

Appendix 2: Co-operative Councils Innovation Network

The CCIN has developed from the original network of councils pioneered by Lambeth Borough to become a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association which encourages participation across the political spectrum. There is an annual fee for membership.

The Co-operative agenda is now fairly wide and about much more than simply the promotion of co-operatives or mutuals as a way of delivering services.

The office of the Network is in Oldham. The Network is overseen by a representative Values and Principles Board which sets out the aims and principles and co-ordinates the work programme. As a means of sharing good practice, the network uses the following approaches:

- Officer networks to lead the development of new ideas, including regional networks. Networks hold workshops on a variety of topics. This is seen as one of the most valuable aspects of the Network because it gives those working up ideas for change the ability to quickly tap into experiences of others who face the same challenges and share the same values.
- Shared web resources for ideas, case studies and information
- Members working together to produce tools and techniques. For example, Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes – Labs are larger collaborative projects, Prototypes are smaller projects in individual councils. These are funded projects.
- Multi-supplier consultancy framework to enable extra capacity from approved consultancies to be brought into the network
- The Co-operative Peer Review Commission – established in 2016 and based in Plymouth – reviewers, guidance and criteria to help councils assess their progress as a “co-operative council”, including engagement with citizens and other local stakeholders
- Conferences around the country for meeting and working with peers, social media discussion
- Influence through lobbying at the national level as well as marketing individual councils as innovators
- Access to ambitious political leaders trying to bring change to their communities

The principles of the network fit well with the City Council's aims for Local Leadership:

1. **Social partnership:** We will strengthen the co-operative partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises and Councils, based on a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing 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 in determining the use of public resources
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 co-operative 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 co-operatives 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 in order to encourage broader application of co-operative 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:
 - **Co-operation 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 co-operative 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 co-operatively within and across communities holds the key to tackling today's challenges

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