



# MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT

National Members' Council Elections  
**North West**



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# Tom Laing

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

2025 represents an important opportunity for Co-op and the wider Co-operative Movement. With the International Year of Co-operatives and the Government's commitment to doubling the size of the co-operative and mutual economy, we have a real opportunity to show people what the Co-operative Difference is. To be successful in this, Co-op needs to ensure that young people are at the heart of our messaging. We need to ensure we use this year to showcase to young people why they should join our Co-op and how through co-operation we promote peace, social justice and equity and tackle the major issues facing our society, including the climate crisis, social cohesion and community power. That's why I believe we need to elect passionate young co-operators to the National Members' Council, especially this year, so we truly make this the year of the co-operative.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

Co-operative Values and Principles are important to me. As a passionate and active member of the many different co-operatives, and an elected councillor representing the Co-operative Party, I regularly champion our values and principles and put forward co-operative solutions to the challenges facing our country. In my day job, I am the Policy Officer for Co-operatives UK, the voice of the UK's thousands of independent co-operative businesses, which means working with and lobbying policy makers and politicians of all persuasions, to secure legislative and policy change that will enable our Co-op and many others to grow and thrive. As a current member of the Co-op Young Members' Group and the National Members' Council, I have continued to stand up for our values and principles - especially Principle 2: Member Democratic Control - supporting changes to spending criteria to allow many more member-owners, including young members, to be able to vote in our AGM and have their voices heard.

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

During my short time on the National Members' Council thus far I have:

- Asked questions of the Board, putting your questions to the business, including getting assurances on our branding in Franchise stores.
- Served on the Membership Committee, championing an improved membership offer for young members.
- Worked with other young members to promote the voice of young members to Co-op.

- Championed and supported lowering the spending requirement to be able to vote and stand within Co-op's democracy, opening up access to many more members including young members.
- Worked with my Member Activator to run a stall for Fairtrade Fortnight.
- Worked with and supported other co-operatives.

If elected for a full term:

- I will continue to champion your voice.
- Continue to advocate for Co-op to put young people at the heart of its messaging.
- Work with Member Activators to champion our member-owners.
- Continue to closely scrutinise Co-op's plans for a new membership offer for young people.

I will bring experience of:

- 1 year spent as a co-optee on the Council.
- Co-op Young Members' Group.
- Being a local councillor.
- Involvement with many different co-ops.
- Working for the Co-operative Movement's national body.



## Liam Forsyth

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

I believe colleague safety remains the most important priority for our Co-op in 2025. We are seeing the continued success of our campaigning in this space and the delivery of legislative change.

However, we need to continue this process and work until our most important and best ambassadors for co-operation, our colleagues, feel safe at work. Whilst a change in the law is welcomed, we need to use our strength as a co-op to influence local stakeholders and support the societal change required. As part of this work, I believe that we should be confident in meaningfully articulating our strength and difference as a co-op - by highlighting colleagues as member-owners, who therefore have a unique and crucial stake in the success of our businesses.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

To demonstrate my commitment to our values and principles, I seek to bring them to life and live them every day in both my work and personal life. Growing up, I wasn't as aware as I am now of my family's involvement in our Co-op from the deli-counter to our funeral business but I am firmly of the opinion that a key way that we will continue to grow our Co-op is seeing our responsibility as member-owners of our Co-op, to be ambassadors not only for the Co-op Group, but for co-operation more broadly in our everyday activities. It is my belief that Co-op's current and historical commitment to fairness and collective solutions can provide not only the guidance, but ultimately the answers to a number of the challenges facing both the North West and Britain today.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

Having been fortunate to work as a colleague, I believe my experience across our Co-op allows me to best navigate the organisation to ensure that we are being effective and best able to fulfil our responsibility to hold the Board to account. In my roles across the Co-op, I have met, engaged and worked with members from Carlisle to Chester and recognise the variety in our Co-op businesses across the region. I continue to take inspiration from what our Co-op has led and achieved over the past 180 years, and I am seeking to use my skills and experience to continue, support and deliver in this proud tradition and ensure that we can be proud to pass on our Co-op to the next generation of member-owners in the best position possible.



