



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

STRATEGY

Preston City Council

The Preston Co-operative Development Network

The Preston Co-operative Development Network (PCDN) was registered on the 27th July 2017 as a Community Benefit Society governed by co-operative values and principles. The constitution of the PCDN is an integral part of the 'Preston Model', and follows the recommendations of a report by the University of Central Lancashire to Preston City Council on co-operative values in Preston (Manley & Froggett 2016, <http://clock.uclan.ac.uk/14526/>). The PCDN is conceived as the beginnings of a Mondragón style network organisation of co-operatives, and the Network maintains strong links with the Mondragón Co-operative group in the Basque Country.

The PCDN aims to provide a network for worker-owned co-operatives to take root in the city, especially in economic gap areas identified by the Anchor Institutions. Its objectives are to:

1. Provide information, advice, consultancy and training;
2. Provide and facilitate the provision of premises, equipment and support services;
3. Facilitate and enable access to finance and investment;
4. Provide and enable access to suppliers, markets and customers;
5. Enable and encourage co-operatives and any individual who supports co-operative principles and similar enterprises to work together by providing a network.

The Steering Group, consisting of experts in co-operative business, representatives from the Council, local co-operatives and members of the University of Central Lancashire meets approximately every 20 days. The PCDN is about to invite stakeholder membership across Preston.

As well as promoting co-operative businesses, the PCDN provides a forum for the development of local democracy, community and citizenship. It is also developing the partnership between Preston City Council and the University. The University is committed to its community role in Preston and is endeavouring to become 'more than an Anchor Institution' by going beyond increasing local spending.



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Of the two local worker-owned businesses being developed by PCDN, one is in collaboration with the university and is soon to be launched as a digital media co-operative consisting of student and graduate members and located simultaneously at UCLan and in the city centre.

The other co-operative is as a food hub and café worker-owned co-operative, with strong ties to the university. The university intends to develop co-operative education for undergraduates and encourage the development of co-operative business plans for students as part of its provision of employment opportunities. We anticipate a faster rate of interest and an increase in business once the initial co-operatives are making a profit and after the membership beyond the steering group has taken root.

For further information contact:

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