



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

Submission of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN) to the Local Government Innovation Taskforce

An Introduction from the Chair of the CCIN

On behalf of the 19 member authorities of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network, I welcome the Labour Party's call for evidence to the Local Government Innovation Taskforce. As council leaders, portfolio holders, ward councillors and members of our local communities, we consider ourselves well placed to understand the scale of the challenges that local authorities and their places are facing across England and Scotland.

Many communities are disengaged from local democracy; councils can seem like distant bureaucracies; and, as organisations, we as councils are struggling to manage huge funding reductions just as local people are putting more and more demand on local services.

If councils are going to survive in this context, and if communities are going to thrive, then we all need to start doing things differently. We need to work together, in genuine and equal partnership with local people, to make the most of the strengths that lie in our communities. We need to step out of the town hall and back into communities to tackle old issues in new ways. Most importantly, we must drive real innovation, with local people at its heart, if we are to face the challenges ahead of us.

This, at its core, is the purpose of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network. With the right support nationally, we feel the Cooperative Council represents the future of local government in the United Kingdom. This submission details why we believe cooperative working to be so important in the context of the challenges our communities face, and includes many examples of cooperative working in practice. I hope that it proves useful to you and that you will give it appropriate consideration. If you require further information or evidence at any point we would be happy to assist.

Cllr Jim McMahon
Chair, Cooperative Councils Innovation Network

About us

We are a growing member network of 19 local authorities* from across England and Scotland, committed to reforming the way we work through building an equal partnership with local people.

This year the Network was re-launched in its current form as a hub for co-operative action, innovation, advocacy and policy development, and became a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association. Though our membership at present is exclusively Labour-led authorities, we are a non-party political group welcoming membership and contribution from all UK local authorities.

The Cooperative Council is not necessarily the pursuit of specific organisational forms such as cooperatives and mutuals (though these are sometimes embraced); it is a modern articulation of the cooperative values and principles of empowerment, equal partnership and collective action which we believe are essential to the success of place based approaches to public service now and going forward.

*Bassetlaw, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Knowsley, Lambeth, Liverpool, Newcastle, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Norwich, Oldham, Plymouth, Rochdale, Salford, Sandwell, Southampton, Stevenage, Sunderland, Telford and Wrekin, York

SECTION 1: Cooperative Councils and a new citizen-state relationship

1. Introduction

Public services and our communities face deep and complex challenges. The gap between rich and poor continues to grow and the cycle of deprivation experienced by some of our most troubled families has yet to be broken. Slow economic growth sits alongside low wages, falling living standards and rising costs of living. Lack of economic opportunity for young people is fuelling a generational divide, while an ageing population has led the costs of care for the elderly to rise unsustainably.

The next Labour government will have to find ways of responding to these challenges to create a fairer economy and a stronger society. It will be tempting to reach for a familiar command and control model, which gives ministers the false reassurance that a lever pulled in Whitehall will address a complex and deep-rooted problem elsewhere.

However Labour's One Nation framework offers a significant new opportunity to develop a different account of the role of the state and public services both centrally and locally, with the aim of creating a stronger social contract that binds together our economy, society and public services, and reflects the role that each of us can play in building a better society.

We think there is a growing consensus – led by Cooperative Councils but shared increasingly widely – that a new approach is needed. As Cooperative Councils, our experience day to day in our communities across the country has led us to conclude that traditional models of top-down governance and service delivery are no longer fit for purpose. We need to rethink the role of citizens and the role of the state, enabling people to contribute to meeting the unprecedented challenges we face by bringing their strengths and assets to the table. This is fundamentally about empowering and supporting people to shape their own lives and the places they live in.

Cooperative Councils are pioneering an approach which looks beyond a traditional service model to ask what they can do to help create stronger, more resilient and more productive communities. Building on the founding traditions of the cooperative movement - collective action, cooperation, empowerment and enterprise – Cooperative Councils are pioneering new relationships with citizens which view them not as passive recipients or consumers of services, but as co-creators of value, better outcomes, better places and a better society.

The case studies included in this submission show what this approach looks like in practice, and the positive impact it is having on the lives of people in our communities.

2. The importance of People and Place: evidence from Cooperative Councils

Cooperative Councils are building evidence that an approach to public services based on community involvement and place can bring about better outcomes for local people and a better use of public resources. Councils are uniquely placed to address the challenges facing our communities and public services because they have:

- Unique understanding of their people and their places
- Oversight of 'place' as opposed to just specific services, and an ability to connect services to the future of place and community
- An understanding of complex issues as they manifest themselves locally for people
- Capacity to engage and develop long term relationships with communities

- Ability to understand and address the root causes of problems people face, shifting resources towards prevention and managing demand
- Proven capacity to innovate and address local priorities while coping with massive reductions in resource.

Five detailed examples of Cooperative innovation are included in Section Two of this submission:

- Lambeth: People with mental health issues being asked to help redesign services, resulting in better services, better outcomes and the empowerment of service users
- Sunderland: Reframing the relationship with its citizens through its approach to community leadership and re-energising local politics in order to strengthen community resilience
- Plymouth: Children learning to work collaboratively in cooperative schools, and better, more cost-effective collaboration between schools and other education partners in the city
- Oldham: Unemployed people being helped back into work by services designed around their needs, aspirations and skills which take into account local opportunities
- York: Working with local people and staff in a more equal relationship, including creating a community benefit society that gives staff and residents a real opportunity to shape and deliver a libraries service that meets their expectations and their needs. Now moving to co-produce a cooperative housing proposal for the city.

These examples show the impact that cooperative ways of working can have in specific service areas. (More examples can be found at www.coopinnovation.co.uk). But equally important are the ways in which Cooperative Councils are going beyond the 'service lens' to tackle the big issues that affect the lives of their residents, such as the rising cost of living. Examples of the innovative ways that Cooperative Councils have approached the cost living crisis include:

- Campaigning for cheaper transport and working with bus companies to reduce bus fares; negotiating collective deals for reduced energy bills and running social marketing campaigns to persuade citizens to switch energy providers in Oldham
- Using municipal energy plants which already power public buildings to provide cheaper heat and light for thousands of council homes in Southampton
- Building greater insight into why people use pay day loans and using this insight to design and promote credit union alternatives in Lambeth
- Driving out pay day loan sharks and promoting new credit unions to provide sustainable short term finance options in Glasgow.

Cooperative Councils are already doing all this and much more. And Cooperative Councils are not alone among the innovators in local government. Projections from 'whole place' Community Budget pilots are demonstrating the potential for improved outcomes at reduced cost through 'whole system' transformation and the alignment of services, resources and behaviours across a place.¹

¹See National Audit Office report on Community Budget pilots: <http://www.nao.org.uk/report/case-study-on-integration-measuring-the-costs-and-benefits-of-whole-place-community-budgets/>; Ernst and Young's modelling

The City Deals process, while arguably limited in scope, is illustrating how community leadership and the creation of genuine partnerships across a place can drive economic growth, support job creation and create revitalised communities with richer networks of social and economic capital.

