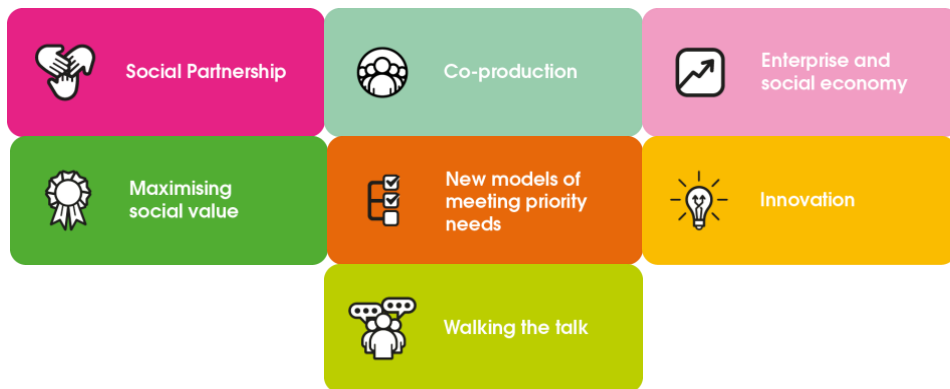




Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING



CBN working with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Using the Thin Layer Model for infrastructure development

In the last 5 years Tameside MBC and its public sector partners, including the NHS, education and social housing providers, have been building a borough-wide digital infrastructure, including a fibre network and data centre.

Using an innovative model developed by Tameside and CBN, the public sector partners are able to share the benefits easily - including with the private sector. This is the 'thin layer model' or 'cooperative neutral host'.

Now CBN is working with partner authorities to apply the model to other use cases, including EV charging point deployment and local energy markets.

How it works

Digital infrastructure is made up of layers - from the raw, physical infrastructure on the bottom layer to the applications and services at the top.



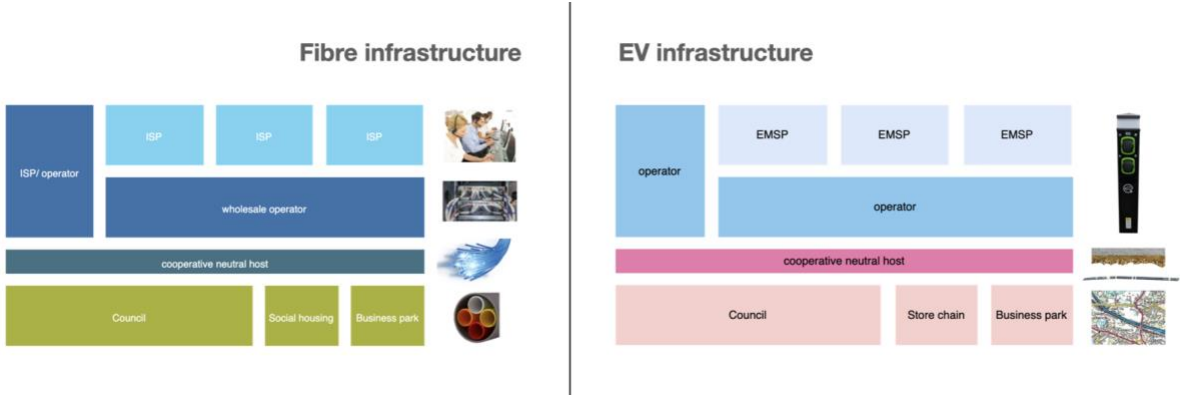
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The thin layer model offers a way to sew together infrastructure elements at the bottom layers, so that they can be shared at the upper levels - without creating complex joint ownership structures.

What's more it allows the private sector to join in, without the grant of any subsidy, and without any form of exclusive concession arrangements or joint ventures. The cooperative model ensures absolute neutrality, and opens opportunities for smaller and local businesses to access the infrastructure directly, so that they can add more value, innovate and differentiate their products.

Cooperative Network Infrastructure (<https://cni.coop/>) now provides access to over 200km of spine fibre infrastructure and multiple carrier-neutral data centres. It has 9 local authority members alongside more than 15 telecoms industry members.



How it can be extended

Durham County Council is developing a layered model for neutral-hosted EV charge points called STEP. Drawing on CBN's work in this area, Durham is looking at applying the cooperative model, making it easier for public sector partners to collaborate, and as a way to ensure neutrality in dealing with EV charger operators.

Blackpool Council is working with partners (including CBN) to create a unique local energy market, leveraging local opportunities such as off-shore wind and data centres using a new international fibre route. The cooperative thin layer model is envisaged as the mechanism to reduce complexity in transactions between multiple energy users and generators.

For further information contact:

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