



The Muslim Council of Britain

DEVELOPING BETTER MOSQUES

A summary of the consultation results of
Better Mosques: A Community Consultation 2018

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Muslim Council of Britain
PO Box 57330
London
E1 2WJ

T: +44 (0)845 26 26 786
W: www.mcb.org.uk
E: mosques@mcb.org.uk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Background to MCB	2
1.2 Context	2
1.3 Purpose	2
2 METHODOLOGY	3
3 PARTICIPANTS	3
4 RESULTS & ANALYSIS	4
4.1 Section 1: Context	4
4.2 Section 2: Proposals	4
5 ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS	4
6 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	5
APPENDIX	6
Figure 1: Context of Mosques in Britain Question	6
Figure 2: Challenging Facing Communities Question	7
Figure 3: Rate 5 Proposed Ideas Question	8
Table 1: Organisations that took part	9
Table 2: Selected Raw responses for additional Suggestions	10
Table 3: Selected Raw Responses on Council of Mosques	13
Consultation Advert and Slides	16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

'Better Mosques: A Community Consultation' was a public consultation launched by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) following the inaugural 'Our Mosques Our Future' conference in London on 20 January 2018 (ourmosques.mcb.org.uk)

The consultation asked participants about what could be done in the UK at a national level to support the development of mosques in Britain. It consisted of an online survey, regional mosque forum workshops and one-to-one phone calls conversations. In total 241 individuals were engaged between January and April 2018.

This report outlines the consultation results and makes recommendations for what a structured national programme to support the development of mosques should include. The recommendations are:

1. **Women, Youth and New Muslims** - Any structured national programme to support mosques should prioritize youth, new Muslims and women as key user groups, based on strong feedback from consultation participants that they are currently under-served.
2. **Best Practice Online Portal** - The 'Best Practice Online Portal' was found to be the most popular of the five proposed ideas. This should be prioritized as a potential 'quick win' to support mosques and establish a two-way feedback stream with key users on further content.
3. **Discounts Service** - The 'Discounts & Preferential Rates' proposal was found to be the least popular of the five proposed ideas. Unless this proposal is significantly modified, it should be omitted from being taken forward. The other three ideas should have their merits considered carefully as part of any wider programme.
4. **Council of Mosques** - Strong consideration should be given to how the capacity and sustainability of regional 'Council of Mosques' (COM) organisations could be developed to better support mosques in that region or city, based on strong feedback that some COMs are currently seen as under-resourced, weak and not fulfilling their true potential. Examples of successful and long-established COMs in North England could be used to promote best practice amongst other cities or regions.
5. **Holistic approach** - Any programme should aim to deliver a range of services that benefit mosques, rather than focusing solely on any specific proposal or service in isolation
6. **Piloting** – Any programme should begin as a pilot in order to prove the concept, with a built-in thorough review phase to ensure future sustainability and success.
7. **Volunteer Focus** – Any structured national programme must include a strong focus on people development, as volunteers should be seen as the primary pillar of the mosque. This could be achieved through professional development programmes, awards ceremonies for volunteers or national 'Volunteer at my Mosque' initiative.
8. **Data** - Focussed research programmes to better understand the mosque sector quantitatively and inform the priorities of any structured national programme should be designed and delivered in parallel to the programme itself.
9. **Advisory and Delivery Partners** – A range of organisations and individuals with an interest in developing better mosques in Britain today should be brought together to feedback on these consultation results, and subsequently advise, plan and deliver the tangible next steps.
10. **Regular Feedback** – Regular touch points with local communities about the challenges and opportunities facing their mosques is needed to ensure any programme remains relevant to changing community needs. A similar consultation to this should be considered for 2019, including in-person surveys within mosques to better reach key user groups such as the elderly.

These recommendations are designed for consideration and action by Muslim civil society stakeholders with an interest in the development of mosques. The MCB will continue to engage with any interested stakeholders, partners and funders over the next 3-6 months to develop co-ordinated strategies that will deliver the tangible next steps required to achieve better mosques in Britain today. This includes a second 'Our Mosques Our Future' conference which will take place on 6 October 2018 in Manchester.

In terms of report structure, this report begins with the context and purpose of the consultation and why the MCB launched it in January. This is followed by an outline of the methodology, results, conclusions and recommendations. Finally, an Appendix containing raw consultation results is also included.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO MCB

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is a national representative umbrella for Muslim organisations. Founded in 1997, the MCB now has over 500 mosques, educational and charitable associations affiliated to it. It is:

- Independent (core funding comes from affiliation fees)
- Cross-sectarian (affiliates belong to Islam's diverse religious traditions)
- Democratic (leadership is elected for 2-year terms and is accountable to affiliates).

The MCB's vision statement is *"empowering the Muslim community to achieve a cohesive, just and successful British society"*.

1.2 CONTEXT

Following on from #VisitMyMosque Day on 5 February 2017, the MCB held a number of roundtable feedback meetings across the UK with mosques that took part in the day, to explore and better understand the challenges and opportunities facing them.

The need for a national approach to help mosques became evident. Based on this, the MCB focussed organisational resources during 2017 and 2018 on:

- a) Organising a one-day conference in January 2018 entitled 'Our Mosques Our Future', which brought together over 400 mosques activists to discuss the challenges and issues facing their mosques.
- b) Developing ideas and proposals for a structured and national approach to achieving better mosques across the UK and consulting on these via 'Better Mosques: A Community Consultation.'
- c) Further listening to the grassroots through launching five mosque working groups focusing on women, youth, health, education and convert care (www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/working-groups/)

In the meantime, #VisitMyMosque Day took place again in February 2018, further engaging with a wider number of mosques, and planning is underway for a second 'Our Mosques Our Future' conference on 6 October 2018 in Manchester, to better engage with communities in North England.

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of the consultation was to explore proposals for a structured national approach to developing better mosques in Britain today. Five specific ideas were proposed via the consultation webpage (www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/consultation) and participants were requested to provide their feedback. The full consultation slides are provided in the appendix.

The five ideas were:

1. Best Practice Online Portal
2. Discounts & Preferential Rates service
3. Certification Service
4. Job / Vacancies Board
5. Independent Mediation Service

Based on the consultation results, the MCB pledged to work with its affiliates and key delivery partners to turn the results into tangible action.

2 METHODOLOGY

The consultation was primarily carried out via an online survey split up into three sections.