And emergent approaches to demand management are highlighting the scale of savings and improved outcomes that can be achieved through behaviour change, prevention and ‘whole system, whole place’ reform.

In summary, local government is demonstrating its ability to innovate and tackle some of today’s biggest challenges in ways which make sense in their places and build on the resources of local people, and Cooperative Councils are leading the way.

3. The Costs of Centralisation

We should be clear that the costs of centralisation are ultimately costs to the people who live in our communities. Local authorities and other local public services that are forced to work within the strictures of central funding regimes, grants, targets and accountability are constrained in their ability to respond to the genuine needs of the people they are meant to serve.

Time and time again councils find their hands are tied when it comes to redesigning services and relationships to really meet local need.

Where Cooperative Councils have managed to create new ways of working, enormous time and creativity has often been required to challenge entrenched structures and behaviours which have are features of a centralised system. Although some constraints can be overcome with determination and leadership, going against the grain has often required complex negotiations, special requests of central government and a great deal of time.

This is an inefficient use of public resources. Analysis by Greater Manchester² shows that while spending by local authorities reduced by nearly £1bn between 08/09 and 11/12, the total amount of public spending in the city remained almost exactly the same, with the shortfall being made up by welfare and health spending, over which councils have little influence. If total resources were organised around place, the real potential for a more effective use of public money would be realised.

Challenges include:

Restraints around sharing outcomes and funding between local partners

Strong collaboration with local partners such as health and the police which translates into real change on the ground is the exception, not the norm. The sharing of outcomes and budgets is generally still restricted to pilot projects because of the way partners receive funding and are held accountable. The ability to redesign interventions with long term unemployed and troubled families in ways which make sense to the beneficiaries themselves is limited, leading to duplication of effort and spending and poor outcomes.

Lack of freedom to share the rewards of innovation and improvement

work on Community Budgets: <http://www.lgcplus.com/Journals/2013/01/10/c/l/x/LGA-and-EY-Community-Budgets-Report-.pdf>

² http://www.agma.gov.uk/cms_media/files/121031_ws2_business_case.pdf?static=1

Successful interventions – and the money saved by them – often will not accrue to the organisations which funded them. This matters because of the cost of upfront investment often required to shift outcomes and the time delay between intervention and savings.

Lack of freedom by councils to connect economic development with public service reform

Prioritising investment in employment in order to help improve other outcomes and manage demand on other services is hugely constrained by inadequate local levers over welfare and work initiatives.

Lack of leverage over welfare spending

This means that there is little economic payback when people are moved into work, except through reductions in demand on other services. It also means that there is duplication of effort between councils and centrally controlled bodies and programmes.

Lack of influence of national schemes such as the Work Programme

These do not take into account local labour markets or context when considering the most effective ways to get people into long term work.

4. Looking Ahead: The components of a new place-based settlement between central and local government

Emerging evidence from Cooperative Councils is showing the scale of innovation possible by ambitious councils that are willing to redefine their relationship with local citizens to create stronger communities. Despite the continuing dominance of a Whitehall-centric political system, we have seen that councils can act creatively to deliver positive outcomes for and with their residents.

These examples highlight the value of a different approach to services designed around people and place, and sit alongside emerging learning from central-local initiatives such as Community Budgets (and Total Place) and City Deals.

These schemes are showing real potential, but don't go far enough in driving the scale of economic development, public service reform and improvement in community resilience necessary for a One Nation political economy which can thrive in the context of austerity. Our political system can all too often act as a hurdle to be navigated, rather than an enabler of change.

We believe that place-based approaches to policy and public services ultimately have far-reaching implications for the role and shape of local and central government. We also believe that it may be more important to develop a set of principles which underpin the role of the centre and localities, recognising the value of local places and local public services, than to try and define the specific policy 'asks' which might comprise a central-local 'deal' and a new place-based settlement. However, building on our experiences and existing policies such as Community Budgets and City Deals, we highlight the importance of certain factors:

- **Creation of a framework for place-based public service transformation** – removing the structural, financial and accountability barriers between different services and organisations in the locality, enabling investment in prevention and the organisation of services around people and place.

- **Recognition of the importance of the local economic growth agenda** - giving local areas greater power and flexibility, such as alignment and pooling of skills and employment funding and services, in exchange for responsibility for the creation of high-quality jobs and skills which respond to local employers' needs and the raising of living standards for their communities;
- **Localisation of the Work Programme (or its aims)** – allowing local authorities to design employment services that work with the grain of people's lives, building on their assets and leveraging community expertise and resource. This may mean devolving services to a local level and giving communities and service users a more active voice in how they are delivered, exploring innovative solutions such as personal welfare budgets, community dividends and network-based approaches to employment;
- **Greater local influence over welfare spending within the locality;**
- **Support for councils in making the link between public services and growth** – for example by developing alternative service delivery models which embody cooperative principles through employee and user engagement and voice. These have the potential to respond to challenges such as an ageing society but also provide the basis for jobs growth. Promising examples include the creation of arm's length trading organisations in social care in places such as Sunderland and Oldham, designed to provide better, more cost-effective services and living wage employment terms.

5. Conclusion

It is important that we are clear: our aims of building better places and stronger, more productive communities are shared by the Labour Party, and the debate should be about how these can best be realised based on the evidence.

Cooperative Councils are developing innovative and effective approaches to tackling the biggest issues facing our communities today. Our approach is based on a sense of place and a sense of community. In this submission we have described the challenges inherent in the current central-local system, which in turn creates barriers to genuine partnership working with other local agencies and our communities. We have also described the components of a new central-local relationship which would enable us to work collaboratively to create solutions which work for local places and local people. We believe that a relationship which respects the importance of people and place is essential to achieving our shared aims.

As Cooperative Councils we have demonstrated our willingness to step outside traditional services to respond to the needs of our communities, and to redesign those services so that they are fit for purpose and support real change. We are challenging the ways we historically work with local communities and local partners to create new relationships and approaches which really work. We need an equivalent willingness on the part of central government to change the way we all work together in order to realise the full benefits.

SECTION 2: Cooperative Council Case Studies

The following case studies have been prepared by 5 members of the CCIN with the aim of illustrating cooperative working in practice and the positive impact it has on outcomes and people's lives.

