



# Co-operative Councils

## Innovation Network

### EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES

1300 – 1500 hours, Monday 13 July 2020

Online Call

#### Present:

Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr Barbara Brownridge	Oldham Council
Cllr Peter Bradbury	Cardiff Council (from item 4)
Cllr Clive Fraser	Croydon Council
Cllr Chris Penberthy	Plymouth City Council (Ex Officio – V&P)
Cllr Clare Penny-Evans	Newcastle City Council
Cllr Paul Stewart	Sunderland City Council
Jonathan Bland	SBI/E3M

#### In Attendance:

Jonathan Downs	Oldham Council (Accountable Body)
Fiona Gibson	Cardiff Council
Giles Perritt	Plymouth City Council – until item 10
Cilla Ross	Co-operative College – item 6
Rob Gregory	Stevenage Borough Council – item 9
Anna Peachey	Plymouth City Council – item 11
Nicola Huckerby	CCIN (minutes)

#### Apologies:

Cllr Dave Jones	Staffordshire Labour Group
Simon Parkinson	WEA (Advisor)

### **1. Welcome, introductions and apologies**

- 1.1 Cllr Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair thanked those that had attended the virtual launch of the Cooperatives Unleashed report earlier in the day, which had attracted over 50 attendees.
- 1.2 Cllr Taylor also welcomed back Cllr Barbara Brownridge from Oldham Council who had re-joined the EOC after a two-year absence.
- 1.3 Cllr Sue Woodward, Leader of Burntwood Town Council, had agreed to be Joint Vice-Chair of the V&P, along with Simon Parkinson. It was noted that Sue would be invited to attend future meetings when Cllr Penberthy was unavailable. Simon Parkinson was already an Advisor to EOC.
- 1.4 Apologies were noted from Cllr Dave Jones and Simon Parkinson.

### **2. Minutes of last meeting – 23 March**

These were agreed as a correct record.

### **3. Matters arising from meeting 23 March**

- 3.1. Appointment of a Vice Chair – Cllr Taylor advised that two nominations had been received. It was agreed that Cllr Peter Bradbury, Cardiff be elected as Vice Chair and this was approved unanimously.
- 3.2 Cllr Fraser agreed to progress proposals to encourage London Boroughs that were currently not in Membership to join the Network. Action: CF and NH
- 3.3 Cllr Peter Bradbury joined the meeting.

#### **4. Budget and Project Planning**

- 4.1 The Budget report was presented by Jonathan Downs on behalf of Oldham Council as the Accountable Body. JD reported that the budget surplus was growing partly because of Nicola Huckerby's excellent job in recruiting new members but also because of the impact of Covid-19. The conference budget was largely unspent this year as all events have moved online and it's unlikely that in-person events would return until 2021.
- 4.1 It was agreed that from a finance perspective, it was important that we didn't continue to carry forward such large balances. It was suggested that we might now look at how to allocate some of that funding.
- 4.2 It was agreed to allocate extra funding to the budget line on the CCIN Website – allowing us to undertake more of our work online including uploading of reports, vox pops, dynamic features. The website was a critical tool for us to communicate with members and partners.
- 4.3 Cllr Taylor outlined some thoughts on potential themes for project development work that might merit Policy Labs:
  - Connecting cooperative development and enterprise agencies with councils looking at these opportunities during the Recovery Phase
  - Children's Services (as we'd not received any bids in 2020)
  - How can we support some of the community activity being undertaken by Mutual Aid Groups post Covid-19?
  - How we might work with universities (PhD students) on inclusive economy agendas
- 4.5 Cllr Penberthy suggested that we establish 'thematic' networks similar to the Officer Network in order bring together members who were responsible for particular portfolios, for Leads and Shadow Leads (Associates) for example in the areas of Adult Social Care, Housing and Community Wealth Building. He proposed that funding be allocated to JD and NH into resourcing these Networks as a way of actively supporting Member Councils and to generate future project ideas. This was supported by Cllr Taylor. Action: JD
- 4.5 It was agreed that these proposals be worked up for consideration by EOC as soon as possible and that we do not wait until the next meeting. Members were asked to send in ideas for themes for discussion at the October meeting so that we could invite bids for 2021.
- 4.4 The Budget was noted.

#### **5. CCIN Strategy Action Plan 2019 – 2020**

The following updates were agreed/noted:

##### **5.1 Induction Programme (1)**

- 5.1.1 Design & implement at CCIN Induction Programme (1.1): Cllr Taylor referred members to the newly launched web-based Induction Programme which had been developed for us by the Cooperative College. This was now available to view on our website:  
<https://www.councils.coop/ccin-induction/>.