# Christian Guerreiro

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food and Insurance

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

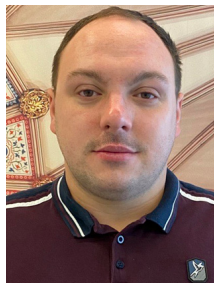
I believe that the Co-op should prioritise its members' needs by delivering value for them, economically, democratically and socially. Truly understanding what's important to them and reacting through offering support and services within local communities. Delivering fair and inclusive pricing to benefit both new and loyal members. Being known as a member-led organisation that champions its values through varied initiatives including equity, social responsibility and education. This could be by running local projects that better equip our members in their everyday lives, whilst supporting communities locally and further afield. Building a stronger Co-op through community engagement and actively working with partners that boost communities. Focusing on what democracy means for its diverse members and how they can play a part nationally and locally.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I believe that championing our values and principles are key to driving value and change through the Members' Council. Engaging with members often so that their needs are met and they're a part of decisions being made. Focusing on equality and solidarity is vital to creating a sense of belonging and ownership. Holding the Board accountable on performance and decisions made. Making sure we're true to our values and principles shows my commitment. Building a more equitable and sustainable organisation.

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I'd frequently engage with Member Activators and work through and raise issues in the relevant forums. I'm thorough and take time to prepare to get the most out of sessions. My experience of working on Co-op's websites helps me to understand potential opportunities and looking at the member experience end to end. I'm curious and ask questions to understand the impact decisions will have on members. I'll challenge decisions that don't align with members' voices, making sure that viable solutions are discussed for what matters most. Helping to contribute to a fairer and more resilient member-owned organisation.



## Marc Kurucz

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

For me, the most important priority for the Co-op in 2025 is sustainable growth. Over the last few years, the Co-op has made significant efforts to improve its financial position and enhance the value for its members. Now, the Co-op is in a great place to make strategic decisions to achieve the goal of 8 million members by 2030. This involves exploring new areas for growth while strengthening the core estate and the growing Q-comm proposition, adding value for our members. The Co-op is in an opportune position to demonstrate the power of a co-operative by working with like-minded businesses, listening to members and communities, and utilising our strategy of pure convenience to drive growth in capital-light ways.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I firmly believe in the co-operative values of doing business differently by listening to our members and upholding democratic processes, one member one vote. This commitment to values is one of the main reasons I have stayed working with the Co-op for over 15 years. We are trailblazers, whether through championing great products and Fairtrade (I've converted many friends from branded chocolate to our own brand Fairtrade!) or improving the lives of members in our communities.

One of my favourite times each year is attending the AGM, seeing our members' voices come to life. As Co-Chair of Respect, the LGBTQ+ colleague network at Co-op, I have worked with our academy students to discuss how inclusion is embedded throughout the Co-op and how we work with Respect Members on what they need from the network, just as the Co-op does with its members.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I will add value to the Members' Council by not only bringing my experience from working in stores on the frontline, in the heart of our communities, and supporting stores nationally within the support centre but through my understanding of how the wider Co-operative Movement works across the country. In my recent roles, I have supported the Food business with our evolving membership proposition, including the launch of member pricing and the recent proposition changes. I believe I can use this experience to advise future business decisions and work with members on how we can grow this proposition.

For the last 4.5 years, I have been the Co-Chair of Respect, ensuring that LGBTQ+ colleague members can be themselves and are supported, regardless of their gender,

sexual identity, or trans status. I led the network through a rebuild in 2020 to attending the most Prides that Co-op has ever participated in, with over 40 attended in 2024. I believe I can bring my leadership experience and commitment to inclusion to the Members' Council.

Since 2021, I have also been a National Colleague Voice representative, serving multiple teams across the support centre, including the Retail Support Centre, supply chain, and colleague networks. I have ensured that colleagues' voices are heard and have challenged leaders when necessary. Through my listening and communication skills, and my willingness to speak up, I believe I have qualities that will further strengthen the Members' Council.



## Lucy Smith

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

I believe that the Co-op should prioritise what communities want and need. There is much uncertainty in the world and in our economy at the moment. That means we should focus on good value products, supporting local producers, community engagement and investing in community resilience. The Co-op Group is a national retailer in a local setting, which allows us to promote at all levels sustainability, good and safe workplaces and collective prosperity.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I believe in the founding principles of the Rochdale Pioneers that by working together, we can get affordable products for all. Therefore, I always seek to work in a co-operative manner, seeking the opinions of all and putting people at the heart of what I do. I have been a member of several co-operatives for many years now and promote membership to others.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

As a trained community organiser, I understand how to engage with local communities and how to amplify people's voices. I have experience in campaigning for change, which means I have the ability to challenge in a constructive way and have the communication skills to engage and work with members.





