

The Council role

It's important that prospective candidates understand the role and key responsibilities of the Council - this underpins the person specification shown on the following slides.

The Council is a democratically elected body that represents Co-op Members across the UK. It ensures the business is run for and on behalf of Members and is an essential element of the Society's governance structure.

The Rules set out the key roles, powers and responsibilities of the Council as follows:

- **the Guardian Role** - act as the guardian of the Society's Purpose, Values and Principles and the constitution
- **the Holding to Account Role** - hold the Board to account and influence strategic and operational initiatives
- **the Consultation and Representation Role** - act as part of a consultative body and a body for making representations on behalf of Council constituencies
- **the Approvals Role** - approve matters reserved by the Rules for approval by the Council
- **the Decisions Role** - make decisions on those matters reserved to the Council by the Rules.

The following person specification highlights the skills, experience and behaviours that will enable the Council to effectively carry out the roles outlined above.



1. Your skills and experience

- Collectively, the Council needs to draw on a wide breadth of skills and knowledge - we understand that not all prospective candidates will be able to demonstrate every requirement outlined in this person specification.
- You can demonstrate and develop the skills and experiences outlined in this specification through many different situations outside of paid employment – eg. life skills, caring roles, unpaid and voluntary work etc.
- We understand that prospective Council members will possess other useful skills not detailed in this specification that would improve the effectiveness of the Council. Our nomination process and your election address will enable you to share these skills with members.



2. Co-op commitment

2A	You'll be a regular consumer of the Society's products and services, and passionate about Co-op Values and Principles and representing Members' views.
2B	You'll be an ambassador and positive role model for the Co-op - committed to protecting its status as a bona fide co-operative society owned and controlled by its Members.
2C	You'll have a genuine interest in the Co-op's businesses, services and products, and how our membership and governance model puts business ethics and community at the heart of our Co-op.




3. Personal characteristics

<p>3A. Integrity demonstrated through self-responsibility, you're trustworthy and act in the best interests of the Co-op at all times</p>	<p>3F Co-operative and able to work collaboratively, either as part of a small working group or large team</p>
<p>3B Sound judgement demonstrated by an ability to make considered independent decisions</p>	<p>3G A willingness to ask questions, challenge constructively and assertively and seek support and advice when required</p>
<p>3C Articulate with strong communication skills</p>	<p>3H Organised - well prepared for meetings and other activities</p>
<p>3D Ability to prioritise and to "see the bigger picture"</p>	<p>3I A commitment to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.</p>
<p>3E Influential and diplomatic, with experience of making a positive impact</p>	<p>3J A commitment to ongoing personal development</p>



4. Core knowledge

<p>4A</p> <p>Co-operative knowledge</p>	<p>An understanding of the Co-op democratic structure and the role of the Council. Knowledge of the Co-op's membership and community offer</p> <p>An understanding of the Co-op's relationship with the wider co-operative movement.</p>
<p>4B</p> <p>Business knowledge</p>	<p>Good understanding of the Co-op businesses and services and the wider retail sector</p>
<p>4C</p> <p>Financial knowledge</p>	<p>Understanding of basic statutory and management accounts.</p>
<p>4D</p> <p>Further development if you're elected to the Council*</p> <p><i>* Supported through a structured training programme</i></p>	<p>The strategies and performance of Co-op businesses, and how financial information can be used to monitor performance and guide decisions.</p> <p>The Co-op membership and community offer and our sustainability model</p> <p>Governing documents of the Society that define how our Co-op is run</p> <p>The heritage of the Co-op and the development of a global co-op economy</p> 

5. Our way of working - some essential skills & requirements to get the most out of this role

<p style="text-align: center;">5A</p> <p>As a UK wide body, the Council uses digital and remote channels for information sharing and communication. This includes use of conference calls, on line meetings and a secure information area for accessing key documents.</p> <p>The Council also encourages members to engage via social media with members.</p> <p>To be able to fully participate, you'll need to be computer literate with the ability and commitment to participate digitally</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5C</p> <p>You'll be willing to play an active role in sub-committees and smaller working groups that meet remotely and be committed to training and development activity that takes place outside of Council meetings</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5B</p> <p>You'll need to find time to prepare, travel to and participate in Council meetings including weekends and evenings at least 4 times a year</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5D</p> <p>You'll be willing to get involved with local member events and community activity</p> <p>You'll work closely with Member Pioneers in your local community, gathering their feedback on local issues and sharing Co-op information relevant to their community / member role.</p>