## 5.2 **Engagement Plan - Action Plan item (2)**

- 5.2.1 Develop new CCIN Engagement Plan (2.1): Cllr Taylor reported that the meeting with Joe Fortune needed to be re-arranged. Action: ST/NH

Meeting being sought for Cllr Taylor to meet the Don Morris the new Chair of Coops UK. *They are in the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive.* Action: NH

WhatsApp Groups have been established for governance.

We've been engaging MPs with events during Lockdown.

Cllr Penberthy reported that the V&P Board had recently appointed someone from a Worker Coop to bring that perspective to the Board. It was also looking at seeking a representative from the retail sector.

- 5.2.2 Develop Networks of CCIN advocates (2.2): Covid-19 has seen a more engaged Officer Network.

A Virtual call has been arranged with GMCA councils on 23<sup>rd</sup> July to encourage non-CCIN Member councils to join. It was suggested that we might want to organise a similar event for London Councils who were not in the Network. Action: NH

- 5.2.3 Member & wider stakeholder frameworks (2.3): One of the recommendations from the Coops Unleashed report was to establish a Network for those Officers involved in Coop development. Action NH to liaise with Anna Peachey at Plymouth.

Work on creating more 'portfolio' based Networks was an action for this area of the strategy.

- 5.2.4 Engage Affiliate Members in the processes of developing Co-operative Councils (2.4): A Working Group of the V&P Board (Cllr Sue Woodward, Simon Parkinson and Michael Curnow) had been established to develop a buddying system between old and new Members. They were looking at devising ways of encouraging more communication through a WhatsApp Group between members in the same category ie Affiliates, Associates – Opposition Groups, and Associates – Town & Parish councils and to ensure that there was a route to feedback information derived from the 'representative' roles on EOC and V&P.

It was noted that some of our Members who were 'Joint Administrations' were keen to develop ways to allow other Groups on councils to have more engagement.

## 5.3 **Member communications (4)**

- 5.3.1 Condense messaging/objectives & develop clear elevator pitch (4.1): NH had developed a draft Elevator Pitch which would be circulated for comment with the minutes. Action NH.

- 5.3.2 Improving CCIN working practices (4.3): Cllr Taylor felt that these were working well, it was important to get the right information in front of EOC and V&P and that the time tabling of these meetings enabled V&P to check that the cooperative values and principles were included in the projects that EOC was being asked to consider.

## 5.4 **New Work Programme (5)**

- 5.4.1 Opportunities linked to students / universities / co-op start-ups (5.1): Cllr Taylor reported that a Working Group had been established comprising Dr Cilla Ross, Nick Matthews and Nicola Huckerby to work with volunteers from the Officer Network to explore the

potential of universities as economic anchors to develop the cooperative economy. It was noted that there had been several universities represented at the Coops Unleashed report launch (Birmingham, Exeter, Liverpool, UCLAN) so there was an appetite from Universities in the work that we were doing. Agreed: NH to contact Cllr Dave Jones to see if Keele University works with any member councils and whether he would like to be involved in this area of the work programme. Action NH/Cllr Dave Jones.

Cllr Penberthy commented that V&P would be scoping out a co-operative approach to LEPs, for future consideration by EOC.

- 5.4.2 Agree a small number of themes to prioritise (5.2): EOC would be considering themes for Policy Labs and Prototypes at its next meeting.

Cllr Penberthy reported that the V&P Board had suggested that as well as an Open Call for Policy Labs we might do a Call for Policy Prototypes on Children's Services which would give us the benefit of more publications, launches and more updates during the year. Cllr Taylor agreed with this approach for Policy Prototypes as all tiers of authority would be able to submit.

## **6. CCIN Induction Programme – Phase 2**

- 6.1 Dr Cilla Ross updated the meeting on content for Phase 2 of the Induction Programme – Becoming a Co-operative Council. Four in-depth interviews have now been completed and have been written up as Case Studies. The next step is to identify the small pieces of quotes/text to be pulled out and to get these segments of video approved.
- 6.2 The architecture is now completed, and optional activities have been designed, the sections will be around: community wealth building, cooperative place-making and co-production. There is also a section on co-operative learning. The value of CCIN membership is a theme that has been drawn out, in relation to peer to peer learning and sharing of experience. Next steps are to make sure that it isn't too text heavy. Plan is to complete the content by the end of July for the CCIN to review it and for it to go through our approval processes.
- 6.3 Cllr Taylor thanked Dr Ross and the College team for the work that had done into Phase 1 of the Programme. The content and the platform were excellent, it is a superb addition to the Network's resources. She commented that Phase 2 looks equally interesting and strong. And that it was good to have a product to share with those that are interested in the Network but have not yet come on board as well as having something to share with new councils who join us. Cllr Taylor said that we would share with EOC and V&P for comments before it went live and shared with all Members.