# Glen Mitchell

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Profitability and growth. We do things differently but in order to do some of the amazing things we do for our member-owners and communities, we need to have a fundamentally sound, cost controlled business model with strong ambitions for growth. This then becomes a virtuous circle having the money to reinvest in the business, providing economic value to our members and doing great work in supporting our communities.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

As a colleague member of 10 years - and a long-standing member before that - I live and breathe our values and principles. I've had the privilege of being in Supply Chain for most of my Co-op career, working with some key big suppliers on sustainability or ethical initiatives - putting our values into action. Most recently for the last year, I have been working on how Supply Chain responds to providing great value deals for our member-owners.

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I think I can add value as a colleague member who by nature of my role is so focused on supporting our member-owners in great economic value. But ultimately before I was an employee, I was always a Co-op customer. I enjoy visiting our stores and talking to staff and customers - you get a real sense of the heart of our communities. So, I think I can be a strong voice and a great champion for our member-owners within this unique governance model.



## Claire Blanchard

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

In 2025, one of the most important priorities for the Co-op is expanding its convenience retail presence. The Co-op plans to open 75 new stores across the UK, aiming to ensure accessibility and convenience for its customers. This expansion is part of a broader strategy to enhance community engagement and sustainability.

Additionally, the Co-op is focusing on the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives 2025 theme, "Co-operatives Build a Better World." This initiative highlights the crucial role co-operatives play in sustainable development, poverty reduction, and inclusive economic growth.

These priorities reflect the Co-op's commitment to growth, community support, and adherence to Co-operative Values and Principles.

I will ensure that all business practices are ethical and sustainable. This includes Fairtrade, environmentally friendly operations, and ethical sourcing of products.

I will work collaboratively with other co-operatives and organisations to achieve common goals. This reflects the principle of solidarity and the belief in the strength of collective action.

I will represent the Co-op in external forums and advocate for policies that support co-operative development and the broader Co-operative Movement.

By embodying these actions and attitudes, I can effectively demonstrate a strong commitment to Co-operative Values and Principles.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I am deeply committed to the Co-operative Values and Principles, including self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. I believe in the power of working together to achieve common goals and am dedicated to promoting these values in all our endeavours.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities to innovate and grow our Co-op, which I believe will drive our Co-op towards a sustainable and prosperous future.

I am passionate about our Co-op and am committed to serving you with integrity, transparency, and dedication.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

If elected, I will engage actively in Co-op meetings, events, and decision-making processes. My involvement will show a dedication to democratic principles and collective decision-making. I will advocate for fair treatment and opportunities for all members. This can include supporting initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion within the Co-op.

I will participate in or lead community projects that align with Co-op's values, such as sustainability efforts, local charity work, or educational programmes. This demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility and community support.

I will maintain open communication with members and stakeholders. Being transparent about decisions and actions fosters trust and aligns with the principle of accountability.

I will invest in continuous learning about co-operative principles and encourage others to do the same. This can involve attending workshops, seminars, or courses related to co-operative governance and management.



# Jon Russell

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

The priority for the Co-op in 2025 should be the same as it was for the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844. To provide value for its members.

Due to the cost of living today, our communities are struggling.

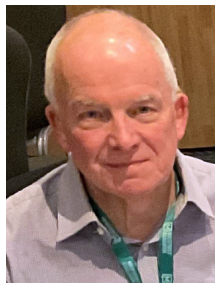
We are living in tough times. The priority for the Co-op during these difficult times should be more than ever to provide value in every way it can.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

Co-op Values and Principles can be demonstrated in lots of ways. This could be through volunteering, as I have at the inspirational food charity, FareShare, or simply choosing to do the food shop with Co-op rather than the competition. More than anything though, I believe Co-op Values and Principles can be demonstrated best in normal everyday life. Being kind, treating people as you wish to be treated, caring for the environment, voting for political parties who believe in fairness and equality. These are values and principles I strongly believe in. I believe the more these are demonstrated, the better off our communities will be.

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

Having worked for the Co-op for a number of years, I know how the Co-op works, I understand the history. Its inspirational history, along with its frustrating history. I worked through the recent hard times the Co-op has been through. But have also seen and worked through the brilliant recovery and turnaround. This recovery was all down to what the Co-op stands for, its values and principles. But also, from good people working hard and co-operatively. This is what has kept the Co-op going since 1844 and will continue to. You can learn a lot from working with good people. If elected to the Members' Council, I will work in a passionate, respectful and fair way. A co-operative way.



## Alan Sandham

Statement not submitted



# Sophie Beresford

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

## 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Over the last 12 months, we have witnessed an increase in divided communities – both at home and abroad.