- Section 1 sought to understand whether sharing best practice amongst mosques would be valuable and whether mosques require more support on regional and national levels.
- Section 2 asked questions around the challenges facing mosques and by extension, Muslim communities in the UK.
- Section 3 was designed to prompt specific feedback on the five proposals.

The online consultation form took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and was open from 20 January 2018 to 30 April 2018. The survey linked to a slide pack (See Appendix) which detailed each of the five ideas in greater depth.

The survey was promoted via email mailshots, on social media, at regional mosque forum events and through the five working group meetings. Feedback was collected via these meetings as well as through one-to-one direct phone conversations.

3 PARTICIPANTS

Of the 143 online responses, a range of organisations and individuals completed the consultation. This included 36 individuals who made a submission on behalf of their organisation.

Around 98 other individuals also engaged with the consultation via meetings, phone calls and emails. The table below shows the breakdown of consultation participants:

Online consultation submissions	143
<i>Of which as individual</i>	<i>107</i>
<i>Of which as organisation</i>	<i>36</i>
Direct phone conversation	16
Working Group/Focus Group session	82
Total	241

Consultation participants were a mixture of individuals from MCB affiliates and non-affiliates organisations. In addition, it should be acknowledged that participants were to some extent self-selecting, as naturally individuals who have a strong interest in improving their local mosque and/or national mosque sector would have been attracted to take part in this consultation.

The majority of this report focuses on the evidence collected via online consultation submissions and phone conversations, while the working groups/focus groups have supported in the interpretation of the data collected.

4 RESULTS & ANALYSIS

4.1 SECTION 1: CONTEXT

The first section of the consultation sought to understand the landscape of mosques in Britain today. Figure 1 in the Appendix shows the results. The majority (81% of 143 online form responders) strongly agreed with the statement that **‘mosques in Britain should be sharing examples of best practice’** in comparison to 0.04% strongly disagreeing with this statement.

Further to this, the need for professional development is also clear with a large proportion (72% of the 143 online participants) strongly agreeing with the statement **‘it is essential for mosque management teams to receive professional guidance and training to achieve a minimum standard’**.

Less people strongly agree that their mosques require more support at a national level (37%) in comparison to 70% who strongly agree that their mosques require more support on a regional level. This suggests that collaboration and learnings could be focussed at delivery at a regional level.

Figure 2 demonstrates the biggest challenges facing the Muslim community according to participants. Highest on the agenda is that of the **‘lack of space facilities for women and young people’** which 46% of the online responders rated a ‘very high’ challenge facing their mosque or local community. A close second was **‘meeting the social and welfare needs of the congregation’** with 43% of responders feeling this way.

Whilst commonly assumed that mosques may struggle to cover running costs, this was the second least popular option (27%) selected as a very high challenge. Additionally, it was the option which received the lowest responses. Islamophobia and anti-Muslim prejudice also appeared lower at 24%.

4.2 SECTION 2: PROPOSALS

The five proposals (best practice online portal, discounts/ preferential rates, certification service, jobs board and independent mediation service) each received feedback via the consultation.

Figure 3 shows the responses and highlights that the most preferred proposal is the **‘Best Practice Online Portal’** including draft constitutions, policies and more. The **certification service, jobs board and independent mediation service** were also popular amongst those who completed the consultation. Least popular is the discounts and preferential rates option.

5 ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS

The consultation survey also included a space for participants to make additional suggestions. Raw responses are provided in Appendix Table 2. Key suggestions include:

1. A recurring proposal throughout the additional suggestions was the lack of space for women, young people and New Muslims, in addition to the lack of wider community engagement beyond the mosque walls. (Appendix Table 2, points 7, 11, 12, 15, 17, 24, 25, 26 and 27).
2. Promoting engagement with those of other faiths and none through interfaith initiatives, such as through enabling visiting the mosque at prayer times, during festivals such as Eid and more.
3. Promoting more activities for women and mothers with young children e.g. mother and toddler play groups.
4. A "volunteer at my mosque" campaign was suggested as a way of highlighting and celebrating the contribution that volunteers make to the running of mosques.
5. Standardized training and quality manuals for Imams and mosque committee members
6. Linking best practice with a mosque awards ceremony or event.
7. Many suggestions around Councils of Mosques (COMs) include the need to fund these organisations well to ensure that they are resourced and able to effectively be a support system for local mosques and become sustainable. (Appendix Table 3, Points 39, 40, 44, 48, 49, 52, 53, 57, 61, 66, 67, 91 and 94.)

6 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

'Better Mosques: A Community Consultation' was a public consultation launched by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that engaged with 241 participants between January and April 2018 via online responses, one-to-one phone calls and working group session events.

It explored proposals about what a structured national programme to develop better mosques in Britain today could look like.

Based on the consultation results, key recommendations for any such structured programme include:

1. **Women, Youth and New Muslims** - Any structured national programme to support mosques should prioritise youth, converts and new Muslims as key user groups, based on strong feedback from consultation participants that they are currently under-served.
2. **Best Practice Online Portal** - The 'Best Practice Online Portal' was found to be the most popular of the five proposed ideas. This should be prioritized as a potential 'quick win' to support mosques and establish a two-way feedback stream with key users on further content.
3. **Discounts Service** - The 'Discounts & Preferential Rates' proposal was found to be the least popular of the five proposed ideas. Unless this proposal is significantly modified, it should be omitted from being taken forward. The other three ideas should have their merits considered carefully as part of any wider programme.
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6. **Piloting** – Any programme should begin as a pilot in order to prove the concept, with a built-in thorough review phase to ensure future sustainability and success.
7. **Volunteer Focus** – Any structured national programme must include a strong focus on people development, as volunteers should be seen as the primary pillar of the mosque. This could be achieved through professional development programmes, awards ceremonies for volunteers or national 'Volunteer at my Mosque' initiative.
8. **Data** - Focussed research programmes to better understand the mosque sector quantitatively and inform the priorities of any structured national programme should be designed and delivered in parallel to the programme itself.
9. **Advisory and Delivery Partners** – A range of organisations and individuals with an interest in developing better mosques in Britain today should be brought together to feedback on these consultation results, and subsequently advise, plan and deliver the tangible next steps.
10. **Regular Feedback** – Regular touch points with local communities about the challenges and opportunities facing their mosques is needed to ensure any programme remains relevant to changing community needs. A similar consultation to this should be considered for 2019, including in-person surveys within mosques to better reach key user groups such as the elderly.

These recommendations are designed for consideration and action by Muslim civil society stakeholders with an interest in the development of mosques. The MCB will continue to engage with any interested stakeholders, partners and funders over the next 3-6 months to develop co-ordinated strategies that will deliver the tangible next steps required to achieve better mosques in Britain today.

