



Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

Review of the Year

August 2023 – July 2024



Building resilient neighbourhoods

57 new Case Studies illustrating some of the ways Cooperative Councils are working with local people to build strong and resilient neighbourhoods

Over 530 Case Studies at: councils.coop/case-studies

councils.coop

 Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

 People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

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Welcome from Cllr Louise Gittins



Leader of Cheshire West & Chester Council
Chair of the Cooperative Councils'
Innovation Network (CCIN)



The Network has grown from strength to strength. There are now 119 Members with 23 Supporters

The Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network is the fastest-growing cross-party network in local government. When elected as Chair of the Network at the end of 2022, I followed in the footsteps of Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, recently appointed as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

The Network was founded in 2012 by Steve Reed OBE MP, now Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Jim McMahon OBE MP, Minister of State for English Devolution and Local Government and Baroness Taylor. These three former council leaders came together with a vision of demonstrating the power of cooperation in action in councils and communities and sharing the unique energy that cooperation brings with fellow councillors and their councils. I don't think that, twelve years later, they could have imagined the collaboration and innovation that characterises the Network today.

The Network has grown from strength to strength. There are now 119 Members with 23 Supporters, including Adur, Tamworth, and Peterborough Councils, who, along with Edinburgh and Medway, were Associate Members (as Opposition Groups) and are now transitioning to Full Membership, having taken control of their councils.

Congratulations to former Network Council Leaders Shaun Davies MP (Telford & Wrekin) and Paul Foster MP (South Ribble), who now represent their constituents in Parliament. The new government gives us a fantastic opportunity to push forward and highlight the role of cooperative values in delivering their missions for the country: community energy projects, fair employment, community wealth building and much more. Change is happening, and the future is starting to feel hopeful and full of promise for everyone.

We took the opportunity to send out Congratulations Cards with the latest Case Studies pack to over 150 Leaders, MPs, Elected Mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners after the Elections. These packs demonstrate how cooperative councils work with local people to build strong and resilient neighbourhoods and show what local government achieves daily.

The day after the General Election, I was offered and accepted the incredible opportunity to join the Local Government Association as its first female labour chair. Sadly, as a result, I have only been able to serve one term as Chair of the CCIN. Rest assured, I will continue to advocate for you and work to highlight the fantastic cross-party innovations happening within communities across the UK.

I have had the pleasure of chairing our Executive Oversight Committee, including using our membership subscriptions to fund policy labs and prototypes, giving our Councils the space to innovate without putting scarce council funds at risk. We have developed and launched groundbreaking cooperative policy documents on topics as diverse as Arts and Culture for Social Cohesion, led by North Herts District Council, and 'This is not a Manual on Coproduction' led by Rochdale Council. We also organised a Study Visit to Emilia Romagna, our second overseas visit, where 25 Members and Officers discovered a truly cooperative region for themselves.

We had exhibition stands at the Liberal Democrat and Labour Party Conferences in Autumn 2023. We delivered a groundbreaking Annual Conference hosted by Sunderland City Council in November, which included Plenary sessions on 'Supporting Children and Young People the Cooperative Way' and a 'Cooperative Council's Manifesto for the General Election'. There were 15 workshops led by a range of Network Members and an exhibition supported by our Affiliate Members. The early General Election took its toll on the events in the first half of 2024; noticeably, the LGA Conference did not occur during our Report year.



We delivered a groundbreaking Annual Conference hosted by Sunderland City Council in November

Progress has been made on the 2024-6 Strategy, which now includes a 'plan on a page' and Key results for the three focus areas: 'A cooperative network comprising cooperative councils working to promote cooperative policy and practice across the country'.

Our cooperative values and principles remain clear and strong, supported by our Values and Principles Board, which has membership from across the cooperative movement. Thank you to all our dedicated V&P Members who are currently supporting 17 live Policy Prototypes and Policy Labs through the delivery and approval process.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to our Network with commitment, energy, and passion for our values over the last two years and the ten years before. Working with such a dedicated core team has been an honour and a privilege. Thank you to Jonathan Downs from Oldham Council, our Accountable Body, who oversees our budget and governance, and finally, a massive thank you to the amazing Nicola Huckerby, who keeps us focused and arranges everything; without her, the Network would not be the one we have today.

July 2024



Cooperative solutions in local government

How the CCIN and Cooperative Councils are addressing
the challenges in our communities

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-projects

Introduction

Borne out of austerity in 2012, the CCIN is today the fastest-growing cross-party Network in local government. As a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association, we are proud that both councillors and officers are engaged in our work, making it as simple as possible to maximise membership benefits. Our collective work is crucial in facing the cost-of-living crisis and the public sector's financial challenges.

Members of the Network are local authorities committed to reforming their work by building an equal partnership with local people and driving real innovation.

Town, Parish, Community Councils, and Opposition Groups are welcomed as Associate Members. Opposition Groups take control of their councils and are supported through a year of transition to become Full Council Members. Our Affiliate Members are a growing group of values-based non-governmental organisations and corporations wishing to show their support and engage in developing innovative Cooperative Councils.

Being a Network Member has meant sharing our developing good practices and supporting one another by spotlighting our cooperative values and principles. As we enter our second decade, it is clear from discussions that Members

are eager to see more of our cooperative ideas and approaches percolate throughout their organisations to build a movement of cooperative ideals within local government. With the election of a new Government, Members are excited for the opportunity to showcase the difference that the Cooperative Council's approach to service delivery is making in communities. Seeing how the Network has become a focus for creating positive change for the benefit of communities across the UK is inspiring.

Over the last decade, the Network has reinvested more than £400k in membership fees for Member-led policy projects and organised international study visits for Members to experience cooperative working across Europe. As we move forward, it is the perfect time to review how we invest those funds to build a broad range of champions in cooperative service delivery and thematic areas. This will ensure that the learning from this policy work supports council decision-making across the Network. The Network is committed to investing in its Members and working towards creating positive change in the community.

Embedding ownership of this strategy across the Network is critical to creating a cooperative council movement.



48 Councils → **12.1m Citizens** → **£19.8bn Budget**



CCIN Statement of Values and Principles



Our **Values** are what we believe in

While not a registered cooperative, the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network has adopted the Cooperative **Values** developed by the International Cooperative Alliance:

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Our **Principles** guide the way we, and our Members, put our **Values** into action

The Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network endorses the Principles of the International Cooperative Alliance:

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence

- Education, training, and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

In acknowledging that councils are not in themselves registered cooperatives, we and our Members have developed Principles that have grown from those of the International Cooperative Alliance and are relevant within the context of local government:

The icons (right) are used to indicate how Cooperative Councils are putting our Cooperative Principles into practice, demonstrating the 'cooperative difference' in the work that they are doing.