Throughout our history, the Co-operative Movement has played a vital role in helping to rebuild communities by educating them about true democratic participation.

Co-op is currently educating the wider public about what it means to be a co-operative. I think we can build on this work and play a crucial role in reminding people of what it means to be part of a democracy, and how we have more to gain from solidarity than we do from division.

## 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

As a Co-op Foundation colleague, Co-operative Values and Principles sit at the heart of my day-to-day work. I've spent the last two years building our new campaign function to generate long-lasting systemic change. To do this, I have harnessed our democratic values, seeking feedback and advice from across the Co-op network to ensure that all our campaign activity feeds into the overarching positive change our members want to see in their communities.

## 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I think I could bring real value to the Members' Council. I pride myself on being a resilient, honest, empathetic and values-driven individual and I believe these are qualities that are essential for the role.

I'm used to providing constructive feedback in my role as a Co-operating in Crisis steering group member. I do this to ensure we are meeting our objectives and commitments as a group, while also meeting the needs of our valued members.

I know engaging young members is really important to Co-op. I believe my passion for youth social action – demonstrated through a mentoring role I previously held at Reclaim charity – as well as my experience of helping Co-op's charity develop its youth participation practices could benefit the Members' Council and the wider business as a whole.

I am a naturally curious and sociable person, which is why I enjoy being part of a local social action group. I am used to attending local events to build relationships and understand more about the issues that those in my community face every day. I know I would embrace the opportunity to do this more in the Members' Council role.



## Howard Ballard

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Social responsibility, equity and democracy.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

To promote customers and community providers from all areas to understand what core values and principles are; to educate and sign post them to ask questions and promote the Co-op's social platforms. We need to do more work in social isolation, mental health and access to food and reducing food to landfill.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I have personal skills in working in areas for supporting, chairing meetings and listening to communities and promoting their concerns. I help run a foodbank in Fleetwood, am a current governor at the local hospital, and served as a councillor for Wyre Council for 8 years.



## Helen Wharton

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

To create more value for our member-owners by increasing active members. This will help to drive the values and principles of the Co-op in the wider community.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I shop local and with the Co-op daily and support the local community goals in my area.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I am a positive role model with a strong passion for equality and inclusion. I am confident and committed to participating in the best interests of the Co-op to support its values and principles.





## Ali Raza Ilyas

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

One of the most important priorities for the Co-op in 2025 is continuing to raise awareness and educate people about the co-operative model, particularly highlighting member-ownership over shareholder profit. By strengthening understanding and engagement, we can ensure long-term sustainability and growth.

Additionally, with the change in government, there is a significant opportunity for co-operatives. We now have more co-operators in Parliament than ever before, and the Government has committed to doubling the Co-operative and Mutuals Sector. This makes it vital for the Co-op to advocate for stronger legal and policy frameworks that support co-operatives, ensuring we influence decision-making in a way that benefits members and communities. As the sector expands, it will be essential to maintain strong governance, ethical business practices, and a focus on sustainability, ensuring that the Co-op remains at the forefront of this growth.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I actively demonstrate Co-operative Values and Principles by integrating them into my work, governance roles, and community engagement. Co-operation, democracy, equality, and solidarity are at the heart of everything I do. I strongly believe that the best decisions come from listening, engaging, and working together to achieve shared goals.

As a trustee of both my local food bank and community library and hub, I have played a leading role in securing funding, co-ordinating emergency food parcels during Covid, and organising important community events. These experiences have reinforced my belief in the power of collective action and co-operation, reflecting the core values of the Co-operative Movement.

Beyond my community roles, I am an active member of the Co-operative Party and the Labour Party, frequently involved in campaigning and advocating for policies that benefit co-operatives and mutuals. I understand the importance of amplifying member voices, ensuring that co-operatives have a seat at the table in political and economic discussions.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I bring extensive governance experience from serving on boards of charitable and community organisations, as well as on a local government council. This has given me

a strong understanding of council structures, operations, and scrutiny committees, along with the responsibilities and collaborative work required to ensure effective decision-making. Through my governance roles, I have developed skills in operational oversight, strategic planning, and management, ensuring that organisations remain accountable and responsive to their members.

I would work to strengthen engagement between members and the Council, advocate for policies that empower co-operatives, and ensure that we remain a driving force for social and economic change. With my background in governance, policy advocacy, and community leadership, I am confident that I can add value to the Council and contribute to its ongoing success.



