



Project Report and Recommendations Meeting: Transitions for Preston Two-day event

**Day 1: 14th January 2021
9:00 – 15:00 UK Time
Via Zoom**

AGENDA

09.00-09.05: Introduction: Julian Manley

LKS Mondragon Presentation

09.05-10.35: Presentation and discussion

10.35-10.40: Break

10.40- 12.00: Presentation and breakout groups

MEETING MINUTES

Julian: Thanks very much for coming to this meeting this morning. We have two days, it's divided into four sections, we do realize that not everybody will be able to make all four sessions. That's fine, obviously. The sessions most relevant to the project committee are this morning and tomorrow morning. Because those sessions follow on directly from the series of meetings and presentations we've been having with Marta and Ibon. So, if you do need to prioritize the morning sessions, today and tomorrow are the ones to prioritize.



This afternoon, we have a very interesting session, if you have time and if you're interested, where we're inviting researchers, mostly young academics, from a group called CorNet, the Cooperative Research Network, to present a series of very short, very bite size presentations on their ongoing research into cooperatives. And it's certainly going to be very interesting for those of us who have time. Tomorrow afternoon, we'll see how it goes. The idea in tomorrow afternoon is that we have a more open debate and maybe invite people who haven't been part of the project committee, but who are nevertheless interested in the Preston model, and interested in contributing in one way or another.

So, for tomorrow afternoon, Friday afternoon, if you'd like to invite a colleague or a friend, or someone you know, who might be interested in a couple of hours of discussing the kinds of things that the project committee has been debating along with Marta and Ibon, please feel free to do.

The structure of the meeting this morning, is really guided by Marta and Ibon and it consists of a presentation with moments for discussion and debate. We had a chat yesterday, and we decided that instead of breakout groups, it would be better to have a general open group, that there wasn't really a need to have breakout groups because this group is okay in terms of size for a discussion. So, we'll have a break at 10:35, just for five minutes. And apart from that we'll let Marta and Ibon guide us as to when we should be listening and when contributing, and so on and so forth.

As you know, while the presentation is going on, if you have a comment or idea you want to put in the chat, please feel free to do so. And you could also use the chat if you wish to include a question that we can pick up later on. That's also a possibility.

Right, thank you. So, I'm going to hand over to Marta and Ibon now. Just to say that today and tomorrow are the last days of online presentations and debates with Marta and Ibon. And as a result of all this work, they will be proceeding with writing and presenting a report for us, which I'm sure they'll make a comment about in a minute. So, thank you, Marta, Ibon....

Marta: Hello, good morning, everybody. As usual I'm going to share my screen with you to have the presentation. Thanks for your attendance in our eighth meeting in the framework of this Project. These two last sessions are going to be a little bit different from the ones that we had before, because in the previous ones we shared with you case studies, where we were analyzing entrepreneurship initiatives from the Basque Country. And today we would like to listen to you. We would like to share the main conclusions that we have obtained during our meetings, interviews, and so on, and all the work that we have been doing, share these conclusions with you. But for us it's also important to listen to your opinion and gather new ideas that maybe are not collected in the current document of conclusions.



And secondly, we would also like to present the four main challenges that we have identified and that we should discuss in a deeper way. And this discussion we would like to make tomorrow, but today we would like to share with you what are these challenges. So, today's aim is to reach a broad level of agreement about the main key issues of Preston, of the ecosystem, about the entrepreneurship and listen to your opinion.

So, just before I start the presentation, we would like to explain to you that we have organized these conclusions in four main groups or main issues. And we are going to present the conclusion of each issue and then we would like to have a debate and a dialogue with you to gather these new ideas.

The first issue is about Preston entrepreneurship ecosystem and its main features. The second group of ideas that we are going to discuss is about entrepreneurship features in Preston - what kind of entrepreneurs, what kind of sectors and so on. Then a third group of conclusions is about the cooperative movement - how it's organized and what is the current situation of cooperativism in Preston. And finally, the fourth one is about Preston model - what are the main ideas, opinions around Preston model that you are developing here.

So, we have obtained these conclusions from the seven committee executive meetings that we have been conducting in the framework of this project. So, probably there will be ideas that you have already heard or that are your own, that are not new in that sense. Another input that we have used to elaborate on these conclusions are the eight personal interviews that we have conducted with the different stakeholders from Preston. And we have done other interviews here in the Basque country with the representatives of each entrepreneurship initiative - from BBF, Saiolan, Gaztenpresa - that give us another vision, which we have also included in this conclusion. And finally, another input of information that we have used is the analysis of information and data that we have obtained. So, these are the main sources that we have used to create this presentation.

And as I told you before, we are going to share these conclusions on each issue with you and then we would like to have a debate or a collaborative work. We have planned to have around 30 minutes to gather your opinions. Maybe you think there are issues or ideas that are missing that you consider are important. So, we would like to get them from you. Or maybe there are ideas that need clarification or further study. We would like to get your opinion on that as well. The goal of this meeting is to get a level of agreement and consensus between the members of the committee executive.

The first point that we have is the conclusion on Preston entrepreneurship ecosystem. Currently, it has a low dynamism. The idea that has been repeated in several interviews is that the productive fabric here in Preston is based mainly on public sector, and also on as small and medium enterprises. So, there is a kind of dichotomy between the anchor institutions, who



are the bodies with high purchasing capacity and the small companies. And opinion is that there is a lack of big private companies located in Preston with the high purchasing capacity to the rest of the productive fabric of the economy.

An idea has been repeated is the proximity of Preston to Greater Manchester and Liverpool. From one side, there were people who think that this symmetry was an opportunity for Preston. And other ones, on the contrary, think that it is a threat, because they think it is more difficult for Preston to retain the talent – once the students finish their degree, they normally would go to Manchester, or London or Liverpool. So, we have these opposite ideas about the proximity of Greater Manchester and Liverpool.

It has been said in several interviews that Preston has a smaller scale, and that is why it is difficult to retain talent. But a positive point is that in Preston a lot of people know each other. And this can be seen as an opportunity to foster collaboration and cooperation between different communities or different members.

And despite the tradition of Rochdale, as a cooperative movement, the pioneers of modern coop societies in Great Britain, currently, there is a lack of knowledge about coops in a general sense.

And finally, another element that has been obtained from the interviews and from the meetings is that you have different communities in Preston, each of them has their own needs, their own peculiarity, and if we want to attract them to develop these entrepreneurship projects, maybe it is a good idea to define different strategies to track them and to support them just to focus on the needs of these specific groups. These where the main features of this ecosystem.

The perception of people is that in the last years the collaboration among stakeholders has increased. And it has helped Preston model to have these closer relationships. However, there are things that can be improved. Even though this collaboration has increased, currently, some of you have defined it as the early stages of effective collaboration. So, a step has been done, but can be improved. But fostering this collaboration implies time, knowledge, trust and the generation of relationship between the different stakeholders.

It's important that we should try to enable a higher level of collaboration in existing forums, through developing a new collaborative approach and in defining and creating new projects, or opportunities for collaboration. So, there are forms that are working and maybe we have to redefine or rethink to facilitate participation and collaboration. It has been highlighted that there is a need of new public/ private collaboration spaces, and, also, requested that this collaboration should not be driven politically. So, it's important to have another shared leadership, not based on political parties.



And in that sense, also, one point where collaboration is seen as relevant and that can be improved is between the different educative institutions of Preston. Here we have UCLan and its elements to support with Propeller; Centre for SME Development; we have Preston's College, Preston's Vocational Center, Unions and other training providers. And it has been highlighted that it's important to create a more collaborative atmosphere between them to improve these vocational, technical training and re-skilling programs with the goal to make people more competent and fully employable to have an impact in the communities. So, this training in entrepreneurial skills, the development of new skills for new sectors to help increase employability: are issues around which a collaboration between these institutional, educative institutions can be strengthened. So, to make this collaboration and develop new training and entrepreneurial skills, it's also necessary to have a clear idea about the current needs and the future needs of the companies to help to define these workforce development programs.

It seems that there are other incubation facilities in Preston that exist already, and we also need to integrate them in this ecosystem and into this collaboration.

We have now this Town's Fund project, which proposes two new innovation centers. There are already existing incubation facilities, like Propeller or the co-working spaces and we have to increase this coordination between all of these institutions that are already working in fostering this entrepreneurship in Preston.

And finally, we would like to address another issue that has emerged from the meetings and interviews. There is some level of collaboration between anchor institutions, although some relevant stakeholders are not taking part or are not integrated into this collaboration system that we are trying to strengthen. For example, the Chamber of Commerce is not taking part; other small and medium enterprises and industrial sector companies are out, because they are not anchor institutions; or other players in Preston that are working, or that have incubation facilities and co-working spaces. And we should try to integrate community grassroots organisations. And on the other side, there are other bodies that are participating, but with a low level of commitment, and we should try to increase their level of engagement, like the hospital or Lancashire County Council.

So, these were the main conclusions and the many ideas that we have obtained during the meetings. And now we would like to have your feedback on them. We have 30 minutes to debate with you about the Preston entrepreneurship ecosystem. And we would like to identify new ideas that are not gathered, and if there are any ideas that have to be clarified, rewritten or modified, or maybe not as important as we have highlighted – we would like to have your opinion. Who would like to share their ideas and opinions first?

Julian: If you could put your hand up either physically or using the Zoom - that'll be great.



Alina: Mick wants to speak.

Julian: Mick.