1. **Social partnership** – We will strengthen the cooperative partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises, and Councils, based on a shared sense of responsibility for well-being and mutual benefit.
2. **Democratic engagement** – We will support the active engagement of the full range of residents in decision-making and priority-setting.
3. **Co-production** – We will develop systems that enable citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning public services and determining public resource use.
4. **Enterprise and social economy** – We will promote community-based approaches to economic development that focus on supporting the creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and providing an environment for cooperative and mutual enterprises to thrive.
5. **Maximising social value** – We will support the development of a framework and criteria for social value, giving substance to the concept and supporting Councils with the tools to ensure better local social and economic outcomes.
6. **Community leadership and a new role for councillors** – We will explore ways for Councils to act as a platform for helping the community to contribute to local outcomes, and to re-think the role of councillors as community connectors, brokers, and leaders.
7. **New models of meeting priority needs** – In exploring new ways of meeting the priority needs of our communities we will encourage models, such as cooperatives and mutuals, which give greater influence and voice to staff and users.
8. **Innovation** – We will embrace innovation in how we work with local communities to drive positive change.
9. **Learning** – We will capture and 'expand' the experience and learning from individual projects and approaches to encourage broader application of cooperative principles within individual Member Councils and across the Network.
10. **Walking the talk** – As a membership organisation, we will make this statement of our principles operational by:
 - Cooperation among Members: Our Members work together to help each other implement our values, sharing experiences and learning
 - Openness of membership: Full, Associate and Affiliate Membership is open to any qualifying Council, organisation or individual who shares our values and is committed to putting them into action
 - Co-production of the Network's work: Members help shape the Network's work programme and the content of events and written products
 - Action-focused: The Network is a vehicle for helping Councils translate cooperative values and principles into policy and practice
 - Membership-based: The Network is majority funded by modest membership subscriptions from its Member Councils, Associates and Affiliates
 - Non-party-political: Members share the belief that working cooperatively within and across communities holds the key to tackling today's challenges



Highlights of the Year

By the end of July 2024, there were 48 Full Council Members, 22 Associate Members (including thirteen Town, Parish, and Community Councils), and 49 Affiliate Members. Members (excluding GMCA and those transitioning from Opposition Groups into Full Council Membership) represent 12.1 million citizens and control a budget of £19.8 billion. There are also 23 Supporters, both individuals and organisations.

CCIN's profile has continued to grow. There has been a steady increase in interest from across the Network in participating in Policy Labs, leading to a broader contribution from Network Members in municipal policy development.



Mayor Caroline Woodley – Hackney Council at Labour Local Govt Conference Feb 2024

Highlights include:

- Approved funding for three Policy Labs
 - Cooperative Values driven AI – led by Wigan Council
 - BEING Cooperative: towards a model of brave and inclusive governance in local govt – led by Rochdale Council
 - Taking a Cooperative approach to tackling health inequalities – led by Westminster City Council
- Approved funding for five Policy Prototypes
 - Employability and Skills Project – Hackney Council
 - Empowering communities through crowdfunding – Cheshire West & Chester Council
 - Employability and Skills Project – Brent Council
 - Improving Accessibility – Lewisham Council
 - Empowering residents within housing estates to adopt sustainable behaviours – Westminster City Council
- Published 534 Case Studies on our website: www.councils.coop
- Organised a Study Visit to Emilia-Romagna for 25 Councillors, Officers and Affiliate Members
- Launched two Policy Lab Reports at the Annual Conference
 - Arts and Culture for Social Cohesion
 - This is not a Manual on Coproduction
- Published a Case Study Pack of 53 new Case Studies
- Published a Welcome Pack, updated the Introduction to the Network and funded projects
- Three Opposition Groups took control of their council in May 2024 and are transitioning to Full Council Membership
- New Full Members: Hounslow Council, Manchester City Council, Warrington Council and Oxfordshire County Council, the first county council to join the Network
- New Associate Members: Central Swindon North Parish Council, Kidsgrove Labour Group, Loggerheads Parish Council
- New Affiliate Members: Cooperative Heritage Trust, Plinth, Refernet and Social adVentures

Membership

In 2023/4, Membership increased across all categories. Total numbers grew from 138 Members and Supporters to 142 by 31 July 2024. We have Green, Labour, Labour-Coop, Liberal Democrat, and SNP-led councils in membership.

119 Members
23 Supporters

48  **Member**
Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

22  **Associate Member**
Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

49  **Affiliate Member**
Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network



Delegates at the Labour Local Govt Conference Feb 2024 (left to right):

- Cllr Sue Woodward, *Burntwood Town Council*
- Cllr Louise Gittins *Leader – Cheshire West & Chester Council*
- Cllr Sital Punja *Hillingdon Labour Group*
- Cllr Chris Penberthy *Plymouth City Council*
- Mayor Woodley *Hackney Council*

48 Full Members as of 31 July 2023 (45 in 2023)

Adur District Council*	Newcastle City Council
Barking & Dagenham Council	Newham Council
Birmingham City Council	North Hertfordshire District Council
Brent Council	Oldham Council
Bury Council	Oxford City Council
Cardiff Council	Oxfordshire County Council
Cheshire West & Chester Council	Peterborough City Council*
Darlington Council	Plymouth City Council
City of Edinburgh Council*	Preston City Council
Glasgow City Council	Rochdale Borough Council
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)	South Ribble Borough Council
Royal Borough of Greenwich	South Tyneside Council
Hackney Council	Stevenage Borough Council
Hounslow Council	Stroud District Council
Hull City Council	Sunderland City Council
Inverclyde Council	Swansea Council
Kirklees Council	Swindon Borough Council
Knowsley Council	Tameside Council
Lewes District Council	Tamworth Borough Council*
Lewisham Council	Telford and Wrekin Council
Liverpool City Council	Trafford Council
Manchester City Council	Warrington Borough Council
Medway Council*	Westminster City Council
Milton Keynes City Council	Wigan Council

*Councils transitioning from Associate Membership (Opposition Group) into Full Council Membership following election success.

