

Minutes of the Cross-Party Groups on Co-operatives

1 March 2021 1.00 – 2.00 pm

Online via Google Meet: A new co-operative approach in Scotland: Scottish Parliament elections 2021

CPG Members in attendance

James Kelly MSP, Johann Lamont MSP, Claire Baker MSP, Claudia Beamish MSP
(Other attendees listed at the end of this document).

1. Welcome and introduction

James Kelly MSP (CPG Convener) opened proceedings and welcomed attendees.

2. A new co-operative approach in Scotland: Scottish Parliament elections 2021 and priorities for Co-operatives UK.

Rose Marley, Chief Executive, Co-operatives UK introduced herself and gave a presentation on Co-operatives priorities for the Scottish Parliament elections in May. Copies of the manifesto 'asks' document are available [here](#).

Rose advised that Cooperatives UK have written to each party leader asking them to include co-op development in their manifestos. If adopted by the new Scottish government, the co-op economy could grow further through four key programmes:

- An entrepreneurs' scheme aimed at establishing new worker co-ops;
- A job recovery scheme designed to protect the livelihoods of workers threatened by business sale, restructuring or closure;
- More support for housing co-operatives to help local communities develop more affordable housing;
- A boost for community funding via a scheme aimed at making institutional investment in local assets easier.

Rose hoped each party would look closely at these proposals as they develop their own manifesto for the election.

3. How the Scottish parties propose to help cooperatives thrive in Scotland.

The meeting heard from representatives of 4 parties on their approaches to developing cooperatives in Scotland and what measures they would like to see the next Scottish Government put in place to further grow the cooperative sector in Scotland. The representatives were (in order):

- Katy Gordon, Scottish Liberal Democrats
- Johann Lamont MSP, Scottish Labour
- Lorna Slater, Scottish Greens
- Susan Webber, Scottish Conservatives

4. Q&A from the event host and audience on co-operative priorities.

Questions were asked of speakers about the following topics:

- Raising awareness of community shares particularly in the energy sector;
- the importance of co-operative thinking at a global level and in finding consensus on climate policy in the year of COP26; and
- Ensuring a cultural change in our attitude to co-ops and embed cooperative thinking across our decision-making.

5. Next steps, how the Cross Party Group will take the recommendations forward, James Kelly MSP

James Kelly MSP thanked all the representatives of parties present and those that had contributed to the debate and asked questions. He hoped the Cross Party Group would reconvene after the election to take forward the priorities for cooperatives in Scotland identified by Cooperatives UK in their manifesto asks document.

6. Summary and close

James Kelly MSP thanked all those for taking part in particular those MSPs that are standing down at the election. He put on record appreciation from the group for Johann Lamont MSP who has been involved since her election as an MSP in 1999 when the Scottish Parliament was reconvened. Johann had been a dedicated proponent of cooperatives as both an MSP and, prior to 2007, as a Minister in the Scottish Executive.

**Cross-Party Group on Co-operatives,
Scottish Parliament - Monday 1 March
2021 - 1-2pm**

	First name	Surname	Organisation
1	Darah	Zahran	Co-operative Development Scotland Limited
2	Benjamin	Carey	Carey Tourism
3	Lilly	Hunter	SNP
4	Richard	McCready	
5	Irena	Pistun	Co-operatives UK Limited
6	David	Somervell	Cohousing in Southern Scotland CHOISS Edinburgh
7	Gareth	Wright	Co-operatives UK Limited
8	Lucinda	Broadbent	Social Change Productions Ltd.
9	Craig	McCormack	Scottish Wholefoods Collective Warehouse Limited
10	Vilte	Vaitkute	Social Change Productions Ltd.
11	Carol	Boden	Scottish Enterprise
12	Gareth	Roberts	Craigmillar Eco Housing Co-operative Limited
13	Jim	Lee	Energy4All Limited
14	Stephen	Gill	VME Coop Limited
15	Nigel	Todd	The Co-operative College
16	Ruth	Hall	Individual
17	Paul	Gerrard	Co-operative Group Limited

18	Martin	Meteyard	Individual
19	Eddie	Thorn	Scottish Midland Co-operative Society Limited
20	Stephen	Kelly	Co-operative Group Limited
21	Morven	Lyon	Community Shares Scotland
22	John	Forbes	Co-operatives UK Limited
23	Dick	Philbrick	Clansman Dynamics Limited
24	Leslie	Huckfield	Glasgow Caledonian University
25	James	Baster	Open Data Services Co-operative Limited
26	Pam	Maxwell	The Co-operative College
27	Francesca	Dymond	Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative
28	Chris	Cowcher	Plunkett Foundation
29	Brian	Connolly	Scottish Enterprise
30	Nick	Stokoe	Code Operative