



**Co-operative Councils**  
Innovation Network

## The Year Ahead 2016/17

Are you ready to make the most of your CCIN membership in 2016/17? We have an exciting year planned for you, full of co-operative innovation, deliberation and perspiration (especially for our members delivering Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes – more on that later!) We want to help you, our members, re-energise your co-operative ambitions and support you to deliver genuine transformational change for your communities this year.

Our aim is to make sure that the CCIN continues to deliver fantastic value for money for our members. In the last twelve months we have given back £50,000 of grant funding to our members to prototype, innovate and share world leading co-operative best practice. Over the next twelve months there will be huge opportunities to collaborate with other members on nationally leading co-operative projects aimed at transforming the way local government works. We also want to showcase the work of our members, so will be providing opportunities to promote and share your achievements at our events throughout the year.

### Welcome to our Regional Leads:

As you will have seen in the *CCIN Review of 2015*, we have appointed four regional leads: Edinburgh City Council (covering Scotland and NI); Cardiff Council (covering Wales and the Midlands); Sunderland Council (covering the North of England) and Croydon Council (covering the South of England). The regional leads will be responsible for regional recruitment, and will represent their region's interests at the CCIN's Executive Oversight Committee meetings.

The regional leads will also provide a central point for engagement with regional and national partners, including working collaboratively with other regional leads to support the delivery of cross-regional Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes.

You can support your regional lead by proposing potential Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes, and by identifying opportunities for additional membership growth and recruitment. You can get in touch with your regional lead by emailing:

- [Graeme McKechnie](#), Edinburgh City Council (Scotland and NI)
- [Fiona Gibson](#), Cardiff Council (Wales and the Midlands)
- [Phil Spooner](#), Sunderland Council (North of England)
- [Sarah Ireland](#), Croydon Council (South of England)

## Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes:

The CCIN work programme for the next twelve months will be member-led and owned by putting you, our network members, firmly in the driving seat. We are inviting you to propose work areas that you want the CCIN to focus on over the next 12 months. This could be anything from co-operative housing commissions to initiatives that put communities back at the heart of local decision making. We are open to all ideas, the more innovative the better!

The CCIN work programme will be divided into [larger projects \(called Policy Labs\)](#) and [smaller projects \(called Policy Prototypes\)](#). Policy Labs are bigger collaborative pieces of work that CCIN members will work on together, while Policy Prototypes are smaller projects that you may want to deliver in your locality on behalf of the network.

The first Policy Lab and Policy Prototype funding round closed in February and we are pleased to announce that the following proposals have received funding:

## Policy Prototypes:

1. **Welcoming and helping refugees and asylum seekers** – Cardiff Council: With the refugee crisis likely to continue to worsen over the summer, many people in Britain want to make a difference and to contribute towards a positive response, but at present do not know the best and easiest way to get involved in supporting these vulnerable people. As well as providing formal training courses, Cardiff will mobilise volunteers and local communities to come together to support refugees and asylum seekers in providing a range of additional cultural learning opportunities and community activities.



2. **Closing the education attainment gap** – City of Edinburgh Council: In partnership with CCIN Councils Edinburgh will research, identify and share good practice from out of school care provision across Councils. On identifying best practice, they will work with the parent-led, out of school care organisations, to develop a network of support for homework opportunities within breakfast club and afterschool settings. This initiative will be a practical, cross curricular intervention targeted at vulnerable children and hard to reach families.
  
3. **Mental Health Day** – Telford and Wrekin Council: Through collaboration with Telford Crisis Network, Telford and Wrekin are jointly organising a Mental Health Day that is taking place in April 2016. The purpose of the event is to provide a joined up approach to improve support for service users across the borough. It is hoped that the event will be the start of a development of a wider network of support for mental health in the borough.

## Policy Labs:

1. **Beyond Asset Transfer** – Newcastle City Council: For some organisations, asset transfer has opened up new and exciting opportunities, whilst others have considered the option but have decided not to pursue asset transfer due to governance and / or financial capacity. To continue to develop the concept of co-operative asset transfer, Newcastle will conduct a study into how successful organisations have been, post asset transfer.

This project will enable Network Members to strengthen their support and practice around this important agenda. It will also help to define asset transfer policy in a co-operative context. This work would also inspire more local organisations to go for asset transfer by highlighting successes and showing what is possible through co-operative approaches.

2. **Co-operative Performance Framework** – CCIN Performance Framework Steering Group: The CCIN was established in 2012 and been working together to better define and describe what Co-operative Councils stand for, what we do, how we do it and evaluate the difference that our work makes.

Whilst many of the foundations are in place to help us do this, we want to better evidence impact through a Cooperative Performance Framework, enabling co-operative councils to measure co-operative working and to provide an evidence base for promoting and influencing policy and investment at a national level.

A Performance Framework will also provide a way for cooperative councils to benchmark their performance. Developing a common basket of co-operative performance metrics would also enable annual reporting and analysis to inform improvements, share good practice and promote the positive impact of co-operative council approaches.