The case studies are as follows:

1. **Care** – Lambeth's Living Well Collaborative
2. **Community** – Sunderland's Community Leadership approach: local leadership of place and the unique contribution of councils and councillors
3. **Education** – Cooperative Education in Plymouth
4. **Employment** – Get Oldham Working
5. **Cooperative approach including various case studies** – York City Council



1. Lambeth's Living Well Collaborative

Lambeth's cooperative ambitions are built on a simple insight: that public services will achieve more when we do things *with* people, rather than doing things *to* people. Local government is open, inclusive and democratically accountable. However, we acknowledge that there must be a system-wide change if we are to meet the outcomes that we have developed with our citizens. At the heart of this change are commissioning, coproduction (empowering and working with our citizens) and a focus on the strengths of our citizens and communities, growing their assets and strengths and enabling them to meet their own needs.

We have long recognised that decisions taken at the lowest possible level improve decision quality and trust in public services. But we also know that local services work better when we listen and act on the experience and insight of our citizens; that we use resources more effectively when we help local people to meet their own needs; and that we improve services by focusing on the outcomes that local people want to achieve. We view it as the council's role to enable this collaboration creating local solutions designed for and by local people in an equal and reciprocal relationship.

Compared to the rest of England the health of people in Lambeth is varied. Deprivation is higher and life expectancy lower than the England average. But like the rest of the country health and social care costs and demand are increasing at a time when funding levels are decreasing significantly. Within Lambeth a preventative agenda and the promotion of greater independence is at the heart of the cultural change we are undertaking to meet these challenges.

Our mental healthcare system, like in many other parts of England, is struggling to handle high levels of referrals and people stuck in secondary care. The Lambeth Living Well

Collaborative exemplifies how relevant public services and third sector partners have collaborated with citizens in Lambeth to address these challenges. In addition to the peer support example set out below the story of the [development of Airdrina's integrated health and social care budget](#) is another that demonstrates the significant life improvements and cost savings that such an approach can generate. In doing so the Lambeth Living Well Collaborative have utilised community expertise, improved and democratised the system, built on the strengths and assets of service users and provided the collaborative with greater ownership of their decisions.

The Collaborative is just one example of where Lambeth is using a cooperative commissioning approach. From housing, to planning and adult social care, we are using cooperative commissioning to change the way local government works with people to improve lives and local areas.

Lambeth Living Well Collaborative – from ‘just about surviving’ to thriving

[The Collaborative](#) is group of service users, carers, GPs, public service commissioners and providers from the public and third sector. They have come together to tackle these big challenges and radically improve the outcomes experienced by people with severe and enduring mental health problems in the borough by collaboratively redesigning local care pathways.

The involvement of the council has been crucial as enablers of a cooperative approach, as joint commissioners, as part of work towards the wider integration of health and social care and because the people who are co-producing the new service offer with the Collaborative are citizens of Lambeth.

The Collaborative has wholeheartedly embraced co-production as the foundation of its approach³. Key elements of the service model that has emerged from this extensive coproduction are

- Increased user control and choice
- Peer support
- Getting connected and supporting reciprocity
- Improved Access
- Better guidance and support in the community
- Primary care capacity

For example: local peer support

“for the 5 people I will support in the next 5 days, between one and 3 of them will go on to support another 5 or more.”

The Collaborative believes that local peer support is one of the most important ways to positively develop the skill mix, opportunities, experience and outcomes for people using mental health services. This reduces over-reliance on professional expertise and taps into

³<http://www.innovationunit.org/our-projects/projects/innovative-mental-health-services-lambeth-living-well-collaborative>

the huge potential of service users and carers' lived expertise around recovery and staying well.

The peer support programme went live in 2011 with 10 peer supporters on wards at Lambeth Hospital, supporting people over 12 weeks as they were discharged from hospital... a time when people are at their most vulnerable. Since then it has reached more than 1,300 people, both formally and informally.

As a result of their work hospital admissions are being avoided and people are being discharged from community mental health teams (CMHTs) at a higher rate

Such is its success another cohort has gone through the eight-week training and have started working with the Community Options Team (COT) and Primary Care Support Service (Pass) as people face the transition from their community mental health team back to their GP.

The costs and benefits

The cost of the Collaborative's overall approach is estimated at £99 per patient. The benefits, many of which it is exceedingly complex to place a financial value on, include⁴:

- Mobilising the asset base that is patients, service users and their communities
- Increased treatment compliance as patients co-design and self-manage
- Improved health outcomes for patients as they are better able to manage their long-term condition
- Improved quality of life for patients by improving self-efficacy, autonomy and health status.
- Reduced hospital admissions, out-patient attendance, and length of stay, and increased discharge by improving patients' self-efficacy, the effectiveness of clinical interventions, and condition management
- Improved use of primary care by improving patients' ability to self-manage
- Improved patient experience by involving patients in the delivery of their care and delivering patient-centred services
- Improved patient satisfaction by improving the effectiveness of clinical treatment and the patient experience
- Reduced the cost of healthcare by reducing the need for primary and secondary care
- Improved social capital by building networks of support around the patient and involving them in community activities

| ⁴Nesta_People powered health



2. Sunderland's Community Leadership Approach: Local leadership of place and the unique contribution of councils and councillors

This submission will highlight:

1. Practical and successful examples where Councils have achieved effective integration of public services around place by reinvigorating their unique community leadership role and the central role of local Councillors within this
2. Sunderland City Council's innovative approach to developing the Council's community leadership role and capacity which rejects the suggestion that the future for local government is one of managed decline
3. The practical approach adopted in these cases and their clear focus upon successful achievement of social outcomes through a redefined relationship between Council and people which provides greater assurance of future sustainability

Sunderland City Council's Community Leadership Programme has achieved meaningful decentralisation of local public services to the five areas which make up this City of 280,000 people. The Council's Responsive Local Services agenda has transformed the governance and delivery of environmental (street scene) services in the city, youth services, prioritisation of local highways maintenance activity and a range of other service areas. Prioritisation of important, visible, high profile front line services, currently with budgets in excess of £15m being subject to local influence at Area level so that decision-making can be quicker and more responsive to local needs. An extensive 'pipeline' of further services will see the range and value of services increase dramatically.

The environmental services which made up the first successful wave of Responsive Local Services were subject to fundamental service re-design which, created new multi-disciplinary teams with far greater empowerment of front line employees, mobile technology and a brief to engage with their communities whilst extracting major budget efficiencies. Major social landlord partners, in particular, were engaged so that integration of all main environmental management resources around place was achieved, land ownership issues resolved and maintenance regimes prioritised and co-ordinated.

Results have been exceptional. Despite taking over £3m out of environmental services budgets, the Council has achieved its highest ever MORI satisfaction ratings for these services. Compliments exceeded complaints for the first time and ever since changes were introduced nearly two years ago, staff reporting of issues has exceeded public reporting.