This includes a second 'Our Mosques Our Future' conference which will take place on 6 October 2018 in Manchester.

APPENDIX

FIGURE 1: CONTEXT OF MOSQUES IN BRITAIN QUESTION

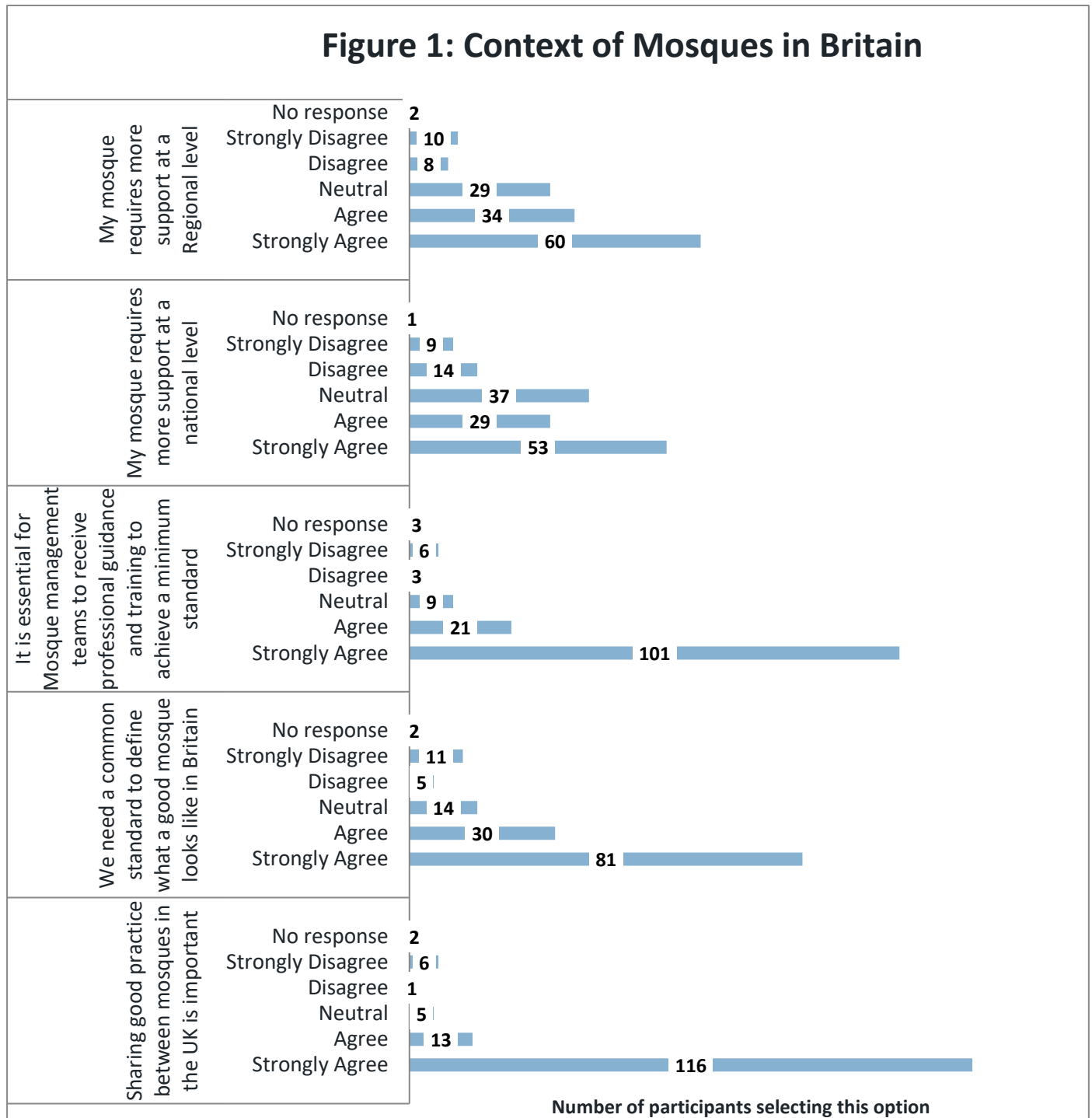


FIGURE 2: CHALLENGING FACING COMMUNITIES QUESTION

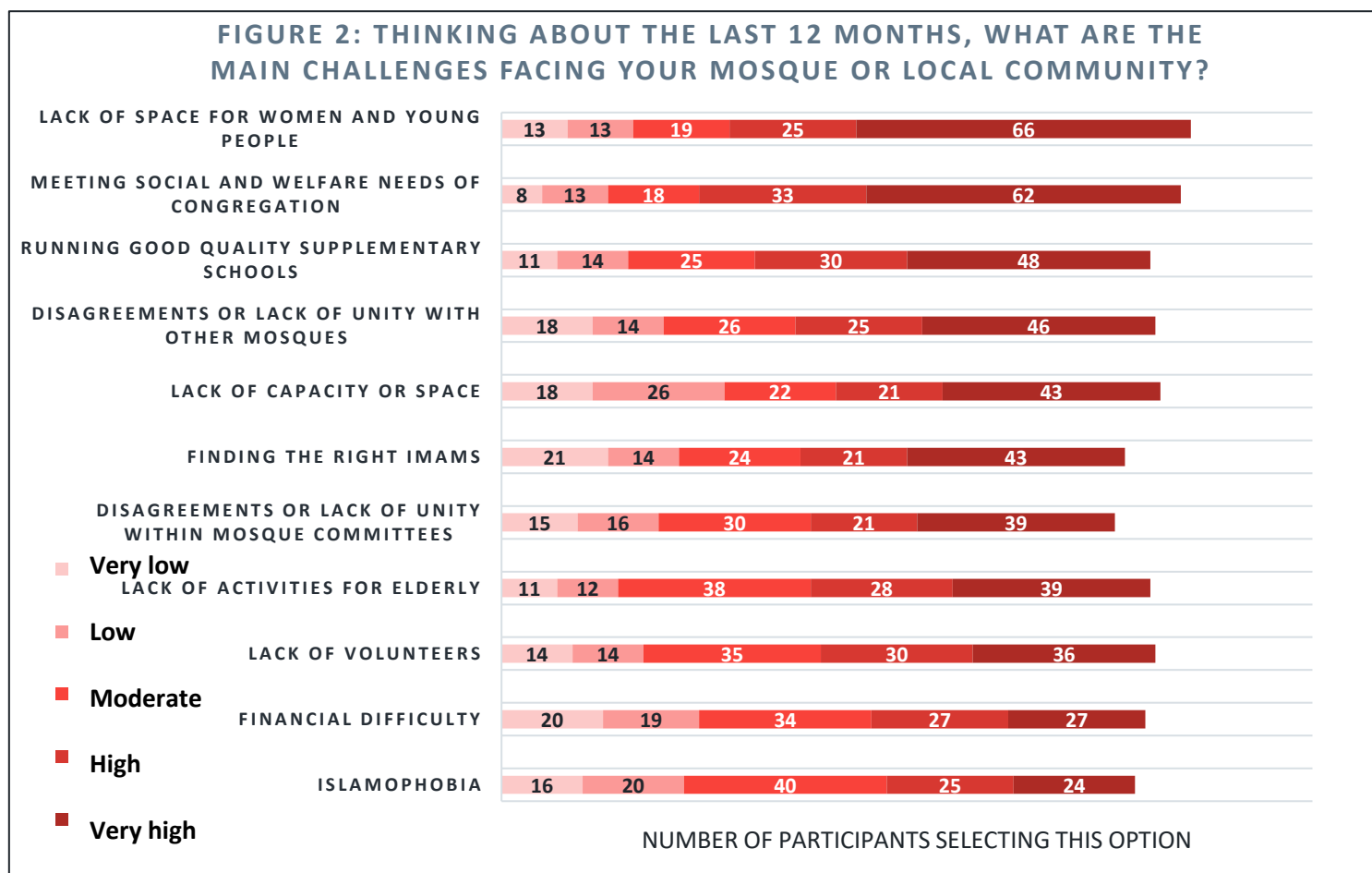


FIGURE 3: RATE 5 PROPOSED IDEAS QUESTION

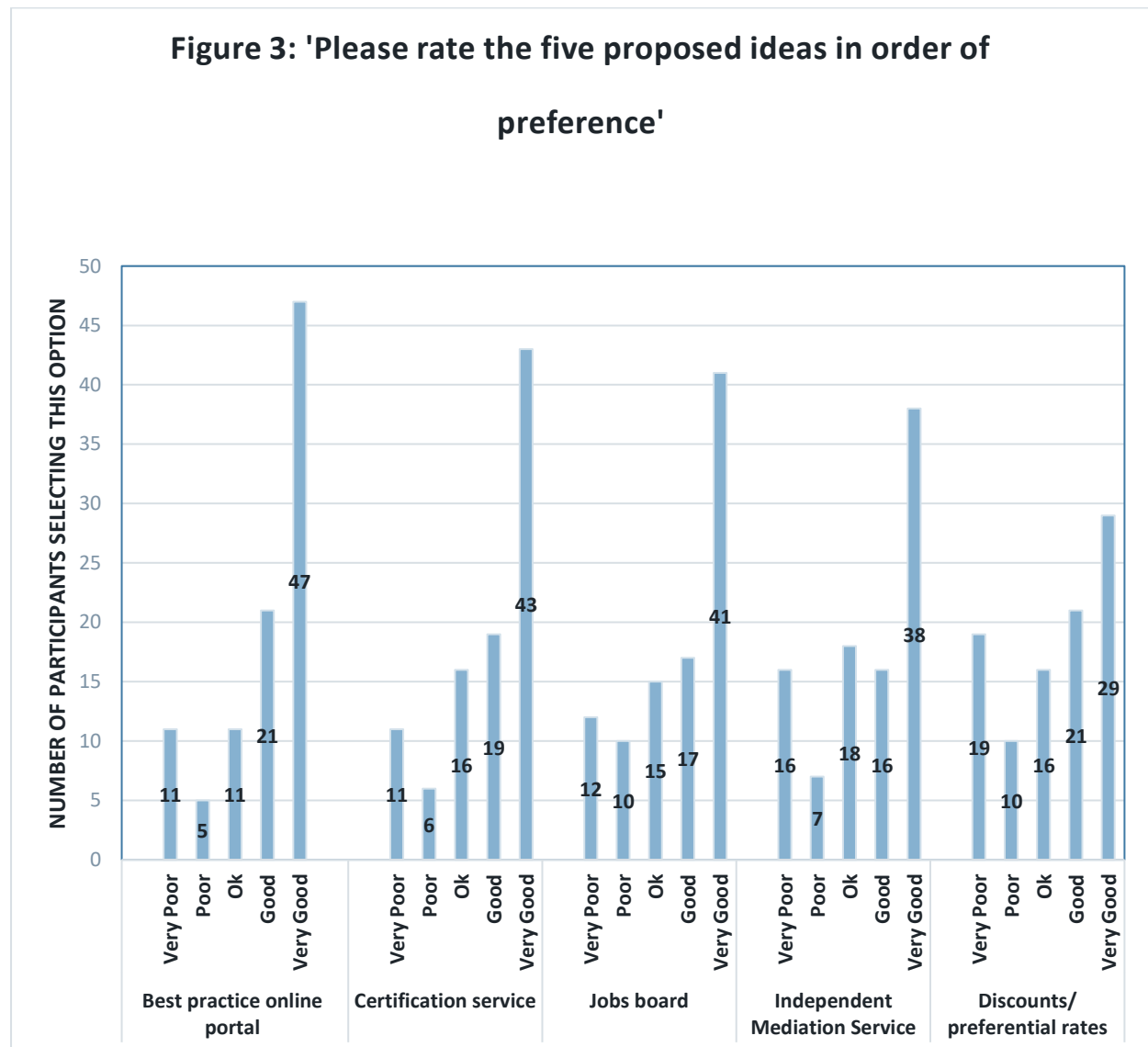


TABLE 1: ORGANISATIONS THAT TOOK PART

Table 1: List of mosques which participated in consultation:
Welsh Muslim Cultural Foundation
MANUK/Old Kent Road Mosque
Hayes Muslim Centre
Mushlla Raudhatul Jannah
Lewisham Islamic Centre
Luton Islamic Community Forum (Hockwellring Masjid)
Palmers Green mosque
Bury St Edmunds Islamic Cultural Organisation
Dunfermline Central Mosque
West Norwood Mosque
Norwich and Norfolk Muslim Association
Madinatul Uloom Islamic Centre
UKIM Leeds (Iqra Centre & The Lingfield Centre)
Havering Islamic Cultural Centre
Da'watul Islam UK & Eire
Al-Emaan Centre
Liverpool Mosque and Islamic Institute
Finchley mosque
Masjid & Madrassa Faiz-UI-Quran
Kingston Muslim Association
Belfast Islamic Centre
Craven Arms Islamic Centre
Al Emaan Centre
Madina Masjid
Jamia Masjid and Usmania Education centre
Hyderi Islamic Centre
Inter Madrassah Organisation
Leeds grand mosque
Council of European Jamaats
Belfast Islamic Centre
Surrey Muslim Association
York Mosque
Finsbury Park Mosque
Newbury Park Masjid

