



Executive Oversight Committee Meeting

MINUTES

1200 hours – 30th June 2017

Unity Hall Wakefield

Present

Cllr Sharon Taylor (Stevenage) - Chair; Cllr Barbara Brownridge (Oldham); Cllr Chris Penberthy (Independent); Stephen Brown (Bassetlaw), Jonathan Downs (Oldham), Simon Parkinson (Co-operative College); Nicola Huckerby (COOP Brand Ltd) - Notes

Apologies

Stephen Powers (Newcastle City); Cllr Kevin Dukes (Bassetlaw); Cllr Peter Bradbury (Cardiff); Cllr Richard Farnell (Rochdale); Cllr Tony Newman (Croydon), Cllr Gary See (Knowsley)

1. Minutes of last meeting

These were agreed as an accurate record.

2. Matters arising

c/f from November 2016 meeting - Terms of reference of EOC to be updated to reflect changes in structures and approach since 2013.

3. Report back from Chair

Councillor Taylor reported back on a successful Co-operative Party Local Government Conference in Birmingham on 24 June, where there had been a lot of interest in the Network. It was agreed that our focus should be on the 'difference' that the co-operative Values and Principles can make to current agendas, remain positive in all that we do and engage with new Groups. The Chair explained that she had agreed not to stand again for a role at the LGA so that she was able to drive the Network and be more engaged. Cllr Taylor would also have access to Officer Support in Stevenage.

4. CCIN membership update

Membership stands at 21 Members, South Tyneside have recently joined the Network and a meeting has been arranged on 11 July, Councillor Powers has agreed to attend. Telford and Wrekin have decided not to renew their Membership.

It was agreed that the Chair would re-engage with Islington Council via Cllr Alice Parry who had been contacted at the Co-op Party Local Govt Conference.

Cllr Brownridge said that membership of the Network was a way of dealing with budgetary challenges and quantifying budget decisions. Cllr Taylor explained that most Councils want to showcase what they are doing and we need to promote engagement between Members.

It was proposed by Cllr Brownridge and agreed that the Network could fulfil a more campaigning role as we have the evidence and the opportunity to lobby government both through the HoC and HoL. We are one part of the local government family which is looking at how we work differently with residents, something that is driven bottom-up. We can engage across Officer Networks, Cooperative Leads, Chief Executives and Leaders.

It was agreed that:

- twice a year we should produce a newsletter to get the Cooperative Council 'agenda' out to all Councillors through Democratic Services.
- Use social media to generate more engagement with Member Councils

5. Budget update

The budget was noted. There is £30k available for the Policy Labs c/f from 2016/7.

The Chair suggested that it might be appropriate to organise a 'study visit' to Emilia Romagna to look at best practice in health and social care with individual members funding their own participation, but with the Network making the arrangements. It was agreed that a programme be prepared for consideration at the next meeting.

It was suggested that the Network allocate a specific sum to support participation in meetings and events. It was agreed that a budget of £1000 be allocated to ensure that members of the Governance who were not employed by a local authority/3rd party organisation were able to attend CCIN events without having to fund participation from their own pocket.

It was agreed that the Network should put in place a financial safety net to ensure that it could deliver on the basics

6. Future Network Support

Cllr Chris Penberthy introduced the item which had begun with conversations with the former Network Chair, Councillor Andrew Burns. He explained the desire for the Network to pay for some advice on how we are made more effective as a Membership organisation which goes beyond Marketing and Communications.

A draft Job Description had been prepared by the Co-operative College and been submitted to the Job Evaluation team at Oldham Council for consideration. Jonathan Downs reported that the post identified had been graded £40k - £45k with on-costs. There is some resistance from Oldham Council for the Network to employ someone to provide 'Network Support'. It was agreed to look at ways for the Consultancy Framework to potentially employ someone. It was also agreed that the post should be 'Politically Restricted', in that a serving councillor or someone that had previously held the post of councillor would be unable to apply for the position. It was agreed that location would be flexible.

Cllr Penberthy asked that the JD was less detailed which would give 'more flexibility' around the post and whether the post should be 'Politically Restricted'. Cllr Taylor explained that she felt it was right for the role to be 'Politically Restricted' and that any incumbent would be unable to campaign for any political party.

It was agreed to explore whether the Network could commission the Consultancy Framework to provide the services required for a three-year (two years plus one year) basis as a fixed term role.

The consensus was that the Network could probably afford to create such a role. It was noted that previously all the budget had been allocated to the RSA and although the Network had had access to a dedicated team at the RSA it was for only a few hours a week.

It was agreed that Jonathan Downs set up a small group to look at a potential package to put to the Framework. Simon Parkinson said that the Co-operative College would be interested in acting in an 'Advisory' capacity to this group as they would be interested in tendering for this role.

The Job Description was agreed as presented (item 6b).

Councillor Penberthy explained that the Values and Principles Board has said that it would like to see more quality engagement with existing members rather than an increase in membership. It was agreed that the Network should aim to become the 'Gold Standard Brand' in local government, it was noted that the LGA only has 25 engaged Members out of 435.