Mick: Hi, Marta, thanks for the report. I generally see the merit of what you've put across to us there. And obviously, it's only a brief summary. And my point is may be a matter of emphasis for at least one question. So, I think that it's about who the players are in this ecosystem. I personally have been involved in along with others and a lot of efforts to get trade unions involved. And I only see that mentioned sort of minimally there. I think they're key stakeholders, and at least a few other developments including the Education Centre. So, I wonder if that might need emphasising and finessing. Similarly with the grassroots groups, I think that's a point really well made that we need to do a lot better in terms of connecting with a whole range of grassroots groups and movements, neighborhoods and everything. But I don't think there's a complete absence of that. I think some great efforts have been done around that. So again, I think it's a little bit of emphasis... but my question is about the stuff about new partnerships that are not politically driven. What do we mean by not politically driven? I always have a little bit of thing in the back of my mind that sort of everything is political. And I know you mean party political, but to some extent we are only really here because Preston Labour Party have actually pushed the development of the Preston model. So, what are we actually saying? I'm not quite sure I've grasped the point. They are my contributions.

Marta: Yes, we said that because in different entrepreneurship initiatives that we have studied, for example, in Gaztenpresa, that was an important matter, also in Mondragon. Mondragon is not a political institution, which has developed corporation or has been a personal leadership or a group of people who live there... (*word not clear*) ...without any special political party. And we think that's important if we want to give continuity to this initiative. Because there will be political changes, we don't know when, in May, maybe in four years or maybe in 10 years. So, we want this initiative to last long.

Mick: I see about the continuity point. But, I suppose, I'm talking about politics with a smaller "p" - the ideas for a fairer economy, that whether we can make employment more complete; and the whole spirit of democratic ownership seems to me to be fairly clearly attached to a particular form of politics that I wouldn't want to lose sight of. But I do hear what you're saying about continuity issues.

Julian: Can I chip in here? I think that this is a big question. The big "P" in political or a small "p" in political, and the idea of continuity, the necessity for autonomy, and so on. I do think that when people talk about the Preston model, there's often the idea of defining it as common sense. And I think that what Marta is saying, is related to, what I understand, as people's idea about common sense, which we might relate to the common wheel or something like that. And



common sense would make the model and the way of working cooperatively in society available to all, as opposed to only available to a particular way of thinking. I think, Mick, we should take a note of that and get into depth about it at some stage. Thank you. Sue Smith, you had a question.

Sue: Hi. Yeah. Thank you, Marta. I guess my question is, you mentioned Chambers of Commerce and it might also relate to the small “p” that you've just been talking about. Any suggestions from your experience on increasing our traction through getting more people involved without increasing the democratic need for everyone to make the decisions, so the more people involved, potentially, the harder... I don't know, your experience of how do we get more players like those critical to the business community at the chambers of commerce, without diluting the ability to make decisions and move forward. So, something to do with our traction, our momentum? I think, that's my question. So, I'm not sure if that makes sense. Or Julian, or Alison Hitchen, either of you maybe want to add anything there?

Julian: Just to say that makes perfect sense. And the whole question of democracy and how it works in governance terms in Mondragon is (*word not clear*). Well, let me let Marta or Ibon speak about that.

Marta: What we were thinking is that maybe we should work together more closely with the Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness... try to minimize the productive fabric of the companies that are already working in the comparative values. At this stage raise awareness and have collaboration meetings to share these new values or this new way of thinking, because we have identified that there is a lack of awareness and knowledge about these topics. Maybe there are a lot of conversion processes that can be done maybe in companies, where an owner is going to retire and a company can be converted into a cooperative. So, maybe they can have this kind of context, we have to make them aware, to give them this kind of nucleus to facilitate the expansion or the creation of new cooperatives in that sense.

Julian: Thank you. I think it's also true to say that in Mondragon, the cooperatives have big cooperatives. So, it's not feasible to have a direct involvement in decision making for everything all the time. So, when you've got a cooperative that's 300, or 400, or 500 or a thousand people in the cooperative, the way it's dealt with in Mondragon is by having a specific governance structure that delegates the democracy in terms of governance, except for occasional meetings of the entire group. So, there are different ways to deal with that. And I think that it's a hot topic in Britain at the moment, isn't it? With, for example, the discussions about Citizens Assemblies? And I've had some discussions about this with Allison, and the idea is that the Center for SME Development might through software application, that we're applying for funding for, provide an opportunity or platform for Citizens Assemblies online. I think that's a big question - the idea of how can you be democratic but still be efficient with



your decision making? Yeah. Rachel, you had something about Chambers of Commerce as well, and maybe other matters?

Rachel: Yes, a couple of things, really, because Chamber of Commerce, and indeed, the Federation of Small Businesses, have long been a member of the local procurement group that was established to support progressive procurement in Preston, which actively involves five anchors, in that they're all working together around to increase the share of local procurement in their tendering processes. And over and above those five partners that are actively doing that there are other partners who attend those meetings, including the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Business. So, looking beyond the cooperative sector, and looking at community wealth building as a wider project that underpins what is often called the Preston model, there is engagement with the Chambers of Commerce and with the Federation of Small Businesses in that area, and actually also around the real living wage. So, I would slightly take issue Marta's conclusions that the Chamber of Commerce is not engaged, because I think there are two areas where they are. And I've just wondered whether, in doing the research, I don't think you've spoken to my colleague Tamar, who's been leading the progressive procurement in the Preston City Council now for a number of years. And so it might be worth at some point finding out a bit more about how that work is embedding itself more deeply into the local economy. Because a key priority for that work stream is also to engage with the SME sector. And that has been quite successful. So, I think there's a part of the story missing in what you're presenting. And I think it's important to take that on board and talk to a few people, who can give you a sense of perhaps what is already happening around progressive procurement, and to some extent around the real living wage, which is a very important part of community wealth building in the Preston model.

The other thing is that we are picking up on what you said about encouraging the business community to look at alternative models in the current context. Again, we've done a little bit of that work. There were two webinars in September: one talked about the employer businesses and the other about worker cooperatives. So we're making some efforts to get the message out about diverse business models and different ways of doing things. I think the reality is, as we all know, is that there isn't a strong cooperative culture in this country. It's not supported at a central government level. So it does feel like taking quite a new conversation to the business community. But that's just part of the context we're in. So yeah, I share, perhaps, a lot of your conclusions, but I think possibly, you haven't explored the community wealth building in Preston in all its depth and it might be worth picking up on that, and having a few interviews with people, who have been engaged for a number of years in particularly progressive procurement work, but also to some extent in the real living wage work as well.

Julian: Thank you, Rachel. I don't know if Marta or Ibon, you want to say something about that? And then we'll have a question from Chris. And then maybe we should continue with the presentation.



Marta: Yes. Thank you, Rachel, for your comments. We will follow your suggestion to get more information about progressive procurement, you have told us about and the involvement of Chamber of Commerce?

Julian: Thank you, Chris. Do you have a question?

Chris: Yeah, my question is connected with being more democratic and how that conversation works. And the governance of the decision making. It seems to me that we can most effectively and efficiently have that wider democratic moment now, at the beginning of the process. And let's talk to people, let's have an open conversation with the hundreds and 1000s of people in Preston about cooperatives, where the needs might be for that kind of model. Why do we need it? How can it happen? There's lots of appropriate information that makes the decision making really healthy, rather than appropriate for people who happen to be around the table. So, for me, that needs to happen. And then from the get go the foundation of the whole thing has had that right input, and you can then just continue with that conversation in certain ways. The mechanisms of which will come out of that open, initial conversation.

Julian: Thank you. Marta, Ibon? I know, Mick, that you want to say something, but I'm going to carry on after this and maybe bring you in later on, so we can continue with the presentation. Is there a comment from Marta and Ibon on Chris's point?

Marta: Yes, Chris. This element of having more conversation we have included in what we have considered the Preston model, but it's also in another part of the document. But yes, of course.

Julian: Thank you.

Chris: Sorry, Julian. Can I just add? For me part of that the need for that conversation is the perception of cooperatives. When I speak to people locally on our estate, there's a kind of misconception of what cooperatives might be: from "my nan was a member of the co-op...it's an old-fashioned kind of model of doing stuff" to a number of people mentioned they understood Barcelona as the co-operative. That was their understanding of what a co-operative was. And people have also said that, to me that "it's something that other people do" and that they felt it was a bit hippy-ish, and middle class. So, there's a whole perception that needs dealing with in that conversation, I think. Like yourselves, I see it as a real good way forward. But I think people perceive it as something different at this point, or know nothing about it.

Julian: Okay, thank you. Point taken Chris. I think that's a good point.



Alina: John raised his hand, sorry.

Julian: I know that John and Mick have things to say, but I do know as well that Marta has more presentation and a break after that. So, we can come back to more comments. And Mick and John, you're first in the queue, when it comes to the next moment. Marta, would you like to continue?

Marta: Yes, I'm going to share the presentation with you. Okay? But now Ibon is going to speak. Let me see...One moment, Ibon.

Ibon: Yes, no problem. I can do it myself, if you prefer. So, fine. Thank you, Martha. As we are opening the presentation again, I would like to say also that some of these issues will come again. We have just addressed the first, let's say, chapter of the four chapters that we are going to address today. And still tomorrow, we will go a little bit more in depth on these issues to see how we can move forward, because that's the end of the story. We are doing a diagnosis today, and tomorrow we want to jump into the recommendations and next steps. So, I'm sure many of these issues will come back again today and tomorrow. So now we start with entrepreneurship features because we, as you know from our previous meetings, also needed to have a kind of profile or diagnosis or state of the issue on entrepreneurship itself: how it's evolving in Preston, what are the main features, who is doing entrepreneurship and why.

So, starting from the needs that came out of these interviews and analysis, we got some concrete points on the needs of the entrepreneurs. There is a need related to the access to funding resources, that's clear, that's a need everywhere. So, having financial resources on funding is not enough - you need a very strong business project. But without funding resources many of very good business projects are not moving ahead.

Then the need to access to networks and business relationships because we know that many successful business ideas are a result of having these connections, having this access to potential clients, suppliers, partners and so on.

