

# NEC Update – Summer 2025

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Membership Review.....	2
Labour and Co-operative Local Government candidates – updated process.....	2
Strategic Objectives .....	2
Strategic Objective: Support the election of co-operators at all levels of Government.....	3
Strategic Objective: Be leaders of co-operative solutions, seeking their delivery locally, regionally and nationally in every sector of society and the economy .....	4
Strategic Objective: Inspire and educate our audiences about the achievements and potential of the co-operative movement.....	6
Strategic Objective: Have an engaged, diverse and growing individual and organisational membership that values the Party and its work.....	8
Strategic Objective: Ensure the Party is organisationally and financially sustainable .....	10
Recruitment & Membership.....	10
Contacting the NEC .....	11
Inviting NEC members to meetings .....	11
Elections to the NEC .....	11

## Introduction

The NEC meets regularly throughout the year, with some of meetings over a full day or weekend in-person and the remainder online.

This update covers the May and June meetings. In May, the NEC received the report of the Auditor and approved the [Board Report and Accounts 2024](#). They also received the report of the General Secretary on the Strategic Plan and the membership and recruitment update for quarter one. These are summarised below.

The June meeting for the NEC was the AGM. Jim McMahon MP (Westminster Parliamentary Group) was re-elected Chair, with Ruth Hall (Scotland) as Vice-Chair. The NEC also elected members to the Audit, Policy, Staffing and Remuneration and Disputes Sub Committees, the Rules Working Party and the Labour Party National Policy Forum.

At the June meeting the NEC also considered the recommendations following the membership review and approved changes to the endorsement procedure for Labour and Co-operative local government candidates. These are outlined below.



## Membership Review

The NEC considered the interim report on the recent membership review and agreed some immediate steps, including changes to branches where requested. The Rules Working Group was reconstituted to look in detail at outcomes of the review.

Party Officers will be kept updated.

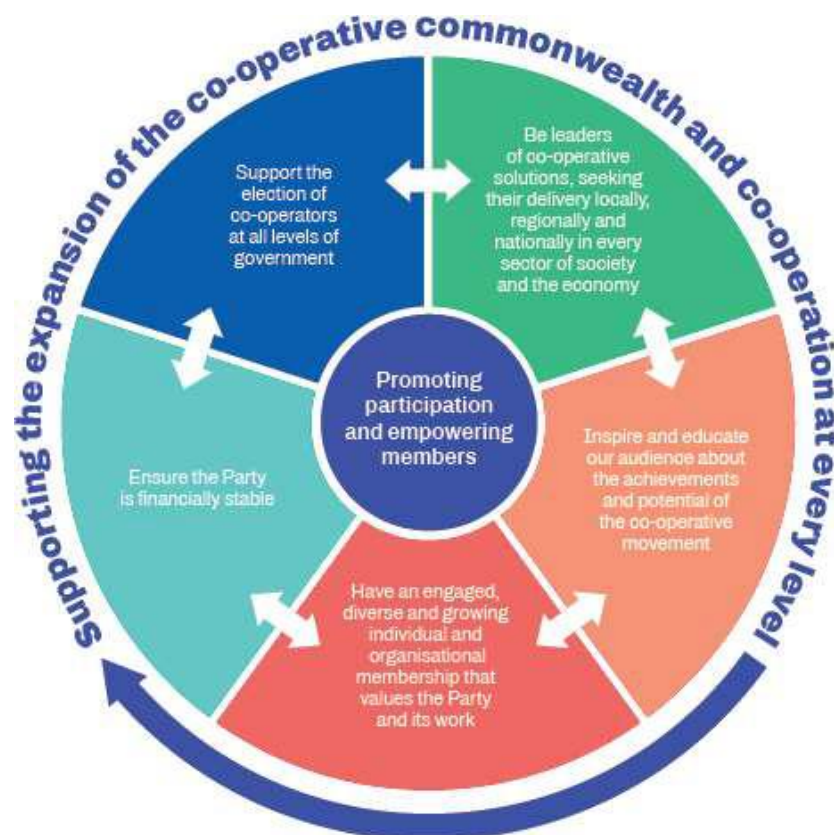
## Labour and Co-operative Local Government candidates – updated process

The NEC agreed revised local government candidate selection procedures to streamline the process ahead of election in 2026. These will be circulated to Party Officers.

## Strategic Objectives

In November, the NEC agreed a new three-year Strategic Plan for 2025-27. This sets out how the Party will achieve its Strategic Objectives (see wheel below).

Each quarter, the General Secretary reports to the NEC on the Party's activity and progress on the Plan. When the NEC met in May they received reports on Party's work for the first quarter of 2025. These are summarised below.





