

## Motion from Members' Council - Inequality and Food Poverty

### 7

This AGM recognises the response of our Co-op to the COVID-19 pandemic and the outstanding work of our colleagues, members and Member Pioneers to support communities.

This has demonstrated the power of co-operation with over £500,000 raised by members through Co-op Members Coronavirus Fund, the launch of the Community Partnerships Fund, £1.5m worth of food donated to FareShare, free school meal vouchers provided for Co-op Academy students who need them and our support for Marcus Rashford's End Child Food Poverty campaign and much more.

The pandemic has brought into stark focus the inequalities and injustices across our society with the impact of the pandemic, recession and food poverty being felt most by young people and BAME communities.

176 years ago, our Co-op was founded to address the social inequalities and injustices of the time and provide fair access to food and opportunity for all, establishing our internationally recognised Co-operative Values and Principles.

This AGM calls on our Co-op to build on the work of the last year and our founding values and principles to:

- Empower people through education and employment opportunities, ensuring fair availability and access to food for all and solutions which enable food equity, self-help and self-responsibility and demonstrate the value of collective co-operative solutions.
- Campaign and advocate for change, to tackle the inequality we see today and challenge Government to address these issues and their root causes to enable social mobility and equal opportunity throughout our society.

#### More information on our motion:

#### Motion 7 – Inequality and Food Poverty

As we emerge from this pandemic, the UK faces some of the greatest and gravest challenges we have faced in generations – some caused by the pandemic and some existing inequalities made worse by it. The Co-op is strongly placed to lead a campaign on social mobility – a fairer approach that means everyone can prosper and succeed in their lives regardless of their background by moving on from their current situation through personal growth and, ultimately, to greater prosperity.

There is an opportunity for our Co-op, as a purpose-driven business to make a difference for struggling individuals and communities. We can achieve this by:

- promoting employment and learning opportunities for young people through schemes like Kickstart, promoting apprenticeships amongst under-represented groups;
- continuing to grow the Co-op Academies Trust, supporting the development of outstanding schools where communities most need them;
- working in partnership with those like Marcus Rashford MBE to ensure that no child is too hungry to learn in the UK in the 21st century;
- delivering on our [Commitment to Racial Equality and Inclusion](#) published in September 2020; and
- working in partnership with the [Youth Endowment Fund and the #iwillfund](#) to support young people to shape solutions they want to see to make their communities safer, fairer places.

By taking action, sharing our insight and lobbying for change our Co-op can act as a catalyst for change, encouraging Government, businesses and other stakeholders to do better.