The knowledge and expertise about business and management issues, the cooperative model, leadership and teamwork. So, of course, we also need good skills on management not only of a cooperative model - that is very singular, but also on other management general skills related to leadership teamwork and so on.

And of course, also the space to operate and to start new businesses is very critical as we saw in the case of Bilbao Innovation factory and you also know your incubation initiatives in Preston. So, the features of the intrapreneurship projects beyond the entrepreneurs themselves. So, we are talking about small entrepreneurship projects, most of the cases micro SMEs belonging mainly to the service sector and not capital intensive with low levels of



investment needs in general. So, there are funding needs, but they are not big funding needs. And we are mainly talking about various small business initiatives. And in this sense, we also got the idea that there is in a big opportunity also to create what many people call the cooperative platforms mainly related to the new digital economy. You know that these platforms are growing a lot in the US and in some other parts in Europe, mainly related to digital businesses and also freelancers, riders, social care where they are trying to fight, let's say they're not democratic, digital businesses with alternative cooperative approaches through cooperative platforms.

So, in the profile, we are talking about mainly middle age entrepreneurs. So, I mean, young people are not so common as entrepreneurs in general. And this is quite common also in some other places in Europe and also in North America, where you usually really make the decision to start a new business when you are a little bit older, not just when you have finished college or your studies. And that's a challenge because we see that many of the policies and support resources in the private sector are mainly focusing on young people, because in many cases, this is considered as the way to help them avoid unemployment. They can jump into entrepreneurship, whereas the main profile of the entrepreneurs is a little bit older people. So, there is a gap between the target groups that we are focusing on and the real entrepreneur profile that we actually have.

The main need of this middle aged entrepreneurs is mainly again the access to funding and not so much the assessment and support, because these are people who have more experience in the business sector and they have a different profile compared to younger people.

Talking about sectors for entrepreneurships and those sectors that could create more opportunities. Coming from these interviews and analysis we have done, we are talking about like in many other cases, the green economy, all related to renewable and clean energies, of course, construction, refurbishment, building renovation, all related to urban renovation in general. Also the case of social care in all the different aspects related to elderly people, childcare, disabled people, domestic work, - there are many areas where there is an increasing need of new activities that can support and can give services to the people. Also the creative industries, as we know, there is a big clustering in the Manchester Metropolitan Area, and Preston is also very close to that. Digital and advanced services related to both to the service sector and the industrial sector. And of course, also hospitality and leisure. Probably once the COVID pandemic is over. There's also a need to support entrepreneurship projects in low income communities. Because we also know that they have extra problems and limits to start new businesses, but with also a social value approach and not forgetting the idea that every business even if it's coming from a low income community or other concrete communities needs to be competitive and sustainable in time. So, we really need to focus on the idea of various strong business models that can make these business projects be



sustainable over time. So, if we go ahead, yes. So those are the main ideas related to the entrepreneurship features of the of the Preston ecosystem. So again, we would like to open now the debate, following the same questions that we had in the previous in the previous chapter. So, what do you gain from these analyses? What would you add? What would you change or skip in this case? Do you agree with this analysis of the of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Preston?

Julian: Thank you. While people are thinking about that, I'd like to go to Mick and then to John, who were cut off before. Mick, would you like to start?

Mick: It's only to follow up on Chris's point. Just before Christmas, UK Citizens Movement was trying to develop a Preston Citizens Movement, which would ideally make more connections between local grassroots groups and involve individuals in their own right. And I think two things. One, that could be a vehicle for communication around the issues that we're interested in here and build alliances across groups. But the other one is, if it was really cooking, it could connect with the stuff that you mentioned, Julian, about developing democratic platforms that can fill the spaces between face to face meetings or Citizen Assemblies, and such like. And I think if we gave that some energy, we could really develop something, and it could have a wider appeal than just the stuff that we're interested in, it could just improve the local democratic infrastructure. Full stop. We could go on all day. I do like what you said, Julian, about having longer conversations that might deepen what we mean by a politics with a small "p", because that thing allows us to borrow under: what do we actually mean by people's engagement with democracy? And I heard what Chris said. There are fashions and fads and predilections and confusion about some of the things and concepts that we take for granted. And one of the things that demoralizes me the most, but also energizes me is people's lack of interest in democratic participation. Or finding out, why that sort of frittered away in some places, and maybe it's not so fragile in places like Preston, because people are putting some energy into talking about it doing something. But let's not delude ourselves. There's a lot of work to be to be done there. So, thinking about these sorts of different ways in which we might connect with people and involve them, and appreciate different points of view, and actually persuade people around to other points of view as well, if we can. It's part of what I think as a sort of more deliberative and participative democracy. But we don't really have the infrastructure presently to actually do the best that we can around all that stuff. And I think we have to both nurture and capitalize upon initiatives, like the Preston Citizens thing to actually help ourselves, because we can't do all on our own. That was just the point. On a very practical sense, after the inaugural meeting around the Preston Citizens idea, I've sent some emails to this effect. And the follow up meetings have not yet happened for anyone who wanted to get involved in those discussions. And there's a lot of people on this call, who are already involved in a general sense anyway. I'm waffling now, but that was the point I wanted to make.



Julian: Thank you, Mick. And I think that two points I'd take away from what you've said, and I think are really important is first, there are going to be some points that we want to pick out of the final report that Marta and Ibon will provide. We want to pick those points out and look at them in depth. And second, we need to join the dots. I think that's really critical. So, if we're talking about a group doing work on democracy, we need to know how to interlink and interweave that work with everything else that we do. And I think that's one of the main aims that we should be focused on. There's so much energy can be wasted when people are working in silos. And I think that that's the one of the lessons for Mondragon is exactly that. You look at Mondragon, and every item in Mondragon, everything is interlinked and interweaved with everything else. And that provides strength in numbers, if you like, and support for one thing supports the other and so on. John...

John: Yeah, I think I wanted to firstly say that in terms of the second set of presentations, I think I agree with Ibon's analysis set out there. But just going back to the earlier one, I support Marta's view in terms of the low level of cultural awareness of this at the moment, and I think that is a fundamental British problem in terms of the hierarchical culture of employment in particular, we're used to. And I think Mick's point about the trade unions is really important. And what Chris was saying about the frustration of people's perceptions about co-ops and how this work, it is odd, because actually, in the informal economy, we're all used to working cooperatively in voluntary organizations of a whole variety of kinds, sports groups, and so on. And yet, somehow, the experience just doesn't get translated into our formal engagements in work. And even my own experience on the employee ownership side, it sometimes feels like you're pulling employees with you, as it were, kicking and screaming the idea that they might have participatory rights and expectations in the process, which is frustrating, I think.

And then thinking also about work within the third sector. But quite a number of third sector groups are actually established from a constitutional perspective on a cooperative basis: the industrial and Providence societies, which is a standard model for operation. But the actual way in which life goes on within these organizations continues to be conventionally hierarchical, with a board of trustees, people receiving whatever services the organisation or the charity actually produces. And it is very hard to actually involve people in the engagement process. So, I think I just agree with the fact that this is the long term issue for us the long term time timescale we need to think about, and also the amount of effort that it takes to change cultures in this way.

And just moving on to one of the points that Ibon made, he referred to riders, and I see him that this was referring to, you know, delivery arrangements and Uber and so on, and so forth. And I was struck by a development recently in the City of London, where basically the city is intending to ban all delivery arrangements within the city. Take lorries and vans out and just have licensed deliveries. And they've signed up a monopoly arrangement with Amazon. So, if you want to get a parcel into the city of London, you will be going through the Amazon last mile



delivery hub. Right? And I am just thinking about that as a model we stuck with the idea that somehow Amazon is going to take over the universe even more than they already have done. And how's that kind of apply in Preston? The physical space is ours, we own it, isn't owned by Amazon, we should be able to control it. And there's an opportunity there for a Last Mile Delivery Co-op, just in the same sort of development way as a taxi co-op. On the basis that this is like a social value consideration, that because this is our collective space, democratically controlled through Lancashire County Council and Preston City Council, we should be able to apply social value principles to how it gets used. And that can mean favoring the social value that the entities that are involved actually deliver and taking that into account in terms of access rights, in the same way as it can be taken into account in procurement, as Rachel was mentioning. So I do think that there are ways of getting around this. But we mostly don't hold those in our heads - is my experience.

Julian: Thank you, John. Ibon and Marta...

Ibon: Maybe not to go too long. I will address the last point on the cooperative platforms or the platform economy initiatives. I totally agree with John that we need to be careful on how to operate on that transition because we know that the economy is becoming more digital every day. And that's something that it's very difficult to oppose to, or to be against to. But how to take this as an opportunity to create more social enterprises. Because the first movement was radically against social enterprise. So, it has been creating totally non-democratic organizations where you have a bunch of freelancers that are working for a very wealthy person, who are treating them as slaves. So we see that in a second stage, for instance, in Barcelona, there were some interesting cases where these bicycle riders are taking control of this situation. Are leaving their digital platforms, and are creating their own digital platforms, but in a more shared ownership approach, where they not only bring their work to the organisation, but also want to be part of the ownership of it as in a cooperative model, or it could also be a limited company and so on, but have a more social enterprise approach. So, they are still operating in the digital economy idea, because they're probably one of their competitive advantages needs to be the digital platform, but at the same time, they can be a social enterprise. And as you said, John, there are many, many issues behind that, when we are talking about larger logistic platforms. I mean, there is the issue on space and how public institutions are giving opportunities more to digital platforms that have a social approach than to traditional large digital platforms. And of course, there is the whole issue on awareness. Because many of these people that are working as slaves in these traditional platforms, they don't even know about co-ops or about alternative models. They are young people who have got their first jobs and are in the middle of a problem. So, we also and also public institutions, and the whole cooperative sector needs to become more aware and help them understand that there are alternative models, even in the digital sector, for these organizations, so I totally agree.