While it shapes plans for customer behaviour change that will achieve a further step change in demand management, the Council has therefore achieved an effective approach to early intervention which means that many environmental issues are sorted before they become a problem for the public. Member satisfaction with these services, their ability to introduce

local insight and intelligence and to set local priorities through new Area Place Boards consistently – but not surprisingly - exceeds 95% as measured by the Council's Member Satisfaction Survey.

The Council's success has been achieved by setting individual initiatives of this kind within a wider programme of transformation. The Community Leadership Programme has challenged people, processes and structures to improve their contribution to helping Sunderland City Council to become the best Community Leader that it can be. Each must work within the Council's core values of 'Decent, Proud and Together' to help the council to

- Understand its communities, customers and their needs better than ever before
- Set priorities which will meet the highest priority needs of local people and local communities most effectively
- Develop responses to priorities which will maximise chances of achieving desired outcomes irrespective of who delivers these
- Evaluate success and impact more effectively than ever before

In 2012 the Council rationalised its Executive and Committee arrangements and aligned these to support its priorities for development as a Community Leadership Council. Changes featured extensive devolution to Areas on the one hand and an increased focus on strategic aspects of community leadership on the other. It therefore

- Consolidated the role of Area Committees as local hubs of community leadership and service redesign
- Introduced Area Boards for 'Place' and 'People' as the focus of 'de-siloing' council services and decentralised governance.
- Actively encouraged Area Boards to recommend bottom-up changes to current service standards and approaches
- Established a clearer relationship between Cabinet, Area Committees and Area Boards to aid the introduction and embedding of these arrangements.

New arrangements have been complemented by refreshed Area-based budgets with a budgetary value of over £1.5m. These are designed to enable local Councillors, working with partners and their local communities to identify the right local priorities and to act upon these speedily with minimum bureaucracy and delay. Budgets include a Ward Community Chest of £10,000 per Ward per year which often also acts as seed funder of local community activity. Budgets are increasingly being targeted at activity which

- Strengthens engagement between the Council and communities to improve the quality of intelligence available to the Council to target and shape its priorities and responses
- Supports demand management by promoting local self-help in key areas such as Adult Social Care

- Encourages community capacity development in areas which the Council has identified plans for transformation which could generate additional local economic opportunities

The Council's rapid and fundamental transformation – which is, of course, ongoing - is underpinned by its commitment to reinforcing not just the Council's community leadership role, but the centrality of Councillors to this. This means that Councillors drive change in effective partnership with Officers, are part of it and are not therefore marginalised by it. This has clear, positive implications for not only the Council's appetite to 'explore new territory' in transformation terms, but for the speed of decision making at a time where rapid determination on often extremely difficult matters is at a premium.

This approach, unique in the practical way in which it has strengthened Officer-Member relationships, has therefore enabled the Council to go further faster on its journey of transformation. Changes to Executive and Committee arrangements were conceived, designed and delivered within a matter of weeks. Major service decentralisation and devolution – with clear positive impact upon social outcomes – was not simply introduced, but was supported by an entirely new Councillor-driven governance system within a few months.

The Council's Community Leadership Programme has underpinned this transformation with a series of small, practical and no cost interventions which have helped to galvanise the internal 'team' within the Council. The Programme has been described by the RSA 2020 Public Services Hub, which evaluated Sunderland's approach recently, as the 'glue' which holds wider transformation together. The Communities and Local Government Select Committee on the Role of Councillors in their Communities visited Sunderland in 2012 to witness this approach first hand.

At root, the Community Leadership Programme represents a belief that Councillors must be at the heart of Sunderland's strategy for social and economic renewal, but that to fulfil their potential as community leaders, they need a new type of support and capacity building, and a new set of tools to lead. The Community Leadership Programme therefore incorporates a variety of support interventions and development initiatives under three broad strategic directions:

1. *Engaging councillors more effectively as community leaders* – creating new support structures that empower councillors at the 'front line' (working with Councillors to re-define their role, understanding satisfaction, measuring it, customising support including individual 'Account Managers' to support each Councillor, improving IT and wider capacity in new, more creative ways) .
2. *Engaging councillors in the development of Responsive Local Services (RLS)* – creating new governance and engagement mechanisms that support council services that get closer to citizens and are more directly responsive to the needs of people and place as described above.
3. *Engaging councillors as partners in local economic growth* – developing the means to engage councillors in the City's Economic Masterplan growth framework, particularly around the potential of citizens and communities to develop new SME's and public service spin-outs.

Four years after inception, the Community Leadership Programme remains a focal point for much of the Council's strategy for public service reform and community wellbeing and a vindication of the Council's focus on the role of councillors as key agents of change.

Although the Council does measure Member satisfaction on a regular basis - and this has improved dramatically over the lifetime of the Programme – the Programme’s true importance in strengthening trust between Officers and Members cannot be overestimated.



3. Cooperative Education in Plymouth

'There is a heap of evidence staring at policy makers in the face that it is the collaborative group that accelerates performance. These results occur because day to day pressure and support is built into their work. It is social capital that has the quality and speed essential for whole system reform.'

Michael Fullan: 'All Systems Go', 2010

The Plymouth Context and Co-operative Education

As one of the first cities in the UK to ever form a co-operative society, Plymouth has a proud history in the co-operative movement. Plymouth's Labour administration was elected in 2012 on a commitment to form a Co-operative Council, and one of the first areas of focus was the formation of a co-operative approach to education in the city. We believe our children deserve the best possible start in life and the co-operative model offers a way of enabling the entire community to be involved in making this happen. The co-operative model offers a range of benefits – social, educational, economic – to our children and young people, families and everyone who lives and works in the city. The model encourages collaboration between schools, parents, the council and partners to improve outcomes.

We already have some excellent examples of co-operative education in Plymouth. Lipson Co-operative Academy (judged outstanding by Ofsted) is showcased nationally as an example of how co-operative principles applied to education can achieve dramatic results. The aim of the Trust is to further the life chances of young people in the community in a socially responsible and ethical way. Membership is open to Students, Alumni, Staff, Parents and the Community. Anyone can join so long as they are committed to the values and principles of the International Co-operative Alliance. Each member has an equal vote in any decision taken by the Trust regardless of status.

There are many ways in practice that the co-operative aims are visible and lived by the school: students are involved in many enterprises that may be social or business orientated. These are democratic organisations that are run by the students themselves and operate within the frame of the co-operative values and principles. Young Co-operatives, managing their own terms of reference, are represented on the forum of the Lipson Learning Co-operative Trust. It applies to learning in the classroom too; the school believes that all people learn better together through a method of teaching known as co-operative learning. Co-operative learning is a structured and disciplined approach that encourages dialogue and promotes confidence in the learner. A co-operative classroom is one that relies on open and constructive dialogue. Several schools in Plymouth have already moved to co-operative trust status and more are in the process of following their example.

