



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Online Zoom call

1430 for 1500 - 1700 hours on Tuesday, 10th January 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Louise Gittins
Cllr Peter Bradbury
Cllr Paul Cassidy
Cllr Graeme Miller
Cllr Anthony Okereke
Cllr Shabir Pandor
Clare Gamble
Jonathan Bland

Cheshire West & Chester Council (Chair)
Cardiff Council (Vice Chair) (until item 8)
Inverclyde Council
Sunderland City Council (until item 9)
Royal Borough of Greenwich
Kirklees Council (from item 4)
Billingham Town Council (Associate Rep)
SBI/E3M (Affiliate Rep)

In Attendance:

Jonathan Downs
Fiona Gibson
Nicola Huckerby
Dr Amanda Benson
Caroline Wolfenden

Oldham Council (Accountable Body)
Cardiff Council
CCIN (Minutes)
Cooperative College (item 9.1)
Rochdale Borough Council (items 7 – 9.1)

Apologies:

Cllr Steve Darling
Cllr Barbara Brownridge

Torbay Council
Oldham Council (Accountable Body)

Absent:

Cllr Sue Smith

Rochdale Borough Council

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

- 1.1. Cllr Gittins welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new EOC. She was delighted to have been elected as Chair and was looking forward to working with the new Committee. All members introduced themselves.
- 1.2. The Chair asked that a massive thank you be recorded to Baroness Taylor for all that she had done for Network over the last six years as Chair. The Committee wished Sharon well with her new role in the House of Lords, giving the Network another ally in the House as we looked forward to the next 10 years.
- 1.3. It was noted that the new chair of the Values and Principles Board would join the Board as an ex-officio member once appointed.

1.4. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 23 November 2022

These were agreed upon as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising from the previous meeting

3.1. Honorary Vice Presidents of the CCIN

- NH introduced the item.

At the last meeting, it had been agreed to confer the titles of Honorary Vice Presidents to Lord Roy Kennedy, Baroness Glenys Thornton and Baroness Sharon Taylor. We have an outstanding minute to do the same to Jim McMahon OBE, MP.

Agreed: to arrange an event at the House of Lords to confirm the appointments.

Action: NH to speak to Jim McMahon and arrange the event, inviting other members of EOC to attend.

3.2. Exceptional Financial Issues Policy

- JD introduced the item and explained the background.

The Policy would include:

- Agreement on how we would respond to those councils who were not paying / unable to pay their membership fees as a result of a financial notice eg Section 114, and for how long they should be able to access member benefits.

Agreed: J Downs is to write up and circulate the process ahead of the next meeting for discussion and agreement at the meeting.

- One of the outstanding issues was ensuring that NH was reimbursed quickly for any payments incurred on behalf of the Network rather than waiting for payment through Oldham's standard payment system. JD reported that in the future, NH's invoices for these expenses would be repaid within 24 hours.

3.3. Launch of ['Achieving social Outcomes' report](#)

NH explained that this Policy Lab had been given the go-ahead in 2019 and was funded by one of our Affiliate Members, Peopletoo. It had been signed off at the last meeting and was ready for launch at an all-member online event. Several member councils were involved in the project, which included Case Studies from:

Barking and Dagenham

Birmingham City Council

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Newcastle City Council

Preston City Council

Rochdale Borough Council

Salford Council

South Tyneside Council

Stevenage Borough Council

Torbay Council

NH had agreed with the authors at Peopletoo and that they:

- would have individual discussions with each of those councils to confirm that they were happy to be involved in the launch and to see if there were any updates required in their submissions

- would upload the Case Studies and arrange an online Roundtable discussion in early March for all members.

Agreed: NH will circulate a launch date to EOC, before Purdah.

4. Election arrangements

- 4.1. JD explained the process and results of the 2023-24 EOC elections on behalf of Oldham Council, the Accountable Body. The deadline for self-nominations was 25 November.
- 4.2. There were 8 candidates for the 8 full member places on the Board and one candidate each for the Associate and Affiliate Member representatives.
- 4.3. There was one candidate for Vice Chair – Cllr Peter Bradbury was elected.
- 4.4. Cllr Clare Gamble was re-elected to represent the Associate Members.
- 4.5. Jonathan Bland was re-elected to represent the Affiliate Members.
- 4.6. There were three candidates for Chair. Ballots were sent to Leaders and Officer Leads at Full Member Councils with a Voting Paper. They were asked to vote on behalf of their Council. Voting closed at Noon on Friday, 9th December.
- 4.7. Results: There was a 60% turnout. And two candidates had 42.86% of the vote each. Those councils that had voted for the 3rd candidate were asked to recast their votes.
- 4.8. After the 2nd round of voting, the final count gave **Cllr Louise Gittins** 52.38% of the vote, and she was duly elected as Chair.
- 4.9. V&P - The deadline for nominations for the V&P Board was 5pm on Monday 9th January. NH reported that there were more self-nominations for the Affiliate Member places than places, so there was likely to be a further election.
- 4.10. Cllr Okereke thanked NH and JD for running a smooth election process. He also congratulated Cllr Louise Gittins on her election.