22 Supporters as of 31 July 2024 (22 in 2023)

Individuals

Stephen Barry-Stanners
Vince Barry-Stanners
Michael Bell
Andy Boys
Cllr Paul Byrne
Cllr Richard Eason
Sandra Hamilton
Kevan John Hawker
Christin Marshall
Cllr Keith Martin
Cllr Thomas Mewies
Scotty Montgomery

Rani Moorcroft MBE
Ben Procter
Cllr Mike Roberts
Peter Sagar
Philip Watson

Organisations

Community Catalysts
The Finance Innovation Hub
Resonance Ltd
South West Peninsula Party Council
Southwark Co-operative Party

22 Associate Members as of 31 July 2024

(23 in 2023)

Town, Parish and Community Councils



Central Swindon North Parish
 Council



Loggerheads Parish Council



Opposition Groups

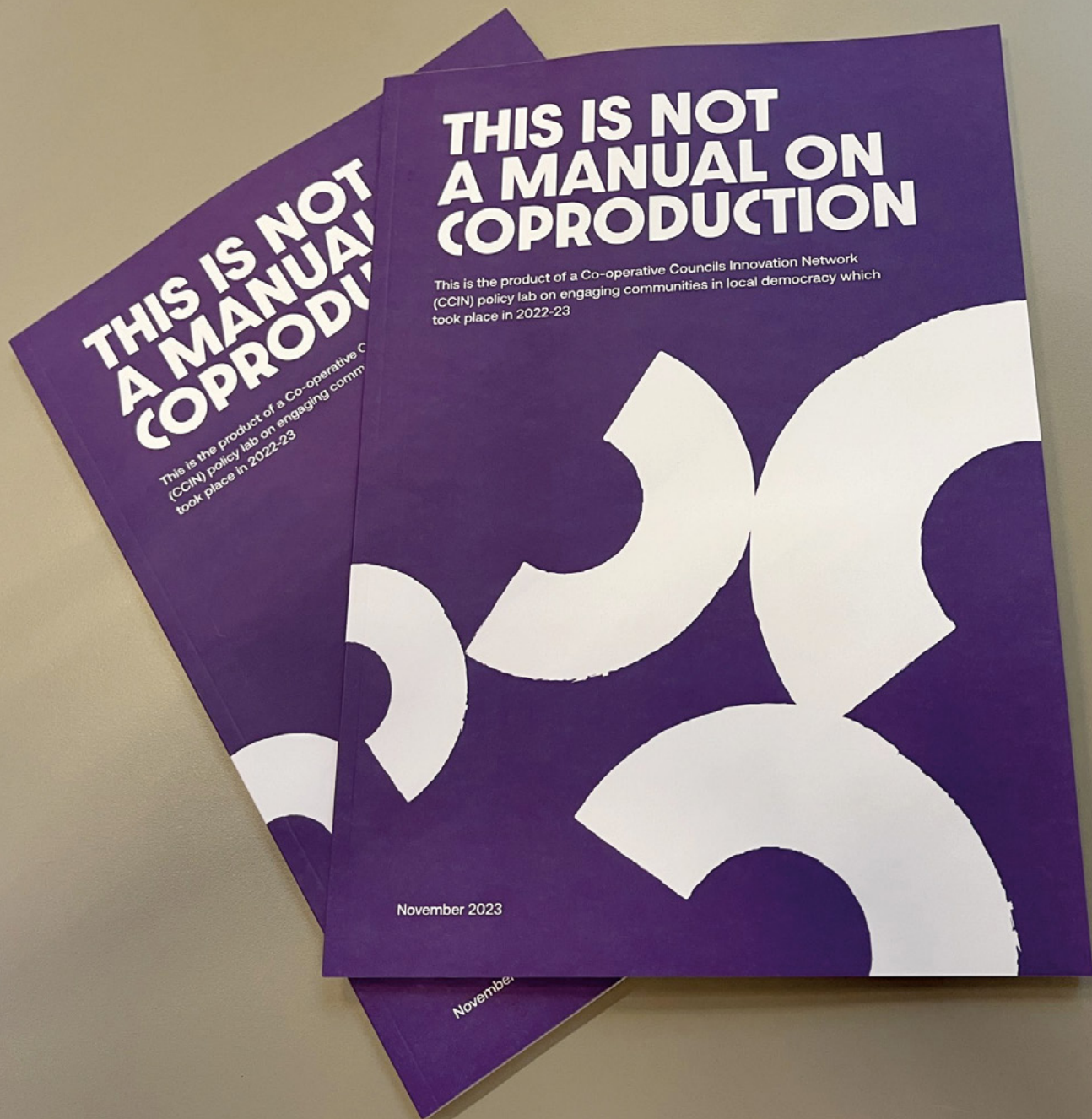


Kidsgrove Labour Group



49 Affiliate Members as of 31 July 2024
 (49 in 2023)





This is not a manual on coproduction

An encyclopaedia of ideas about how local government is engaging, and can engage, communities in local democracy

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-Democratising-Policy

Governance and Structure

The Network is politically led, with elected councillors chairing and forming the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) and Values and Principles (V&P) Board. Representatives of our Affiliate Membership are also elected to positions on both EOC and V&P. The V&P Board also comprises representatives from the cooperative and trade union sectors.

Elections for places on the Governance panels are held every two years and will be held again in Autumn 2024. To find out more about the process, visit bit.ly/ccin-eoc.

Executive Oversight Committee

The Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) holds delegated powers to manage Network affairs on behalf of all Members.

The purpose of the EOC is to:

- Drive forward Cooperative Policy Development on behalf of Network Members.
- Make key decisions on Network priorities, for example, setting the scope of Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes.
- Oversee the development, review, approval and implementation of the CCIN's strategic direction.
- Raise the CCIN's profile, develop our influence and strengthen our policy impact.
- Oversee the Network budget, allocate spending, and sign off on the CCIN's annual accounts.
- Ensure the Values and Principles Board is resourced and supported to perform its functions.
- Manage the Network's reputation, considering issues, including Member behaviour, which may impact the reputation of the CCIN.

All meetings this year were held online. Minutes of the EOC can be read here: bit.ly/ccin-minutes.