Julian: Thank you. Any more comments? Questions? Yes, Chris...

Chris: Can I can I just say, in terms of abundance, final point about local initiatives, and them needing to be competitive. It's a really important point for local stuff, from my perspective. In the initiatives, if we're going to develop initiatives - they need to be quality, they need to be robust, there's nothing worse than a failed short term flop. It sends our estate backwards. And I think in terms of this cooperative kind of movement thing, we need to make sure that initial quality is really there. We need to be able to promote through our successes the whole notion of cooperative working, so that's a really important point. And I know that the guy who was talking about the bank was saying that, yeah, we can be socially wonderful, but we need to be a good bank. I think it's a really important point.

Julian: Thank you, Chris. I completely agree with you. And I'd also like to say that, in my view, that's one of the lessons of Mondragon as well. That they really concentrate on successful businesses and they make money. The point is what they do with the money once they've made the money. That's the difference. So instead of that money going off to shareholders, it can be distributed in the way that the co-op members deem fit. But you've got to make the money in order to do that in the first place. So I think that's a point really well taken. Thank you. Anyone else?

Alina: Mick posted a question in the chat.

Julian: Mick, is your question to be shared?

Mick: It's more like a question for everyone, really. I'm not sure if I've got any readymade answers, but there's age profile discrepancy. Sort of young, middle aged... I think that's reflected elsewhere in society, and where we're probably on the cusp of having quite a substantial and difficult to cure rift between today's younger generation and people of the age of most of the people on this call. And I think some of this also intersects with some of these issues of the crisis in democracy that we've got, and could deepen that legitimacy crisis in democracy. And so I haven't got any easy solutions. But I wonder whether where we need to pay attention to it is in the development of things like the Cooperative Education Center, and how within the cooperative ecosystem, we develop strong links between the educative components, and maybe right back into mainstream schools before you get to things like employment based education and university education. But I don't think there are any readymade solutions. Unless someone else has got any.

Julian: Some of us know Debbie Shannon, who works in Link Cooperative Educational Psychologists. I know that she's interested in the whole area of cooperative schools. And to what extent these things can be introduced at an earlier age. Just tell me if I'm right, Marta and



Ibon, in Mondragon, there is a cooperative primary schools in there, which is funded by the cooperatives, is that right?

Ibon: There is an Arizmendiarieta Primary School, but I'm not sure if it's totally funded by the Mondragon Corporation, but it's a very interesting model, Julian, because in the Basque region, in the in the 60s and 70s, cooperative schools were created also because of a social need. At the time of Franco's dictatorship, speaking, teaching and learning in Basque was not allowed. So, as the dictatorship was coming to an end, the people in the region decided to promote schools, where the children could learn in Basque, and of course, there was no public support for that, because it was not allowed. So, they decided to start this course with a cooperative approach to cover that social need that was there. Because as it happened with the rest of the cooperative movement, it was a response to a social need where there was no traditional private response to that. So, is also Arizmendiarieta Ikastola is an example of the many cooperative schools all over the region. And, of course, the corporation is supporting this school, but also nowadays, the Basque government within the public education system is supporting it with the funding. And also Mondragon Corporation and Laboral Kutxa are supporting the Mondragon University - all the education initiatives - with funding. Yes.

Julian: Thank you. I'm not sure, Julie, if you want to say something. You've been making some comments in the chat, would you like to say them here?

Julie: Yes, I will. As someone who was involved in the Preston Citizens leadership team, I am struck by how much the focus in Preston Citizens is about community organizing. And one of the key things that is talked about in there is how that is not something that can be rushed. It's something that's built on relationships. And a key thing in Preston Citizens group is getting to understand what people care about and why. And looking at where different interests come together. And I think we can't shortcut that. It's important to engage with the existing community groups and actually start to be having these conversations. And I think it's something that's been around right from the beginning of this project, isn't it? And it's something that Chris, Mick and Rachel have been saying at different points about the importance of bringing in communities and it's necessary to find out how do we do that in a very practical way. Citizens operates in a way that is based on one to one conversation, having many one to one conversations across Preston, to understand what is it that makes people angry? What is it that people care about? What is it that... why, why. And that's going to take time. I just felt I needed to put in a word of caution. And I get the points that you were making, Mick, about making that connection, and it is something for us to be aware of. But to actually see Preston Citizens as a body that can be consulted, or it isn't what Preston Citizens is about. It is very democratic, and it is very much about community organizing. I think that's my main point.



Julian: Thanks, July. I think Mick should say what he thinks here? My understanding was not that Preston Citizens would be used as a kind of consultancy group, but simply that through the practice of participatory democracy, - because you just said that they are very democratic in their practice, - they can contribute to the general learning of all of us in Preston, - was the sort of idea that I got. But before we launch into that one, Ibon and Marta, should we continue with the presentation? We have a break at 10:35? Should we continue now? Or shall we continue with the discussion?

Ibon: I would say that if there are more comments or questions, we can continue a little bit with the discussion after the break and then continue with the other two chapters. But I'm not sure if there are other comments or suggestions?

Julian: Well, I'd like to invite Mick to make a comment because I kind of spoke in his stead. I think that's probably not a good idea.

Mick: No, I think you've got it and I'm not in any way trying to contradict what Julie is saying, and I'm very, very conscious that Citizens are new in Preston, but a constellation of groups that do forms of community organizing and connect with communities is not new. They're already there, they've been battered recently with austerity and everything, but they are around. And my experience of Citizens is elsewhere. And particularly in London, I've been involved in my trade unions alliances on and off, they haven't always been perfect alliances, by the way, but alliances on and off with movements like citizens. And I think the shared interest is at that level of deepening democracy in communities, and a sort of reciprocal interest in each other's interests. So, for instance, the most successful UK citizens activities that I'm aware of have been around the Real Living Wage. And that's where unions and grassroots groups and individual citizens have had a most mutual interest and on the basis of those sorts of campaigns, London Citizens, for instance, organized a whole raft of really big assemblies and such like. So, I do hear what you say about this sort of one to one movement building stuff. And interestingly, the unions have been on that territory as well. So, union movement building, particularly community union organizing models are based on the same principles and seeking out the people who are already connected and where their sort of community assets are, and we know all this stuff, don't we? And so, I could go on and on. But I think this is emergent stuff. And we may as well be building the alliances and connections from the get go. And if we're also interested in building sort of digital solutions to democratic deficits, we could be doing that together with as many interest groups as possible, which is back into that sort of common sense common wheel stuff that Julian was starting with. So I see lots of potential there. But I do hear you, Julie, there is a sort of cart and horse thing going on, as well. But we may as well be involved in those conversations. And I think those conversations have already started. So, I think that's a good thing.



Julian: Thank you, Mick. Thanks. I was quite interested in a point made in the presentation. And I think it's been mentioned already about how it tends to be maybe middle aged or older people who are entrepreneurial startup leaders, and I'd be interested to know, I don't want to put you on the spot here, Alison, or Sue. But with a center for SME development, which connects small businesses in Preston, obviously, where the members are of any age. And you have Propeller that actually intends to be an incubation unit for student startups, many of whom will be very young. Can we think of a way of combining the leadership and experience qualities of, say, the older entrepreneur with the new skills and the youth from graduates?

Sue: I'll just say something quickly, then you can, Alison. Some of the plans we developed this year is something called Entrepreneurs In Residence, which some of you might be familiar with. And there's an opportunity there to bring in this more democratic social business model, which we do anyway. But we could more explicitly bring that in. So, the idea is to grow our network of SMEs and develop entrepreneurs in residence in order to have a kind of circular giving back. So, we help them and we give them a defined set of responsibilities, and one of those might be mentoring our students to become enterprising and, perhaps, set up business. Alison, do you want to say more?

Alison: Yeah, I think, when I saw that on the slide about the middle age profile, I did actually chuckle out loud because it is very true for the center and for a lot of the other networks. Just building from what Sue said, what we are looking at is the Propeller students mixing in with the Centre of SME members. That's what we are looking at at the moment. So that's physically by making the incubation and co-working space a mixture of students, graduates, and established middle aged SMEs, and also with networking as well. So that's through opening apart our network to the student community and also proactively putting the student community with the SMEs for things like shadowing and things like that, which is something we're looking at with career. So yeah, I think it's about getting the two communities to mix. And I also think it's about upskilling the students so that they have those soft skills, or they have that creative thinking and develop that entrepreneurial mindset, to enable them to be entrepreneurial.

Julian: Thank you. Has Marta or Ibon got any comments on what's been said so far?

Ibon: Yes, maybe coming to that last point. I think what Alison mentioned is also very key: that there's this combination of students, young people, who are in incubation ecosystem and incubator or similar infrastructure with SMEs or companies that are running and many of Mondragon examples that we have seen like Saiolan are that, somehow. They are not just leaving students in incubators to make their own projects, but they are creating connections with already existing businesses, SMEs or larger businesses. So that these synergies can be easier. And this is very, very important. And I'm happy that you are already doing that and especially in social enterprise, where you have more limit for growth and having these connections with other social enterprises is very important.



Marta: Sorry, Julian, I would like also to add that in different initiatives that we have seen, mentoring is really important. For example, in the case of Gaztenpresa, Saiolan, the mentoring for new entrepreneurs it a key point to have a high survival rate of a new initiative. So, I think that it's also important in Propeller to create this kind of mentoring - it can be volunteers from existing owners of small business enterprises, or just professors and lecturers from UCLan, just try to get this kind of mentoring and support to the new entrepreneurs during the first years of operation of the new company. I think that it's a key point, if we want these new companies to have a higher survival rate and have the success in the market.

Julian: Thank you, Marta. Thank you. I think we have time for one more comment or one more question before we have a 5-10 minute break. Does anybody have?

Alina: Julie has a quick point and then Chris.

