



CO-OPERATIVE WORKING

The Future of Local Government

As part of an innovative commitment within Glasgow's Strategic Plan, resources were put in place to establish a Co-operative Development Unit (CDU) based in Development and Regeneration Services (DRS).

CO-OPERATIVE WORKING

The Council's Strategic Plan contains commitments relating to Glasgow becoming a co-operative city.

These are:

01

Make Glasgow a Co-operative Council, by aiming to grow co-operative businesses and social enterprises, and devolve power to our people.

02

Establish a Co-operative Unit to promote the development of co-operatives and other social enterprises in the city.

The remit of the CDU is to promote co-operatives and other social enterprise models in the city. This effectively seeks to change the Council from an organisation that does things on behalf of people to an organisation which works with Glasgow citizens, organisations and businesses. That is the nature of Co-operative working. Obviously this will not happen overnight but Glasgow is not alone in its journey to change how it operates. Many other Local Authorities throughout the UK are looking at how they can deliver services on a more co-operative basis. This network of Local Authorities is called the Co-operative Council Innovation Network (CCIN) and more information can be found [here](#).

Although the CDU is based in DRS, this commitment covers all the 'Glasgow Family' of Council Services and ALEOs. The CDU liaises with representatives from across the 'Glasgow Family' developing and supporting new ways of working with residents and communities by embedding the internationally recognised Co-operative values in our service delivery and service development. These are self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.

The CDU is also actively promoting and developing co-operative and social enterprise business models as a viable option for businesses wishing to set-up or develop in Glasgow. To this end, the CDU commissioned research to find out more about the size and scope of the Co-operative Business Sector in the city and has set up a Co-operative Glasgow Business Development Fund with its funding being used to develop existing co-operatives and co-operative start-ups. There is more information about these activities on page [5](#).

In this newsletter, we will introduce you to the people involved in delivering 'Co-operative Glasgow', highlight some of the projects we are involved in, and help you to find out more about 'Co-operative Glasgow'.



COUNCILLOR ARCHIE GRAHAM'S BLOG

Devolution is the buzzword ringing around today: from the corridors of Whitehall, Holyrood and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies, to town halls up and down the UK. To support this ambition we as local authorities must transform the way we work: moving from corporate organisations that simply deliver services to community leaders that seek to improve and develop their place. This is the challenge that co-operative councils are grappling with. Below are a few things I want to highlight that are particularly important if we want to put our communities at the heart of a new settlement.

First, **we must relate to our communities in a new way.** The basic principle that should underpin our organisational culture is that we must do things with people, rather than to them. This means rejecting the traditional 'command and control' model of local government and becoming more co-operative. Examples of this are neighbourhood partnerships, co-produced employment support programmes, direct devolution of money to communities through participatory budgeting and connecting high-level growth plans with the needs and aspirations of people and neighbourhoods. This way of working means having new conversations with local businesses and other partners, and working with them to create jobs for local people or to promote the Glasgow Living Wage.

“The basic principle that should underpin our organisational culture is that we must do things with people, rather than to them.”

COUNCILLOR ARCHIE GRAHAM

Second, **we must strengthen the role of councillors as advocates of local communities.** Councillors often have to wear two hats: helping to ensure smooth corporate service delivery, but also being advocates of their local communities. Striking the right balance between these two can be challenging, but it is the 'community champion' role that is becoming increasingly important – and it is essential if we want local people to take greater responsibility for local spending and delivery.

Third, **we must appreciate our potential and not only our constraints.** Yes, public sector cuts and rising demand will severely test the services we deliver. However, we must also appreciate, harness and develop the resources we have at our disposal: from the skills, experiences and talent of our workforce and partners; to our knowledge of how local areas work and the large pots of funding we still preside over or have an influence on.

“We must relate to our communities in a new way.”

Devolution of power to communities is a key ingredient of co-operative localism. To make it work we must recognise that devolution isn't simply about transfers of power between different arms of the state. It is more fundamentally about a new relationship with communities and local partners. The three points I have identified above provide some suggestions for how we can put this into practice.

MEET THE TEAM



The team, from left to right, John Flynn, Eddie Percy, Lesley Thomson, Keri Isdale, Liz Maguire, Alan Davidson (Principal), Marie McLelland, Umy Amin.

A dedicated Co-operative Development Unit has been created by the Council to deliver on the Council's aspirations to become a truly co-operative council. The CDU team is based in Economic Development within Development and Regeneration Services and has been fully operational since March 2014. The team is responsible for the development and growth of the city's co-operative business sector and the implementation of the wider Co-operative Glasgow objectives across the Glasgow family of services and ALEOs.

CDU highlights to date include:

- Business mapping and needs assessment of the Co-operative business sector (see page 7)
- Awarding transformational business development grants in excess of £600k to co-operatives to support the creation of

new businesses, new products/services, new technology and job creation.