Membership of the Executive Oversight Committee comprises:

- Up to Six Member Council representatives
- One representative from the Associate Membership (voted for by those Members)
- One representative from the Affiliate Membership (voted for by those Members)
- Chair of the Executive Oversight Committee (Full Member)
- Vice-Chair of Executive Oversight Committee (Full Member)
- A representative from the Accountable Body
- Chair of the Values and Principles Board (Ex Officio)

Members of the Executive Oversight Committee 2023-4



Cllr Louise Gittins
Chair of CCIN
Cheshire West & Chester Council



Cllr Peter Bradbury
Vice Chair of CCIN
Cabinet Member, Cardiff Council



Cllr Graeme Miller
Leader
Sunderland City Council



Cllr Anthony Okereke
Leader
Royal Borough of Greenwich



Cllr Paul Cassidy
Vice-Convenor
Inverclyde Council



Cllr Sue Smith
Cabinet Member
Rochdale MB Council



Cllr Cathy Scott
Kirklees Council



Cllr Kelly Middleton
Cabinet Member
Telford & Wrekin Council



Cllr Barbara Brownridge
Cabinet Member
Oldham Council



Cllr Clare Gamble
Chair
Billingham Town Council



Jonathan Bland
Managing Director – Social
Business International/E3M



Cllr Sarah Doyle
Chair of V&P
Liverpool City Council

We want to thank **Cllr Graeme Miller** – Former Leader of Sunderland City Council, and **Cllr Cathy Scott** – Former Leader of Kirklees Council, who stepped down from the EOC during the year.

Values & Principles Board

The **Values & Principles Board** has overall responsibility for Values and Principles oversight within the Cooperative Councils' Innovation Network. More here: bit.ly/ccin-vp.

Individuals from the national cooperative sector sit on our Values and Principles Board, providing insights and expertise.

The June 2023 meeting was held in person, and all others were held online. The minutes can be read here: bit.ly/ccin-minutes.

As Vice Chairs of the Values & Principles Board, we are confident that we can look back on the previous year and feel optimistic about the work we are supporting. The Conference in Sunderland was an amazing opportunity to contribute to conversations about the values in cooperative working. The energy from this flowed into exciting and far-reaching Policy and Prototypes projects that we are supporting this year. Each demonstrates the practical ways our Members can make a cooperative difference on the ground. This work provides the opportunity to showcase, share and celebrate different ways of approaching issues which we are confident will pay huge dividends to our communities.

The Values and Principles Board has gone from strength to strength, and we thank all our Board Members who have served alongside us over the last year. We'd also like to pay tribute to our outgoing Chair, Cllr Sarah Doyle, whose cooperative insights have guided our progress. Particular thanks go to Nicola Huckerby, who is at the heart of our organisation and makes the Network possible.

We are enthusiastic about our Network's continuing growth and the potential for the new government to advocate meaningful cooperative solutions to the challenges communities are facing.

Cllr Mike Stubbs *Newcastle-Under-Lyme Labour Group*

Claire Ward *Anthony Collins Solicitors*

Vice Chairs of the Values & Principles Board



Membership of the Values & Principles Board comprises:

- Chair
- Representatives from up to **five** Full Member Councils
- Representatives from up to **five** Associate Members
- Representatives from up to **three** Affiliate Members
- Up to **five** representatives from the cooperative movement
- A representative from the TUC

We want to thank the following Members who served on the Board during the year and who helped support all aspects of the Network's activities:

- Cllr Ajaz Rehman – Oxford City Council
- Cllr Nathan Pardoe – Winsford Town Council
- Gavin Callaghan – Beartas
- Rachel Walker – Trueman Change
- Neil Calvert – Co-operative College

The Values & Principles Board as at 31 July 2024



Cllr Sarah Doyle
Chair of V&P
Liverpool City Council



Cllr Joyce Welsh
Vice Chair
South Tyneside Council



Cllr Sandra Barr
Stevenage Borough Council



Cllr Mili Patel
Brent Council



Cllr Jacky Alty
South Ribble Council



Cllr Michael Stubbs
Vice Chair
N-U-L Labour & Coop Group



Cllr Peter Curling
Hillingdon Labour Group



Cllr Sue Woodward
Burntwood Town Council



Cllr David Darkin
Llanelli Town Council



Cllr Chris Bain
Tamworth Labour & Coop Group



Claire Ward
Anthony Collins LLP



Andrew Laird
Mutual Ventures



Jo Hannon
Your Co-op



Rebecca Harvey
Co-op News



Cheryl Barrott
Co-operatives UK



Richard McCready
Co-operative Party



Jo White
Co-operative Futures



Liz McIvor
Co-operative Heritage Trust



Paul Bell
Unison

Finance and General Purposes Group

A Finance and General Purposes Group was introduced in March 2024 to strengthen the Network's processes regarding budget accountability and finance.

The Members of that Group are:

- Chair – Cllr Peter Bradbury – Vice Chair of the Executive Oversight Committee | Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty, Equalities & Public Health (Tackling Poverty & Supporting Young People)
- Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Accountable Body Lead | Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Oldham Council
- Cllr Mili Patel – Deputy Leader, Brent Council

- Cllr Mike Stubbs – Vice Chair of Values & Principles Board | Newcastle-under-Lyme Labour Group
- Cllr Ruth Bennett – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Transformation, Liverpool City Council
- Cllr Alistair Willoughby – Executive Member for Community and Partnerships, North Herts District Council
- Jonathan Downs – Accountable Body Officer Lead | Corporate Policy Lead – Oldham Council
- Nicola Huckerby, CCIN Operations Lead, will attend as required.

Officer Group

Monthly Officer meetings have allowed Officer Leads and others the space to share experiences and best practices with peers. All Council Officers are invited to join these calls, which Jonathan Downs, the Corporate Policy Lead at Oldham Council, chairs on behalf of the Accountable Body.

Operations Lead and Network Support

Network support is provided by Nicola Huckerby, who manages day-to-day operations and provides a central coordination point for the Network. During Nicola's time with the CCIN, the Network has grown from 19 councils to 142 councils, political groups, organisations and supporters in the last eight years.



CCIN Stand at the Labour Party Conference October 2023 (left to right):

- Cllr Bev Craig – Leader of Manchester City Council
- Cllr Eamonn O'Brien – Leader of Bury Council
- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN
- Cllr Peter Marland – Leader of Milton Keynes City Council



Art and Culture for social cohesion

Supporting the role of culture is vital to building social cohesion. Culture is essential for avoiding and resolving conflicts.