The Council see's these values and principles transcending debates around models of governance and autonomy. Our offer and commitment is to all schools irrespective of status. Alongside the Co-operative Schools, we are supporting the wider development of cooperation and collaboration within education among a range of organisations within the city. For example, helping schools to benefit from the integration of school to school support services and, benefit from economies of scale when commissioning support services. We

are also seeking to extend adult and community learning services through a mutualisation model.

The future of the Plymouth Co-operative Learning Community

In order to maintain a sense of inclusion and cohesion across the entire city, the Plymouth Co-operative Learning Community currently being developed will bring all partners, and many more, together as affiliates or core members of a co-operative network. To succeed it will need to be systemic in approach, encourage participation and able to work adaptively as landscapes change. The network is being constructed as a major transformation programme leading to the removal of duplication, offering integrated commissioning and literally seeing the education of our children as a joint venture by all. The model is being depicted as a honeycomb in which different 'cooperative cells' tessellate, relating to each other, sharing resource and forming a coherent structure overall. Some functions currently performed by LA services will be integrated within existing cooperative bodies; others will be delivered through new co-operative working across the honeycomb.

Long term benefits are seen as:

- creating a network that responds to the learning and skills needs of residents; Along with users that can become involved in and, broker excellent support and resources;
- creating a model around that partnership that can trade and maximise the outputs from the collective capacity of partners;
- modernising the council education and families services by integrating it within a network and putting it at the heart of citywide co-operation;
- developing and sustaining a learning and skills offer that is not dependent upon or driven by short-term initiatives and funding;
- instilling peer review and mutual accountability for priority areas and outcomes;
- developing a more robust and focused approach to citywide challenges, irrespective of governance arrangements in individual schools or settings.

It is intended that our model will demonstrate and develop the Co-operative values and the principles behind the Co-operative Council in Plymouth. There will be an expectation of behaviours that promote equality amongst partners, equity and inclusion, solidarity and democracy. It must also be open, honest, demonstrate social responsibility and support community aspirations.

Examples of Co-operative Working in Practice

The Plymouth Teaching School Alliance (PTSA)

The PTSA is made up of Plymouth schools and the LA who work together to take sector-led responsibility for school improvement with the aim of building better leadership, teaching and learning across all the member schools. This body, like the Plymouth Excellence Cluster (an early intervention and prevention arm of schools and council work), are sustainably supported by investment from the Dedicated Schools Grant, schools and the LA.

The Plymouth Association of Primary Headteachers (PAPH)

Originally established as the voice for Plymouth's primary school headteachers, PAPH has created a Co-operative Community Interest Company, aiming to work for the betterment of Plymouth's children, tackling deprivation, low aspiration and under achievement. It provides a range of services to its 77 members and invests its profits back into Plymouth's primary schools, keeping the money where it counts – in schools. The services it provides include:

- a teacher supply agency that currently employs about 100 newly qualified teachers to work across 77 member schools;
- Supply+ - the primary school teacher recruitment service for Plymouth;

- a weekly recruitment and opportunities e-bulletin, 'The School's Post', which has significantly reduced the marketing and advertising costs incurred by schools;
- advice and support relating to property compliance and general building maintenance in partnership with Plymouth City Council;
- Access to multi-agency extended services including a Schools Meals Service driven and determined by the needs of schools and sitting within a democratic governance structure (from April 2014);
- a blended approach to school improvement, including support for schools in challenging circumstances.

Plymouth Adult and Community Learning Service Public Sector Mutual (PACLS)

PACLS is taking the lead on the development of a Public Sector Mutual that will provide coherent, responsive, community and employer-based adult learning opportunities. Mutualisation of this service will allow greater freedom to design and deliver a wide range of learning opportunities via an expanding network of partners from across the community, voluntary and charitable sector. This will allow the service to do things differently while building on strengths and core business areas of the current service. As a social enterprise PACLS will prioritise positive social impact as an outcome from interactions with the service and for partners. Establishing a mutual will allow the service to work more effectively working with partners and support the development of the local and regional economy.

Education Catering Service

It is proposed that, for school food provision, PAPH CiC and the Council create the first of the network of co-operatives to operate potentially as a Joint Venture Company (JVC) on the basis of a 60% schools and 40% Plymouth City Council ownership. An Outline Business Case has been drawn up and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be in place from 01 April 2014 setting out roles and responsibilities of each partner clearly setting out a direction of travel, timeline and destination for the school food services. During the year 2014/15, further work would be undertaken to resolve any remaining issues with regard to pensions, State Aid and EU procurement.

A fundamental aspect of this transformation is to ensure that the right person is able to deliver the best service possible. Consequently, in this model, we see the Council as setting policy and standards and fulfilling procurement and maintenance obligations. Schools will manage front line staff and day to day operations. The Catering Service has recently extended its work with communities, by beginning to provide Community meals and, plans are being developed to offer meals during school holidays from community bases. With the aid of community support and involvement this offer will include healthy and cheap food along with training and employment opportunities.

Children's Centres

The co-design of the cluster arrangements of Children's Centres between stakeholders, providers, council and health rewires the model to preserve the most valued and essential elements. The universal provision within Children's Centres will be protected but management and back office efficiencies will support more front line provision. Additionally, in partnership with health colleagues we have created a multi-agency approach to ante and post natal care delivered through our Centres. The model has attracted interest from a number of providers who see this as becoming part of the 'honeycomb' co-operative.

Plymouth College of Arts School

Plymouth College of Art (PCA) is the founder and sponsor of the Plymouth School of Creative Arts (PSCA), a new mainstream 4 – 16 all-through school that places creativity in all subjects, and the creative arts in particular, at the very heart of the curriculum. Together they form a unique and seamless continuum of creative learning and practice, which Sir

Nicholas Serota, Director of Tate, has hailed as a new educational model of national significance.

Plymouth School of Creative Arts is a free school that opened in the Millbay area of Plymouth in September 2013. Located in an area undergoing regeneration and with long-standing disconnection and deprivation in the community, the school has a vision of working co-operatively with the local community.

PCA–PSCA are working with the support of a Cabinet Office programme to develop a mutual society on a bespoke co-operative model capable of including for example, arts organisations, artist-led and community interest groups and health trusts, on the basis of shared values and a common interest in the Millbay/Stonehouse neighbourhoods of Plymouth.



4. Get Oldham Working – a local co-operative solution

Introduction

Oldham has a rich industrial heritage of which it is proud. In 1913 Oldham boasted more cotton spindles than any other town in the world and the town brimmed with confidence and certainty about its future.

