



EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

1330 for 1400 - 1600 hours on Wednesday, 22 June 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr Paul Stewart	Sunderland City Council
Cllr Barbara Brownridge	Oldham Council
Cllr Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Council
Cllr Steve Darling	Torbay Council
Cllr Clare Gamble	Billingham Town Council (Associate Rep)

In Attendance:

Jonathan Downs	Oldham Council (Accountable Body)
Fiona Gibson	Cardiff Council
Nicola Huckerby	CCIN (Minutes)

Apologies

Cllr Peter Bradbury	Cardiff Council (Vice Chair)
Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West & Chester Council
Jonathan Bland	SBI/E3M (Affiliate rep)

Absent

Cllr Sue Smith	Rochdale Council
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1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

- 1.1. Cllr Sharon Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and reflected on the CCIN session at the Labour Local Government Conference the previous weekend.
- 1.2. ST reported that **Cllr Leanne Feeley** has resigned from the EOC, and **Cllrs Joyce McCarty** has resigned as Chair of the V&P Board.
- 1.3. Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Bradbury, who was represented by Fiona Gibson, Cllr Louise Gittins, and Jonathan Bland.

2. Minutes of the last meeting - 10 January 2022

These were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the meeting on 10 January 2022

3.1 Stir to Action - New Economy Festival (12 - 14 July)

There are six unallocated sponsored places available for the event.

Agreed: to widen the opportunity and allow partner organisations to attend.

Action: NH and Cllr Steve Darling to discuss tickets for Torbay Council. NH to promote to members again.

4. Any Other Urgent Business

4.1. Governance Elections

Agreed: To hold elections for the two council vacancies on EOC and V&P over the summer.

4.2. Global Local Govt Alliance to build sustainable communities

The Chair reported that since the last meeting, the CCIN had been invited to meet with the equivalent organisation in Argentina. The call had been at the instigation of the President of the International Cooperative Alliance, Ariel Guarco - President of Cooperar. Cooperar is the Argentinian equivalent of Cooperatives UK. They have been funding a local authority network with the aim of promoting the social and solidarity economy, providing cooperative education and training and encouraging councils, and the public, to buy from cooperatives.

The Chair and NH had been involved in two calls where we had learnt that there are two other local authority Networks, like the CCIN, located in France and Valencia (Spain). The aim is that we work toward bringing these Networks together to create a Global Local Government Alliance to build sustainable communities across the world. This objective would sit under Number 17 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals' Partnerships for the Goals'.

Agreed: To report back on future discussions.

4.3. Annual Conference Theme - 'Being a Cooperative Council'

The Chair reported that the Annual Conference would be held in Telford over two days in November, and as soon as we have dates confirmed, we will let all members know. The programme will be:

Day 1: EOC, Tour of Ironbridge and Networking event

Day 2: AGM and Conference

5. Budget Report

5.1. Jonathan Downs introduced this item. He explained that the budget report was very similar to that reported previously but wanted to flag two issues:

5.1.1. It was likely we were going to be underspent on policy lab and prototype spend, and members may wish to consider another funding round later in the year

5.1.2. Oldham Council has overseen and managed the CCIN budget for around a decade. JN is seeking to bring in an independent auditor to offer some independent scrutiny on the CCIN Budget and some rigour into their processes to give EOC that the budget is being managed appropriately.

The Chair welcomed that decision.

Action: JD to report back to the next meeting.

5.2. The Chair suggested a discussion at a future meeting about how we might encourage some more significant bids. Another idea was that we invest in a video to promote our 10th Anniversary in 2022 to highlight what has been achieved to date.

Action: NH to note for next agenda.

Agreed: To open another funding round in September/October 2022

Action: NH/JD to discuss the video

6. Applications for Policy Lab Funding

6.1. Democratising Policy Solutions - Lead: Rochdale Council

Members supported the proposal.

Several clarifications were sought:

- how Rochdale is planning on engaging other councils as this Policy Lab as it builds on a previously funded Prototype for a Cooperative Engagement Toolkit
- the bid was for a specific amount, and members asked how the funding would be allocated **Agreed:** to fund the Policy Lab proposal for £19,760

Action: NH to ensure that Rochdale responded to the questions asked when V&P considered the work programme.

6.2. Arts & Culture for Social Cohesion - Lead: North Herts District Council

Agreed: To fund the Policy Lab proposal for £15,000

6.3. Translating Cooperative Values into 'Social Values' for Procurement - Lead: Oxford City Council

Bid for £20,000. It was noted that Oxford had submitted two proposals under the same title, one for a Policy Lab and the other for a Policy Prototype.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the Policy Lab application until the Policy Prototype report has been submitted, and this should identify potential partners for the more significant piece of work. It was also noted that Peopletoo were due to submit their Policy Lab report on Social Value and Social Outcomes and that this would be a helpful starting point.

6.4. Study Visit to Mondragon - Lead: CCIN

Agreed: To fund the Policy Lab proposal for £10,000.

6.5. Cooperative Option Training

NH gave some background to the proposal on 'Cooperative Option' training offered by Cooperative Culture. It had been submitted following a discussion at the Leaders/Coop Leads meeting where members had asked for development training for their business support/small business advisors/ econ development officers so that they would have the confidence, and the knowledge, to suggest the cooperative 'option' to anyone looking to set up a business, or at succession planning, and to signpost them to get the necessary support.

