

EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Online Zoom meeting
1300 - 1500 hours on Tuesday, 27 January 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Jim Robbins	Swindon Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr Paul Cassidy	Inverclyde Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Sue Smith	Rochdale Borough Council (Intermittent)
Cllr Barbara Brownridge	Oldham Council (Accountable Body) (Intermittent)
Cllr John Fahy	Greenwich Coop Development Agency
Cllr Mili Patel	Brent Council (Chair of V&P)

In Attendance:

Jonathan Downs	Oldham Council (Accountable Body)
Fiona Gibson	Cardiff Council - CCIN Officer Lead
Vince Barry-Stanners	CCIN (Comms & Marketing)
Pete Vallance	CCIN (Minutes)

Apologies:

Cllr Peter Bradbury	Cardiff Council
Cllr Mike Stubbs	Newcastle-Under-Lyme Labour Group
Cllr Jacky Alty	South Ribble Borough Council

Absent:

Cllr Kelly Middleton	Telford & Wrekin Council
Cllr Shanika Mahendran	Milton Keynes City Council

This meeting was conducted using the Zoho Meetings platform, it was noted that some members had difficulty when accessing Zoho meetings.

Action: PV review accessibility and firewall issues when using Zoho.

1. Introductions, welcome and apologies – Chair

1.1. Cllr Jim Robbins chaired the meeting, and apologies and absence was noted.

1.2. Vince Barry-Stanners was welcomed to the meeting. The Chair highlighted the intentions of this role going forwards as being able to raise the profile of CCIN Work to its members, and an extended audience.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – online 18 November 2025.

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted **and** those present agreed that this was a correct record. Given that the November 2025 meeting was inquorate, ratification of several decisions had been sought via WhatsApp between meetings.

The following were formally ratified:

- Middlesbrough Council – Full Membership
- Tamworth Borough Council – Full Membership
- Cornwall Labour & Co-op Group – Associate Membership
- Causeway Creative – Affiliate Membership
- Debbie Williams – Supporter
- Approval of 3 x Zoho One CRM licenses (£444 per license per annum) – it was confirmed the PO had been returned and payment would be made within four days.

Agreed: All of the above decisions were formally ratified.

3. Matters Arising from the meeting on 8 September

3.1 CCIN Membership of Co-op Press – PV confirmed that two digital subscriptions per full member council could be provided (one for the officer lead, one for the council leader), delivered via the Co-op News mailing system.

Action: PV to supply details of two contacts (CCIN Officer Lead & Leader) per full member to Coop Press

3.2 Barking & Dagenham (LBBB)– Cllr Robbins reported he had spoken with a LBBB councillor and was working to revisit the Council’s decision to withdraw from the Network. Some cabinet members appeared supportive of remaining. The matter held as a watching brief.

Members continued to support the proposal that John Fahy had suggested at a previous meeting around the opportunity of arranging a meeting with London councils to explore the CCIN offer, as part of discussions around London being a cooperative City.

4. Appointment of Honorary President, CCIN

Cllr Cassidy presented a verbal report in which he outlined that Steve Reed had stepped down as Honorary President on taking up his government responsibilities in July 2025, leaving the position vacant. He recommended appointing Nicola Huckerby, former CCIN Chief Executive, to the role of Honorary President. She is widely known to members, a trusted ambassador, and would provide a valuable sounding board with no formal time commitment required.

The Chair strongly endorsed the recommendation and noted that work was underway to ensure suitable recognition of her work to cooperation in Local Government. Members supported the proposal. It was suggested the formal announcement be made at the AGM on 12 February.

Agreed: EOC approval for the appointment of Nicola Huckerby, to the role of Honorary President.

Action: PV to make suitable arrangements for inclusion into the AGM 2026.

Cllr Patel suggested exploring whether Baroness Sharon Taylor might host an afternoon tea as a gesture of appreciation, given her connection to the network.

Action: Chair to explore appropriate gift and honours nomination support letters from members.

5. Finance and Budget Update

5.1 Finance & General Purposes Group feedback – Cllr Cassidy reported that a Finance & General Purposes Group (F&GPG) meeting had taken place the previous week. Some budget lines remained fluid given the transition from Nicola Huckerby's tenure. Ongoing support from Andrew Huckerby for website management and the Policy Lab application process was discussed and approved for continuation in the short term, with a transition plan to be agreed.

Agreed: Agree transition plan with Andrew Huckerby regarding website/GoDaddy account

5.2 Budget Update - JD reported a positive financial position. Income lines were stable due to conversion of associate members to full membership and new joiners. The IT/software budget line had increased to reflect the Zoho One licence procurement. Some budget lines remained subject to finalisation pending decisions on staffing costs.