Julian: Okay. And then we'll have a break, Julie?

Julie: Okay. Those things that are going on at UCLan sound great, but I'm thinking about the wider body of young people. And I was thinking about what you Julian and Ibon were saying about changing the mindsets and how do people know that a cooperative might be something that they would be interested in? How are we communicating that and, perhaps, that goes back to the idea of the co-operative college or school that would make the ideas around cooperatives and the values, and what properties are more accessible to the to the wider community.

Julian: Thank you. Chris.

Chris: Around the conversation of young people I just wanted to raise the potential angle of cohort for enterprise that I come across is when education has failed young people, they haven't finished school, haven't had any work experience, are almost unemployable. And number do turn to enterprising means often misguided, selling dope and stuff like that. But there are a number of young people who have fallen through a net that, in some ways, their survival skills are enterprising skills that could be channeled towards something more constructive. And I think that's a cohort that we maybe need to consider. If you can turn that around, it's a wonderful example of what people can do in terms of their enterprising-ness. But also, from a social perspective, it potentially saves a fortune going forward in other fees, shall we say? So, I just wanted to raise that point.

Julian: Thanks, Chris. That's a great example of lateral thinking, isn't it? That's really, really great. Matthew joined us a bit late. If you would like to have a word now with us, Matthew, and then we'll have a little comfort break.



Matthew: Yeah, apologies for being late. I've asked for the slides from Alina. Hopefully, I will see them soon. But just really important point from Chris Davis in the sense that a couple of the co-ops we're looking at are former prisoners. So, through the PCDN we're working with the prison services and others to incubate cooperatives, and it's looking quite successful at doing that. So that's the first thing. The second thing is obviously, with the pandemic of lockdown, you're seeing in Preston, - cause we still got pockets of quite severe deprivation, - crime and other incidences go up. So a lot of that's linked to young people and the lack of hope that you get in society generally, and in the economy. And I know that there's lots of working with you, and especially with BAME youth as well, about how we can engage them in cooperatives at community level. So again, that's a really important point, because, we're still in a bit of a collective trauma, aren't we? In the sense of the COVID pandemic. And I think people behaving in a way that's a bit different to usual, just barely getting their head around it. So, I think cooperatives are a really good solution. And the fact we're having those conversations now and doing the training now, with Stir to Action, and others, I think it's really good. So, I think that's something that we need to make sure that it is not as what's been said before, it's not it's not a middle aged thing. It's got to really appeal to the whole diverse community. Thanks.

Julian: Thank you, Matthew. So, I suggest that we now have a comfort break, and we get back together at 10:40. It's now 10:33. So that gives us seven minutes or so to have a break. So, see you in seven minutes or so, everybody. Thank you.

Marta and Ibon if you could continue with your presentation, that would be great.

Marta: Yes, Julian, perfect. I'm going to share my screen with you again. Okay, here it is. So, let's start with the fourth block of conclusions that is about cooperative movement. And the main most shared opinion between all of you that has also merged during this morning is this lack of knowledge and awareness and culture about what cooperatives are among all of the stakeholders: starting from unions, anchor institutions, entrepreneurs; the banking system also does not have a clear idea, educational institutions, city council's and citizens in general.

And so we asked on the interviews, what can it be done to increase this knowledge about cooperatives? One of the answers was that we should try to make a marketing campaign or a communication project, or just to make cooperatives look more attractive and to modernize the concept of cooperatives. We have to give them an image of competitive companies that are in the market, that they are not, as Chris said before, this hippie model, and that also have a social value approach. That it is a sustainable economic model for all kinds of economic sector, starting from digital entrepreneurs or even industrial companies that can become a cooperative, or retail or services sector. So, it can be applied to any kind of business. It's also



important to show examples of running cooperatives, where the worker owners could explain their own experience through videos, and make them accessible to citizens.

And it's also important to highlight the social approach of co-ops as a way to impact in wealth distribution and in the creation of a competitive and sustainable productive fabric – to give this new vision.

Another proposal was to create apprenticeship programs for students from UCLan or Preston college or Preston Vocational Training where they could have working experience in existing cooperatives. So, that they could learn what is a cooperative, if they could appreciate the difference between the traditional company and we think that this is also interesting to be developed.

The educational institution should also integrate more training workshops about co-ops. And in that sense, we consider that Preston Cooperative Education Center can create and design this new educative content and training. It could play an important role in facilitating the collaboration and the content of these new trainings. And as I mentioned before, UCLan can also provide an opportunity for students to work on real business issues for co-ops and to have lecturers or business owners from SME Development Center as mentors for new entrepreneurship projects. This can be another action line that can also be developed.

We have tried to identify opportunities that have this cooperative movement in Preston. And as it has been said in different meetings and today as well, that a cooperative and very collaborative culture doesn't really exist in the UK and that mainly there is a individualistic vision of the society. It's also true that there is a higher willingness to develop and take part in collaborative projects, especially among young people. So, we can have a little bit of hope with young people to have a more open mind, vision and collaborative approach.

Another opportunity is the conversion of companies, for example, from the industrial or service sector into cooperatives. But it's also necessary to develop the processes to raise awareness about these opportunities, because there is a high level of knowledge of how it can be done and what are the key points. So, we should try to generate case studies or best practices to disseminate to companies that will want to go through the conversion process.

There is also an opportunity to create new platform cooperatives in sectors where there is a high level of self-employed workers, e.g. in technology, taxi drivers. There are some potential sectors where the creation of a cooperative would have a high impact in disadvantaged communities, e.g. the construction sector, social care, and creative and digital industries. So, we have a set of opportunities in Preston that can help to develop a cooperative movement.



We would like to remind you some of the benefits of the cooperative model that we are trying to develop. This model enables the creation of a more democratic business fabric, where the workers are owners of the companies, and they also place a dynamic role in the decision process of the companies. It also increases the resilience and survival rate of the companies, because the level of engagement and commitment of workers is higher than in a traditional company. It also implies an improvement of the working conditions. And finally, it has an impact on wealth distribution. And it reduces economic inequality among the people. So, these are the main conclusions about the cooperative movement in a broader sense and we will would like to see your vision.

Julian: Ok, so, who'd like to go first?

John: I feel a fraud going first, because I think the education and programmes' issues are particularly important. But just taking on that point about platform opportunities and going back to what I was talking about earlier, with another hat on I'm a trustee of Preston Community Transport, which has got a base in the Mobility Center, just off the junction of Ringway and Friargate. Matthew will be aware that there is a transformation programme to do with transportation, and pedestrianisation and so on, that city center are in the middle of this. There are plans for a bike hub to be created. And it seems to me that this may actually create an opportunity for the Last Mile delivery platform of a riders platform that we're talking about and actually create this on a cooperative basis. So, I'll stick my head above this one and say, I will take that on. And obviously, if anybody else is interested, do get in touch. And I'll keep everybody informed on where we'll go with this.

Julian: John, that sounds great. Brilliant. Is this a new transport scheme a part of the reaction to COVID?

John: No, it's a long-term issue about the traffic and air quality and the separation that exists because of Ringway in particular, in terms of economic and retail development. So, it's a longer-term vision for where the city might go, and particularly the linkages between UCLan and the city center. But, obviously, in the middle of all of this, the impact of COVID on retail, and what that's going to look like in time, and so on. I don't want to get into the transport problems, but, in essence, the government has made some money available, which is enabling the city in the county to instigate a number of improvements. And this could be one of them. There are certainly going to be improvements on the various junctions.

Julian: I see that Matthew Brown is asking you to keep in touch with him about that. So that would be great. Anyone else?

Mick: I am going to only say, and Matthew and a few others have been involved in this as well, that there's been a fair few developments around the care sector, and mainly around connecting with all their interested parties and stakeholder groups. Like the OSF, like the trade



unions, like trade union colleagues, and others in the US, who have developed cooperative solutions in this sector. And those discussions are ongoing, they're not quite at the point of actually starting anything. Latterly, we've been talking with CLES, about the more finer-grained details of viability of a cooperative business in this sector, given the actual fact that the market is actually a basket case anyway. So, all of those things are going on. We're also linked in to developments in Kirklees and elsewhere where people are ahead of us in terms of developing cooperative solutions in the care sector. So, I'd like to think something will happen there. Hopefully there will be something that we're actually in control of, and it's not just a response to the whole thing falling down for other reasons. We'd like to be proactive and develop a model that's got its own energy and plan rather than be reacting to market failure. But just to say, since we spoke with Marta, there's been quite a lot more going on. And for me, it's quite heartening that the public sector unions are actually right behind it now, whereas a while ago they were much more ambivalent if not skeptical about this stuff. So, Matthew has really been an ally there in terms of helping us convene some of the connections with some important stakeholders, like CLES, like the OSF, who are really interested in this. And the OSF in particular are interested in not just 'can we develop something' but in 'can we develop something that's actually transformative and has the potential to be scaled up fairly rapidly'. Whereas the other approaches elsewhere in the country are - possibly of necessity, and understandably so - very small scale, and trying to do stuff that protects itself, because it's small, with a view to aggregate it up slowly, but in a way that it's something very good for the small initiative they've got, but isn't necessarily pointing to how we might cure the really challenging problems that are in the sector as a whole. And it could be that, within this ecosystem we're trying to develop here we have the potential to do something that's more transformative.

Julian: Thank you, Mick. Matthew...

Matthew: I'm getting more optimistic about where we are going actually. The report and the conclusions or recommendations. I think they're pretty banged on as to where we are, to be honest, but compared to where we were two years ago, where there had been achievements with the community wealth building. It was really just around people raising wages within the institutions, and also local companies winning lots more public contracts, which did have a big effect, but in many ways the community didn't really understand that people just got a job within a local company, building our markets or refurbishing the bus station or the organization became a living wage employer, when they really got a pay rise, really.