The CCIN would need to hone the content to ensure it met Coop Council requirements and supported our Values and Principles. We would also need to be clear about how funded places might be allocated across the Network and whether it was something we could offer on an ongoing basis.

Agreed: Cooperative option training would be a welcome addition to the member council toolkit and something that should be considered for Policy Lab funding once we have clarified the process for council involvement.

Action: NH to follow up and report back at the next meeting.

6.6. **To better equip Councillors and their officers with the strategies, justifications, and tried and tested tools for taking more action on cooperative economy development**

A formal bid had not been submitted because it required a member council to lead; however, there was an offer to Match Fund this project by up to £10,000 from Power to Change It was agreed that Cooperatives UK should be asked to get involved in this project. Cllr Pandor reported that with EOC's support, Kirklees Council would be happy to lead on this project so that it could move forward.

Agreed: To accept the offer from Kirklees Council to lead on this proposal and that a formal funding bid would be welcomed.

7. **Applications for Policy Prototype Funding**

Only one application for Prototype funding had been received.

7.1. Translating Cooperative Values into 'Social Values' for Procurement - Oxford City Council

Agreed: To fund the Policy Lab proposal for £2,000. See 6.3 for further guidance.

Project Tracker Update

NH shared the Risk Schedule for CCIN-funded projects, which included status updates on all policy lab and prototype projects.

8. **Policy Prototypes 2021**

8.1. **One-Stop-Shop to deal with mental health issues**

This report had been through V&P, who had made some comments which were being incorporated.

Agreed: The report was approved unanimously.

Action: NH to promote the report on the CCIN website and include it in the August Newsletter.

8.2. **4-week summer holiday activity programme - 2021**

Cllr Gamble reported that the Town Council had difficulty writing their report for this project. She also noted that the activities coincided with the Government's funded holiday activity programme. In conclusion, the Town Council had reluctantly decided to withdraw their funding application. The Chair thanked CG and the team at Billingham Town Council for the work they had done and welcomed interest in future bids.

Agreed: To note the withdrawal of the application.

Action: JD to adjust the CCIN budget accordingly.

9. **Policy Labs**

9.1. **The Learning Outcomes for the Certified online training programme**

The Chair introduced a paper from the Co-operative College which outlined the proposed outcomes for our Certified training programme. This course will be certified by the *Open College Network*, and it was important that EOC was happy with what was being suggested as outcomes for each module before the programme was submitted to the OCN. V&P had suggested that Modules 1 & 2 were more instructive for learners and therefore self-explanatory but that the Toolkit in Module 3 required more exploration. They had suggested a small number of council representatives form an EOC/V&P advisory group to support and advise the College. This group would be able to describe the 'Cooperative Difference' as it relates to Council services - and identify any new Case Studies which could be used in the programme.

Agreed: Cllrs Taylor and Stewart agreed to represent EOC.

Action: NH to advise the Co-operative College.

9.2. **Co-operation at the Grassroots – Stevenage Borough Council**

Agreed: The report was approved unanimously.

Action: NH to promote the report and videos on the CCIN website and launch them at the Annual Conference in November.

9.3. **Growing an Inclusive Cooperative Economy - Oxford City Council**

Agreed: The report was approved unanimously. Members felt that this report should be published in the same way as some of our earlier reports and recommended that EOC approve a small budget for proofreading and design.

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

9.4. **Achieving Social Outcomes - Peopletoo**

Agreed: To introduce Oxford City Council to Peopletoo to ensure there is no duplication of effort while we await the final report from Peopletoo.

Action: NH to chase the final report.

9.5. **Tackling the Barriers to Building the Co-op Economy - Oldham/GMCA**

JD reported that GMCA/Oldham are in the process of seeking a delivery partner from the DPS to work with on his one.

10. **Being a Cooperative Council - #OurCoopDifference**

The Chair explained that the Leaders/Coop Leads Group had pulled together some thoughts on the tangible actions that Coop Councils can take to distinguish them from non-Coop Councils. There were suggestions about steps councils could take on their own or with the CCIN. And there were also some specific actions around community wealth building and cooperative placemaking - that members might wish to consider. We want to launch the pack of actions at the November Conference along with any assets.

Action: If anyone has any comments, thoughts, or ideas on the content or if anything is missing, please let NH know.

Action: NH to share any case studies on paying Real Living Wage with Cllr Paul Stewart.

11. **Constitutional matters**

11.1. **Exceptional Financial Issues Policy - J Downs**

JD explained that this would be addressed as part of the review of existing budgetary practices (Ref 5.1.2). The Chair explained that we needed a process where councils with financial restrictions placed upon them could continue to be part of the Network for up to 12 months at no cost to help them work through those challenges and would be considered case-by-case. Once agreed, this 'exceptional financial issues policy' should be included in the Constitution.

Action: JD will bring a draft policy for discussion at the next meeting.

11.2. **The quorum for an AGM**

Cllr Taylor reported that we do not have a quorum for the AGM.

Agreed: It was decided to set the quorum at 20% of members.

Action: NH to update the Constitution on the website.

12. Dates of next meetings

12.1. EOC meeting in early October

12.2. AGM and Annual Conference would be held in Telford in November to include a short EOC meeting

12.3. NH reported that we would be holding new Governance elections in December/January, after the Annual Conference, which would end their two-year term.

Agreed: Any items for consideration over the summer to be shared, discussed and decided online. **Action:** NH to coordinate.

The meeting closed at 1505 hours.

10-08-22 - NH