5.3 Membership Fees Update - JD reported strong performance on affiliate and associate payments, collected earlier than usual. However, approximately £100,000 remained outstanding in full membership fees. Attendees were encouraged to use the Labour Local Government Conference (8–9 February) to informally chase outstanding payments.

Action: Attendees at Labour Local Government Conference to use Updated membership payments list to follow up outstanding payments.

Discussion took place on risk ahead of the May 2026 local elections. Strategies discussed included targeting Combined Authorities (notably Liverpool City Region and West Yorkshire) to provide more stable, multi-year membership anchors.

Action: Explore multi-pronged approach to encourage Combined Authority membership with Liverpool City Region and West Yorkshire.

5.4. Multi-Year Membership Discounts JD presented the finalised Multi-Year Membership Discount Policy. A 5% discount would be offered to Full Members paying two or more years in advance. Members already benefiting from any other discounts including a Combined Authority concession would not receive an additional discount. The policy was presented as a pilot for Full Members initially.

Agreed: Multi-Year Membership Discount Policy approved and to be offered to Full Members. In effect from 1 January 2026.

Action: Paul Cassidy to communicate this at the Annual General Meeting.

5.5 Ad Hoc Payment Mechanism – JD & PV reported that the number of ad hoc annual payments had been reduced to circa four items (including website hosting and Canva) following Zoho consolidating several previously separate services. Oldham was comfortable processing these. Multi-year payment options to be explored for website hosting and similar services.

Agreed: Mechanism noted. GoDaddy/Microsoft 365 account migration to be resolved as part of Andrew's transition.

5.6. Affiliate and Associate Membership Fee Review – Jonathan Downs presented the finalised fee review. Fees had not risen since they were introduced in 2017. The review identified 19 affiliate members who would see increases, generating a potential £8,000 of additional income. F&GPG had reviewed and supported the new fee structure.

Agreed: New Affiliate and Associate Membership Fee Structure approved. To be implemented from the AGM 2026.

Action: Communicate revised fee structure to affected members including a rationale. [JD]

6. EOC & V&P Board Attendance Update – PV circulated the Attendance report with the meeting pack prior to the meeting. JD reported that the Board attendance had been upgraded to a High-Risk item on the risk register by the F&GPG following concerns about attendance levels at both Boards. It was noted that a number of members were now in breach of the attendance policy.

Discussion took place on whether to enforce the policy given proximity to the May 2026 elections. Members agreed the policy must be applied consistently. Cllr Patel suggested that letters sent to members in breach should be copied to the leader of their council and the chief executive, given the nature of the membership.

Cllr Cassidy confirmed that membership of EOC is personal and not transferable; substitutes are not permitted. Board elections were anticipated for the latter half of 2026, subject to any delay arising from constitutional/legal review processes.

Agreed: Proceed with written correspondence to members in breach of the attendance policy copying in the council leader and chief executive. If no response is received, this will be taken as a decision not to continue.

Action: Identify members in breach and draft letters. Co-ordinate with Chair [PV / JR / PC]

7. Taskforce on the future of the CCIN

7.1 Task List Update – Cllr Paul Cassidy gave an update on the actions. 29 actions complete, a number ongoing, and 10 overdue (several with revised timelines). Members were asked to review actions assigned to them. PC anticipated that several overdue items could be closed before the March 2026 EOC meeting.

Action: All members to review and update their assigned actions on the task list.

7.2 Recruitment update – Cllr Paul Cassidy updated that interim arrangements remained in place, with Pete Vallance's (Engagement / Strategy) contract extended and Vince Barry-Stanners (digital) brought in to support the digital channel. JD would prepare a paper on the procurement issues encountered with Oldham Council, with solutions and recommendations for the March EOC, ahead of a post-election recruitment drive.

Action: JD to prepare a paper on procurement process matters and proposed solutions for March EOC.

7.3 CRM update – Pete Vallance positive progress with Zoho One. Zoho Campaigns had replaced Mailchimp, with six newsletters successfully distributed in the past three months. The platform was being used to host the upcoming AGM and conference at a fraction of previous costs, and that this would also inform proposals for future digital meetings. Noted.

7.4 Service Level Agreement draft targets – Cllr Paul Cassidy reported that draft SLA targets were with Oldham for review. A meeting between PC, JD and the Oldham team would be arranged to agree final targets, with a view to presenting a draft SLA for adoption at the March EOC meeting – before the local election period.

Action: Arrange SLA target meeting with Oldham; bring draft to March EOC. [PC / JD]

7.5 DPS Review and member session – Jonathan Downs reported that the planned January DPS member session had been deferred, as attendance would have been too low immediately post-Christmas. A decision was taken to hold the session around the time of the Annual Conference. The session will be open to both officers and elected members and will be recorded for future use. DPS Round 4 is now open; three applications were received in the last round, of which one is currently being processed.