Much has changed since then. Oldham was hit hard by de-industrialisation and over the past decade the manufacturing and engineering base has reduced by a further 50%. Whilst over the past twenty years much public money has been spent in Oldham, a significant percentage of this has been spent outside of the local economy, and whilst we now have new buildings and infrastructure, too many local residents remain trapped in unemployment, low pay and poverty. This mixture of out-of-borough spend and a labour market swamped with relatively lower value services, has resulted in Oldham consistently having the lowest workplace earning levels in Greater Manchester, higher than average rates of unemployment and worklessness, and relatively low levels of entrepreneurship. Local flexibility, coupled with local leadership around investment and funding provides much greater opportunities for approaches which create employment opportunities for local people and positive routes out of poverty.

However Oldham is a place with the ability and capacity to change and is now on the threshold of recovering its former prominence. We are on a mission to regenerate the borough and turn it into a productive, thriving place where communities are confident and resilient.

It is paramount that we support local businesses and local people across the borough by creating the right conditions for growth. This means enabling thriving local economies through encouraging existing companies to grow, attracting new businesses to set up in Oldham, encouraging entrepreneurship, and increasing the number of employment opportunities across the borough. In order to support local people to make the most of these opportunities and to provide a future for our residents, we also have to focus on improving their skills and educational achievements.

If Oldham is to achieve the forecast Greater Manchester average employment rate by 2020, then after allowing for some leakage, some 6,600 jobs would have to be created – that is some challenge. We are up for it, but we know we can't do this on our own. We need to work in partnership at all levels – nationally with the government, regionally with our GM neighbours, and locally with our partners to enable the economic regeneration of this proud borough. For example, the current 'City Deals' policy has been beneficial and we would welcome its continuation and extension.

This paper outlines the challenges that local authorities face in creating sustainable jobs and encouraging economic growth and outlines some of the details of our current Get Oldham Working programme which indicates the scope of what an ambitious local council can achieve, even at times of austerity, through innovation and co-operation.

What are the challenges for local authorities in reducing unemployment rates and getting people into suitable sustainable employment?

Connecting supply and demand: There is currently a plethora of activity at the beginning of the employment cycle in terms of skills development and training but a real gap in terms of creating jobs, connecting residents to those jobs and ensuring those jobs are sustainable. This is primarily a consequence of the way the funding is constructed i.e. funding is paid per person in the education system so course availability is structured around the best funding match rather than a skills match to emerging job markets in the area. In 'Making it Work', 2012, NESTA stated: *"The current approach to tackling worklessness is a complicated picture of multiple initiatives designed to help the labour market work better..... £5 billion per year is spent and yet the system is not working effectively in connecting individuals to work"*.

Duplication: Linked to the above point, but worthy of specific mention is the amount of duplication in terms of the type of support available in skills development and training. This adds to the plethora of support available and is driven by funding pots, not demand or analysis of needs for the area. This is where a place-based approach is essential, in ensuring that partners are delivering a place offer and each doing their bit towards a joint agenda of employability.

Sustainability: This is a challenge both in terms of the sustainability of the jobs created and the longevity of any employability schemes we have going forward. The mechanism for delivering the programme will have to devise a new way of working and be agile, with the ability to respond to changing economic and political environments over a long period. For example, in Oldham the core values of the approach will be:

- Creating a point of difference for Oldham people – an approach which is driven by what residents identify they need rather than what the system provides. As part of the Public Service Reform (PSR) work taking place across Greater Manchester we are looking to change behaviour at a community level to tackle and challenge the social norms in an area.
- Being able to build on established good practice and learning from what works to increase the volume of GOW activity and decrease unemployment figures further as a result.
- Being co-operative and harnessing the best of current provision – working together with our partners and communities to use what is already out there, address gaps in provision and repair the disconnect between supply and demand – ensuring the offer is relevant, appropriately sequenced and joined up. However, there is also a responsibility on individuals to 'do their bit', responding to the help up positively and taking responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- Sustaining delivery through pragmatic risk assessment of funding and delivery opportunities
- Focussing on PSR through working with key stakeholders and learning through experience - Unemployment is a key driver of wider demand for public services. Tackling worklessness is a core strand of the PSR programme ensuring the wider wrap-around support is available to address existing barriers to employment.
- Continual monitoring and evaluation, so that delivery can respond rapidly to change – this could be change in local situation or changes of legislation or to the centralised approach. For example, work is planned in one of our communities to develop a deeper understanding of how employers communicate about jobs, how residents find about them through formal channels, but also through their social/informal networks. We want to discover where the disconnects are and how we can develop creative ways to bridge the two that work for local places.

Tailoring and flexing for local: One size does not fit all, either for the person looking for work or for the employer. Lots of centralised initiatives did not take account of regional and local differences and was inflexible to respond to those challenges. A local place-based solution is necessary to take account of the individuality of each place, understand its specific challenges and maximise the opportunities to produce better outcomes.

Additionally, generic solutions do not reflect the needs of the individual or encourage people to think of their own needs. It is not enough just to look at individuals, families and physical places. It is necessary to also take account of the social and cultural bonds that tie those individual, families and places into communities. An approach tailored to the individual, such as individualised budgets for example, support independence and self-reliance – two of the co-operative trademarks.

Poor availability and accuracy of data: It is currently very difficult to establish who makes up our client base, due to problems with the way that JSA and Universal Credit statistics are being reported. Oldham was a Pathfinder authority for Universal Credit and we have been informed that sharp reductions in the number of JSA claimants is to a great extent due to the transferring of residents to UC. However, more accurate data (to include Universal Credit transfers) has not been as readily available as soon as we would have liked. There is a wider issue about data sharing generally, more particularly so, at a time when the councils are working towards achieving Public Sector Reform (PSR) principles through building effective and financially efficient partnerships. It follows that if you cannot identify your client base, it creates real difficulties in planning focused interventions, including through our PSR and employability programmes.

What are we doing about it in Oldham?

In May 2013 we launched Get Oldham Working, our strategic programme to increase skills, employment, business engagement and support opportunities. Our approach as set out below, has set out to address some of the challenges we face as described in section 2.

The strategic aims in the short to medium term of the programme will be to:

- Provide 2015 work related opportunities by 2015

- Guarantee that every 18-year old leaving school in 2015 can access continued education, training, apprenticeship or a job.

Get Oldham Working seeks to connect supply and demand and, in the longer term, aims to:

- Provide an on-going service to help residents secure long term employment and make an economic contribution to their neighbourhood and the town.

- Join up the employment opportunities gained through the significant investment in regeneration with unemployed residents.

- Act as a catalyst for the borough-wide economic framework to improve the quality and range of jobs available and improve Oldham's position within the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) offer.

- Ultimately (over 10-15 years) support the restructure of the labour market to provide more and higher skilled jobs in the private sector, as the public sector workforce contracts.