TABLE 2: SELECTED RAW RESPONSES FOR ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

No.	Table 2: Do you have any additional suggestions?
1	Even if you only get a small number initially to sign up, and opt for certification please persevere. Although we are not a mosque, but rather a centre, we are used as a musalla and have many of the functions and needs outlined in your survey.
2	Food is a major pull to bring people together, mosques should run events over lunch, food [to bring community together. Utilising the skills and asserts of the community.
3	I feel the mosque committees have failed new Muslims or English speaking Muslims. Friday sermons are catered only to Asian communities and therefore converts like myself gain no Islamic knowledge. There is no valid excuse why sermons should not be delivered in English and Arabic, young Muslims speak English more than their parents languages and those within the community that have not learnt English, this is their own matter to solve. The Prophet said that when there are three people, the third should not be excluded from their conversation, as converts we are excluded from the conversation between the imam and his congregation- without doubt. Because converts feel isolated from the community, they may end up seeking knowledge from other avenues, some of which are unsavory and damaging- puritanical and fanatic in their teachings. I don't just pray, I beg, I beg that Allah opens up the minds of those who hold the power to enforce this change.
4	I find it heartbreaking that as a fellow believer (and a revert) that I am not welcome in my local mosque.
5	I feel in addition to your focus groups you need to also engagement with the numerous local imams/scholars madrasahs/colleges in the UK so there's discussions also taking place amongst scholars and imams on how to support change in delivering better mosques.
6	Youth activities and more activities for women and mothers with young children.
7	1. Could try and hold regional meetings more frequently 2. Could try and initiate a project to promote intra- faith meetings to help bridge the gap between mosques of different persuasions 3. Perhaps consider a "volunteer at my mosque" campaign 4. Could produce standard syllabus for Madrassa which includes Islamic perspective on citizenship respecting other faiths etc 5. Become an external examiner for GCSE and A levels in Islamic studies Arabic/Urdu etc 6 Create a directory of service providers that might be useful for mosques eg Muslim architects Muslim lawyers that specialize in charity law etc bid writer's and fundraisers etc 7. Encourage mosques to register as a place of worship so they can perform registered marriages 8. A CPD scheme for imams
8	We need greater unity amongst all school of thoughts.
9	Mosque volunteers should try to participate in local social welfare projects, perhaps working with their local councilors.
10	How to tackle educating the community on how to include different aspects of our community, eg. ladies, new Muslims, ex offender new Muslims. How to address mental health issues in the community.
11	There is a massive gender problem with access to participation in mosques and there needs to be training for men and even to have females speak to them about the harrowing experience a mosque has become for many. Maybe like those programmes where victims speak to the perpetrators about the impact on their life.

12	For many years, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) has had a great deal of success in building up a national forum for mosques, sharing best practices and working towards scholarships, expanding interfaith relations etc. Demographic differences between the UK and North America aside, they seem to provide a potential blueprint for future progress.
13	The mosque is not a community centre. For community efforts and activities, community centres can be set up. People are entitled to their own views and should not have to feel pressured into changing their views - for example the Hanafi position it is that its preferable for women to pray at home than the mosque - Hanafis have the right to stick by this and should not be bullied into doing something contrary to their madhab.
14	I underline the importance of decent and enough spaces for ladies. We are often told that women do not come to mosque that is why the space is limited. No women do not come because the space is not decent and is limited.
15	There really needs to be much better welfare support or counselling services available, where people need to discuss private issues in confidence- whether it's to do with their marriages, drugs & alcohol consumption, LGBT issues, etc. This would be of particular benefit to younger folk and women. Imams are imams, but imams are of course not qualified counsellors. I know there are a number of different 'major things' that mosques could be doing and need to prioritise, and for the sake of community welfare, the provision of welfare/counselling services needs to be one of those priorities.
16	Youth engagement in our community is pathetic please provide assistance to improve our outreach and providing safe places for them to come to the mosque
17	Certification would be great but don't see how it will be sustained
18	There should be a proposal on how mosques should engage with all demographics of the community it serves; Muslim and otherwise.
19	Thank you for driving this initiative and for providing many others like me with a voice I hope there will be a slow but steady increase of women and youth representing the country at their local mosques.
20	We should establish a regular support for young Muslims as they will carry the Islam in the future and offer various opportunities to learn about Islam
21	Governance training for mosque trustees is important and I would be happy to work with MCB to provide this.
22	- Consumer portal for mosques to enter o Address & facilities o Prayer times o Ramadan times o Eid announcements dates o i.e. Congregation can then know quickly/easily as well as finding mosques when they are travelling.
23	There's no need to wrap up access for women to so many mosques with a consultation about the general 'quality' of a mosque. So many of these issues would be resolved by having women allowed to actually enter mosques and to actually sit on the committees that run masjids.
24	How can sisters be given provisions to pray in the masjids.
25	We need to have masjids that facilitate women; at the moment it is very hard for women, especially when travelling, to wash and pray inside a masjid while the menfolk pray, we are left to pray on pavements in towns and cities which have a huge number of masjids! Groups and sessions for babies and toddlers & mums, for youth, reverts, and for the elderly also need to be implemented. We are neglecting these sections of society, no good opening our doors to non-muslims to show best practice if we don't even cater properly for our own!
26	Most important consideration is to accommodate women worshippers. If the mosque cannot accommodate women at salaah times due to lack of space at least they can allow women worshippers to use the space when it is not in use by men.