Action: Organise and schedule DPS member session to coincide with Annual Conference programme. [JD]

8. Legal Subgroup – In the absence of Cllr Stubbs, the Chair and Cllr Cassidy noted that a compelling outstanding SWOT analysis remained the one blocking item before the full legal review package was ready to activate. PC requested that Jim write to Mike Stubbs to establish a timeline, with the aim of having something for the March EOC meeting. If necessary, the work might be reassigned.

Action: Write to Cllr Stubbs to agree a timeline for the SWOT. [PV / JR / PC]

9. Membership Update

9.1 Membership List 1st January 2026 – Noted.

PV reported the membership position as at early January 2026. One affiliate/associate had indicated they would not renew for the coming year. No further changes to report. Transition of Medway and Peterborough was being completed, with quotes being gathered for a future newsletter.

10. Policy Labs & Prototype Funding Timescales

10.1 Case Studies Pack – Call for Case Studies Deadline: 13 March 2026. – Noted.

10.2 Launch of Policy Labs & Prototype Timeline 2026. – Noted.

11. Annual Conference

11.1 Conference Programme. Members were presented with the online conference programme built on Zoho with sessions confirmed and booking website open.

Agreed – Conference Programme approved, and all members to actively promote the bookings website.

Agreed: To make non-members tickets (£30/session) available for the Councils Coop Development Toolkit & CLES Community Wealth Building sessions.

Action: PV to add extra non-member ticket Category to Bookings and find a solution to take payment.

12. AGM 2026

12.1 Draft Agenda – Noted.

12.2 Constitutional Amendments – Cllr Paul Cassidy presented a tracked changes version of the CCIN Constitution, incorporating amendments agreed in principle towards the end of 2025. Key changes included the addition of a contents page, clarified definitions and acronyms, updated language on fee payment timescales, provision for virtual meetings, clarification that EOC approves new members, updated attendance requirements.

Agreed: Constitutional amendments approved for formal ratification at the CCIN AGM on 12 February 2026.

Action: Finalise constitution document (correct minor typographical errors) and include with the AGM papers.

13. Events Calendar – Members noted the up-and-coming events programme.

13.1 Labour Local Government Conference. - 8/9 February 2026 – CCIN has stand and breakout session organised with speakers confirmed. Cllr Robbins, Cllr Cassidy, PV & VBS will be in attendance. Members will be encouraged to attend the CCIN Fringe breakout.

14. Schedule of future EOC meetings: It was noted that anything post May 2026 could be subject to change, the following dates had been agreed for future EOC Meetings.

Agreed:

- **Wednesday 1st July 2026 – Online – 1.30 – 3.30**
- **Wednesday 16th September 2026 – 1.30 – 3.30**

15. Pride in Place Funding Discussion – Members thanked PV for the paper which highlighted that over 20 CCIN Members with more than 52 Pride in Place locations as part of this UK Government Programme. This represents potential investment of £1bn over the next 10 years.

It was noted that in Wales, Cardiff was on their own path with regards to similar funding. Cllr Cassidy shared Inverclyde's experience supporting Greenock.

This represented a significant opportunity to support cooperative placemaking, and it was hoped that a proposal focusing on Pride in Place might be forthcoming in this round of Policy Projects.

Action: PV to baseline contact details for Pride in Place Contacts in each CCIN Member location with a view to developing a community of practice, if colleagues so wished.

15.1 Rochdale Paper - Ben Greenwood presented details of three Pride in Place programmes from within Rochdale.

The Chair thanked colleagues from Rochdale for this submission and looked forward to hearing more at the Pride in Place Session planned as part of the Pride in Place Workshop at the CCIN Conference.

16 Any Other Urgent Business

16.1 E-communications & Platforms Policy – PV raised the opportunity to rationalise digital communications and platforms used by the network. The proposed direction for use of Zoho for Meetings / Webinars will also be included. The existing social media policy (drafted by Cllr Stubbs) was not considered the right document for this purpose, as this is more focussed on conduct while using social media.

Action: PV to draft a one-page summary of the platforms used by CCIN – to act as guidance for elected members and staff.

16.2 Government Call for Evidence, Cooperative Development Support – PV informed members that he had attended a roundtable event organised by Cooperatives UK to assist in their formation of a suitable response. Due to the forthcoming deadline members felt it was achievable for Cllr Robbins to provide a response in his capacity as Chair, CCIN.

Agreed: Cllr J Robbins, provide a submission to the government call for evidence.

17 Date of Next meetings

- **10-12 February 2026:** CCIN Annual Conference (Online)
- **12 February 2026 (2.00pm)** CCIN Annual General Meeting (Online)

- **23 March 2026 (13.30pm)** EOC/V&P Joint meeting to consider Policy Project Bids
- **1 July 2026 (13.30pm)** EOC Meeting
- **16 September 2026 (13.30pm)** EOC Meeting

Meeting End: 14.57pm

PJV