

# Expression of Interest – Policy Prototype CCIN Funding

**CCIN Member Authority:** Kirklees Council

**Name of CCIN Lead Member:** Cllr Shabir Pandor

**Name and Job Title:** Jonathan Nunn,  
Strategy & Policy Officer (sustainable economy)

## 1. What is your idea?

### Catalysing Care Co-operatives through Community Engagement

This proposal seeks to facilitate learning between Preston and Kirklees regarding the opportunities and practical pathways to developing locally owned and controlled co-operative solutions to social care provision. It is anticipated that this will support future replication of social care co-operatives in Kirklees and Preston, and subsequently other areas as a result of increased awareness of the approach.

A local multi-stakeholder, co-operative social care service provider has been developed within Kirklees. This community-led project grew out of discussions within the Kirklees Solidarity Economy Network ([ksen.org.uk](http://ksen.org.uk)). Those discussions highlighted some of the fundamental problems within the current dominant model for social care provision, and the challenges that our society faces with respect to social care. KSEN has also been central to mobilising the interest of local residents in the theme of social care and galvanising support around creation of a social care co-op.

Co-operative Care Colne Valley ([valleycare.coop](http://valleycare.coop)) has been supported by Kirklees Council with a development grant, and through staff secondment recognising current challenges recruiting in the sector. The co-op – now in the final stages of development and planning – will shortly launch a community share offer, and expects to begin trading in Q1 or Q2 of 2020/21.

A key aspect of the co-op's vision and longer term development strategy is to scale through a process of replication, creating a network of local care co-operatives, each owned by and accountable to their local community. These could be connected through a secondary federal organisation enabling effective sharing of best practice and resources, and delivering economies of scale (e.g. through joint purchasing), an approach that has proved successful in other European countries, notably Northern Italy. The co-operative has been awarded funding from Power To Change ([www.powertochange.org.uk](http://www.powertochange.org.uk)) to pursue this “replicate and federate” model, initially through a process of documenting their own developmental pathway, learning from other organisations and initiatives, and building an online resource base and advice, information and support services package.

Preston City Council (PCC) is known for its strong Local Wealth Building programme now known as the Preston Model. While this has mostly concentrated on changing aspects of the local economy, it is underpinned by strong co-operative values such as self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, and solidarity.

The Preston Co-operative Development Network (PCDN) has aspirations to develop a co-op in the care sector and is working to involve people more in planning changes to the local economy. To

this end PCDN are also working with Northern public sector unions which have moved beyond initial anxieties about cooperatives in this sector towards support for cooperative models of service delivery which integrate best practice for worker members. PCDN are already working closely with the trade union movement to develop a new approach.

Co-operatives are based on the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others. It is therefore important for the model's success that local people have a say in what is planned and are part of the decisions being made. PCDN hopes to learn from the Kirklees experience to enhance their community engagement activities and think through the ideal governance structures for their own care co-op, including resolving any potential tensions between the union role and multi-stakeholder democracy.

The CCIN Policy Prototype provides a focused opportunity to engage specifically with other CCIN members, enabling the co-operative to gain a wider understanding of the social care landscape in local authorities other than Kirklees, consider how their replication support model can be optimally developed to ensure a good fit – and therefore a higher level of success – within a wider variety of settings, and build mutually valuable relationships that will enable awareness and application of the solution to grow faster and go further than may otherwise be the case. It is also expected that this learning will support more effective replication within Kirklees.

The funding will be used to facilitate meetings and discussions between Kirklees and Preston that may otherwise not be able to take place and to document the lessons learnt as pertains to the role that councils can play in catalysing the type of community activism required to see co-operatives created within the care sector.

## **2. Who will you work with?**

This project will be developed directly with Preston City Council and the Preston Co-operative Development Network (PCDN) who are eager to learn from the Kirklees experience particularly in relation to community engagement aspects. The co-operative and KSEN have already opened a useful dialogue with PCDN and PCC.