- Promotion of the Glasgow Living Wage
- Strategic Development and Support for the Credit Union Sector
- Implementation of a Community Benefit in Public Procurement Strategy
- Co-ordination of the Council's Co-operative Champions Group

On a day to day basis, the CDU also lead on the delivery of the Co-operative Glasgow Action Plan, developed through consultation with Senior Officers, Elected Members and representatives of the co-operative, social enterprise and Third Sector. The action plan outlines specific objectives across a range of strategic workstreams linked to service role and responsibilities.

CO-OPERATIVE CHAMPIONS ACROSS THE COUNCIL FAMILY

The Co-operative Champions Group (CCG) are exploring and developing sustainable solutions at a time of unprecedented public sector challenges brought about by the economic environment, changing demographic, increasing complexity of need and public expectations e.g. amongst others we are looking at establishing Co-operative Parks and also continuing the developmental work of Credit Unions [further information will be available about both these projects in future issues]. Setting up Energy Switching Company, Glasgow People's Energy, to save Glasgow businesses money. For further information on Glasgow People's Energy see page 8.

Becoming a Co-operative Council is a Corporate activity involving every part of the Council Family. On page 2 it was mentioned that there are 2 main objectives that the co-operative development unit seeks to achieve.

These are:

TO GROW THE SECTOR

TO CHANGE THE WAY IN
WHICH THE COUNCIL
OPERATES.

With regard to growing the sector the Glasgow Co-operative Business Development Fund has helped to grow 30 existing co-operatives and to establish 11 new co-operatives.

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However, the second objective is much more difficult to achieve and will take a much longer period of time as it involves changing behaviour, roles and attitudes amongst council staff and elected members as well as the nature of the relationship which the Council has with Glasgow citizens, organisations and businesses.

To help to start this process and ensure that every part of the Council is involved Councillor Archie Graham established the CCG in conjunction with the CDU in November 2014. The purpose of group membership is to ensure every service department and ALEO has someone who assists in the delivery of key strategic objectives by developing links throughout their organisation, raising awareness and communicating progress of 'Co-operative Glasgow' activities and progress, and identifying new areas of co-operative working across the Glasgow Family.

CO-OPERATIVE CHAMPIONS ACROSS THE COUNCIL FAMILY *(cont.)*

Below is a list of the Co-operative Champions across the Council Family and their contact details:

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HOW BIG IS THE CO-OPERATIVE SECTOR IN GLASGOW?

In January 2014 the CDU commissioned research to look at the scope and development needs of the co-operative sector within the City. What the research found was a very healthy sector which reflects the health of co-operative sectors across the planet.

e.g. Did you know that

- Most champagne is produced by co-operatives! ...Salute!!
- 80% of Spanish olive oil is produced by co-operatives
- The Mondragon Co-operative in the Basque region of Spain has 83,000 employees and turnover last year of 13 million euros.
- Lurpak butter in Denmark is produced by a co-operative
- And... around 50% of parmesan cheese in Italy is produced by dairy members who are part of a co-operative

The research in Glasgow found there are:

1. There are approximately 104 co-operatives within the Glasgow City boundary, including 34 Credit Unions and 28 Co-operative Group outlets.
2. Co-operatives in Glasgow employ around 1,117 full-time and 242 part-time employees, with a further 137 full-time and 789 part-time volunteers.
3. The co-operative sector in Glasgow is worth £192m turnover. This will likely grow to around £268m over the next five years if forecasts are realised.
4. Nearly all co-operatives (94%) have social objectives, the most common being educational (32%) and environmental (32%) objectives, and, doing good for the community (29%).

[FOR THE FULL REPORT
PLEASE CLICK HERE](#)

**CO-OPERATIVE
GLASGOW**



As we discussed earlier below is some information on one of the projects we have been working on:

The Glasgow Chamber of Commerce on 27th November 2015 saw the launch of Glasgow People's Energy, (GPE), a new scheme designed to help businesses in Glasgow to save money. The commercial energy switching service is a partnership developed by Glasgow City Council (the Co-operative Development Unit and Housing Investment team), the Wise Group and Citrus Energy and is a great example of co-operative working in action. The Council provided the initial start-up funding to get the service up and running and some of the fees generated will go towards expanding the G-Heat service (G-HEAT has been established to provide independent advice on energy related issues to householders on a face to face basis, in their homes, and assist in Glasgow City Council's strategic aim of eliminating Fuel Poverty).

In its initial phase, GPE will focus on providing an independent and impartial energy switching service for the city's businesses and third sector organisations. The aim is then to develop the service to provide energy switching services to domestic customers, especially fuel poor households. Council leader Frank McAveety, said: "Glasgow City Council is committed to tackling fuel poverty for our residents and businesses, and I am sure Glasgow People's Energy will make a real social and economic difference to the city. I am delighted that the council is working with our partners the Wise Group and Citrus Energy to deliver this service."

The service will have a dedicated team dealing with enquiries for Glasgow properties, which can be contacted on: 0800 112 4059 or e-mail enquiries@GPE.scot. The service is now live.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE CLICK HERE**

CDU

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