



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

VALUES & PRINCIPLES BOARD

Online Zoom call

1230 for 1300 - 1500 hours on Wednesday, 2 March 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Joyce McCarty
Cllr John Fahy
Cllr Sue Woodward
Gus Della-Porta
Cllr Rae Evans
Richard McCready
Neil Calvert
Jo White
Rebecca Harvey
Paul Bell

Newcastle City Council (Chair)
Royal Borough of Greenwich (Vice Chair)
Burntwood Town Council (Vice Chair)
Bates Wells (Vice Chair)
Telford & Wrekin Council
Co-operative Party
Co-operative College (until 1400 hours)
Co-operative Futures
Co-operative News
Unison

In attendance:

Nicola Huckerby
Steve McNay

Operations & Communications Lead - CCIN (Minutes)
Council Manager - Woughton Community Council (Item 8.1)

Apologies:

Cllr Frank Walsh
Cllr Peter Curling
Michael Curnow
Cllr Hayden Philips
Cllr Joyce Welsh
Cllr Mike Stubbs
Cheryl Barrott

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Hillingdon Labour & Co-operative Group
Peopletoo
North Warwickshire Labour Group
South Tyneside Council
Newcastle -Under-Lyme Labour & Cooperative Group
Co-operatives UK

Absent:

Cllr Donna Fuller

Woughton Community Council

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

- 1.1. The Chair began by welcoming everyone to the meeting. We have three new members: Richard McCready, who joins as the new permanent representative of the Coop Party, Paul Bell representing Unison and Councillor Rae Evans from Telford and Wrekin.

Gus Della-Porta had been elected as Vice-Chair representing Affiliate Members.
All members introduced themselves.

- 1.2. Apologies and absences were recorded. The Chair noted that several members had submitted their apologies late and that we were only just quorate, with the required attendance being nine members.

The Chair reported that Michael Curnow had won a new role and would be leaving Peopletoo at the end of the month. Therefore, he was resigning from the Board, and we would have another vacancy for Affiliate Members. The Chair asked that our thanks be extended to Michael for his support and involvement in V&P and the broader CCIN agenda over the last three years.

Action: NH to thank Michael and advertise the vacancies.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting - 16 November 2021**

These were agreed as an accurate record.

3. **Matters arising from the meeting on 16 November 2021**

3.1 **Co-produced training opportunities with the LGA.**

NH reported that at the last EOC meeting, they agreed to arrange a three-way meeting for the LGA/College/CCIN to discuss the next steps on the training format and how we saw the relationship with the LGA in terms of funding and promoting this training.

Action: NH

4. **Any Other Urgent Business**

- 4.1. **Revised Constitution** - The Chair reminded all members that the revised Constitution had been approved at the AGM on 16 February and thanked those who supported this work. The Constitution had been circulated with the AGM papers and was available on the website: [Constitution](#).

The Chair reported that the revised document had not included the quorum for an annual meeting. This would need to be fixed before the next AGM and raised with the EOC.

Action: NH

- 4.2. **New CCIN website** - NH gave members an overview of some of the new website's features. If anyone has any resources that would be useful for the section on 'Growing the Co-op Economy', please send these to Nicola Huckerby.

The structure, look and feel of the website were warmly welcomed.

5. **Member Engagement Updates**

- 5.1. Associate Members - Cllr Sue Woodward

SW reminded everyone that it was important that the work of the CCIN was embedded into the work programmes of all members, both councils and opposition groups.

She was pleased with the number of Associate Members that had attended the Annual Conference. SW to organise another meeting of Associate Members.

Action: Cllr Sue Woodward.

5.2. Affiliate Members - Gus Della Porta

GD-P fed back on the Affiliate Member session at the Annual Conference, where two CCIN council leaders reflected on their roles and answered questions from Affiliate Members and others. GD-P to organise another meeting of Affiliate Members to identify how they can support co-op councils going forward.

Action: Gus Della-Porta

6. Feedback from the Annual Conference

The Chair thanked NH for the thought-provoking and comprehensive programme, which encompassed much of the CCIN's work over the last 18 months. She also thanked the Co-operative College team, who had provided excellent IT support in the run-up to the event and during the conference. Special mention was made to the keynote from Baroness Sal Brinton.

JF thanked NH for delivering a superb conference that endorsed how the CCIN's reputation was growing. Many of the sessions could form helpful training sessions for prospective members and members who could not attend the event.

SW also referred to the session from Baroness Sal Brinton, who was an advocate for the Cooperative Values and Principles and understood the work of the CCIN; speakers from across the political spectrum were welcomed as the Network sought to expand its reach.

