bespoke service to address them.</p> <p>We have just launched advertising for our second (and final free of charge) event for 22 March, with very little marketing 40 people have already booked in (which has attracted some new people – with others who couldn’t make it asking to be kept in the loop for next time).</p> <p>A recent conversation with the Editor of the Fynn Lark News has also got them excited about the events and the editor is about to start promoting to their readership. The Editor of the Grundisburgh News has already started promoting us and has granted a 500 word column in each edition. Both of these publications reach every household in their local area, covering the entire Carlford and Fynn Valley Ward. Once established in Grundisburgh, we envisage a far-and-wide local outreach to a large number of needy communities who are desperate for local, on hand support, assistance and general</p>

basic education to enable them to function as they used to in days pre this take-over of technology. Auxiliary benefits of reduced social isolation and greater social interaction will also be noted.

The initial feedback and support has been very positive for the workshops. We have also started piloting the support service where three requests have been resolved with success and the benefactors have been happy to pay a contribution.

#### **4. Who will benefit from the outcomes?**

All residents of our local communities who maybe digitally disadvantaged and struggle to understand how to use their devices (or get the best use out of the apps on their devices) whatever their economic status. We want to educate and keep the community safe from online crime and fraud.

A group of technology savvy individuals have come together to form a social enterprise called the Community Tech Hub to help community members gain the benefit of a professional service whatever their personal economic status. We are available to everyone who needs help. The model can be expanded to all communities making it a more personal and trustworthy offering. The idea of a community led approach appears to engender more trust which is becoming increasingly more important in a world where online fraud and scamming, fake news and contact is not only rampant but eroding confidence, understanding, and reducing an understanding of what is to be trusted. Many people feel abandoned, at risk, and unable to understand/choose the safest technological answer and have started to abandon it as the safest answer. We will try to reverse this trend.

#### **5. How will the outcomes(s) be sustained after the funding period (if appropriate)?**

We have established a business model which once rolling can be scaled but will need some form of annual funding support to bridge the gap between the income we can generate and the costs of providing it for the benefit of all whatever their economic status. The challenge will be funding the technical resources required.

Our intention is to start engaging with local corporates including BT on supporting the project with funding and resource. Preliminary discussions have already been completed and were considered promising by those in attendance.

We are also starting to investigate strategic relationships with some local higher education organisations who are providing IT / Technology / Digital A-Levels & Degrees to offer real world experience and on the job training. This will strengthen the student skills, provide community connectivity, deliver rare intergenerational opportunities in a rural area, provide in depth knowledge to fraud prevention and prepare them for the real world of work.

We will be launching a Hackathon in the next 2/3 months to get this started.

It is also noted that the learning achieved in the sessions will enable local residents to become more self-sufficient, both in terms of IT literacy and the additional benefits associated with this, such as wider access to health and employment opportunities. This is expected to reduce the financial inequalities seen between more rural and urban areas.

## 6. Brief description of the project / activity that will deliver the outcome(s).

The social enterprise is developing three core propositions:

- 1) Education:
  - quarterly workshops in a community location (online safety / how to...sessions)
  - classroom style training to address specific subjects
- 2) Online resources – hints tips e.g. how to recover
- 3) Support Service – help in the home and / or repair the damage caused by issues

This will all be supported by a Community Tech Hub Club Membership Model which can be replicated across other local communities. Membership will be subsidised for those in need, it will be openly promoted to be as inclusive as possible.

It is anticipated that additional and measurable softer outcomes will also be achieved through the actions above. This includes a reduction in social isolation and enabling local communities to develop their own further methods of developing positive relationships. Examples of this in other local projects include walking groups created from attendees of a Community Partnership funded SPOT Wellbeing course held in Grundisburgh in 2022.

The project will further address the matter of 'rural proofing', ensuring that such provision is available in local villages and does not require sometimes challenging travel to more urban spaces.

Start and End dates: 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31 March 2025

## 7. Who is involved?

**Who is involved in developing this outcome proposal?**

**Who will deliver the project/activity?**

**Name of East Suffolk Community Partnerships Board Member supporting the project:**

5 directors have been appointed to set up the initial business and have joint responsibility for all service delivery with well-defined roles:

**Paul Finch:** CEO 45+ years in technology, with a background in software development, business leadership, and charity management.

