

**CABINET
27 JUNE 2019**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: CO-OPERATIVE COUNCILS INNOVATION NETWORK

REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The report sets out the corporate commitment of the Council to:

- i) joining the Co-operative Council Innovation network as a full member
- ii) As a full member North Hertfordshire District Council will be a co-operative council that builds the co-operative values of accountability, fairness and responsibility into everything it does.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet recommend to Full Council that;

- i) North Hertfordshire District Council become a full member of the Co-Operative Innovation Network and adopt the networks co-operative values, and
- ii) to declare North Hertfordshire District Council a Co-operative Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Labour and Co-operative group of North Hertfordshire are currently associate members of the Co-operative Innovation network. With the recent change in administration, the Leader of the Council seeks to make the Council a full member of the Network.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1 The administration has asked that this proposed corporate commitment is considered by Cabinet. This is with the view that approval of full membership of the Co-operative Innovation network is sought by full Council.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 It is widely acknowledged that that public sector faces unprecedented financial challenge. Funding to all local authorities has decreased significantly since 2010, and further future reductions in real terms are also possible.
- 7.2 As resources reduce and demand for services increase, there is real concern that a gap of provision will arise. i.e. a gap between the services that communities expect to receive and the services that local authorities will be able to deliver.
- 7.3 Against this financial position many local authorities acknowledge that there needs to be a more co-operative relationship between public services and the community. To this end several local authorities, who are committed to working more cooperatively for the benefit of their local communities, have come together to form the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 As stated at the outset of the report, The Labour and Co-operative group of North Hertfordshire are currently associate members of the Co-Operative Innovation network. With the recent change in administration, the Leader of the Council seeks to make the Council a full member of the Network.
- 8.2 By becoming full members of the network, the Council will be able to access its shared resources, to share learning and develop ideas and processes to support innovative ways to provide services with reducing budgets.
- 8.3 The network also provides a national voice for similar minded local authorities to influence national debate and the formation of national policy regarding public services.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Cabinet's terms of reference include: 5.6.37 To advise the Council in the formulation of those policies within the Council's terms of reference. Council's terms of reference include 4.4.1 (t) arranging for the discharge of any other functions of the Authority which are not executive functions. Such general overarching issues, where not specified in terms of legislation, are better decided by the full membership.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There would be an annual subscription fee of £4,990 to join the network. In considering the outturn on the revenue budget for 2018/19, That the transfer of £5k from the underspend on the General Fund to create a budget for joining the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network, subject to the approval of this report to Cabinet.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific risks associated with the recommendation in this report. Being able to access the shared learning resources may help to reduce risks in the future. However it should be noted that the Council already undertakes a lot of idea sharing through existing formal and informal networks.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 The stated values of the Co-operative Council Innovation network seeks to benefit all within the community and are therefore underpinned by the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Any service changes resulting from adopting a more co-operative will be subject to an equality impact assessment.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The Network has a ‘Policy Officer group’ that shares good practice and supports officers of member councils. This ought to increase the ability of officers to address the issues faced within the communities that they work in.
- 14.2 Service changes and collaborative working may increase or decrease the workload for teams and staffing implications will need to be considered for any future co-operative projects.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Introducing the CCIN

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 None.