So, you know, it's moving on now to the democratization phase. And there's just lots of ideas which were out, but it needs to be a bit more coordinated, and grassroots. Now we're going to launch now our community wealth building strategy, there's a relaunch of it in February, and having that there's going to be a big attempt to actually engage the community with a live public broadcast. And there's going to be people involved in that, like Community Gateway, for



example, but also the taxi drivers in our new worker co-op there and others, to actually get that message out. So, I am getting very positive, I think there's been a cooperation with our institutions to make this happen. And that came from the failure of your traditional big developers, like Approaches, which we pursued over a decade. So that collaboration had to happen to actually get the city into a stage where it could regenerate itself, which we've seen over the last few years. I think we're getting there now.

It's interesting how things are just emerging out of nowhere now. So, there was there was an inquiry from someone in the African Caribbean community about a potential restaurant, which is mainly West Indian food. Could the community come together and actually take it over potentially into a worker co-op there, that came under the stress due to the pandemic. That culture is getting there, these things are emerging, but crucially, we got to get to a stage where this is brought to scale, really, and that is a challenge, isn't it?

And to do that we need, not just institutions on board, which we have already, but, as Mick said, we need that grassroots organization and support from trade unions, Citizens UK, community groups and others, and I think it's getting there. But the challenge is how can it coordinate into something that people understand that they get behind 100%, and how they respond in a way that's coordinated, because there's lots going on but for me, the main thing is just actually getting that coordination in there. Cheers.

Julian: Thank you, Matthew. And just to follow on from that, I'm really delighted that thanks to the work of some of the colleagues who are here on this call, the Preston Cooperative Education Center will be constituted as a union co-op. And as you've just said, Matthew, and as Mick mentioned before, the idea that the unions would not only support but actually become part of our cooperative development would have been unthinkable just two years ago. So, it's absolutely brilliant now that we can have a union co-op as part of that system, and of course, that is a union co-op, and it's involved in education. So, it fulfills the need to change the culture, change the mindset, to encourage democracy, to encourage new cooperative businesses. And as Marta and Ibon have pointed out, if the Preston Cooperative Education Centre can work closely with other partners such as Preston's College, Preston Vocational Centre, UCLan, Propeller, Centre for SME Development, it seems to me that, things are really emerging and things are looking good. Okay, Julie has a comment.

Julie: Yeah. Thanks, Marta, for that sort of presentation. Because I think the idea about looking to address the lack of knowledge, awareness and culture about cooperatives is a theme that's been coming up, I think, again and again throughout the different discussions. And I remember back to one of the presentations that you made, and I think there was something said about Mondragon, how you also work in schools. And I was thinking about not just educating young people, but actually educating children and how do we link in with schools? And UCLan has as all sorts of connections with schools through various science



things. And I don't know if there's a way for us to do more of that. Because when you're asking children, 'what do you want to be when you grow up?' How many of them are going to have a sense of 'Oh, I want to be in a cooperative' or have aspirations or understand what it is. So, I don't know, whether there's a way to first to think about that. But I was just struck by that when thinking about your previous presentations and linking that in.

Marta: Yes, I'd like to say that Mondragon University has the Faculty of Education. And they have a special approach when they train the students. In this faculty they have students develop community projects during their degrees. So, they have a very practical vision of the curricula. And during the four years of their degree they have to develop educative community projects. They also have small groups of 30 students on every course. So, there is a need to give future school teachers a new vision of doing things, that they can apply in the school. In some cases, they are going to work in cooperative schools, as Ibon said before, but in other cases, they are going to work in public schools. So, this is to give them the tools and a vision of the community. And it's also supported by Ilanki, which is a unit of cooperative education, who specialise in translating cooperative principles in education. There is a unit of research investigation in Mondragon University that works specifically on these things.

Julian: Thank you, Marta. Any more comments or questions?

Olga: Hi. I think bringing schools into this project is possible. As an example, at my daughter's school I remember they used to run cooperatives. It was a girl's school and girls were very keen. I'm not sure that these were just enterprises, but somehow they tend to call themselves cooperatives. So, I don't think schools will be against somebody coming there and helping them and educating them on that. I think this is doable. So that's it. Thank you.

Julian: Thank you, Olga. I also think it's worth thinking at some stage about corporative values and principles as a way of living as opposed to just a way of governing a business. I think there's also something to be said there. So, if we're talking about schools, for example, although there are schools that call themselves cooperative schools, I think many, many schools might be more interested in cooperative values and principles as opposed to the actual cooperative form of governance. And so, to me, cooperative values and principles are a means of encouraging participatory democracy and different ways of working, whether you are a legally constituted cooperative or not. Anyone else?

I don't know if Marta and Ibon you either have a comment or whether you think we should continue with the debate or whether you think we should continue with the presentation. What is your view now?

Marta: So, maybe we can go on with the last group of conclusions. So, Ibon, what do you think?



Ibon: Yes, sure. The next chapter is very related to this issue, because we are talking about the Preston model. We will share the outcomes of the analysis and the results of the of the interviews. In general, the Preston model is considered as a good starting point by all parties. But it is thought that this model should be deepened or this model can still grow without losing the vision of generating a social impact. And some people are highlighting the need to measure this impact. Not only to have an idea that the initiative is good as such, but also try to grow more, to see how it can evolve as an ecosystem, and as such, how we can start measuring the impact of such a new ecosystem. So, the model, as you know, is mainly based on public procurement. So far, even if Julian and Matthew and some of you have already told us about other initiatives that are being developed in the framework of the Preston model in the cooperative development and education aspects of it, but still, right now, it's mainly based on public procurement of local anchor institutions. So, we need to be aware that this local procurement has to be competitive, we know that. It would be good to apply a regional vision to this model to somehow scale up the model beyond Preston, at Lancashire level, and increase the scale of Preston to get a higher impact both in public procurement and in other pillars of the Preston model, there is still room for growth. At the territorial level, at the regional level, it should try to support partnerships between big companies and small local contractors, especially in the construction and building sector. We are aware that public procurement is a fundamental driver of growth, but at the same time when we are thinking about those co-ops and small companies in public procurement opportunities, we are aware that there's a need for more partnerships with bigger companies and larger traditional companies. So that those social enterprises can fulfill their ambitions in their respective part of the value chain, but at the same time they can have successful value proposals for these procurement opportunities. In many cases we know we are talking about complex projects where you also need technology, you also need access to expertise, to talent and these partnerships could be real opportunities for smaller companies. And by the way, this is also a tradition in Mondragon. So the inter-cooperation is not only within Mondragon, but there is a big inter-cooperation with other companies that may not be co-ops and that could be critical for getting contracts in private and public sectors. City Council is developing other policies in the framework of this model as it was also mentioned by Matthew and other people. The living wage policy, the Cooperative Bank, the new cooperative bank that was already presented in the last session.

We can go ahead Marta. Yes. So, even if the assessment of the Preston model is very good in general, there is also an awareness about the lack of narrative and knowledge among citizens about this model. So, there are some suggestions in line to improve the communication about the benefits of the model to the citizens beyond the articles in The Guardian and other similar press, which is really great, I mean, we need this kind of awareness, but we need to go beyond that. So, how to reach people that are not reading the press that may be in the social media and so on. With the idea of the wealth generation and distribution, the employment generation and the improvement of economic indicators, or how to reach the rich people, more



engagement with grassroots community organizations, this was also mentioned by Matthew in the definition of strategies and policies to increase the outcome and impact of them. So, there is this idea of expanding the network, especially with these community organizations, and they need to be less theoretical and more practical, but this is also natural, because we are moving forward in this project. So, in the beginning it should be more theoretical, you need very good roots for such a project. So, we are in the right track, but now we need to move to the next level, and start the scaling up strategy. So, it's time for a more practical approach from now on. Currently, some of the challenges that the Preston model is facing are related to, of course, the pandemic, we are aware that the pandemic is changing many factors in the business activity and also in the society as a whole. So, as we know, many businesses are in danger of closure, especially those related to retail to hospitality, or bars, restaurants, especially in local lockdown times, they are suffering a lot and many are even in danger of discontinuing their activities.

So, the other question is: how will the entrepreneurship activity continue after the pandemic? We are now talking a lot about entrepreneurship and about supporting entrepreneurs to start up, but how will this happen after this huge economic crisis we are suffering right now. Of course, we know there will be many activities and sectors of opportunity, but we are also aware that it will be very challenging for any entrepreneur to start a new business now. So, how to combine that and how to follow the right strategies to support those entrepreneurs. And we will see an increase of unemployment. So, entrepreneurship as a tool to create new jobs could be an alternative, could be a good strategy. We have the example with Mondragon that in the periods of crisis have enabled the creation of initiatives to support entrepreneurs. That was in the case of Gaztenpresa. They started in a very difficult time where the apprenticeship was not the easiest way to move forward. But that's why this could be the right moment to start such initiatives in Preston and to start transitioning into a more social entrepreneur society in Preston.

And this is very much related to the talent attraction and retention strategies. So, the question is: what can be done to prevent students and our talent in Preston from leaving the city once they finish their degrees, their studies. Preston is an education ecosystem. There is a big student population in the city. This is a great opportunity for talent retention, but we see that the economic activity ecosystem is not as large as the education ecosystem. So, how to create opportunities for these talented people to stay in Preston and especially, if possible, to engage them in social enterprise business initiatives.

So, the Town's fund has to facilitate the development of collaborative projects. People in general that were taking part in the interviews were assessing the Town's fund as a great opportunity, but at the same time, we need to think about collaborative projects, we need to really get the different stakeholders engaged in the process and create the core participatory



initiatives with implication of the different stakeholders to share an idea of creating a positive impact in the city and in the in the ecosystem.

From now on these are the main outcomes related to the Preston model. And of course, even more than before, we would like to hear from you your thoughts on this assessment and how you share or don't share these conclusions, because we are really talking about the core of this project.