**Will Barber:** 20+ years in web development, ecommerce, cyber security and IT education

**James Mott:** 20+ years in software development in the banking sector, covering many aspects of cyber security and software safety

**Phil Bailey:** 40+ years in software development and deployment and cyber security, in the MOD and telecoms.

**Lynette Chapman:** 40+ years in education and learning methodologies

*All Directors hold DBS and Safe Guarding Certificates.*

<b>8. Give information about match funding here:</b>		
Source of match funding:	Funding confirmed?	Amount (£)
None yet, but expressions of interest have been made to the Suffolk Community Fund and the Digital Inclusion Fund via the East Suffolk Communities Team		

Total project / activity cost	£20,000
Total of confirmed match funding	TBC
Total amount of Strategic funding required	£10,000

<b>9. Identify where the Community Partnership Board Strategic Budget will be spent:</b>	
Description of activity or item (by who and by when where appropriate)	Cost (£)
12-month Marketing campaign	
12-month service operation	
Our total expenses forecast for the next 12 months are approx. £30k, which will be funded by £11k of community member led income. Our operational expenses include the provision of 4 workshops, a number of training sessions and a certain volume of technical support service backed up by the usual expenses of running a business like accountants' fees and management overheads etc. This expense includes marketing costs. This is estimated at £20k per annum. We would anticipate that on a rolling the community led income would reduce the gap to £10k pa.	£10,000
To help us get started we are anticipating the need to acquire a variety of devices covering off the main operating systems and device manufacturers in order that demo applications can be started to support specific training modules. We also need to build a website with relevant security controls and event management. The one off capital expense requirement for this is estimated at £10k.	£10,000
A full budget is available and attached.	
Total	£20,000

<b>10. How will the project / activity be monitored, and outcomes reported (including project risks)?</b>
<p>A company board has been set up with the founding 5 directors chaired by an experienced managing director Paul Finch who has been running business for 30 years. He is also the founder of a Charity called Red trouser Day raising funds for Bowel Cancer Research (founded in 2016, registered with the Charities Commission in 2017. So strong governance has been a key aspect of his leadership.</p> <p>We have already identified our proposed Key Performance Indicators for the first year, we are happy to be led with any additions that may be required to secure the initial funding. We will hold monthly board meetings where a standing agenda has already been created including addressing Training Needs, Conflicts of Interest, Policy Implementation. A monthly board progress report will be created and be available to any funding partners as well as our local community members. Monthly finance reporting will also be created (management accounts) that will be reviewed in the board meeting.</p>

**Community Partnership Board Member Declaration:**

I confirm that I support this proposal:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Lead Organisation Declaration:**

I am authorised and eligible to sign and approve this proposal on behalf of the lead organisation and declare the information included in this proposal is true and accurate.

By signing below, the information you have supplied is being collected to allow us to process your application. By completing this form, you consent to East Suffolk using your information in this way.

I understand that in the assessment of this proposal the Council may share information contained within it, with other core funders for funding programmes we have applied too, relevant Council directorates and committees. If you do not provide your consent, we will not be able to process this proposal.

Your information will not be used for any other purpose unless we obtain your consent or unless permitted by law.

Due to corporate retention requirements for financial information, your information will be retained for 7 years. You can request that your information is deleted at any time.

Data will be processed and held securely and in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 (and any updates).

Further information about data protection and the full Communities Team privacy notice can be found on the East Suffolk Website <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Your-Council/Access-to-Information/Privacy-Notices/Communities-Privacy-Notice.pdf>

*Please enter your name below only if you agree to be bound by the terms set out in this form. We will treat this as your signature of the form.*

**Full Name: Paul Finch**

**Signature: *Paul Finch***

**Date: 16/2/2024**

**Please submit this proposal to the Funding Team at [grants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:grants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) Hard copies can be submitted and returned to: Funding Team, East Suffolk Council, East Suffolk House, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge, IP12 1RT.**