Working co-operatively with local people underpins our approach to all that we do in Oldham. The Get Oldham Working Scheme is linked to the Public Service Reform work taking place across Greater Manchester which aims to improve the lives of Manchester residents and reduce dependency on services by investing in different activities and services and testing new ways of working. In Oldham we are clear that the basis for reform should be

a different starting point for public services: 'working with', not 'delivering to' local people. We believe that in order to drive significant increases in economic growth and residents' economic productivity, it is necessary to have an integrated approach that combines both the economic growth and public service reform agendas – and that these are developed in line with co-operative principles and values.

Working co-operatively with public and voluntary sector partners and with the community, Oldham partners are focusing on:

- Changing practice among frontline staff and professionals working in the community so that they provide constructive support to residents to help them become more independent and self-reliant.
- Local people becoming more independent, self-reliant and doing their bit within their local community, resulting in less demand on public services.
- Intervention at the earliest opportunity to prevent the need for high cost support at a later date
- Influencing key decision-makers and budget holders so that reduced service demand is reflected in changed investment, commissioning and decommissioning arrangements. This will enable us to use public sector funds more efficiently and effectively.

Our aim is to genuinely tackle barriers to employment, including health, anti-social behavior and benefit dependency, to develop self-reliant and self-sufficient residents. This approach is being analysed, monitored and interrogated to test the hypothesis that employment will reduce reliance on public services, such as health services and policing, and savings will be delivered.

It is crucial in a co-operative borough to consider how we can work differently with residents and communities, partners and employees to bring about improved outcomes. In order to create a fundamentally different relationship between public services and Oldham residents, we are exploring ways in which front-line workers think and act differently – working to change skill sets and mindsets. If we are to support significant numbers of people into work we have to move away from an 'assess-refer' mentality to a problem-solving approach that seeks to understand and tackle the root cause of the problem.

We are starting this reform in some key ways, as part of developing an 'end-to-end offer to support people into employment, ensuring barriers to employment are identified and tackled:

- Creation of a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Team: The CAF team now have a family focus and families are supported by one key worker instead of the myriad of key workers from different agencies, who all operate with only their agenda in mind i.e. housing not employment, public health and not housing. We are training professionals in careers guidance so that they are multi-skilled and develop their thinking, in that they understand that employment will reduce reliance on services.
- Creation of a Family Focus Team to support and challenge families to develop the skills to be independent and self-reliant, with an ultimate goal of supporting them into work.
- Development of a Family CAF to ensure a whole family's needs are understood and addressed holistically by a range of agencies, also with an ultimate goal of supporting them into work, rather.
- Working with Job Centre Plus and the Work Programme to create access to job-related opportunities and providing a holistic package of support to people struggling to overcome barriers to work (e.g. drugs and alcohol, mental health problems).

Building on the work being carried we are already beginning to see early signs of change and this is partly reflected in August 2013 employment data (See note under section 1):

- Unemployment in Oldham in August decreased by 399 claimants (-5.3%), which is the largest decrease across Greater Manchester.
- Unemployment in Oldham has decreased this year by 980 claimants (-12.2%).
- The Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) count in Oldham is 7,078, the lowest it's been since June 2011.
- The unemployment rate in Oldham now stands at 5% which has fallen from being the highest across Greater Manchester (GM) to the third highest rate.

Next steps

Actions are, and will be, taken in a co-operative way with responsibility and resources shared between partner organisations, communities and individuals. The programme has been structured into four work-streams. Importantly, connections are being made across services to join up programmes and crucially to drive activity into mainstream delivery.

Workstream	Priority projects
Work stream 1 – People: Supporting people in preparation for work (focussed on the prospective employees)	Traineeship Programme Review Neighbourhood employment and skills offer Oldham Learning Cooperative
Work stream 2 – Opportunity: Stimulating work opportunity creation (focussed on employers)	Business Engagement Campaign 2015 work related opportunities by 2015 Social Value Charter
Work stream 3 – Infrastructure: Helping people move into work (the role of the Council and its partners)	The Oldham Agency Priority Access to Jobs Identification of Transport Gaps
Work stream 4 – Sustainability: Sustaining a higher level of employment (maintaining the long term benefits)	Oldham Enterprise Trust Develop a PSR pilot in St. Marys and Coldhurst Inward Investment and Growth Planning

It is:

Innovative: A number of the elements are innovative, such as the Learning Co-operative and the Enterprise Trust. Additionally, the Oldham Agency approach is innovative and will lead the way in a market-place where there is a real issue with connecting supply and demand. The Agency will enable services will act as one, and provide one front door to a family of services aimed at providing intensive support to residents facing barriers to sustainable employment. This level of support will be reflected in services to employers providing the critical link between unemployed residents and employment related opportunities. Reducing duplication, saving money and building the investment proposition and spending less on engagement and assessment and more on getting people into work and sustaining employment.

Co-operative: A concrete example of promoting co-operation and innovation is the Enterprise Trust. On 10 May 2013 Oldham entrepreneur Norman Stoller CBE announced a £1 million grant from the Stoller Charitable Fund to kickstart the Trust. The £1m will be gifted annually for four years, at a rate of £250,000 per annum and will be used to guarantee that

every 18-year old leavings school can access continued education, training, apprenticeship, or a job.

Additionally, our approach to skills and employment is a great co-operative example of everyone doing their bit and everyone benefitting. For example, our Social Value Framework ensures that we get more for every public pound spent in Oldham, benefitting local businesses as they are part of local supply chains and benefitting local residents as work related opportunities are created and paying the living wage is encouraged. In order to make this work, residents, partners and the Council all need to take responsibility and ensure that the best outcomes are achieved.

Place-based: A place-based approach is already working in terms of the Get Oldham Working programme spanning all sectors with priority projects emerging that work across all sectors. Get Oldham Working is also inextricably linked to the PSR work that is currently being led in Oldham. Better understanding between local partners of what each other do should highlight the links between key areas such as health, housing, and employment, reduce duplication and increase our ability to make the most of what is available.

Preventative: A better understanding of the strategic links between these key areas will also help us to identify how increasing employment and work related opportunities, can be used to reduce demand on council services and build individual and community resilience. This is the point at which we should start to see savings being realised across high cost public services across the borough.



5. City of York Council

Our Co-operative approach

York has a history of philanthropy that stems from our Quaker tradition. The Rowntree family who provided their employees with a library, free education, a works magazine, a social welfare officer, a doctor, a dentist and a pension fund, exemplifies this proud history.

This is an excellent heritage to have as a city and it is important that we work together to address our needs. However, in many ways the world has changed and benevolent paternalism is an outmoded way to deliver what the city needs to meet the challenges of the twenty first century.

It is clear that a one size fits all approach is not necessarily going to deliver the outcomes the city needs. Instead, we are now working to deliver a new, cooperative, approach across the city.