## Kathy Morse

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

I regard the most important priority for the Co-op is to continue being fair, equal and inclusive to their customers and the communities.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I demonstrate co-op values within my patient involvement with other cancer patients. I use my own cancer story to remove stigma and to help foster a sense of inclusion and community with other cancer patients.

I contribute my lived experience, so patients are treated fairly. I have shown commitment in all my Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement work and also a huge commitment getting through stage 3 cancer during Covid.

I have achieved lots with my dedicated and enthusiastic nature. Never giving up at the first hurdle.

I feel Co-op is an organisation that is not afraid of change. It adapts to the changes in its communities. I can adapt to changes too.

I help decrease feelings of isolation in the cancer community the same as Co-op reduces isolation too. I respect what co-op values stand for and would use my personal experiences to transfer those skills.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I will add value as my cancer journey proves my sheer determination to contribute. I have 20 years' experience working with special needs teenagers, which takes patience and understanding.

I am a solution-based individual. If something doesn't work, I will keep trying different methods.

I have a natural empathy with people and strive to understand other points of view. I am humble if I have made mistakes when I was working. I am a naturally sensitive person, but I think that's a good skill in building empathy with others.



## Sally Kirkham

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

In 2025, the most important priority for Co-op is strengthening member engagement and ensuring that our business remains driven by co-operative values. As the retail landscape evolves, we must continue differentiating ourselves through ethical trading, sustainability and community impact. Expanding membership participation and increasing transparency in decision-making will reinforce trust and loyalty. Additionally, supporting colleague wellbeing and fostering innovation will ensure Co-op remains a leader in responsible business and a true champion of its members.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

Beyond my role, I actively support Co-op initiatives that benefit communities and empower members. I believe in member-driven decision-making and will continue advocating for policies that reflect their needs. Co-operation among co-operatives is also vital and I fully support strengthening partnerships within the wider movement to enhance our collective impact.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

With 23 years in the food industry, including leadership at Co-op, I bring a wealth of experience in governance, strategy and stakeholder engagement. My ability to challenge constructively, analyse complex issues and make informed decisions ensures I can effectively represent members' interests. As a strong communicator, I will listen to and amplify members' voices, ensuring they influence Co-op's direction.

I have a proven track record in problem-solving, driving improvements and leading change. My experience working with suppliers and regulatory bodies has equipped me with negotiation skills, commercial awareness and an understanding of corporate responsibility – essential for ensuring Co-op upholds its values while remaining competitive.

As a Council Member, I will be proactive in fostering transparency, championing ethical business practices and driving initiatives that enhance member participation. I am committed to ensuring Co-op thrives as a values-led business, making a real difference for its members and communities.



## James Lewis

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

Exploring how the Co-op can support its members and communities during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis while remaining steadfast in delivering its core values and principles.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I have consistently embodied Co-op Values and Principles, evident in my career decision to focus on compliance—ensuring fairness and integrity—and my extensive community volunteering. Over the years, I've actively contributed to causes in education, environmental sustainability, and healthcare, reinforcing my belief in collective action for the greater good.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

I bring a wealth of experience in commercial, financial, marketing, and compliance functions, honed through roles in large corporations. My ability to analyse, strategise, and collaborate equips me to effectively contribute to the Members' Council and advocate for Co-op Members' interests with dedication and expertise.



## Jan Barnett

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

With the continuing unrest around the world, the UK is likely to continue to be affected by many resulting issues. The cost of living effects are causing serious problems for so many families and if these do continue, I hope our Co-op is able to support its member-owners through this time by being able to keep prices of basic food items and other Co-op Group business related products and services as low as possible, whilst managing the underlying financials to keep the business sufficiently healthy (including maintaining our current lower levels of debt) to enable us to survive and subsequently to thrive. Our members own our Co-op, and we should be committed as far as possible in helping them through these difficult times. In practical terms, this will mean operating efficiently and negotiating, for mutual benefit, with suppliers in order to maintain and hopefully extend our value for money own brand and Member Prices, as well as thinking beyond price to other ways we can help our members to provide nutritious meals for themselves and their households.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

As a Council Member, I've been involved in many initiatives to support Principle 2 - Democratic Member Control. The measurement of this principle can be said to lie in the way members 'Join In' with both face to face and online activities. Whilst the Co-op Group has been increasingly successful in this, I continue to be concerned that numbers voting in our elections and attending our AGM are only a small proportion of the over 6 million active members.