5. Budget Report

- 5.1. Jonathan Downs introduced this item. He explained that the organisation was financially solvent. The Network's financial year runs from August to July, and we invoice for Membership in September, which takes it out of the local government election calendar. Income from membership fees was expected to be £213,314 this year, with an assumption that membership would grow by one member in each category this year. The budget position was very similar to before, and £75,000 had again been allocated to Policy Lab and Prototype funding. Income was predicted to increase as the Network grew thanks to NH.
- Agreed:** to accept the budget report.

6. Membership report

- 6.1. NH reported that the latest membership figures were:
 - Full Councils – 37
 - Associate Members – 23
 - Affiliate Members – 45
 - Supporters – 21

NH explained that we usually receive applications from potential new members, having met them at an event or receiving an invitation to present to them. These applications are processed as new Members /Supporters subject to ratification by EOC. Occasionally we will receive an application from an individual or organisation we do not know. When this happens, she arranges a call to learn more about their Values and Principles and how they align with those of the Network. New Members are included in our stats as soon as they are processed.

Cllr Pandor asked that a report be brought to a future meeting on who was using the Dynamic Purchasing System.

Agreed: to welcome Human Engine as a new Affiliate Member.

Agreed: The Approval Process was agreed.

Action: To bring a report on who was using the DPS to a future meeting – JD/NH.

Action: All members of EOC were tasked with encouraging one new member to join the network in 2023.

7. Event Planning 2023

NH took the Committee through the Event Booking process and suggested Event Calendar for 2023.

Agreed: to book a Stand at the Autumn Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Bournemouth 23-26 September.

Action: A volunteer council officer was required to support the CCIN Stand at the LGA Conference in Bournemouth.

Two Councils had expressed an interest in hosting the 2023 CCIN Annual Conference & AGM – Kirklees and Sunderland. This would be planned for October or early November.

Agreed: to request formal bids to host the 2023 Annual Conference and to agree on the date ahead of the May Elections.

It was noted that we had booked a Breakout session at the Labour Local Government Conference in Nottingham on 11 – 12 February.

Agreed: to run the session on 'Cooperative Councils in Action' drawing on some of the funded project work that had been launched. Cllrs Pandor and Okereke offered to speak.

Action: NH to prepare the programme.

8. Feedback from the Annual Conference

Cllr Gittins introduced this item thanking Telford & Wrekin Council for hosting an excellent conference and for their hospitality. NH summarised the Feedback from delegates who had responded to the post-Conference Survey.

EOC Members felt that the conference was really positive, and the networking opportunities were particularly good as Affiliate Members had been invited to exhibit.

Thanks were extended to the organising team who had been involved in showcasing Telford and pulling together an extensive conference programme.

9. Funded Policy Projects

9.1. Certified CCIN Online Training Programme

NH gave some background to this Policy Lab, which the Cooperative College was delivering on behalf of the Network. This project was approved in 2021 and was designed to follow the 'Induction' training and 'Key Themes' training.

Agreed: NH to circulate data on who had attended the 'Induction' and 'Key Themes' training.

Action: EOC to undertake the training and encourage their councillors and officers to do the same.

Dr Amanda Benson from the College joined the meeting.
AB explained that there were three modules to the new programme in development.
These are all self-paced modules with bite-sized content

- Bringing co-operation to life in Cooperative Councils
- Cooperative engagement
- Walking the cooperative talk – a toolkit for Cooperative Councils

AB went through the topics in each module, and explained that over the last six months, a Working Group comprising members of the Governance had been providing feedback and support to develop the content. The Working Group members were Cllr Taylor, Cllr Paul Stewart from EOC and Cllrs Mike Stubbs and Sue Woodward from V&P. There were now two vacancies for the EOC to be involved in the process. This was to sense-check the content as it was uploaded to the online portal, making sure that it was accessible and in a logical order for the Network audience.

Agreed: to ask Cllr Graeme Miller if Sunderland could continue its involvement in the Working Group. NH to Action.

Agreed: Fiona Gibson volunteered to provide an Officer perspective on the content.

NH explained that the aim was to develop an online training programme which the Open College Network would endorse. These courses would ultimately be offered to the LGA, to deliver in partnership with the College to LGA members.

9.2. Policy Tracker Schedule

NH took members through the Tracker, a filtered spreadsheet of all the policy labs and prototype projects that the Network had funded since 2016.

The process was for the Values and Principles board to consider any updates from projects leads and to ensure that the Network's V&Ps were built into all funded projects as they were being developed. There were no updates for EOC at this meeting.

10. Strategy and Action Plan 2021 - 23

The Chair introduced this item; the current strategy had been approved in 2021, and individual members had agreed to oversee each theme's delivery. Two volunteers were no longer on EOC, so the Committee needed to decide where we went next with the plan.

10.1 There was a general discussion about what members felt was the best way forward and how we could get buy-in from the wider membership.

Agreed: to arrange an in-person, externally facilitated session for all Governance Members to review and update the current strategy.

Action: NH to suggest dates in July for an in-person session.

Action: NH & JD to agree on the brief for a facilitator.

11. Schedule of Future Meetings

March – Review of submissions of Policy Labs and Prototype Bids

Agreed: The next meeting would be an online meeting with the V&P Board on Thursday, 16th March.

Agreed: That councils bidding for Policy Lab funding would be expected to present their bids to that meeting.

June – next EOC meeting

July – Joint Strategy Session with V&P

Action: NH to send out a Doodle poll for dates

The meeting finished at 1700 hours.

NH – 16/01/23