## **Strategic Objective: Support the election of co-operators at all levels of Government**

The activity in the area of this strategic objective through the reporting period focussed on the candidate build and support ahead of English Local and Metro Mayor Elections 2025. This work represents an intense period for the staff team most involved in the activity. Again this year this work was carried out accurately and efficiently.

### **1. Local Elections 2025 candidates**

Through the training and candidate build process the Party maintained its 20% of Labour candidates standing as Labour & Co-operative. This translated into 318 Co-op Candidates. Whilst the number is down on previous years it was the Party's target when scaled back because of delayed and postponed Local Elections.

### **2025 Candidate analysis**

Total persons - 318 candidates fighting 342 contests across every region in England

- 3 (of 4) Combined Authority Mayors
- 1 (of 2) Council Mayors
- 6 Parish Council only candidates
- 308 council candidates across district, borough, metropolitan borough, county, city and unitary authority
- 22 of the 308 also stood for parish or town council
- 56 candidates stood for re-election as Labour and Co-operative, 20 did not

### **Total candidate numbers by region/nation:**

#### **England – 318**

- East Midlands – 96
- East of England – 40
- North East & N Cumbria – 22
- North West – 31
- South East – 36
- South West – 40
- West Midlands – 41
- Yorkshire & the Humber – 12

### **Total councils contested**

- 23 out of 24 (96%) councils contested in England
- 19 parish councils contested

### **Councils with the highest numbers of candidates were**

- 32 – West Northamptonshire Council
- 30 – Lancashire County Council
- 22 – Hertfordshire County Council
- 20 – Derbyshire/Oxfordshire/Staffordshire County Council
- 16 – Cambridgeshire County Council
- 15 – Cornwall Council
- 14 councils had 10 or more Co-operative candidates



### **Of those who provided equality data**

- 44% identify as women, 55% identify as men, 1% identify as non-binary
- 17% identify as BAME
- 24.5% identify as having a disability
- 12% identify as LGBTQ+
- Also, 18% have caring responsibilities for young children
- (58/42 gender split) (50/50)

### **Age profile**

- 18-30 – 37/315 – 12%
- 31-40 – 35 – 11%
- 41-50 – 51 – 16%
- 51-60 – 69 – 22%
- 61-70 – 79 – 25%
- 71-80 – 43 – 13.5%
- - 81+ – 1 – <1%
- Unknown – 4

Youngest candidate was 18yrs and 3.5mths at election time

Oldest candidate was 83yrs and 4mths at election time

### **Other activity in the area of this strategic objective**

- '100 days to local elections' event - the Party's Local Election launch event online with Council leaders, Metro Mayoral candidates and Council candidates.
- Local Elections Communications - the Party's Local Election communications included email, Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter and Bluesky. This contained graphics, hand raisers, video content and campaigning content.
- Campaign packs distributed to candidates, WhatsApp groups established, coffee mornings and training were also conducted for Local Government candidates.
- Anna Smith Lab/Co-op – was selected by the Party to be the Co-op Northamptonshire Metro Mayor candidate.
- Party Officer campaigning – joined by members, Party Officers undertook campaigning visits including in Doncaster, Hull, Amber Valley, Peterborough and Ormskirk, as well as speaking at Campaign launches such as at West Northants.
- Scotland and Wales Parliamentary selections – both Scotland and Wales Parties have agreed and begun processes to adopt candidates.

### **Strategic Objective: Be leaders of co-operative solutions, seeking their delivery locally, regionally and nationally in every sector of society and the economy**

As was outlined in the strategic year plan, this strategic objective would be a key area for the Party to focus on delivery. As can be seen below the last quarter of activity demonstrates some real steps forward on some of the key areas of the Party policy priorities. Of course, some of the below has uncontrollable timelines which means there is still much to do throughout the rest of the year.



## **Westminster Government Bill work**

**Great British Energy Bill** – This Bill creates GB Energy. Throughout the process of the Bill Co-op Parliamentarians, Ministers have consistently raised and underscored the importance of Community Owned Energy and the need to deliver upon the Local Power Plan (the Party's key priority in this area). Through the course of the Bill's passage in the House of Lords and with full Co-operative Party involvement the Government amended the Bill to place a statutory duty for GB Energy to develop community benefit and community owned schemes. Through the Bill's passage and through the process of amendments the Party communicated to members and supporters about the issue from Parliamentarians and Ministers.

**Crime and Policing Bill** – A second key area of the Party's policy priorities has been to see the introduction of a stand-alone offence of retail crime and withdraw the £200 investigation limit. Both these measures were included in the Government's Crime and Policing Bill. The Party has been publicly supportive through the course of this Bill.