This situation is related to Principle 5 - Education, Training and Information - which, as a member of committees, I have influenced and supported in various ways to maximise understanding amongst, not only members but also the general population, of what exactly makes a co-operative unique as a business structure - and why an expansion of this sector is desirable. As an example, I recently took part in a special members' meeting, where I presented one of the Council proposed motions for members at the AGM, where I really enjoyed discussing the topic of 'Responsible Consumption' with members online.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

Now retired, I have had a varied career, which has given me a broad knowledge and skillset relevant to my role as Council Member. Having initially worked as a graduate (B.Soc.Sc. (Hons) Geography and Sociology) in marketing and corporate planning for

a multinational textile group, followed by 12 years as a teacher with many senior co-ordination roles including special needs, early years and child protection, plus owning a national food and drink distribution business transforming vending in schools all across the UK, switching them from unhealthy snack to healthy drinks machines, whilst also supporting the catering function in education settings by working with them to share profits generated. Taken together with many Co-op Group training courses over 9 years, these roles have given me a balanced overview of society and its interactions and needs, as well as excellent business, strategy and financial analysis skills.



## Dan Price

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

In 2025, we must ensure members and customers receive good value. With household incomes squeezed, it's vital the Co-op remains affordable. Competitive pricing on essentials, without compromising ethical standards like Fairtrade, will help members through difficult times and we've already seen how this has increased memberships.

Of course this does mean that growing convenience is harder, but shopping habits have changed, with more people relying on local stores. The Co-op has shown it can deliver this growth and is well placed to meet this demand, and our plan for growth is vital to our success and growing our membership.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

The Co-operative Movement has long been a driving force for positive change in the UK, whose values and principles have guided ethical business and community engagement globally.

#### Self-Help

As the founding chair of Radcliffe's Co-op Market, I was driven by the belief that people, when given the opportunity, can build and sustain ethical businesses that serve their communities.

#### Self-Responsibility

I have always encouraged individuals to step up, take ownership, and actively contribute to their communities. For co-operative businesses to thrive, members must engage, participate, and champion shared values.

#### Democracy

I've always championed the importance of democratic structures. If elected to the Members' Council, I will continue to do this so that democratic engagement and decision making is never forgotten.

#### Equality

As a gay man, equality is not just a value I support—it is something that has shaped my own life. The opportunities I've had were made possible by the struggles of previous generations, and I never take that for granted.

#### Equity

It's about more than fairness. Throughout my career in public service, I have prioritised



fair decision-making and inclusive policies, always considering how to remove barriers and create opportunities for those who need them most.

## **Solidarity**

Much of the progress we have has been achieved through solidarity. I have seen first-hand how powerful this can be and the Co-op embodies this. I am committed to strengthening solidarity between members, employees, and communities.

If elected, I will work to defend and promote the Co-op's core principles, including open membership, economic participation, autonomy and independence, education and training, co-operation among co-operatives, and concern for local communities. These principles are not just guidelines—they are essential for the continued success of the Co-op Movement.

### **3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?**

My life and career spans a unique combination of engineering, sustainability, public policy, and community advocacy, all of which align with the Co-op's mission and priorities.

Fundamentally, I'm someone who wants to help solve problems and deliver. With members' support, it would be a privilege to bring my skills and expertise to the Members' Council.



## Lois McClure

Co-op Group businesses traded with in last 12 months

Food

### 1. What do you regard as the most important priority for Co-op in 2025?

The main priority I believe for Co-op in 2025 is to ensure that our Co-op Movement is set up for the future. Even though co-operation and the values and principles still stand in the present day, our retail business needs to ensure it stays relevant for generations to come. It's exciting to see Co-op looking to new avenues such as the franchise and wholesale market but we need to go into it with our values and principles at the heart of decisions.

### 2. How do you demonstrate a commitment to Co-op Values and Principles?

I ensure I live by the Co-operative Values and Principles during my role both as a Co-op Colleague Member-Owner and also a member of the North West constituency on the Co-op National Members' Council. It's important to take the V&Ps (values and principles) and think about them during any business decisions or when speaking to our Board Members and senior leaders to understand why certain decisions have been made.

### 3. How will you add value to the Members' Council and what skills and experience would you use to do this?

After being involved in co-operation for the last 13 years as both a member and a colleague, I feel like during that time, I have gained so much knowledge about what being a co-operative truly means by visiting different co-ops both in the UK and internationally. Through my colleague role within our Co-op, I have developed many skills that are useful in my role as a Co-op Members' Council representative such as finance, business acumen, stakeholder management and marketing.



# THANKS FOR MAKING YOUR VOICE COUNT

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