

## **Cross Party Group on Co-operatives**

**Minutes from Wednesday 27 June 2018**

**6.00 pm to 8.00 pm**

**Committee Room 4, The Scottish Parliament**

**Theme: Celebrating Co-operatives Fortnight 2018**

### **Attendance:**

CPG Members:	James Kelly MSP (Convener), Johann Lamont MSP, Donald Cameron MSP, Claudia Beamish MSP and Clare Haughey MSP.
Other Guests:	See end of document
Secretariat:	Ed Mayo (Cooperatives UK) and Neil Cuthbert (Public Affairs Co-op)
Apologies:	Jackie Baillie MSP

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

James Kelly MSP opened with meeting and welcomed all CPG Members and Guests to the Scottish Parliament.

### **2. Approval of Previous Minutes**

James Kelly MSP moved that the minutes of the previous CPG meeting held on Wednesday 21 February 2018 be approved. This was seconded by Johann Lamont MSP.

### **3. Opening Remarks from James Kelly MSP and Ed Mayo, Secretary General of Co-operatives UK**

James Kelly MSP noted that the meeting coincided with the annual Coops Fortnight celebration of Cooperatives and asked Ed Mayo, Secretary General of Co-operatives UK to say a few words about the various activities taken place across the country to mark this event.

Ed Mayo noted that Coops Fortnight is now in its 8th year. Co-operatives UK have just published new data on the economic contributions of coops that has been covered in the media including The Scotsman newspaper. The data shows a vibrant economic sector that is also contributing towards UN Sustainable development

goals. Scottish farming coops have been really successful and this is especially relevant as the UK leaves the EU and the Common Agricultural Policy framework. Brexit is bringing the benefits of cooperation amongst farmers into sharp relief and this is to be welcomed.

A good example of a successful new cooperative in a rural location is Glen Wyvis distillery. This has been a big success and is continuing to grow and involve more local people with its success.

The Chair thanked Ed Mayo for all he has done to support the work of the CPG and Scottish cooperatives more generally. He then invited the three Scottish cooperatives present to speak and say a few words about how they make a difference to their communities.

#### **4. How Scottish Co-ops make a difference to their Communities**

##### **a. Greencity Wholefoods**

James Kelly MSP welcomed John Niven, Kirsty Warren, Lucy Harding, Craig McCormack and Leigh Galletly from Greencity Wholefoods to the meeting and invited them to deliver their presentation.

There are 42 staff at Greencity Wholefoods and their democratic structure is critical to their success. Worker coops practice democracy day to day and this approach is liberating and empowering for the staff.

The priority for Greencity Wholefoods in terms of public policy is to see more responsible procurement across government and local authorities in Scotland.

##### **b. Scotmid Co-operative**

James Kelly MSP welcomed Harry Cairney (President) and Shirley MacGillivray (Deputy Secretary) from Scotmid Co-operative to the meeting. Harry advised that Scotmid will be 160 years old next year and he outlined new initiatives being put in place to benefit members and communities such as Community Connect. Scotmid is committed to supporting the cooperative economy in Scotland and the UK and welcomes Coops Fortnight initiative.

##### **c. West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative**

James Kelly MSP welcomed Paul Farrell (Director), Susan Paton (Projects Officer) and Anne Anderson (Chairperson) from West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative to the meeting. Paul Farrell gave a presentation and took questions. He advised that tenant satisfaction is high at West Whitlawburn and compares well with other social housing organisations. Digital inclusion is a priority and tenants have access to high speed broadband without signing up to long term contracts from established providers like BT, Virgin and Sky.

## 5. Questions and Answer Session from CPG Members

James Kelly MSP opened the floor to questions from CPG Members and Guests. The meeting discussed the suggestion of further work on housing Co-operatives in Scotland. The need was highlighted by the fact that few housing co-operatives have been established in Scotland in recent years. The meeting agreed this would be the focus of future work and asked the Secretariat for further details of how this would be undertaken.

## 6. Networking Break

## 7. Thanks and Date of Next Meeting

James Kelly MSP thanked all CPG Members and guests for their attendance and participation, especially those organisations that presented. He noted that the next meeting of the CPG would take place at 6pm on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Committee Room 4.

*The meeting was adjourned.*

## Guests in attendance

First name	Surname	Organisation
Eric	Calderwood	University of Stirling
Keri	Davies	University of Stirling
Taimi	Venho	Edinburgh Wholefood Co-operative Limited
Ben	McLeish	Public Affairs Co-operative Ltd
Charles	Sim	Fenwick Weavers Co-operative Ltd
Richard	McCready	The Scottish Co-operative Party
Kirsty	Connell	Scottish Midland Co-operative Society Limited
Nathan	Bower-Bir	Edinburgh Student Housing Co-operative Limited
Angus	Coull	Fair Trade Sports Balls Limited
Martin	Meteyard	Co-operative Business Consultants
Ed	Mayo	Co-operatives UK
James	Kelly	Scottish Parliament
Paul	Farrell	West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative
Susan	Paton	West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative
Anne	Anderson	West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative
Harry	Cairney	Scotmid Co-operative
Adrian	Shaw	Awesome Energy
Steve	West	The Graphics Company
John	Niven	GreenCity Wholefoods
Kirsty	Warren	Greencity Wholefoods
Lucy	Harding	Greencity Wholefoods
Craig	McCormack	Greencity Wholefoods
Leigh	Galletly	GreenCity Wholefoods
Shirley	MacGillivray	Scotmid Co-operative

Rita	Miller	Scottish Co-op Party
Jim	Lee	Energy4all
Donald	Morrison	Midcounties Co-operative
Sarah	Boyack	SFHA
Jennie	Renton	Lister Housing Co-operative
Sarah	Deas	Scottish Enterprise