## **Wider Westminster and Whitehall activity -**

**A Plan for Neighbourhoods** – Co-op Minister Alex Norris launched the MHCLG Plan for Neighbourhoods, which aims to distribute £1.5bn to 75 communities across the country to build sustainable local regeneration and economic growth and the creation of local community boards to steer the projects. The Plan made specific reference to co-op growth and this was fully integrated in the publication and was highlighted by the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State in her accompanying Op Ed and through Westminster statements.

**Mutuals and Co-operative Business Led Growth Council established** – the Council, which had been called for by the Party was established and first met with Treasury Ministers and DBT Ministers. They have established priority areas for their work and the Council includes members such as ARUP, Arla, Co-op Group, Nationwide, John Lewis Partnership, Co-ops UK, BSA.

**DESNZ Community Energy announcement** – through the reporting period the Westminster Government made a funding announcement for Community Owned Energy. This £15million announcement was to ensure a strong pipeline of Community owned schemes was generated. The Party communicated about the announcement and had a Politics Home op-ed on the topic along with the Independent carrying Party quotes on the announcements. [GB Energy investing £200m in solar panels on schools and hospitals to cut bills | The Independent](#)

**MHCLG Co-op Housing funding announcements** – there was a £20million funding announcement for Community owned housing including housing co-ops. Again the Party issued supportive materials and had a piece and quotes carried in the Daily Mirror newspaper - [Thousands of new homes to be built with £20m boost - with one big difference - The Mirror](#)

**Ministerial meeting with Parliamentary Group** – The Westminster Parliamentary Group met with Economic Secretary Emma Reynolds and Nationwide Building Society Chairman Kevin Parry to discuss co-operative growth and the new Business led Co-op Growth Council.

**Co-operative Housing Tenure Ten Minute Rule Bill** – Andrew Pakes MP presented this Bill to Parliament which called for the establishment of Co-operative Housing tenure a longstanding call of the co-operative movement. The communication of this Bill included co-operative housing visits, video and email/socials support. It also had a Politics Home op ed



and trade press coverage: [The House | My bill will help co-operative housing play a bigger role in solving the affordability crisis](#)

**Scottish Co-op Growth Ministerial Roundtable event** – with Scottish Office Minister and Co-operative MP Kirsty McNeil and Treasury Minister and Co-op MP James Murray

**DBT Oral questions** – saw Co-op MP Jo Platt asking Ministers about steps to support co-operative Growth which led ministers to recommit to co-op growth.

**FCDO Oral Questions** – Patrick Hurley MP asked Co-op Minister Stephen Doughty MP about the Westminster Government's ability to promote co-operatives within its work on international relationship.

**Co-op Housing tax treatment** – The General Secretary wrote to tax Minister James Murray to add the Party to movement calls to relieve co-op housing from changes to tax treatment that would have an adverse effect on their financial stability.

**Home Office questions** – In addition to Co-operative Parliamentarians activity through the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the Crime and Policing Bill, Co-op MP Sally Jamieson asked Home Office Ministers about their commitments to tackle retail crime.

### **Local and Regional Co-op Growth**

**Greenwich Council Commission Launch and publication** – the Party has supported this Commission's work over the last 10 months. The report was issued through the reporting period. The report centres on social care, energy, new co-op growth. It was accompanied with a funding announcement for community energy. The report was launched at the CCIN conference in Greenwich at which the General Secretary made a speech. [Together for Greenwich: Co-operation for the future | Co-operative Commission report - Together for Greenwich: Co-operation for the future | Royal Borough of Greenwich](#)

**London Growth plan - co-op growth plan inclusion** – Metro Mayoral growth plans represent an opportunity for the Party, and it has been working with Metro Mayors and their teams in this area. Through the reporting period London Mayor Sadiq Khan launched the London growth plan, which included business support for co-op growth.

**Rochdale Council CTBR motion:** this motion, which aims to prepare councils for a new Community Right to Buy, was passed by Rochdale through the period.

### **Scottish and Welsh policy**

Through the first quarter the Party launched member led policy consultations for Scottish and Welsh members. This was accompanied with member online events. National officers have also produced policy papers for Scottish Labour on ownership.

### **Strategic Objective: Inspire and educate our audiences about the achievements and potential of the co-operative movement**

In some ways this strategic objective has been shaped by the development and launch of the Party's new campaign frame of Community Britain. It has been punctuated by increased local co-op visits and regular nationally organised events.