## **7. CCIN Action Learning: Co-operation through Covid-19**

- 7.1 This report was presented by Rob Gregory from Stevenage. This proposal came about following conversations at the Officer Group where we started to pick up on some of the learning from Covid-19, considering how we might share that while reflecting what makes the Co-operative Council response 'different'.
- 7.2 We've had an approach from Hull and Sheffield Universities, who we know from their work for DCMS on the Enabling Social Action Partnerships. They have now received funding to do some work on Covid learning and are interested in working with us to define how the Cooperative Council response has differed from other councils. Power to Change are also interested in talking to us about our members' response to the crisis.
- 7.3 Phase 1 of the Proposal seeks to capture some of this learning and for us to feedback in the Autumn. We also want to look at how this co-operative council 'crisis response' might be captured

for future policy lab work which would be subsequent Phases. The end product could be in the form of a publication, video, vox pops, or website toolkit.

- 7.4 Cllr Taylor suggested that we should seek to publish the Covid-19 Case Studies as a separate publication in September and then to decide what the final product looks like early for launch in 2021. Cllr Taylor reiterated that this project will reflect on the learning from Covid-19 Response but that it will also examine the contribution of Network Members to the Recovery.
- 7.5 Cllr Penberthy asked that the report include the different Councillor perspectives from across the Network to include Opposition Groups / Associate Members.
- 7.6 Cllr Bradbury explained that the response to Covid-19 was very different in Wales and that it was important to include the experiences of all levels of local government and from across Nations in the report. He suggested that the Officer Lead for Cardiff, Fiona Gibson, join the Group in order to co-ordinate the responses from Wales.
- 7.7 It was agreed that as we move out of Lockdown the learnings at a localised level does give the CCIN a unique perspective on how the UK is responding.
- 7.8 Officers from Bassetlaw, Brent, Cardiff, Kirklees, Oldham, Stevenage (Chair) and Telford have agreed to form a Steering Group with NH to drive this project forward. Next steps are to canvas the whole Network for Case Studies. The Group will report back in September.
- 7.9 EOC agreed to:
- To endorse the progression of this action-learning set and the timetable outlined.
  - Allocate a provisional budget of £10,000 to support the creation of learning products linked to this work to be available on the CCIN website.
  - To progress conversations on future collaboration with the Universities of Hull and Sheffield.
  - To progress conversations on future collaboration with Power to Change.
  - Invite a representative from Glasgow City Council to provide a Scottish perspective.

## **8. CCIN Conduct & Complaints Procedure**

Cllr Chris Penberthy introduced the report which asked EOC to approve a Code of Conduct and Complaints Procedure for the Network. The report was unanimously approved. Cllr Taylor thanked Cllr Penberthy, Plymouth City Council and the V&P Board for developing the process. Action: NH to upload to CCIN website.

## **9. Membership Report**

- 9.1 The membership report was presented by Nicola Huckerby. Our 31 Member Councils represent 7.8m citizens and control a budget of £10bn.
- 9.2 The latest membership figures for the Network are:
- Full Members – 31 members
  - Associate Members – 17 members
  - Affiliate Members – 26 members
  - Supporters – 9
- 9.3 Three new applications had been received for Full Council Membership; these were approved:
- Oxford City Council
  - South Ribble Borough Council
  - Torbay Council
- 9.3 Five new Affiliate Member Applications had been received; these were approved:
- Development.coop

- Evenbreak
- Mutual Ventures
- Public Service Transformation Academy
- West and West

9.4 Five new Supporter Applications had been received; these were approved:

Individual Supporters:

- Andy Boys
- Paulo Lopez
- Christin Marshal

Organisation Supporters:

- MidCounties Coop Gloucester and Swindon Coop Party Council
- Resonance Ltd

9.5 Cllr Penberthy noted that Torbay was the first council to join the Network, without any Labour councillors on it. Cllr Taylor and that we commented about the tremendous growth in the Network over the last few years and thanked Nicola Huckerby for the work she did to recruit new Members. It was acknowledged that sometimes these decisions take a long time to go through due process.

## 10. Policy Lab Updates 2019-20

Cllr Penberthy gave an update on current projects. These were the significant updates:

- 10.1. Co-operative Approaches to Sustainable Food – Oldham Council – the report would be ready in late July / early August.
- 10.2. Co-operatives Unleashed – as seen from the grassroots – Plymouth City Council – this report had been launched and was now on the website: <https://www.councils.coop/coops-unleashed/>.
- 10.3. Co-operative Neighbourhoods – Stevenage Borough Council – The delivery of this project was severely impacted by Covid-19 and an extension has been agreed with the final report due in Spring/Summer 2021
- 10.4. Promoting cities of service model of social action to CCIN members - Plymouth City Council PCC is currently reviewing the Draft Toolkit with the expectation that it will be released in the Summer.
- 10.5. Achieving Social Outcomes – Peopletoo - Peopletoo remains committed to delivering this project. We're still seeking Council member engagement to refocus the project. With this in mind we will seek to engage again with Officer Leads and perhaps encourage some of the new Members to participate.
- 10.6. Appointment of an External Researcher from DPS to complete the Asset Transfer Policy Lab – Jonathan Downs reported that the draft Specification to advertise this opportunity had been completed and that it was expected that we'd be able to advertise the role in a week. The delivery schedule would see the Researcher submit the final report by the end of October.