Julian: Thank you, Ibon. And I'd just quickly like to say, I think most people know about this, but I think it's worth mentioning, the very early on in working the Preston model we had the example of graduate Fine Art students approaching Preston City Council and asking for support in staying in Preston. So, normally speaking, Fine Art students from UCLan would go to Manchester, in particular, or maybe to London, but these Fine Art students, in collaboration with the council, were able to set up art studios in Council's property. And, and so Fine Art graduates, who normally wouldn't stay in Preston, are now in Preston in a place called the Burley Art Studios. And I think that that's a fantastic and great example of a very successful kind of thing that we need to be thinking about and doing. Okay. Does anyone have any further comments or questions here? Yeah, Chris.

Chris: I'm slightly concerned that it's often me saying stuff. I think the last point that you just made there, Julian, is really interesting, because I know when I finished university in 96, there was no relationship between the Harris Art Gallery and the University at that point. So, the process of getting there to the Burley took a long, long time. So that's something I'd like to add.

I'm interested in a couple of things around the Preston model. And the relationship between the model and the cooperative thing. I'm not sure I've ever got my head round what that relationship is. Whether the kind of cooperative thing is been enabled by the conversation when the Preston model started, whether the cooperative thing is the bastard child of the Preston model. So, I'm not sure about that. But I think in terms of the analysis of impact, that was mentioned in the presentation, is really important. I'd also like to hear about the negative impacts that might be through the Preston model. I think they're always really useful learning experiences for us. I am aware that, in some ways, we're talking about the cooperative thing as the start of a journey, a movement, a conversation to try and unearth people's thinking around it. And the Preston model, it seems to me, has been through that same journey, or a similar journey. And I think that I'd be keen to hear about the energies and what enabled that journey to keep going. I know people like Matthew have given huge amounts of their life and suffered all sorts of stresses, and I'm interested how the relationship between big movements like that, and individuals, and I'm wondering who were the individuals of energy that are going to carry the cooperative thing forward?

Julian: Thank you, Chris. I think, Sue, you have a comment or question.



Sue: I have a question. It might be to Matthew, really. We have a business growth hub called Boost, which is not only for Preston, but for the region as well. And part of its remit is to help new venture creation. So, I was just thinking about the point before, and lots of points around age, and youth internship creation, particularly post COVID, or in COVID. So, my question is, maybe specifically to Matthew, do you know if Boost are involved in this?

Julian: Matthew...

Matthew: In terms of Boost – not directly, but I think the thread that we discussed today is about how we need to make sure all the different entrepreneurial activities and the education facilities UCLan, Preston's College need to come together. So, we will get them involved. I think they work very closely with the County Council. Now the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership again is showing lots of interest in the Preston model and community wealth building. So, I think we need to have a conversation with them at some point, because I know Boost will support entrepreneurial activity, as do one or two others. Just in terms of the wider Preston model conversation, I think the challenge we have is that it's the policies of community wealth building now, it answers the Chris's question, it did start off with the visits of Ted Howard back in 2012. And Ted had managed to create worker co-ops within the deprived areas of Cleveland, Ohio, that was linked to the public procurement of the big institutions. So, they looked at what the not-for-profit University Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio was spending and they all agreed to buy certain contracts from worker cooperatives, which were going to be incubated. So that was the idea, it is very much about cooperative style economies. And the Cleveland model had been linked to Mondragon because Ted had been to visit Mondragon, and Ibon and others, as inspiration, and that's how the businesses were going to be formed based on that inspiration. So, that's what we try doing. So obviously, we started working with CLES, and we needed to decide A) where the money was going and B) how we could redirect it, first, for social benefits. So, the cooperative side of it was always integral, but what we did was just changed the culture to make sure that instead of the public pound just simply go into outsourcing corporations and big companies from outside that don't pay the taxes, and don't engage with local labor suppliers, that a lot more went to the local business space, especially SMEs and that has been very successful.

When we look at the (*can't properly hear the names*) and other construction companies, especially, some of them are saying they've doubled the turnover because of the community wealth building Preston model politics. But what I would say though, is that, crucially, there's been so much happening, but it's in different places with different institutions. So obviously, Gateway with us, they became a living wage employer themselves, they've, at least, doubled the spends with local companies. They're actually employing their own tenants in companies that they're incubating as an anchor institution, and they've insourced activity now, this as a huge benefit for the people concerned. But what's happening, as it is with the Preston model is



you got different institutions doing different things at different times all around that kind of general umbrella and building community wealth and looking at how we can have more ownership and democracy in our local economy. And the challenge really is: how we can get that understood by the public? Because the people, who are benefitting this, those tenants who are actually working in those companies on living wage jobs, who are unemployed, - it does a huge benefit for them. But it's not something that community necessarily understand. And I have seen the whole report briefly, and I looked through it because I was a little late. I think it's pretty bang on about where we need to be to actually get that culture in there. And as said earlier, the fact we've got grassroots involved in this as well, as the big institutions, I think is potentially very revolutionary, where we can get to, but the challenge is that people need to understand it in the community. And that's why we're doing a lot more now, especially with our launch next month to actually say: this is community wealth building, here's how it works and we want you, the community, to actually get involved in it. So, I think that's really, really important. And again, we'll be doing that going forward. It's also other things like when we build our own cinema, which will be in municipal ownership, and that's a political choice we're making is a Labor Council, we're going to the cinema, and it's going to be in the ownership of the city. And obviously, we want to use local suppliers, local labor, potentially, could cooperatives be part of that? -We don't know. But it could be fantastic. We could put things around the city when it's being developed, saying: yeah, this is going to be your cinema, go to it, watch the films, but also, this is a community wealth building project, this is part of the Preston model. By doing that, you then get the public consciousness out there, and then the public starts to take the opportunities, knowing that there's some kind of ecosystem in there that's designed to benefit them. So, that's quite a long answer, but I do think there's a challenge here with actually looking at the results and where we are going with the fact that is quite revolutionary in many ways, and making sure that we communicate it in a way people understand. The Guardian is very good for getting these ideas out. But it's a bit middle classes, isn't it, as is our academic culture. So, the challenge really is the people who've been let down by the current economic model, who feel they have no voice and the people like me, who are not interested in them. How do we actually get them involved in it? And the good thing now is the work we're doing with the BAMME. community, with the unions, with the community groups, it's really trying to embed that. Okay, cheers, Julian.

Julian: Thank you. Thanks, Matthew. That was a very interesting, succinct answer. Yeah, we have Rachel, who wants to come in here.

Rachel: Yes. Hi. A couple of things. I like the emphasis at the end that Ibon was putting, on having a more practical approach from now on, and perhaps less theoretical. I think there are many opportunities in Preston to get practically involved in some of the initiatives that Ibon and Marta have been describing. And a really good starting place is obviously the Preston Cooperative Development Network. And, at the moment, there isn't a great deal of support for that organization from those who are interested in cooperatives. So, at the moment, the PCDN



doesn't even have a treasurer. So, if we really are taking up that challenge of having a more practical approach, that does mean that people who want to see cooperatives happening in Preston need to get involved in the nitty gritty of actually doing the doing.

And I like also very much what Julie said, because I think the reality of trying to establish projects, get people involved, as well as taking a lot of time and dealing with people, often you have to be very sensitive, you have to be sensitive to people's ability to contribute time, but also to where they are, let's say on their cooperative journey, - there's a lot of relational work, there really is. And so, I do feel that to progress in Preston, the focus definitely has to move from theoretical in the research and evaluation to rolling up our sleeves and getting on with it. Because I think there is more talk than there is action. I'm being quite blunt here, but that is how I do see a lot of what's happening. If more resource was going into projects and to capacity to deliver projects, we'd see a lot more happening. So, I think a shift away from research towards action would be highly beneficial. And it's often harder to get money for projects than it is to get for research. There seems to be a big research fund that can be tapped into. But if that's not action research, then it may have less value than funding that will actually drive change on the ground.

Julian: Thank you. Thank you, Rachel. I think the point that Ibon was making about research and going to the practical, or theory and practical, is that they basically go hand in hand. That you wouldn't get to the practical unless you'd had the research. And there was also a point about measuring things, measuring social value, measuring success. So, it seems to me that that there is a constant to and fro between research and action, or theory and practice. And that is exactly what we need to do. The point Ibon was making, I think, was that the time now is for really getting down to the action part, which would not have happened without the research part. So, these things work hand in hand in tangent, I think. So, yes, Gaynor?

Gaynor: Thank you, Julian. Yes, I was just listening to Rachel and I have to say, as a chairman of PCDN, I completely agree that there is an awful lot of researches, which has formed the models that we can look at and use. But it's the boots on the ground stuff we need. Now we need people, who are going to step forward and say: let us help, come with us, come and join us, we can do practical stuff, we can go out and talk to grassroots, we can go and do this, we can set this up. Because we don't have that a PCDN. What we have is a small group of people, who are not paid, who are volunteers to do this, who have full time posts and other jobs. And there is a limit to what we can do. So, this is a really interesting conversation on the results from Mondragon, as an employability and enterprise specialist, which is what I am. This is really, really interesting. It's a lot of stuff that we know about the push pull factors of entrepreneurship, we know about the graduate destinations. We know this stuff, which is great. But I ask, we have lots of lots of great ideas, who's going to put all those great ideas into action? And that's really the discussion with me. So, thanks, Julian.



Julian: Thank you. Alina tells me that Mark has raised his hand, but we have two Marks. So, the Mark who wants to speak please speak forth. Mark Dooris. Hi.