Our vision is of a city that works together to benefit everyone to ensure prosperity and drive innovation, now and in the future. To do this, we need to give local people choice and control over their services and make the most of the resources we have as a city. We also need to help the city find and deliver the right outcomes in the best way it can.

We have the right conditions for success against this agenda in York. We have a vibrant and diverse business community, we have an active social enterprise sector who are engaged in delivery for the city and we have a large number of engaged residents who love the city and want to do more to secure its future success.

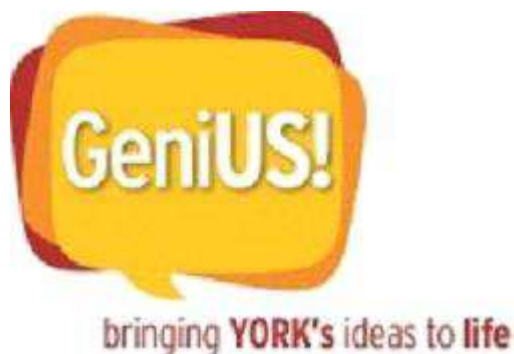
As a city we are using our many lifetimes of commercial and social innovation as inspiration for our collective future - a future built on creativity and collaboration. In an open exchange of people, problems and ideas, the city is working together to create innovative new solutions to challenges big and small and is putting these to the test.

Through taking this approach, we are now able to take a fresh look at how, why and when outcomes for the city are delivered. This paper includes several case studies on how we are planning to deliver in our city.

We are always looking to work with residents to innovate. As part of this we are looking to explore how we can develop a cooperative model for housing in the city.

Case studies in York

Genius



In an open exchange of people, problems and ideas, York is increasingly working as one to develop innovative new solutions to challenges big and small and to put these to the test. Our open innovation platform, GeniUS!, developed with support from NESTA, allows residents to come together to discuss the challenges the city faces. This approach has won regional, national & international awards from the likes of The Guardian newspaper and Living Labs Global.

This approach has given rise to exciting new pilot projects, such as a dementia awareness campaign produced by young people for young people, working with dementia sufferers and a local film company to create a short film and discussion plan for use in York schools and beyond.

At a city level, this new way of thinking has opened up the collective intelligence and resources of its many partners and turned them into a powerful problem-solving tool. It has also ignited a renewed sense of collaboration, with citizens and businesses exploring new ideas together for their mutual benefit.

Libraries and Archives



A proposal was made for a staff spin out of the libraries service which already had a strong track record of delivering service improvement. The council have explored this move as a way of enabling the service to be more enterprising especially in terms of raising additional funding. The decision to move to a Community Benefit Society (CBS), one third owned by staff and two thirds owned by the community enables people to get directly involved in decision making. It will manage savings required whilst maintaining paid staff in every library, ensuring no closures, and driving service improvement.

The Community Benefit Society will make a major contribution to helping the council engage with communities, facilitating adult learning, getting people on line, promoting the health and wellbeing agenda, and supporting vulnerable people.

Adult Social Care Community Equipment Store and Telecare

From April 2014, the Community Equipment Loan Store and Telecare Service will be delivered as a mutual that is majority staff-owned, with the authority continuing to have part ownership.

The team already supports over 3000 vulnerable people and is keen to grow and support many more vulnerable people across the city – helping to make York a great place to grow old.

The enterprise will be a Company Limited by Guarantee in the form of a Community Interest Company (CIC) and will have a Board of Directors comprising of three staff, and three Non-Exec Directors – one of whom will be from the council.

The Social Enterprise's vision describes its ambition and what it is the organisation hopes to achieve. This includes creating a high quality, comprehensive and sustainable telecare and equipment service that redefines care delivery, and helps people manage their lives and stay independent in their own homes through life enhancing equipment solutions.

The expected benefits from the creation of the Community Interest Company are that it will:

- secure the future provision and development of these services and an ability to retain surpluses and invest in service improvement;
- create new opportunities to expand service lines, innovate and develop partnerships to improve the quality of service and outcomes for users;
- adapt to growth in service user numbers at no additional cost to the Council within agreed thresholds;
- provide social care prevention services to a wider audience through increased marketing and geographical spread; and,
- deliver budgeted savings of £200k over four years made possible through the introduction of revenue generating services to avoid cutting the service.

Living Wage



In October 2013, a group of employers across the city started to work together on our the anti-poverty programme target to make York of a Living Wage city. This group includes employers from all sectors promoting the benefits of the Living Wage and includes CYC, aviva, JRF, York St John, York CVS and York CAB. This group are working together to promote the Living Wage and progressive employment in the city. Activities to date have included distribution of a Guide to employers through business networks and a lively Twitter discussion to raise awareness of the issues and benefits

Further plans include:

- Follow up with businesses who took part in the Twitter discussion by all of the partners who will act as Living Wage mentors
- A community-based consumer campaign promoted by One & Other, a social enterprise in the City.
- Promotion of the Living Wage through the York Economic Partnership
- A progressive employment fair to be hosted by York St John University in 2014.

Edible York

Another community project is Edible York, a citywide community food growing project where people grow vegetables on their own or council land. Where the land is owned by the council, we have enabled this to happen by setting a peppercorn rent for vegetable beds.

This activity has been replicated in other parts of the city. Students and staff at the University of York have set up communal edible gardens on the university site and a York Edible Schools programme is involved in planting fruit trees, growing food on school sites and linking this to the school curriculum.

Smarter York

Smarter York aims to get people to support the quality of York's cleanliness and appearance at a time of significant funding challenge. It builds on the work community groups and parish councils do to help keep their neighbourhoods litter-free.

During the Big Spring Clean in May 2013, City of York Council and the North Yorkshire & York Probation Trust along with partners collected more than 1,600 bags of litter. There is also an app to enable people to submit reports of graffiti litter and fly tipping to the council.

Snow Wardens

Snow wardens are residents who have volunteered to give up some of their time to clear snow during bad weather. The council provides volunteers with training, high-visibility vest, snow-clearing kit and grit so that they are able to make a real difference in their neighbourhoods. Building on what was an untapped resource of people keen to support the community where they live; there are now record numbers of people now registered as snow wardens.

What we want to explore - Co-operative housing

Housing is key issue for York, as it is for many places. We have limited land availability and both sales prices and rents are high. We recognise that councils could make use of their local leadership role to begin to look at opportunities for co-operative housing schemes, starting the debate within communities and with partners, based on a shared understanding of the issues:

- There is a lack of affordable housing both for sale and rent
- Co-operative housing is limited in the UK but forms an important part of the housing sector in Europe
- Co-operative housing could deliver benefits to the community on a wider basis than just housing provision

In order to start the debate we plan to run an initial seminar early in 2014 involving partners such as JRF to assess the level of interest and potential in the city for co-operative housing.