7. Project Tracker Update

NH updated members on the Project Tracker.

The Chair reminded members that it was important that all the reports that the CCIN supported clearly outlined the 'cooperative difference' and how each project promoted our cooperative principles.

8. Policy Prototype Updates 2021

8.1. Social Return on Local Council Provision - Woughton Community Council

Steve McNay introduced the report. SM explained that when he joined Woughton Community Council, he was surprised at the vast array of services delivered, however, he was taken aback at the absence of information and data relating to the value of providing those services to residents and reporting the social return of those services to principal authorities. This report seeks to remedy that.

The report looked at the social return of delivering several council services:

- sexual health drop-in
- specialist LGBTQ+ sessions
- open-access youth clubs
- community fridge
- Woughton advice service
- annual festival

The overall aim for this project is to have a piece of software (in 'app' form, preferably) where a service/project can be added. Whilst no formal 'app' has been developed, the process has brought considerable value. Woughton will continue to update CCIN as things develop. The objective is that tools will be designed to enable all councils to consider these issues on an ongoing basis.

The Chair thanked SM for the comprehensive review of the findings. SW felt that the social return on the council services highlighted, and the provision of dog waste bins, was an exercise that would be useful for all councils and particularly smaller councils.

It was agreed: to accept the report from Woughton Community Council. SM suggested reporting back to the group in a year, when a decision could be made on whether a further project should take the work forward.

Action: NH to submit the final report to EOC for approval before being promoted on the website.

8.2. One-Stop-Shop to deal with mental health issues - update

Jo White asked that the final report clearly outlines the 'cooperative difference' and how the project promoted our cooperative principles. It was agreed that all project authors should be reminded of this and that this should be clearly communicated for all future projects.

Action: NH

It was agreed: to accept the update.

8.3. 4-week summer holiday activity programme - 2021

The report was welcomed but needed more work. The Chair asked that we revert to the project author asking them to clearly outline the 'cooperative difference' of working in this way and how the project promoted our cooperative principles.

Action: NH to request a final, more comprehensive report.

9. Policy Lab & Prototype Funding Process for 2022

NH took members through the process of submitting applications for Policy Lab and Prototype funding this year. £75k has been allocated to projects; Policy Labs can ask for up to £20k and Policy Prototypes up to £2k. The deadline for suggesting new projects is 1 April. The closing date for the submission of bids is 1 June.

There is also a guide on the CCIN website, which asks bidders to ensure that any bids clearly outline the 'cooperative difference' and how the project will align with our cooperative principles.

Action: NH to share the EOI forms with V&P for comment.

10. Role of V&P Board in assessing funded projects

The Chair explained that although we had the visual icons to illustrate our Statement of Values & Principles, we needed to be more precise on our expectations of those delivering funded projects. Our guidance would mean providing better direction and ensuring the 'cooperative difference' was **explicit** in the reports before the V&P Board. It was not just a matter of using the icons. RH suggested that this guidance might include asking project authors to indicate with which of the Values and Principles their reports are aligned. JW felt that we could do this twice, when submitting the initial bid and again when submitting the final document.

11. Proposal for Policy Lab on our Statement of Values and Principles

The Chair introduced this item by explaining that the Board had agreed at its September

meeting to establish a V&P Sub-Group to consider the proposal by the Officer Group to commission a piece of work to:

- Explain why the 'Principles' are important
- What do our 'Principles' look like in delivering specific Council Services
- How the 'Principles' can be used to ensure that 'being a Coop Council' is everyone's business in a Member Council

A Sub-Group would be responsible for pulling together a brief for a bid to undertake this work, the deadline for submission was 1 June. Participants identified were Cllr Joyce McCarty, Cllr Mike Stubbs, Cllr Joyce Welsh, Cheryl Barrott and Neil Calvert; none of whom were present at this meeting.

This process was timely now that we had the opportunity to further our thinking about the role of the V&P Board in assessing funded projects.

It was agreed: that the explicit guidance required to help councils leading on bids was a piece of work that needed urgent attention and that the Sub-Group would prepare the EOI for submission before the deadline.

Action: NH to set up the call.

12. Any other Business

Policy Lab report for approval - Community Economic Development Plans as a tool for fostering cooperative working between Councils and the community.

NH explained that she would be circulating this Policy Lab report after the meeting and asked members if they would confirm that they were happy with it so that EOC could consider it on 14 March.

This was agreed. Action: NH

13. Date of next meeting

It was agreed to meet in June around Co-operative Congress. NH to follow up.

The meeting finished at 1450 hours.