Find out more: bit.ly/CCIN-arts-culture

councils.coop

 Co-operative Councils
Innovation Network

 People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

Being a Cooperative Council

Council Leaders have identified some key themes and actions councils can take to grow their local economies. This is not an exhaustive list, but it gives a good framework for these activities across our membership.

There are two key themes:

Community Wealth Building

- Develop an Inclusive Economy Charter
- Promote a progressive procurement policy
- Support the creation of a regional mutual/ community bank by investing
- Work with local anchor institutions to buy and recruit local
- Regulate rent and rates for 'local' businesses in council-owned property
- Offer business rate rebates for those businesses that become Living Wage Accredited
- Champion Local Employment schemes
- Have insourcing Council Services as an objective

Cooperative Placemaking

- Develop a cooperative development strategy
- Establish a cooperative development network
- Commit to community engagement in local decision making including participatory budgeting
- Invest in local community production, particularly those focusing on community energy to tackle the climate emergency
- Promote the circular economy
- Support local enterprises to convert into coops/ worker coops
- Have an Asset Transfer policy to manage land and assets which support Community Land Trusts

To support these **key themes**, the CCIN offers a **training programme** developed by the Co-operative College for councillors and officers to help explain the concepts. More here: bit.ly/ccin_training



Labour Party
Conference,
Liverpool – October
2023 (left to right):

- Cllr Louise Gittins –
Leader, Cheshire
West and Chester
- Nicola Huckerby –
CCIN

Funded projects 2024

Each year, CCIN Members can apply to deliver projects on behalf of the Network. Full Councils are encouraged to submit bids for projects that can be delivered in partnership with other Members looking to find cooperative policy solutions to local government challenges. These projects attract up to £20,000. Smaller projects, known as Policy Prototypes, are defined to a specific locality and can attract up to £2,000.

Policy Lab Updates

For 2024, we welcomed Bids from across the Network and approved three Policy Lab Bids:

1. Cooperative Values driven AI – led by Wigan Council
2. BEING Cooperative: towards a model of brave and inclusive governance in local govt – led by Rochdale Council
3. Taking a Cooperative approach to tackling health inequalities – led by Westminster City Council

In addition, we also increased the budget for the Emilia-Romagna Study Visit, allowing extra delegates to participate

Policy Prototype Updates

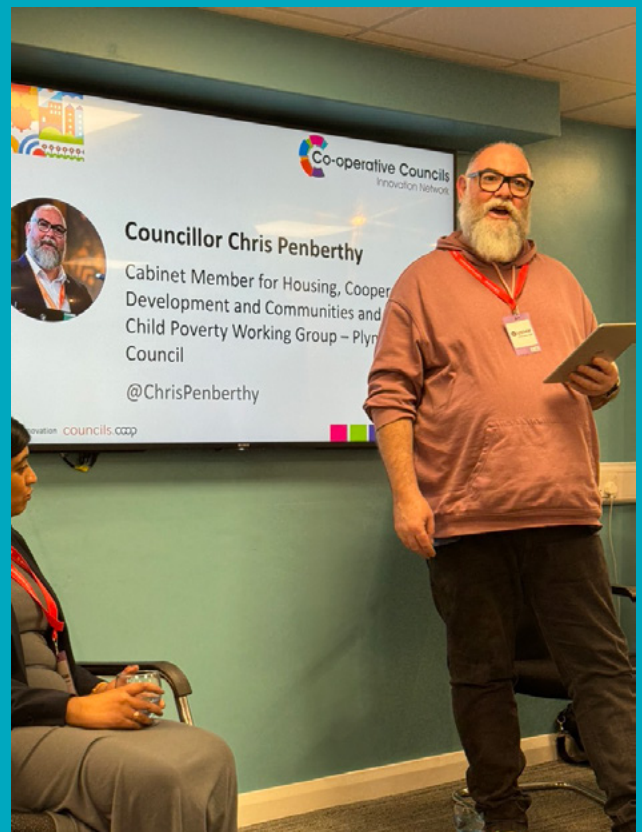
For 2024, we had another open call for Policy Prototype projects and approved five projects:

1. Fairer Help – Hackney Council
2. Empowering communities through crowdfunding – Cheshire West & Chester Council
3. Employability and Skills Project – Brent Council
4. Improving Accessibility – Lewisham Council
5. Empowering residents within housing estates to adopt sustainable behaviours – Westminster City Council



Labour Party Conference, Liverpool – October 2023
(left to right):

- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN
- The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP



Cllr Chris Penberthy – Plymouth City Council at the Labour Local Govt Conference February 2024

Report launches

This is not a Manual on Coproduction (2023)

This project was an extension of a Policy Prototype undertaken in Rochdale borough, which developed a toolkit for community engagement. A group of CCIN Councils, Affiliates, and citizens from various places gathered to share their practice and experience around Co-production. Through workshops and enquiries, they developed an encyclopaedia of ideas about how local government is and can engage communities in local democracy. The product is a reflection and a set of tools to help those who want to think and act cooperatively when making things happen together.

The group used the CCIN approach, which challenges Cooperative Councils to put their cooperative principles into practice to demonstrate the 'cooperative difference' in their work. The CCIN **values and principles** have been the filter through which this project was run to enable the group to think about and share approaches to participation, coproduction and democracy that have helped support the work of cooperative councils, the communities they have worked with, and the CCIN Affiliates who participated in this policy lab.



Thank you to **Rochdale Borough Council** for leading this project and to the following Members who participated in it: **Anthony Collins Solicitors, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Kirklees Council, Oldham Council, Rochdale Borough Council, South Tyneside Council, Sunderland City Council, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Trafford Council, Trueman Change, Unlimited Potential, and Wigan Council.**

The report was launched in November 2023 at the Annual Conference in Sunderland.

bit.ly/CCIN-Democratising-Policy



Arts and Culture for Social Cohesion

This project aimed to raise the profile of arts and culture events and activities locally. Culture and the arts can drive development, social cohesion, and change. At the heart of social cohesion is social inclusion. Communities with low social cohesion often need more involvement or access to civic engagement, economic opportunity, and social participation. Supporting the role of culture is vital to building social cohesion.

Culture is essential for avoiding and resolving conflicts. It is an ideal means of communicating across language barriers, empowering people, and facilitating social cohesion, including among refugees, migrants, and host populations. It prevents the marginalisation of people based on their cultural identity, socioeconomic status, age, and other factors.

