

Public Minutes for Coordinating Group Meeting

16th May 2025 - Birmingham

- **Coordinating Group Members Present:** Beni Stewart, Ronja Schlumberger, Hamish Evans, Jo Poulton, Rebecca Stevenson,, Susanna Waters, Col Gordon (online), Dionysios 'Dennis' Touliatos (online), Roz Corbett (online), Dee Woods (online)
- **Coordinating Group Member Apologies:** Steve Smith
- **Operations Team members present:** Nancy Langfeldt, Alyce Biddle(online) , Anaelle Bouabdelli (online), Dee Butterly (online)
- **Membership Secretary Present:** Lauren Simpson

Agenda	Key Discussion Points	Actions, Next Steps & Outcomes
1. Standing Items		
Operations quarterly report, presentation and proposals		
Presentation of overview of operational work in last 3 months	<p>Staff Leavers The Local Food Project has come to an end and with it staff members Peter Samson and Bella Thompson ending their current roles in April 2025.</p> <p>New Starters: Ali Taherzadeh began in April 2025 as the new Member Services & Support Coordinator - to run a year long feasibility research project and business</p>	

	<p>planning project to assess and design what the LWA could be offering in terms of member services and support based on the input of member's needs.</p> <p>Current FTE staff: 16 (28 individual staff members)</p> <p>Work is continuing on reviewing and adapting of our GDPR policy</p> <p>Work is continuing on making a more formal and clear complaints procedure.</p> <p>The operations team have drafted a series of new policy documents (grievance, disciplinary, redundancy, wellbeing, parental leave, other leave, Varying Terms of Employment) for a staff team review process before finalising.</p> <p>A new sickness policy that staff team fed into has now been ratified.</p> <p>We began work during May's staff away days on creating a 'worker's charter' of the LWA.</p> <p><u>Staff Structure:</u> The working group presented an initial proposal to the staff team during May's</p>	<p>The Staff structure working group are working on a implementation timeline to be proposed to staff, alongside the decision making process to finalise the details.</p>
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	<p>staff away days of a sociocratic structure and initial ideas for the key department circles that the structure would involve.</p>	
Finance and fundraising quarterly report, presentation and proposals		
<p>Presentation of overview financial situation, fundraising focuses and next steps</p>	<p>The quarterly finance report was presented and discussed for the second quarter of the financial year.</p> <p>The 2023/2024 year end accounts are now with our accountants.</p> <p>A portion of grant underspend reported which can be deferred to next quarter / financial year.</p> <p>The CG began discussing a strategy for financing the LWA in a fundraising landscape much altered since 2020-2023 during which time the LWA's income and expenditure dramatically increased.</p> <p>Fundraising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful bids to Arts Council England for support of the 2025 Land Skills Fair; and Amiel and Melburn for 'Hate Out of Farming'. 	<p>A review of the LWAs bank accounts and approach to ethical investment is in process.</p> <p>Submitting of the 2023/2024 accounts by the end of June</p> <p>A further finance and budget focused CG meeting is being scheduled for July with a view of the 2025/26 budget being signed off in the August CG meeting.</p> <p>The FFWG will be working on longer term forecasting for the next 2-3 years with the information we have in hand re income / expenditure / fundraising prospects.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted: bids to Migration Exchange, Creative Pioneers Fund, and Esmée Faribairn for the development of The Agroecology Learning Collective. <p>New CG member Hamish has joined finance and fundraising working group, and CG member Susannah will also be joining it to provide extra capacity.</p>	
Working group and staff team reports and updates		
Democracy and Governance Working Group	<p>The Democracy and Governance Working Group is continuing its work in its two main workstreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Strategy: The data coming out of the series of member engagement workshops has now been organised and analysed. <p>Each staff team and the CG have participated in a strategy workshop to feed into the process to write the next 5 year strategy.</p> <p>The timeline for the strategy writing process was presented to the staff team at May's staff away days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Structure: 	<p>The working group will continue to develop the General Assembly model alongside the rewriting of the next organisational strategy document.</p> <p>The draft strategy will be written in June/July 2025.</p> <p>The first stage of training to be delivered into Sociocracy in Summer 2025.</p>

<p>The HR working group report</p> <p>Comms Working Group</p> <p>Staff team reports</p>	<p>Work on developing the new General Assembly is ongoing alongside the strategy work and staff restructure.</p> <p>CG member Dennis has joined the HRWG. Ongoing review of HR policies.</p> <p>The Comms working group didn't convene in this quarter.</p> <p>The CG received pre-recorded/written updates from each staff team with the LWA.</p> <p>Work on staff structure and ways of working is being developed through sociocracy by the staff structure working group.</p>	
2. Ongoing actions progress and updates: (any not included elsewhere in this document)		
<p>CG election process</p>	<p>A review process of the CG election process will soon begin</p> <p>The CG code of conduct has been drafted and but will now be finalised by the August CG meeting as other things were prioritised over this for the May CG meeting</p>	<p>A proposal for an updated CG election process will be presented at the August CG meeting (delayed from May) -with a view of increasing the level of democratic functioning and accountability within the process.</p>

CG Co-option process	A review process of the co-option process going forward will soon begin alongside a thorough review of the Articles of Association	A proposal for the process will be presented at the August CG meeting (delated from May).
Risk Register	The CG discussed the role of the risk register in their role of assessing risk for the LWA and how best to use it as a tool.	Each section of the risk register will be reviewed and updated. A smaller staff/CG group will meet to update the risk register and make it more of an ongoing live process.
Land Skills Fair	<p>The Land Skills Fair is taking place this July in a pared down format due to a much reduced budget compared to previous years which were heavily subsidised by funding which has now run out.</p> <p>Some funding recently secured from The Arts Council England will allow for a wider arts and music programme, plus some bursary places for BPOC, Queer, and other marginalised groups to attend and participate.</p>	Ongoing fundraising and business planning work continues for both the 2025 festival and longer term.
CG training	<p>CG have begun attending a series of workshops run by Co-ops UK, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial training - Employment Law - HR overview - Essential Coops director - Coop Risks 	

3. Matters arising

New CG Member

The Coordinating Group unanimously voted in favour of co-opting Jo Kamal on to the LWA CG as an independent director from now until the next CG elections in early 2026.

Jo has been co-opted by the CG in particular for their skills and experience related to non-hierarchical governance, HR, finance management and racial justice work.

The LWA CG can have up to 12 elected member directors, and in addition up to 4 co-opted directors at any one point. Currently the LWA CG has 11 elected member directors, with one spot currently vacant. Jo Kamal is taking up one of the 4 co-opted director positions for now, and at the next CG elections Jo is invited to stand officially for election via the membership.

This decision was made based on the guidelines for co-option according to existing LWA articles of association, section 17 - Methods of appointing directors, and in particular with reference to co-option as outlined in 17.5 and 17.6

An induction process will be followed to welcome Jo to the CG with a plan to Jo will stand for election by the membership in the next election process.