27	Suggest the aim is to develop a quality manual covering the key areas which local mosques can use.
28	I attended the MCB conference and it was truly inspiring. I learnt a lot from the conference and hope to attend the next one too in sha Allah. It opened great opportunities for networking, learning and reflecting on what we are doing well as a mosque (Leeds grand mosque) and what we can do better with. The consultations and future plans sound exciting and promising and I pray Allah grants you and us success in this new endeavor by making it beneficial for Muslims and the UK.
29	I believe that mosque services should be opened up to non Muslims. Ie if gym/team room/ quiet space, I think it should be actively encourage for non Muslims to use these facilities. Possibly, if space allows even have a space for non Muslims to be able to come and hear khutbah/eid khutbah etc. (Providing the imam is sensible and avoids confrontational material)
30	I'm ready to participate and plan for the previously mentioned ideas
31	While the solutions mentioned are good, it would be great if there was also an idea to involve those who are often excluded (youth, women, ethnic minorities and those with disabilities.)
32	Give talented individuals a chance
33	if mosques are to be accepted by wider non-Muslim society it has to be modernized and seen as meeting with equalities law in the UK where currently this is not happening and we are looking unfortunately like a male dominated faith where women are second class citizens
34	I wish there was more provision for mothers and their children for jummah prayers in local masjids. There should be a more diverse mix of ages and gender balance on the committees.
35	I am a single mum victim of domestic violence and needed support for my divorce. There was a chance that my marriage could be saved but nobody in my community or local mosque has shown any concern. I'm just another broken marriage, just more children's lives ruined.
36	Could best practice be linked in with mosque awards as a way of rewarding and sharing best practice? Videos on great mosques or great work by organizations working with mosques would also be a good idea

TABLE 3: SELECTED RAW RESPONSES ON COUNCIL OF MOSQUES

No.	Table 3: Council of Mosques feedback question. Participants were asked: 'Some parts of the UK have a regional Council Of Mosques Organisation that deliver services to Mosques at a regional level if there is a Council Of Mosques in your region, what role do you see them playing in the delivery of services to help achieve better mosques? Please use specific examples where possible.'
1.	One city-based council/forum that we are a member of in Newport (Gwent, Wales) is more of an informal network, it avoids getting involved in the internal affairs of mosques and theological differences. It could be much more, but for now it serves only to bring disparate groups together when the need arises for a reasonably unified voice. Even creating an informal non-sectarian network of mosques and Muslim organisations is no mean feat and we have to be realistic about what such bodies can achieve. Expectations have to be at the level of the reality of different cities. Not all cities are as advanced in terms of the institutions or people representing those institutions and there are different levels of capacity.
2.	The Southwark Muslim Forum is one of such organisations and one way it has help Mosque within the borough is in bringing them together to organise the Eid. In recent time they have also engaged with the council to provide important sponsored trainings to Mosque leaders and Managements. Presently, the group has started series of training for Madrassas and Mosque members on keeping the children safe online. An initiative which my Mosque has benefited from.
3.	West London Mosque Forum: Response to consultation (e.g. SRE), Moon sighting, Fajr time.
4.	Our local COM is good at bringing together several mosques from a diverse set of theological backgrounds on at least basic collective challenges.
5.	No. It would be nice to see one develop here but it currently seems unlikely to happen as the mosques are too isolationist
6.	Not sure if my local mosque has joined up with others
7.	Yes. The Main Role is to share good practice
8.	Better co-operation between Deobandi mosques and Barevli mosques, which in my city of Preston can literally be across the road from each other. Ensure converts are felt welcome and are given the same spiritual guidance as the Asian community, which at present the UK as a whole is failing with.
9.	Luton Council of Mosques tries to build a consensus on common issues facing the community in Luton.
10.	Though we don't have one in our area in Hackney, I do in general support a Council of Mosques however some issues with the idea have. There are Muslim community organisations/centres in some area which are not mosques but deliver vital front line various forms of support to the Muslim community - i personally would like to see their formal involvement also in any such local CoM body especially as they bring with them higher level of skills, professionalism and knowledge which will certainly help/support other mosques and facilitate capacity building the community. Additional any local CoM must have inclusivity and true grassroots community engagement at its very heart/core and running through everything it does. The vast majority of mosques i know have single ethnic heredity based (and usually male only) Membership structures, decades go by and there's NO questionnaires type exercises for musallees / service users to complete to help the mosque decide and assess its services, vision, plans, NO internal community open days for MUSLIM themselves to meet and greet the volunteers that run the masjids (meet and greet them, exchange thanks and feedback etc). If a local CoM was formed with no real grassroots democratic engagement with

	Muslims in their area it imho won't be that effective in reaching out and truly representing the grassroots community.
11.	Accounting/independent audit (esp use of funds). Committee selection and monitoring of voting. Community welfare and development (e.g. youth schemes - career/mentoring/work experience/education)
12.	Ipswich and Suffolk Muslim Council, currently only provide a basic service, partly due to funding and resources and partly down to not enough of volunteers.
13.	I don't see them. They're very secretive.
14.	At least half of all trustees/board members must be women. If a mosque cannot deliver this, they have already failed.
15.	There is a small/weak regional mosque council in our part of London, which we have contacted a number of times over the last two years but not received a response. I feel such a service is important and needed in order to share best practise amongst local mosques and offer support on Islamic and Operational activities.
16.	Regional council could help have data about local imams that mosques can hire if their imam is absent. Regional council would understand best mosques needs
17.	Share best practices such as a recommended syllabus for madrassa Distribute literature to local mosques e.g. syllabus material toolkits handbook on best practices Provide Training/ workshops Monitoring visit
18.	No idea
19.	We have a local council which is recently established to bring unity among Muslims. And take initiatives in community cohesion and build bridges.
20.	Unfortunately regional or local mosques councils are useful to bring masajid together and campaign on common issues of concerns, but due to financial constraints they have been unable to provide the quality of services and as result conflicts are rife and services are inadequate.
21.	They help in uniting mosques and bettering communication but I feel they may benefit from an added sense of direction and initiatives to aim for, maybe through such MCB driven proposals
22.	No we don't have a regional council.
23.	Training, guidance, support, tips.
24.	Training on how to run mosque. Sharing best practice. Co-ordinating resources and programmes
25.	Nothing exists across the region - larger city wide structures are based upon sect or ethnic identity. We require a proper formal regional structure.
26.	Getting extra funds
27.	Ensuring dissemination of national guidance. Providing first level for conflict resolution/accountability measures. Running/managing regional initiatives. Working actively to promote mosque cohesion/unity.
28.	Provide syllabuses for madrassah Training for Committee
29.	Receive complaints and feedback mediating, support, help and advice to committee and worshippers.
30.	Unification for Eid, intervention when committee members don't take interests of congregation
31.	Not a member of any council.