### **Community Britain design and launch**

Through the reporting period the Party sought to design and deliver an over-arching narrative to our work on the topic of community empowerment, cohesion and power. This would be a way to make an argument that politics needs to fully understand the public policy





potential of empowered communities and that it has an active role in their creation. More information about Community Britain can be found here: [Community Britain – Co-operative Party](#)

Alongside the launch of this work the Party delivered:

- A launch speech event with Local Growth Minister Alex Norris MP, Ros Wynne Jones, The Mirror and representatives of Stretford Town Hall (community hub).
- A pamphlet titled: Stories from Community Britain, which featured articles from a wide range of campaign groups, Hope not Hate, Community owned schemes, political stakeholders. This work can be found on the above page.
- Site visit to a featured case study within Community Britain from a church with an attached community energy scheme in Hackney, London. This visit was undertaken the Deputy Mayor of London, Energy and Environment Mete Coban. This site visit resulted in video and social media content.
- Site visit to Coin Street Community-led housing with Andrew Pakes MP which resulted in social media and online content in Politics Home.
- A site visit to a community owned Cinema in Oxford with Anneliese Dodds MP. This site visit resulted in social media content and video content.
- A site visit to a community owned Gym in Covent Garden with Rachel Blake MP, which resulted in social media and video content with potential for coverage in the Evening Standard.
- The Party has begun connected work with Stir to Action and Kirsty McNeil MP centring on the importance of Social Clubs. There has been member and supporter hand-raisers and an online members Co-op Live session on the topic. This will be work that the Party returns to through the coming months.

### **Labour Party Conferences**

Through the reporting period the Party attended and was represented at a number of Labour Party Conferences. This included the Scottish Labour Conference where the Party:

- Delivered a sororal greeting.
- Held a fringe meeting on Community Energy with Westminster Energy Minister Michael Shanks MP among others.
- Held a stall.

The Party held a stall and fringe with Kate Gilmartin, Board Member of Great British Energy, Tom Hayes MP (Net Zero Mission Champion) and Cllr Adam Hug, Leader of Westminster Council and LGA Net Zero lead at the Labour Party LGA Conference in Warwick.

The Party also held stalls and fringe meetings at South West Labour Party, North West Labour Party and West Midlands Labour Conference through this period.

Other activity in the area of Strategic Objective included:

- The national Labour Party advertised and held a Labour Party members zoom on the Co-operative Party and movement to recognise the UN Year of the Co-operative.



This zoom was spoken at by Co-op MPs Preet Kaur Gill and Emma Foody as well as the Party General Secretary. This event was advertised to all Labour Party members.

- The General Secretary had an op-ed piece carried by Politics Home on theme of co-operative growth in the context of emerging international instability, which can be seen here: [The House | It's time to give communities the powers they need to fulfil their potential](#)
- Paul Sweeney MSP tabled a motion to the Scottish Parliament recognising the UN Year of the co-operative.

## **Strategic Objective: Have an engaged, diverse and growing individual and organisational membership that values the Party and its work**

Work in the area of this strategic objective centred upon the successful delivery of the Party's Regional Conferences, online regional conferences and Co-op Live events but also includes a range of work with the Party's Subscribing Societies as well as with Party members.

### **Online regional conferences**

In recent years the theme of the Party's Regional Conferences has followed on from the Annual Conference the previous year. This year's theme followed the Party's 'Co-operative Showcase' theme 'Co-operative Change'. The programmes of these events sought to combined National Political figures, local and regional representatives alongside co-operative and community led practitioners.

Each event carried roughly 10-15 speakers and had member led policy discussions and Q&A. Speakers included Westminster Co-op Ministers such as Douglas Alexander MP, Kirsty McNeil MP, Leader of Scottish Labour Anas Sawar MSP, Sarah Hall MP, David Skaith Metro Mayor, Kim McGuinness, Metro Mayor, Becky Gittins MS, Clare Moody PCC, Sadik Al-Hassan MP, Preet Kaur Gill MP, Gareth Snell MP, Baggy Shanker MP, Andrew Pakes MP, Chris Vince MP, Alice McDonald MP etc.

The Conferences carried out through this reporting included: The South West Conference, Northern Conference, Wales Conference, London Conference, Scotland Conference, Midlands conference and South East Conference.

### **Co-op Live members sessions**

The Party's Co-operative Live sessions remain an important education and engagement tool for the Party. Through the reporting period the Party carried out six such sessions. These take place on a Wednesday evening. They included:

- 'Access to food' with the Co-operative Group
- Community Assets with Power to Change
- Social Clubs with Stir to Action
- International development with LCID
- Community Britain members briefing

### **Networks and equalities**

Through this reporting period the network steering committees were formed post elections. There were vacancies on three committees and these elections were reopened and





conducted. An induction session for each new steering committee was delivered by National Officers of the Party.