Thank you to North Herts District Council for leading this project and to the following Members who participated in it: Cardiff Council, Oldham Council, and Stevenage Borough Council.

The report was launched in November 2023 at the Annual Conference in Sunderland.

bit.ly/CCIN-arts-culture



Study Visit to Emilia-Romagna

The CCIN funded a study visit to Emilia-Romagna. The region is known worldwide for its dense network of cooperatives that contribute to 30% of the region's GDP and involve 2/3rds of the population as Members. Cooperatives in Emilia-Romagna are present in most sectors of the economy, including retail, agribusiness, social services, financial services, insurance, and transportation. Learning from other network members is an important benefit of Network Membership, and this visit allowed elected Members and Officers to see first-hand how a cooperative region operates. During the three-day visit, 25 delegates from across the UK met the Presidents of several Italian cooperatives.

Thank you to Nicola Huckerby for organising the visit. The following organisations participated:

Action Together, Birmingham City Council, COOP Brand Ltd, Co-op News, Cooperative and Mutual Solutions, Inverclyde Council, Liverpool City Council, Oldham Council, Oxford City Council, Preston City Council, Royal Borough of Greenwich, South Ribble Council, Stevenage Borough Council, Sunderland City Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Wigan Council.

The post-conference report and presentations can be found here:

bit.ly/CCIN-Emilia-Romagna

Communications and Marketing

Meetings and events

In July 2023, we kicked off our Coop Option Training with an introduction to alternative business models and the related support landscape. A funded Policy Lab, these online sessions were organised by Kirklees Council and delivered by Stir to Action and Coop Culture. The CCIN funded 84 places across three courses to increase council officers' and other stakeholders' understanding of the 'cooperative option'.

In-depth training was delivered in September and October 2023, covering:

- Finance options to support alternative business models;
- Governance models.

In the summer of 2023, the CCIN commissioned the Ideas Alliance, an Affiliate Member, engaging Members in one-to-one interviews, online sessions, and two workshops during the Annual Conference.

We had exhibition stands at the Liberal Democrat in Bournemouth and the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool in the Autumn of 2023. Sunderland City Council hosted a groundbreaking Annual

Conference in November, which included Plenary sessions on 'Supporting Children and Young People the Cooperative Way' and a 'Cooperative Council's Manifesto for the General Election'. There were 15 workshops, the most yet, led by a range of Network Members, and an exhibition was supported by our Affiliate Members.

2024 began with a celebration at Westminster City Council following their decision to join the Network with an event involving sector partners. A Fringe event was held at the Labour Local Government Conference at Warwick University in February with the theme 'A Cooperative Council Manifesto for the General Election'. In June, we exhibited at the Cooperative Congress in Birmingham.

The early General Election impacted the number of events in the first half of 2024; noticeably, the LGA Conference was delayed until the Autumn. Traditionally, that event has secured several new Members. The timing of the General Elections also meant many elected Members were naturally focusing on their Constituency and Ward priorities for much of the first six months 2024 and not looking to online events.



Labour Party Conference, Liverpool – October 2023

(left to right):

- Cllr David Darkin – Llanelli Town Council
- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN
- Cllr Mike Stubbs – Newcastle-Under-Lyme Labour Group
- Cllr Paul Bell – Lewisham Council

All images from the Labour Party Conference, Liverpool – October 2023



- Jim McMahon OBE MP, Minister of State for English Devolution and Local Government
- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN

All images from the Labour Party Conference, Liverpool – October 2023



- Cllr Mike Stubbs – Newcastle-Under-Lyme Labour Group
- Preet Kaur Gill MP



- Seema Malhotra MP – Parliamentary Under Secretary (Home Office)
- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN



- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN
- Steve Reed OBE MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Publications

Participation in our core publication is a crucial benefit we encourage all Members to take advantage of. The 2024 Case Study Pack included 57 new Case Studies from 53 Members. We were delighted with the response as this is our main print for conferences and events. Thank you to everyone who submitted.

The third edition of our **Introduction to the Network and Funded Projects** pamphlet was produced before the Labour Local Government Conference. Updated each year, it includes adverts for every Policy Lab funded by the Network.

New for 2024, a printed **Welcome Pack** has been designed for distribution digitally and in print, which, for the first time, brings together all the Member Benefits, making it much easier for Members to maximise their investment in the Network.

Knowledge Hub and WhatsApp Groups

The Officer Network has started using the LGA Knowledge Hub as an online space where Officers can upload and share documents, ideas, and challenges.

Officer Members have been seeking a safe, convenient way to communicate and share information. WhatsApp is valuable for immediate conversations, but given that many Officers only have WhatsApp on their personal phones, sharing documents is difficult. The space on khub.net is a closed hub, open to all CCIN Member Councils' Officers to join. Current discussions are around:

- The development of the CCIN strategy
- Artificial Intelligence
- Election manifestos
- Spacehive and social value

WhatsApp groups have been a timely way to share our news. We're keen to encourage more Officers to join the Officer Network WhatsApp Group and more Leaders/Cooperative Leads to join their Groups. To join either Group, please WhatsApp Nicola Huckerby on 07813 687 292. You can remove yourself at any time.



Newsletters

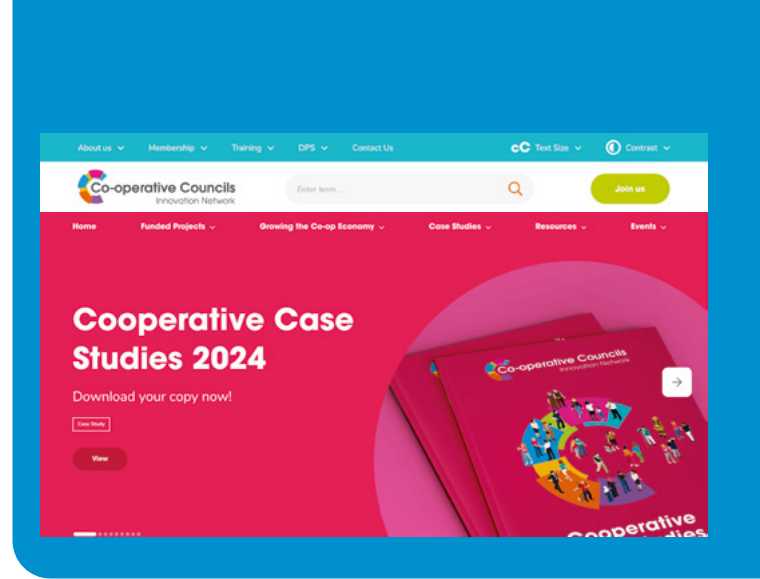
The Chair's Newsletter lands in 1,300 inboxes across eight audiences each month. We're always looking for content, so please send your news by the 24th of each month. In addition to the monthly newsletter, 25 Mailings were sent to at least one audience last year. A vital strand of the 2023-26 Strategy is to 'Support existing CCIN Members to deepen engagement about cooperative practice throughout their own organisation'. An essential element of this is encouraging more sign-ups for the monthly Newsletters and greater engagement with the articles shared (more opens and clicks).