32.	Oversee the charter/standards Mystery shopping Networking events
33.	Co-ordinating resource sharing i.e. access to professionals Encouraging diverse interests to be pursued across different communities, depending on their needs. e.g. feed the homeless schemes for inner city masjids, or befriending the elderly schemes for more residential neighbourhoods. Making sure that relevant focus is placed on individual Masjids, without homogenisation. Providing a role as a 'highlighter' without being the enactor - i.e. undertaking relevant regional research, highlighting issues e.g. regional mental health or Islamic literacy - and encouraging action, without taking the burden of delivering it
34.	Improved training and implementing strategies to recruit more female Mosque Committee members so they are empowered to be the voice for the local community. It would be amazing to see 50% of all UK Mosque Boards represented equally. Implementation of regulated laws to scrutinise the recruitment of Islamic scholars visiting or native when teaching minors and the vulnerable. Boards members and individuals held accountable.
35.	Yes Muslim council of Scotland but I would like to see them more active
36.	There is no Regional council of mosques in our area but they could be useful to amalgamate key issues at a local level. If each region covered around 300,000 Muslims then there could be ten regions that feed into a national level so that could be useful. However it may work better on a mix of regional/denominational level to ensure appropriate representation.
37.	They should be championing the need to improve every aspect of running a masjid, ensuring trustees have relevant background checks and experience e.g. in finance, leadership, outreach, media, etc. Perhaps building up a pool of trustee candidates which masjids should be encourage to pick from rather than appointing 'a friend' etc.
38.	- Please look into MCB Archives - there have been many great initiatives launched and died a death over the years. The MCB did invest money and effort in engaging with willing Masjids over the last decade and a half. Let us learn from the past. - Study the Charity Commission case files to determine Masjid and Islamic Charity weakness. - Centralised wisdom and learned scholars benefitting our whole Ummah for the common greater good.
39.	Working together to engage with local councils, police and volunteer services.
40.	Guidance on how to run a mosque Advertise imams and other jobs Possibility of a list of speakers for events Discounted services for common activities
41.	I think this should be tackled nationwide, so if something like this was to happen regional offices must be linked together nationally
42.	- Roundtable discussion. - Look at relevant topics to discuss like Islamophobia, Scholars wages etc.
43.	Think this is good idea - we don't have a Council of mosques, but think it would make a big difference.
44.	these are poorly funded and not in any position to help
45.	Sharing key services, getting a discount
46.	supervision and coordination with national council of mosques
47.	As above.

48.	Boost in their resources and capacity to then support the local mosques. People running the council of mosques also need the right expertise and track record, before they go and support individual mosques.
49.	Leeds council of mosques is fairly new and i feel it will take time for them to develop credibility and trust amongst the Muslim community. MCB could support the process of their formation as well as ensure structure is followed.
50.	We have the Council Of European Jamaats, and right now they are providing services like Teacher training For Madaris teachers, Bringing together leaders of different mosques to look into current Issues.
51.	Marriage and guidance and nikkah, and support for marriage is find partner suitable for Islamic marriages.
52.	Consensus on best practices, on Eid dates etc
53.	I suppose London has one of these but the smaller mosques around where I live are not influenced by this.
54.	I see them in a role where they love each and every mosque and care for its sanctity like they would their own living quarters and the Ummah education like they would their own children.
55.	Educate, monitor, manage & penalise fir breaches
56.	No local council. Our mosque is the largest in our region & we coordinate unofficially but no structured council.
57.	To provide: Media training Governance advice training advice on appropriate engagement with Muslin and the wider non - Muslim community to be effective hub for it members and address misunderstandings in the wider community. How to attract the professionals to contribute to mosque activities. Support provision of services especially to youth and women/
58.	As a member of UKIM our leadership regularly attends seminars to report progress of ongoing projects - the strategy is agreed by an elected shurah council. This approach is bringing about positive change with a number of mosques adopting a variety of best practices
59.	they are toothless organisations
60.	They are definitely well placed and could help define a standard with other communities and perhaps oversee consultancy. Monitoring and compliance could possibly come from another resource
61.	Educate and guide the Executive Committee members and the musallins.
62.	We don't have much in Scotland or I'm not aware of any.
63.	Council comprising of regional Scholars and Professionals to establish vision of Mosque which has Mosque of Prophet (PBUH) as a role model. This council should also ask local mosques for their needs.
64.	Holding face to face meetings and sharing best practice/issues/risks in the region eg in London this sort of group could have met to talk about Grenfell or the aftermath of each London terror attack.

CONSULTATION ADVERT AND SLIDES

See overleaf.



BETTER MOSQUES

A COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

20 January - 30 April 2018

Tell us how to achieve better mosques!

WHAT IS THE CONSULTATION?

Following on from Our Mosques Our Future conference, which brought together over 400 delegates to explore the evolving role of mosques in 21st century Britain, a nationwide consultation was launched.

Better Mosques: A Community Consultation will run from **20 January to 30 April 2018**, and invites views from mosques and their communities on how a structured and national approach to achieving better mosques in Britain today can be achieved.

WHO IS THE CONSULTATION FOR?

This survey is open to, Mosque Trustees, Committee members, Students, Professionals, Young Activists, Academics, Council of Mosques, National and Regional Umbrella Organisations, Imams & Chaplains, Mosque Service Users, Worshippers, Neighbours...and anyone with an interest in the future of mosques in Britain!

HAVE YOUR SAY!

1. Complete the online survey at www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/consultation
2. Write to us at P.O. BOX 57330, London, E1 2WJ
3. Email us at mosques@mcb.org.uk
4. Call us on 0845 26 26 786

REGIONAL MOSQUES FORUM

The MCB will also be organising at least five Regional Mosque Forums events in major cities across the UK, where you will be able to meet with the consultation team in person to discuss the proposals and the consultation. To register your interest to attend a Regional Mosque Forum, please email mosques@mcb.org.uk.

ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/consultation
[#morethanaprayerspace](https://twitter.com/morethanaprayerspace)

Better Mosques: A Community Consultation

20 January to 30 April 2018

www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/consultation



1

Outline



1. Background
2. Consultation
3. Proposals
4. Have Your Say
5. Regional Mosque Forums

2

Background 1/2



- About 1,750 mosques in Britain which vary in size and quality of service
- Large amounts of positive work and activities being performed by mosques
- But most is not being heard about or shared beyond the local area
- MCB 'Visit My Mosque' feedback sessions in 2017 heard strong desire for structured and institutionalised approach to sharing good practice and achieving better mosques in Britain today

3

Background 2/2



- Several common challenges faced by mosques in Britain were raised, including fear of Islamophobia, youth and women access, confronting violent extremism, community disunity and more.
- Several common opportunities facing mosques in Britain were also discussed, including increased community outreach work, interfaith engagement, supplementary school provision and social action projects like Food banks/drives.
- Many mosques also expressed strong aspiration to embody the spirit of the first mosque in history, the Prophetic Mosque in Medina.