### **Chris Herries Programme**

The Chris Herries Women Leadership programme began its fourth year. This year the Party has partnered with the Co-operative College as a delivery partner. The new cohort applied and were selected, and the programme is half-way through being delivered. The programme includes sessions on leadership, on co-operative history, personal development and storytelling.

There were a number of equalities events which were delivered through the reporting period these included:

- Online event by Women's Network for International Women's Day
- Online Ramadan event
- In person event on Health Inequalities in Walsall

### **Subscribing Societies**

In addition to other work with our Subscribing Societies outlined in this report and routine work not outlined here, the Party undertook the additional activity below:

- The bi-yearly Subscribing Society meeting was held in Co-op Group Headquarters in Angel Square. A meeting which was also addressed by Co-op Group CEO Shirine Khoury Haq.
- The General Secretary became a member of Central Co-op's Policy and Campaign committee, joining its inaugural meeting.
- Anneliese Dodds MP met with the Group CEO on the topic of Peace and Co-operation.
- Party Officers attended the Annual Co-operative Retail Conference in Nottinghamshire, held a stall and the General Secretary addressed the Conference.
- Assistant General Secretary Emma Hoddinott attended and spoke at the Co-operative Group National Members Council.

### **Other activity**

- The latest edition of the Pioneer magazine was produced and delivered through the reporting period.
- Party regional organisers continued to support local and regional meetings with elected representatives, with meetings such as with Manchester members and Paul Waugh MP.



## **Strategic Objective: Ensure the Party is organisationally and financially sustainable**

- Subscribing Societies AGMs have happened and are upcoming. The Party provided video updates to the Central Co-op AGM.
- The Labour Party and USDAW Union circulated emails to their members on the Motion 8 at the Group AGM. This is in conjunction with the Party's regular campaigning and social media advertising.
- The Party conducted new Treasurer and new Secretary Officer training sessions.
- The Party's membership survey work has continued, and initial reports have been worked on with partner organisations. There has been a workshop on the initial findings with NEC members.
- Party Officers have all attended new data protection training, along with new upgrades to Party online security.
- The Party has continued with strong membership retention work including via text, email, letters and engagement with local officers.
- The Party has continued to engage with the Electoral Commission, Welsh Labour Party, Welsh and UK Government on the issues related to changes to Welsh Parliament elections and its effect on Party operations through regulated periods.

## **Recruitment & Membership**

- **On 31 March 2025**, our total individual membership stood at **13,528**.
- **Our affiliate membership** stood at **14**.
- **Total new recruitment** (both new joiners and those who re-joined after being lapsed) for Q1 2025 was 290.
- **London region** had the highest number of new members followed by Yorkshire & the Humber and South West regions.
- **February** was the highest month for recruitment, with 104 new members.
- **Throughout 2024** we continued to look at ways increase both local recruitment & retention, and expand our national email supporter list, which is by far the biggest source of new member recruitment. This included involving the co-operation of local parties and branches in pro-actively recruiting, using text messages to remind members that they are in arrears and localising the new member journey so that new members received immediate information from their region. This continued and built on the work from 2023.
- **Our total number of supporters** who receive our national emails (both members and non-members) at the end of 2024 was around **136,000**.
- **Local recruitment** was boosted in Q1 through Local Government candidate recruitment.
- **Our biggest source of new members** was the targeted Join Asks.



- **Recruitment into 2025** will continue to be challenging, and we will continue to devote considerable attention and time to retention and to improving the member experience and journey. The July general election, the Co-operative Change national event and the 2025 Local Government elections also provided opportunities for this in conjunction with member mobilisation.

## Contacting the NEC

[See here for members of the NEC and contact details](#). You can contact your NEC representative via the link on that page or by emailing Karen Wilkie, Board Secretary at [board@party.coop](mailto:board@party.coop).

## Inviting NEC members to meetings

Following the change to structure of the NEC from 2023, each local party and branch has two regional NEC representatives, in addition to those elected to represent BAME, (dis)Able, LGBTQ+, Youth and elected members.

In England, both of these regional NEC members represent the whole of your section so you can invite either to your Party Council or branch meetings, particularly if the meeting is to take place on line. For in-person meetings, please bear in mind the travel time and costs - the party council or branch should meet the travel expenses of any NEC member they invite.

For regional parties, both NEC members should always receive notice of meetings.

## Elections to the NEC

The NEC is elected by and from members every three years, with the next elections in early 2026. If you would like to know more about seeking election to the NEC, contact Karen Wilkie, Board Secretary, at [board@party.coop](mailto:board@party.coop).