To support its work PCDN has secured a grant from the Open Society Foundation and through links with the University of Central Lancashire and University of Liverpool, also has a £400,000 bid under consideration for research into the community level health benefits of Local Wealth Building, and a bid for a funded PhD studentship. Kirklees will also benefit from access to learning resources funded within Preston including capitalising upon knowledge exchange with key members of the Mondragon Corporation and Cincinnati based 1Worker1Vote who will be visiting and liaising in the course of this project.

## **3. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve?**

1. Develop a clear understanding of the role of community engagement in the Kirklees case, what opportunities may be available to Preston City Council to catalyse this as a local authority and how to involve trade unions in this process;
2. Further strengthen the relationship between Co-operative Care Colne Valley and Kirklees Council;
3. Build on the dialogue with Preston to establish a mutually beneficial working relationship;
4. Enhance the outputs and outcomes of the “replicate and federate” development project, enabling that work to be more widely relevant and effective.

#### **4. How does your project support the aims and objectives of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network?**

The project will provide an invaluable case study for the Network in the cutting edge of innovation in the community-led provision of social care services using a multi-stakeholder co-operative model, and will, through the action-research approach, improve the likelihood of successful implementation of the model in other localities by enhancing the learning of the core team developing the replication tools.

#### **5. How does your project demonstrate the Values and Principles of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network?**

By enabling the participation of other CCIN members in this co-operative development project, and supporting the successful development of this innovative community-led programme, we are putting the co-operative values and the CCIN's principles into practice in the fullest way.

1. **Social partnership:** This project seeks to strengthen partnership between the local council, a cooperative social care provider and service users in recreating the co-op's model. Involvement of public sector unions in Preston will also provide valuable insight into the partnership role they have to play.
2. **Democratic engagement:** Sharing knowledge on strengthening and deepening community interest and engagement in cooperation generally, and a care coop specifically, seeks to enhance democratic engagement in the organisation of care work. Such community engagement activities ought to create contexts and processes supportive of broader democratic engagement.
3. **Co-production:** The emerging Kirklees Adult Social Care Vision that has been co-produced with staff, service-users and providers identifies co-operatives in which staff and service-users are able to shape the care provided as an important element of the future social care landscape in the district. This proposal seeks to recreate this process in other areas.
4. **Enterprise and social economy:** Social care services are beset with a range of difficulties while current services are not meeting the needs of those that use them. The co-operative model presents a new way to deliver these services in a manner which increases effectiveness while improving how both staff and service-users are valued and respected, creating quality local jobs and retaining a greater share of this public expenditure within the local economy.
5. **Maximising social value:** It is anticipated that the cooperative model of service provision will improve outcomes for those requiring care, helping them to maintain independence for longer, while the flexibility afforded to staff will support individuals to enter the employment market who might not otherwise do so and affording them good working conditions. It would also be anticipated that the hyper-local model employed reduce the carbon footprint of services.
6. **Community leadership and a new role for councillors:** This project will provide insights into the role councillors can play in encouraging and supporting the creation of care co-ops.
7. **New models of meeting priority needs:** Creation of a multi-stakeholder cooperative is a new approach to delivering care.

8. Innovation: While the model itself is new it is also expected that a cooperative care provider will have increased openness and flexibility to changes in approach as needs and objectives change over time.
9. Learning: This proposal aims to develop learning from the Kirklees experience to support Preston City Council and other CCIN members to develop similar models within their own areas. Kirklees will also benefit from access to Preston's already funded learning resources.
10. Walking the walk: This proposal seeks directly to work in cooperation with other CCIN member councils

#### **6. How will you share your learning with the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network?**

This project will culminate in creation of a report that describes the Co-operative Care Colne Valley, the process of community engagement through which the idea was born and later established and the role local authorities can play in catalysing this type of activism. If possible within the timescales the report will include how these lessons are being taken forward in Preston.

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