## 11. Co-operatives Unleashed: as seen from the Grassroots – next steps

- 11.1. Cllr Penberthy reiterated the points in 10.2. The PCC team were looking at the questions raised during the webinar in order to prepare some FAQs which would be added to the website. The Toolkit and more in-depth Case Studies were to follow. Action: NH/Anna Peachey.

- 11.2. PCC was also looking at developing a series of webinars which could bring a group of Case Studies in together. They were also looking at how some of the messages could be given to the Co-operative MPs so that they could promote the messaging. PCC had noted the Kirklees Care Coop which was currently doing a community share issue, was an additional Case Study for this project. If there are any other good examples of cooperatives being developed please let Cllr Penberthy and Anna Peachey know. Action: All
- 11.3. Cllr Taylor suggested that for the Toolkit Launch in November we may wish to approach Baroness Glenys Thornton. Action: NH
- 11.4. Anna Peachey observed that many of the comments from participants in the Launch Webinar were aligned to the Report recommendations – which was very positive.
- 11.5. Jonathan Bland suggested that the House of Lords Select Committee on Public Services, which is chaired by Baroness Hilary Armstrong, might be another route for us to get our messaging in front parliament.
- 11.6. Cllr Taylor invited all Members to submit blogs for the newsletter and website. Steve Reed OBE, MP had promised a blog on the Report launch.

## 12. Policy Prototype Updates 2020

Cllr Penberthy reported that unsurprisingly we have slippage on many of the Policy Prototypes and outlined a proposed timetable.

- 12.1 It was agreed that:
- We would invite project leads to present interim findings at our Virtual Conference in October
  - Cllrs Penberthy and Cllr Iain Malcolm had offered to draft the Brief for the appointment of some external support from the DPS to prepare the “**Co-operative difference in care report**”. This would be signed off by EOC before being advertised by Oldham Council.
  - Final project reports are expected December 2020 / January 2021. Action: NH to advise project leads.
  - We ask the appointed Organisation, who will be working with all project leads, to provide any key emerging points during December which could be published as an Interim Report so that we can inform responses to any Government Green Paper on Adult Social Care that might be published. Action: NH for Brief
  - The final report to be launched at an event in Spring 2021 with potentially further Policy Lab work taking place in 2021.
- 12.2 Cllr Taylor thanked Cllr Penberthy for putting the proposed timetable together so that we had a schedule to work to. It was agreed to revisit progress at the next meeting. Action: NH
- 12.3 It was noted that funding had been provisionally allocated to Plymouth for an additional Policy Prototype on a ‘Digital Health & Wellbeing Hub’. Action: Plymouth to confirm that they were able to do this.

## 13. Event Planning 2020

- 13.1 Nicola Huckerby outlined proposals for the CCIN National Conference 2020. All major political conferences scheduled for the Autumn had now moved online it was therefore proposed that we hold a virtual conference. Current ideas were:
- The event to run on 6, 7 and 8 October with a Plenary and breakout workshops from 10am – 11.30/12 noon each day
  - Encourage a wider range of members to participate thematic leads, opposition groups and officers

- workshops on the Policy Labs completed this year
- workshops to gather additional evidence for the 'Co-operative difference in care report'

13.2 All members were asked to send any ideas that they had to NH. It was agreed to set up a small working group of Cllrs Taylor, Penberthy and NH to prepare a draft programme for circulation and comment to EOC. Provision title of 'Stronger Communities' was noted. Action: NH to set up.

13.3 NH was asked to speak to the Cooperative College about providing technical support for the webinars. Action: NH

#### **14. Any Other Business**

14.1 Cllr Sharon Taylor - the White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation was expected in September and that this would be all-consuming for those effected.

14.2 Cllr Clare Penny-Evans – suggested that a potential theme for a Policy Lab could be around 'Green Recovery, Carbon Reduction and Climate Change'. Clare was invited to write a short blog for the Newsletter inviting members to tell us what they have been doing in their areas to make the Recovery a Green Recovery explaining what the cooperative dimension is to this. Cllr Penberthy suggested that this might also include projects that were already happening around carbon reduction. It was agreed that we were wanting to highlight the Co-operative Difference to tackling climate change.

#### **15. Schedule of future meetings**

- Monday, 13 July 2020 - online
- 3pm Thursday 8 October 2020
- January 2021 – Policy Lab and Policy Prototype applications

16.07.2020/NH