3. **Housing Commission** – Croydon Council: Symptoms of housing stress are increasingly apparent. Affordability is a major problem with rising house prices and

private rents, mortgages and the deposits required to secure them out of reach of families on average salaries, landlord repossessions are currently the biggest driver of homelessness, and rough sleeping is increasing in our cities

Croydon will establish a Housing Commission to examine how local councils can best work with their local communities, house builders, land owners, funders and other partners to provide the new homes we desperately need.

**All together  
Sunderland!**



#### **4. Co-operative Five Year Forward View – Oldham and Sunderland Council: The co-operative council model has**

been in existence now for around five years. Different members of the Network have adopted co-operative principles and ways of working at different times during that period and are all at different stages in their co-operative journey.

This approach, as a platform of change to meet the challenges faced by public services taking an asset based approach, didn't have the traction desired to influence the manifestos of political parties in the recent general election.

Oldham and Sunderland will undertake a review of the last 5 years to build a body of evidence supporting the co-operative council agenda through the identification of good practice, as well as areas of weakness. The information gathered through this exercise could be used and adapted by each member authority, providing a mechanism for influencing and lobbying – particularly in the context of devolution.

### **CCIN Annual Programme of Events:**

We will be holding three CCIN events this year, giving you the opportunity to learn from a range of exciting speakers; share best practice; and network with colleagues from across the UK who are also committed to transforming the relationship with the communities they serve.

These events focus on developing the role of the councillor in delivering the co-operative council and borough, exploring what community leadership really means in the current and future national context.

We want to maximise your impact as a councillor, supporting a changed relationship with citizens and communities and a move towards a co-operative way of working. CCIN events give you the opportunity to network with other elected members from across the UK, finding common approaches and solutions to the challenges facing your local community, while learning from a peer group of local authorities working at the coal face of local service delivery.

## Officer Network:

Are you [signed up](#) for the CCIN Officer Network? If not, why not!?

We are currently planning a thought-provoking programme of CCIN officer events for the year, covering everything from co-operative approaches to funding change, to building co-operative services with partners and residents.

We can't deliver the Officer Network without your help. If you have a suggestion for a CCIN Officer Network meeting or would like to facilitate a meeting, please [get in touch](#).

## Values and Principles Board:

The Values and Principles Board will continue to promote the CCIN's positive value driven ambition for local government, attending the [Co-operative Congress](#) in June, as well as raising awareness of the work of the CCIN.

The Values and Principles Board also meet regularly throughout the year. If you have an agenda item you would like to submit to the Board, please contact [us here](#).

## Co-operative Consultancy Framework:

Being on the cutting edge of Local Government innovation is tough, so why not procure a little extra support?

In 2016 we will be launching the CCIN's Consultancy Framework. This Framework will be exclusively available to CCIN members, providing a pre-approved list of organisations that network members could approach for transformational support and advice. We have spoken with procurement teams across the CCIN, who have told us that this will be a completely unique and potentially very valuable framework.

The framework will help you save time and money on individual procurement exercises which may be for relatively small amounts of money and might not always attract the broadest range of potential providers. We recognise that innovation doesn't stand still; sometimes you need expertise and support **today** to help you make a difference. The framework will allow you to quickly and easily draw down the support you need, when you need it, from providers with genuine experience delivering co-operative transformation with local authorities, partners and communities.

## Tweeting, blogging and co-operative vlogging:

Have you [followed the CCIN](#) on Twitter yet? Or [Liked us](#) on Facebook? If you want to stay connected with the latest co-operative ideas, keep up to date with our latest tweets: Follow, Re-tweet and comment – we love hearing your thoughts and ideas!

The CCIN website will also be getting a facelift, along with the development of a new private members' area. The membership area will allow members to discuss co-operative ideas;

participate in Policy Labs and network online with CCIN colleagues. We will also be creating a contact database for each member council – like a CCIN LinkedIn – where members can find key contacts in other local authorities to connect with. There will be no excuses not to collaborate!

## Launch of the CCIN Culture Hub:

It has been sometime since the CCIN website case studies have been updated, but we know that there has been loads of fantastic co-operative work happening across the network. To capture this evidence, we will be launching our new and improved [CCIN Culture Hub](#).

The Culture Hub will capture the latest press releases from our members, providing a ready reference of co-operative case studies that evidence the CCIN's Values and Principles.

We can't make the Culture Hub a success without your help. We need you to submit your latest co-operative press releases on a regular basis to create a resource that is as up-to-date and relevant as possible. So don't hide your light under a bushel, start submitting your case studies [here](#) as soon as possible!

## LGA Conference:



The CCIN would like to say a huge thank you to all the people who visited our stand at the [LGA Annual Conference in Bournemouth](#) this year. The event, held on the 5-7 July 2016 was a great success, allowing us to talk with delegates about the fantastic work of our members.

We were really pleased at the immensely positive response we received from people enquiring about our work. Being a Co-operative Council is definitely something to be proud of, demonstrating a genuine commitment to co-operative innovation, best practice and the communities we serve. We look forward to

welcoming many new members to the CCIN over the coming year, joining a cohort of likeminded local authorities committed to delivering the best local co-operative public services to our communities.

If you would like to find out more about joining the network, please email the CCIN @ [hello@councils.coop](mailto:hello@councils.coop)

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