4

Consultation 1/2



- Based on the feedback received, MCB organised the one-day 'Our Mosques Our Future' conference on **20 January 2018**.
- At the conference, the MCB launched a consultation around five possible ideas that *could* address the issues faced by mosques and provide them and their communities with tangible benefits
- The Consultation will be open from **20 January and 30 April 2018**
- The proposals are summarised in the next slides



5

Consultation 2/2



- The MCB will **not** necessarily deliver these ideas, rather we propose to work with partners to deliver based on the consultation results.
- However the MCB commits to facilitating the consultation exercise and producing a summary report of the results by **June 2018**
- The Consultation consists of:
 - Online Survey (~15 min to complete)
 - Email feedback to mosques@mcb.org.uk or call 0845 26 26 786
 - Regional Mosque Forum Events (see later slide)
- The Consultation is open to:
 - Mosque committee members, trustees, activists, students, professionals, academics, Council of Mosque, National Umbrella Organisations, Imams & Chaplains...
 - ... and anyone with an interest in the future of mosques in Britain today!

6

Proposals - Summary



Five ideas are proposed for national services that could offer several benefits to mosques in Britain and their communities. They are:

1. **Best Practice Online Portal**
2. **Discounts & Preferential Rates**
3. **Certification Service**
4. **Jobs Board**
5. **Independent Mediation Service**

The following slides provide more detail on each idea.

7

Proposal 1/5



1. Best Practice Online Portal

- In many professional sectors a web portal exists where management can access template policies, procedures and forms
- It is proposed to research and collate such best practice documents for running mosques and produce a similar web portal for Mosques in Britain

Possible contents of the web portal:

1. Policies, procedures & forms - templates
2. Policies, procedures & forms - models
3. Guidance documents
4. Project-specific toolkits

- Example web portal can be found here: www.mcb.org.uk/mosque-portal

Key Outcomes for Mosques:

- 1) Increased access to and use of latest best practice and model documents
- 2) Save time by adapting existing documents rather than starting from a blank canvas

8

Proposal 2/5



2. Discounts & Preferential Rates

- Service Providers for mosques exist in several key areas who provide high quality goods and services of benefit to mosques.
- It is proposed to invite interested Service Providers to join a scheme where they agree to provide free, discounted or preferential rate goods and service to participating mosques.

Initial Service Provider areas to invite:

1. Legal Services
2. Accountancy / Book-Keeping
3. Capacity Building & Training Providers
4. ICT and Computing Services
5. Exhibition & Display Material
6. Architecture, Building & Construction
7. Utility/Bills Consultants
8. Other Services

Key Outcomes for Mosques:

- 1) Access to high quality recommended service providers
- 2) Savings in annual expenditure

9

Proposal 3/5



3. Certification Service

- In many professional sectors there is a voluntary 'Standard' or 'Charter' for individuals or organisations to sign up to
- It is proposed to produce a similar Standard or Charter for mosques
- These could build upon the previously produced MINAB Standards in 2008 / Aziz Foundation Beacon Mosques programme
- A professionally-run Certification Service would then be built around the Standard or Charter, which could consist of:
 1. Independent Mosque Advisor to visit mosque to discuss their needs
 2. Customised Mosque Improvement Plans (MIP) produced for mosque
 3. Certification lasts for 3 years until re-certification required

Key Outcomes for Mosques:

- 1) Receiving a customized and actionable Mosque Improvement Plans (MIPs)
- 2) Official recognition as having met a nationally-recognised standard or charter

10

Proposal 4/5



4. Jobs Board

- Mosques constantly need to employ Part-Time or Full-Time staff, whether its new Imams, Centre Managers, Admin Officers, Caretakers, Teachers or anything else.
- Volunteer roles to lead certain projects or initiatives are also often required

Possible online jobs board could be:

1. Hosted on an easily accessible webpage
2. Free for mosques to advertise up to 5 vacancies a year (staff or volunteer)
3. Users can 'subscribe' to receive Job Alerts based on region, role type or keyword search

Key Outcomes for Mosques:

- 1) Easier and quicker to recruit for staff or volunteer roles, minimising empty vacancy time
- 2) Better chances of finding the right candidate for the role

11

Proposal 5/5



5. Independent Mediation Service

- Mediation is the processes where a neutral 3rd party assists two parties to resolve a conflict or disagreement.
- At times, individuals or organisations that deal with or use mosque services want to raise a concern or complain about aspects of mosque service provision
- Where the concern or complaint is unable to be dealt with satisfactorily by the mosque, this Independent Mediation Service could provide an alternative and independently-run way for complaints, conflicts or disagreements to be resolved

Key Outcomes for Mosques:

- 1) Better chances of timely resolution to conflicts involving mosques before escalation
- 2) Transparent way for individuals to raise concerns and have them resolved

12

Proposal – Further ideas?



- Do you have other ideas not mentioned above?
- Further ideas, comments and suggestions for how best to achieve better mosques are welcome!
- Please do submit your ideas as part of the consultation (See next slide for details on 'Have Your Say')

13

Have Your Say - Summary



- Based on the feedback received, MCB has suggested a number of practical and tangible ideas to support achieving better mosques.
- These were presented at the **Our Mosques Our Future** on **20 January 2018** and form part of this 'Better Mosques: A Community Consultation'
- The Consultation will be open from **20 January to 30 April 2018**
- You can get involved by completing the online survey here:
www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk/consultation
- Alternatively:
 - Email us at mosques@mcb.org.uk
 - Write to us at P.O. BOX 57330, London, E1 2WJ
 - Call us on 0845 26 26 786



14

Regional Mosque Forums



- The consultation will also include regional mosque forum events in major cities across the UK
- All mosques in that region are invited to take part
- Duration: Half-day sessions
- Schedule: March – April 2018
- Notes will be transcribed after each session
- Please email mosques@mcb.org.uk to express interest in attending a forum event



15



www.ourmosquesourfuture.org.uk

mosques@mcb.org.uk

16

Muslim Council of Britain
PO Box 57330
London
E1 2WJ

T: +44 (0)845 26 26 786
W: www.mcb.org.uk
E: mosques@mcb.org.uk