CCIN website

The councils.coop website is the first point of reference for Members of the Network to find resources to help develop and grow the cooperative economy. The website highlights what it means to 'Be a Cooperative Council' and our Values and Principles. It uses the icons developed to illustrate how the delivered policy work and case studies resonate with the Network's Principles.

Features include:

- Fully searchable content
- Funded Projects, Published and Active, which can be searched by Member, Date and Principles supported
- Member listings with a location map and links to Affiliate Member websites
- Membership Benefits and Application forms
- Archived events, newsletters and projects
- Functionality for Members to upload their Case Studies and Events
- Resources section, which includes Publications, Newsletters, News and Blogs
- 535 Case Studies, searchable by Member, Region, Principles supported and Categories:
 - Climate Change and Environment
 - Community
 - Community Wealth Building
 - Cooperative Placemaking
 - Education & Training
 - Finance
 - Governance
 - Health & Social Care
 - Housing
 - Jobs
 - Poverty
 - Social Outcomes
 - Strategy
 - Young People



August 2023 – July 2024 event calendar



Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

In April 2020, the Network launched its DPS. As Cooperative Councils, our Members are at the cutting edge of policy innovation – and it can be a tough place to be. Councils often need to move quickly and flexibly to be on the front foot when it comes to ‘doing things differently’. Sometimes it is necessary to bring in extra capacity and specific expertise to do this, and there can also be a need to seek independent challenge to test assumptions and policy design. The CCIN recognises this and wants its Members to be as enabled as possible to develop practical policy solutions as quickly and informed as possible – and this is where the DPS comes in.

A DPS is an entirely electronic system for purchasing goods, works, or services. Unlike a traditional framework, suppliers can apply to join at any time. It is an ‘open market’ solution designed to give buyers access to a pool of pre-qualified suppliers.

Our multi-supplier DPS allows all CCIN Members and Associate Members (and the CCIN itself) to select from a specialist, prescribed pool of organisations to help develop policy, implement prototypes and build capacity in communities and inside the organisation.

The DPS period runs from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025. The CCIN website has a User Guide and details of who is on the DPS: councils.coop/dps.

The following organisations were on the DPS on 31 July 2024:

- 4OC
- Anthony Collins Solicitors
- Branding.coop
- Centrifuge
- CLES
- Climate Positive
- Collaborate CIC
- Co-operative College
- Co-operative Futures
- Co-operatives UK
- Crellin Consulting
- Human Engine
- Ideas Alliance
- Made Open
- Mutual Ventures
- Peopletoo
- People, Potential, Possibilities
- RedQuadrant
- Ruby Star Associates
- Stir to Action
- The Behaviouralist
- Trueman Change
- Unlimited Potential



Labour Party Conference, Liverpool – October 2023
(left to right):

- Nicola Huckerby – CCIN
- Cllr Mike Stubbs – Newcastle-Under-Lyme Labour Group
- Paul Foster MP
- Cllr Aniela Byllinksi Gelder – South Ribble Council



What works in community asset transfer?

What are the barriers?

What makes them successful?

Download: bit.ly/CCIN-Asset-Transfer

Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2026

Work to develop the strategy began in 2023 with the commissioning of the Ideas Alliance, one of our Affiliate Members, to develop a collaboratively produced Strategy. Between August and November 2023, the Ideas Alliance held individual meetings, virtual and in-person workshops, and a Member survey to produce the draft Strategy.

The Officer Network has pulled the resulting actions together through regular monthly meetings, a small working group, and online discussions using the LGA Knowledge Hub.

It is clear from discussions so far that all councils are struggling in the face of increasing demand and tightening budgets. More enthusiasm is needed for people to take responsibility for highlighted activities. Whilst Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes funding encourages councils to work

together on common objectives or challenges, work specifically to develop the strategy or to promote the CCIN sits outside the objectives of any one council. A key issue highlighted in the work has been the difficulty of promoting self-reliance within the current structure and the subsequent over-reliance on the CCIN Operations Lead to take any actions forward.

One of the key achievements has been to produce the 'plan on a page' and key results for the three focus areas: 'A **cooperative network** comprising **cooperative councils** working to promote **cooperative policy and practice** across the country'.

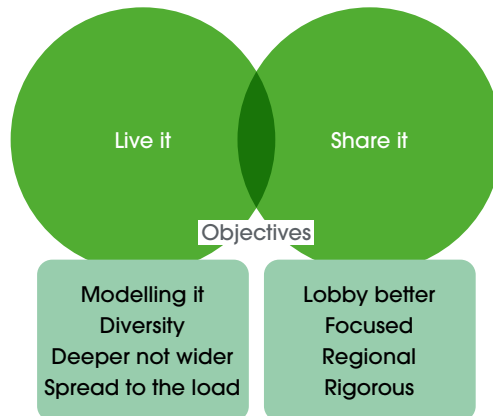
The next stage is to encourage Members to step up and lead on the actions identified in the Strategy.