7. CCIN Consultancy Framework

The Committee welcomed the purpose of the 'Consultancy Framework User Guide' and its purpose to enable Member Councils to move swiftly saving time and money by accessing the Framework. It was agreed that the Framework was one of the distinct benefits of Membership. However, in order to encourage use of the Framework the document needed to be simplified with more narrative and infographics improving its accessibility to Members and Officers.

It was agreed that the document be redrafted and circulated for final comments before circulation.

8. Event Planning

It was noted that the number of events that the Network was attending had continued to grow. There was now a range of marketing collateral and a clear and consistent brand identity had been developed. It was noted that there was a real opportunity with more Co-operative MPs in Parliament to further promote the Network and that both Baroness Thornton and Lord Kennedy had also shown interest in the Network at recent events

It was agreed:

- That Cllr Sharon Taylor speak to Cllr Debbie Wilcox at Newport City Council regarding a CCIN presence at the Welsh LGA conference
- To exhibit at the Labour Local Government Conference in Nottingham in February 2018 at a cost of £350
- That in order to plan budgets for future years our Focus Events would be:
 - LGA
 - LGA event in Wales
 - LGA event in Scotland

- Co-operative Congress
- Co-operative Party Conference
- Green Party or Liberal Democrat Conference ever year
- Seek opportunities for the CCIN Chair to speak at these events
- To organise a Westminster Reception for the Network in early 2018 and ask one of the Co-operative MPs to sponsor this

9. Annual General Meeting

The Committee warmly welcomed a proposal from Oldham Council to host the 2017 AGM. Oldham is currently in the process of delivering the 'Your Oldham Campaign' – to inform, engage and inspire residents in the Co-operative Agenda – and this will culminate in a week-long festival showcasing a diverse mix of creative and co-operative thinking and doing. The Festival will be held from the 2nd – 9th of September and we want to give CCIN members the opportunity to take part.

Oldham was thanked for its offer and it was agreed that the Annual Meeting should run from 5th and 6th September and that details be circulated asap.

10. CCIN Activity

The Network had supported eight projects in 2016. Each of these initiatives were promoted on the website as Case Studies. The Committee now had the opportunity to make any comments:

- i. Welcoming & helping refugees & asylum seekers – City of Cardiff Council
- ii. Closing the education attainment gap – City of Edinburgh Council
- iii. Telford Mental Health Forum – Telford & Wrekin Council
- iv. Beyond Asset Transfer – Newcastle City Council
- v. Co-operative Performance Framework – Oldham Council
- vi. Co-operative Peer Challenge – Plymouth City Council
- vii. Co-operative Housing Commission – Croydon Council
- viii. From Co-operative Councils to Co-operative Places – Collaborate and Oldham Council

Co-operative Peer Challenge - Councillor Taylor questioned whether Members would pay for the 'Co-operative Peer Challenge' on top of their LGA Peer Challenge. It was agreed that Member Councils should be including the Co-operative Values and Principles in everything they did.

It was agreed that the:

- 'Co-operative Peer Challenge' should be circulated to all 'Co-operative' LGA Peers so that they were aware of the document and could use it as part of their Peer Challenges when visiting a Co-operative Council. Cllr Taylor agreed to help with this.
- Performance Framework, the 'From Co-operative Councils to Co-operative Places' report and Co-operative Peer Challenge could be 'bundled' for use by CCIN Members.

'From Co-operative Councils to Co-operative Places' Report – Councillor Taylor felt that this report contained too much 'management jargon' and that it was rather a negative report. Jonathan Downs explained that Collaborate had been commissioned to provide 'critical challenge' in order to provide good solid building blocks. Councillor Brownridge explained that they had asked for analysis of what has been done and how we could move forward and grow.

It was agreed:

- That we should learn from this experience for when we draw down from the Framework
- That a definitive 'History of the CCIN' should be produced and agreed so that the Network's roots were documented.

11. Policy Labs and Prototypes 2017/18

At its meeting on 15 November, the EOC agreed to support two Policy Labs for 2017, and that £10,000 – £15,000 of funding be available for each. The two areas of work are:

- Health and Social Care – on which a joint presentation from representatives from across the Sector would follow the meeting
- Impact of Devolution, Combined Authorities, Metro Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners on the Co-operative Council agenda

It was agreed that

- The new incumbent to the 'Network Support' role could be tasked to do some work on this initiative which should include Devolution associated with Brexit
- Andy Burnham the newly elected Mayor of Greater Manchester be invited to speak at the AGM
- A meeting be sought between Cllr Taylor and Andy Burnham with a view to encouraging other Greater Manchester authorities to join Oldham, Rochdale and Salford. Oldham to help facilitate this.

12. Any Other Business

- i. Simon Parkinson asked for future meeting dates to be set – it was agreed that the next meeting would be held during the AGM in Oldham.
- ii. Jonathan Downs introduced a proposal to develop a CCIN Member Development Programme acknowledging that to reconnect with local communities, Co-operative Councils need strong local leaders who are able to engage with their communities, and who are ready to become 21st Century Leaders. It was agreed that a paper be submitted to the next meeting. Cllr Taylor expressed keen interest in this and would like Stevenage Council to be involved.