Plan on a page

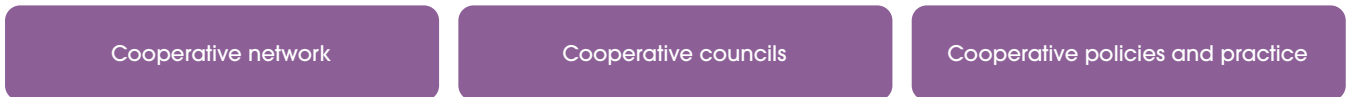
Vision

UK Councils that are using cooperative values and principles to build resilient places through community wealth-building and co-produced services

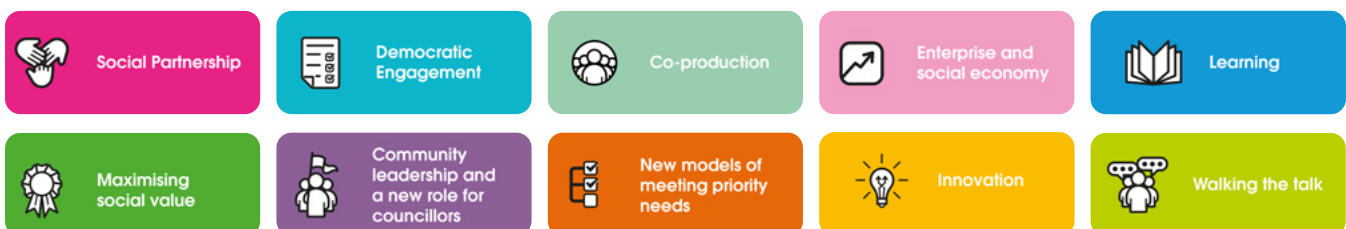
Themes



Focus



Values and principles



Budget Statement

The CCIN Membership year begins on 1 August, and Oldham Council, as the Accountable Body, invoices in September.

The CCIN's budget report is provided below. The CCIN generated income from membership fees across Full Members, Associates and Affiliates. Each year, the Executive Oversight Committee

prioritises spending based on Network needs, funding a range of Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes, attending events and paying for Network support and administration. The budget will be updated after the Annual Conference in November 2024 to reflect any new Network requirements and the new three-year Strategy.



		2022/23 (Actual Spend)	2023/24 (Projected Spend)	2024/25 (Projected Spend)	2025/26 (Projected Spend)
Income					
Member Fees		£198,139.00	£231,028.00	£245,928.00	£252,928.00
Associate and Affiliate Fees		£15,175.00	£20,450.00	£20,950.00	£21,450.00
Supporter Fees		£675.00	£700.00	£750.00	£800.00
Carry Forward		£51,300.00	£34,972.00	£83,584.00	£127,738.00
CCIN Annual Conference		£395.00	TBC	TBC	TBC
Partnership Income		£-	£20,000.00	£-	£-
Policy Projects Withdrawn			£7,000.00		
Total		£265,684	£314,150	£351,212	£402,916
Expenditure					
Accountable Body Fee		£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00
Officer Network Governance		£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00	£6,237.00
AGM and Meetings		£618.00	£3,500.00	£3,500.00	£3,500.00
Travel expenses and accommodation		£6,395.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00	£7,000.00
Management Fees and Governance	MF	£19,487.00	£22,974.00	£22,974.00	£22,974.00
Communications Support		£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00
Website Maintenance and Email Costs		£3,854.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
Printing and Design		£13,589.00	£8,000.00	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
Membership Support		£21,125.00	£24,000.00	£24,000.00	£24,000.00
Communications and Membership Support	CM	£98,568.00	£96,000.00	£96,000.00	£96,000.00
Event Sponsorship		£-	£-	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Stir to Action Festival		£2,400.00	£-	£-	£-
Sponsorship	SP	£2,400.00	£-	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Conference Expenses		£20,661.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00
Annual Conference		£10,628.00	£8,000.00	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
Conference Expenses and Room Hire	CE	£31,289.00	£28,000.00	£28,000.00	£28,000.00
Policy Labs and Prototypes		£57,800.00	£67,000.00	£75,000.00	£75,000.00
Study Visit		£9,168.00	£16,592.00		
Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes	PP	£66,968.00	£83,592.00	£75,000.00	£75,000.00
CCIN Strategy Development		£5,000.00	TBC		
CCIN 10th Anniversary Video (Rewind Project)		£5,000.00			
Legacy and Development Work	LD	£10,000.00	£-	£-	£-
Expenditure Sub-total		£228,712.00	£230,566.00	£223,474.00	£223,474.00
Reserve		£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
		£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00	£25,000.00
TOTAL BALANCE		£36,972.00	£83,584.00	£127,738.00	£179,442.00

Final word

2023-24 is best described as a watershed, and we have continued to be the **fastest-growing cross-party network in local government**.

Congratulations to our Founders, whose idea it was in 2012 to work together and develop a network of local authorities based on cooperative values and principles; each of them has secured significant roles in the new Government:

- **Steve Reed OBE MP** – Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- **Jim McMahon OBE MP** – Minister of State for English Devolution and Local Government
- **Baroness Taylor**, our former Chair, is the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

After the General Election, we said Goodbye and Good Luck to **Shaun Davies MP**, former Leader of Telford & Wrekin, and **Paul Foster MP**, former Leader of South Ribble, as they were elected



to serve their communities in Parliament. They joined over 100 new MPs with current or recent experience serving in local government. This result must augur well for a reset of the relationship between central and Local Government.

Congratulations also to these new Coop Council Leaders: **Cllr Carole Pattison** (Kirklees), **Cllr Michael Mordey** (Sunderland), **Cllr Jacky Alty** (South Ribble), and **Cllr Lee Carter** (Telford & Wrekin).

Seven of our Associate Member Opposition Groups took control of their respective councils in the 2023 and 2024 local elections, a marked increase from previous elections. Congratulations to **Cllr Jeremy Gardner** (Adur), **Cllr Carol Dean** (Tamworth), and **Cllr Dennis Jones** (Peterborough), who took control in May 2024 and are now transitioning to Full Membership.

Being a Cooperative Council is something to be proud of, as it demonstrates a genuine commitment to cooperative innovation, best practices, and the communities we serve.

We look forward to welcoming many new Members to the CCIN over the coming year, joining a cohort of like-minded local authorities committed to delivering the best local cooperative public services.

The Member experience can be even better as we seek to share the innovative practices that our Members have developed with wider audiences. Please get in touch if you have any ideas for events or workshops or want to contribute a Blog, news story or Case Study.

Thank you for your continued support.

Contact:

Nicola Huckerby
Operations Lead

Email: comms@councils.coop

Mobile: 07813 687 292



Coop Option Training

In 2023, we funded over 80 training places for Members interested in offering the cooperative option as an alternative business model, with a deep dive into legal structures and finance.

Find out more: bit.ly/CCIN-coop-option



Join us today

Find out more about the UK local authorities who are driving global public sector policy development & best practice with a common belief in the cooperative values and principles

f @coopcouncils

✕ @coopinnovation

✉ comms@councils.coop

Join us today at **councils.coop**