Mark: Hi, everybody. And sorry, I missed part of Marta's presentation because I was involved in research supervision, having just been discussing the value of research and action. So, I'm just interested in Ibon and Marta's reflections on an area of work, I guess we're focusing on at the moment, particularly, Julian, Julie and I. We're looking at how the Preston model potentially comes together with a focus on addressing ecological and sustainability challenges and response to the climate emergency. But particularly within the context of COVID and, optimistically, recovery from COVID. Because I'm aware that the term 'social value' can be an umbrella to include kind of ecological impacts as well, but I'm just interested in the extent to which you see the potential for recovery in ways that really do meet the needs of the people who are experiencing the sort of hard edge of inequality that Matthew was speaking about, how we can actually move towards an approach which is both looking at the social foundations and human needs, but bringing that together with an explicit focus on sort of planetary boundaries and ecological challenges. Thank you.

Julian: Thank you, Mark. So that that question was specifically directed to Marta and Ibon, I think.

Ibon: Yes. And it's a good question. Because if I'm not wrong, we are talking about social innovation as a clear concept that wants to use the social approach to create the organizations, movements and platforms that can solve social problems and social challenges, like climate change, and aging and so on. So, in our perspective, climate change, if not the biggest challenge humanity's facing right now, the second biggest, and we from Mondragon, consider it also a great opportunity, because we are in the middle of these ecological and energy transition. And there's so much to do, especially with the social enterprise approach.

As Julian knows, we've been working in an initiative to start the strategic alliance in between Social Economy Europe, which is the framework European umbrella organization for social enterprise and American Sustainable Business Council, which is also the American counterpart. And our aim was to somehow use the opportunity of the Paris Agreement. We launched a public statement on December the 12th. That was the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement, especially seeing now that Biden Harris new administration is looking forward to coming back to the Paris Agreement. This is a great opportunity for social enterprise, both small and big organizations in the social enterprise ecosystem, who can provide very good solutions for it. And as you said, also, there is the point with citizens engagement, and how democratic organizations' workers that are citizens, at the same time, can be engaged in providing solutions for climate change related challenges. So, it is the perfect storm and the and the perfect opportunity for all of us.



Julian: Thank you. Marta, I don't know, if you wanted to follow up on any of that.

Marta: Yes, maybe I would like to say that in Preston with construction there is a big opportunity, putting together these energy efficiency measures, all the refurbishment reviews, domestic energy consumption, also the creation of new companies to provide this kind of services related to construction in a more local way with a higher impact. I think that it's a another opportunity that you could develop with this social point of view, with an impact on disadvantaged communities, or people with a low level of educational degrees, or with no educational degrees.

Julian: Thank you. Mark, does that sort of answer to some extent what you were asking or commenting on?

Mark: Yes, Yes. I think it's an ongoing challenge because on the one hand, there is the perfect storm and the opportunity to see recovery as a way for refocusing our economic goals and the relationship of the economy to society and the environment. But I also think there are real challenges sometimes, certainly in the midst of COVID, and the economic hardships that have resulted to get people to think beyond that immediacy when it comes to engagement, and actually finding solutions which seem and feel relevant to everybody. But I'm not expecting an instant answer to that. It's just an observation. So, thank you.

Julian: Thank you. I think where it does fit naturally in a kind of organic way, Mark, which I think is really interesting, is the idea of going towards a green economy is the same thing as going towards cooperation, the idea being that infinite growth and competition won't do it for a green economy or for a future sustainable economy. And so therefore, any work that goes towards the green economy is somehow very naturally fitting into the idea of cooperation. And that for me is very exciting and interesting. It's a natural thing. It's not an imposed thing or it's not even a choice almost. Anyway, we have Julie, and then John.

Julie: Oh, hi. I wasn't asking to speak.

Julian: Ok, you don't have to speak. We'll go straight to John, if you like.

Julie: I was just posting in the chat about doing that work with you, Julian, for the book on Preston model. I was just reflecting on the great communities. There's not a community of Preston, there are communities. And there is some great involvement. And those existing local communities, they are already predisposed towards collaboration and cooperation. So, it's just really thinking about the chicken and egg, which Mick was saying: it's not chicken an egg, it's not an either or, it's both. So, it's about community development and actually working with those existing communities, and taking the cooperative ideas to those existing communities as well, it seems to be both, so I was really putting that down in the chat there.



Julian: Okay, thank you. Thanks, Julie. And I think that the whole work that you and I, and you, in particular, are doing on communities and their connection to cooperatives and how, and I think this is connected to stuff that Chris has been talking about, that people in communities can help each other through cooperation, which is the opposite paradigm to the individualistic capitalist competitive thing. And so, cooperation will help communities to develop and become creative in a way that benefits them and others. John, and then Matthew.

John: Yeah, a number of points just to respond to Mark. Obviously, the environment is actually formally a part of the specific social value legislation under the 2012 Act. It's one of the three legs that can be taken into account in public sector procurement. My perception is that it hasn't been very much so. I think we can't avoid the fact that high proportion of the things which are environmentally damaging are controlled by non-democratic organizations, therefore, we do require quite a legal approach to constrain that. So, the opportunities for co-ops within that are quite restricted, I think, at the moment. Even though they are fundamental, as both Mark and Julian have said about how we think about the future world.

The second thing is, I suppose, just that Living Wage policy and the extent to which that can be taken further, again, my perception with working with authorities elsewhere in the UK is that even where they've adopted this themselves as a living wage employer, they are loath to actually push the boundaries of using social value legislation to require it from their contractors. They may require it from their agency staff, but not their contractors because of concerns about legal challenge. And yet the social value legislation does entitle them to take that into account when they're making procurement decisions. And that absolutely relates to the Preston model conception of the supply chain and the circular economy locally being taken into account. And I think there's a lot more that can be done there. So, passing that on to other larger institutions outside the public sector.

The question about how to keep people in Preston, I'm just noticing that we don't have to go to the office anymore. And the question, obviously, then arises as to after COVID, are we going to revert going back to the office? Or is there going to be a fundamental change of not going to the office so often? And that raises then a question to me, if I don't need to get in the office, do I need to go to London? Or Manchester? Why can't I stay in Preston? But what would the physical infrastructure be required to facilitate that? Because although we've got Zoom and Teams and so on, it's actually not adequate as an answer. There is more that needs to be done. It's a particular problem in introducing new individuals. So, talking about young people, how do they start participating in an enterprise? It's okay for the people who are already there, because they know how to work with each other. But induction is a particular problem. And I think that there may well be collective infrastructure issues that one could set up in Preston, which would help retention and development, this is the extent to which there is access to 5G and fiber and large scale meeting arrangements digitally, to enable people to actually stay in



Preston and not to have to go elsewhere. It is just somehow getting over the idea of 'I own this'. How do I get some emotional attachment to cooperatives?

Julian: Thank you, I'm sorry to rush you on there. But I want to finish at 12. And I know that we have both Matthew and Rachel, who wants to say something. If I could encourage you both to be brief so that we can finish at 12. Thank you.

Matthew: Yeah, just in terms of Mark's comments around the environment, in terms of doing things practically, obviously, we got a number of policies we're looking at the Council. We've got a couple of schemes, we're looking to generate clean energy ourselves on a couple of our development. It's going to be small scale initially, but we're actively looking at that. And I know Rachel, she might want to come in on this, we're looking at potentially support district to community energy as part of the community wealth building strategy, worker ownership in retrofitting, there is some opportunity there with the money from (*word not clear*) towards clean energy measures nationally.

But I just want to reiterate, I think we've got to look at doing everything we can to deliver this on the ground, because I've written a book as well, but I don't envisage that it'll be quite widespread on (*word not clear*), for example. So, I think it's really how we actually get these ideas into our working class communities to get them to own it and actually do things. And I think what we do with influencing our own institutions, because UCLan is pretty good, but could they be involved with the council in generating public energy, and then potentially looking at local SMEs and co-ops, within that? It's that practical on the ground delivery that we need to actually bring to scale with? I think it's really important.

And then the final policy we have is we're very keen to encourage our public pension fund to divest from fossil fuels. I think the 16 billion invested in fossil fuels by public pension funds. Now that could be freed up to invest in clean energy in Preston and Lancashire by our pension fund. There are big amounts of money in our community, and it's those kind of conversations and that influence that we need to actually make things happen.

And then after that, you can get into the conversation speaking about it a lot more. But I just want to get it done first or go on the journey of delivering it a lot quicker and deepen it, and then we can have conversations about what is achieved. But, at the moment, we've not got it where I'd like it to be. Anyway. Cheers.

Julian: Thank you. And Rachel, three minutes for you, please.

Rachel: Okay, well, very briefly. Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Councillor Brown. We are starting now to look at community energy projects, and there is great potential for asset owners. So, councils or it could be UCLan to commit small amounts of land to community



energy projects, and work with community energy groups to generate electricity. So yeah, there's huge potential in that area. Again, it needs boots on the ground to do it, it's not going to happen just because we want it to. We are starting those conversations with some of the people involved in this group, actually.

The other areas is we were talking about cooperation in the community that's already there and happening. And I think a really good example of that in Preston is the network of 34 food hubs that we have. They've been running for some time, of course, during the pandemic, they've been absolutely crucial. And there's a lot of collaboration now between the different hubs. They're working to address issues and needs that they have collaboratively, they use a WhatsApp group. So, a lot of collaborative cooperative capital in the community already. And what we're doing with a follow on to the BAMME cooperative recovery program we had at the end of last year, is working with some of those food hubs to introduce Food Buying cooperatives. This is what I mean by practical stuff on the ground. It's actually working with some of the relational and collaborative capital that's out there to move things on to the next stage and say: "Okay, well, food poverty is a real issue. We need to be working in ways that promote autonomy and dignity for people who are struggling to get the food for their family. What about becoming part of the Food Buying cooperative?" And that's exactly what we're launching now. We'll see how it goes. It's not going to be an easy ride. We know all the groups involved are exhausted, the families who we want to engage are also exhausted and struggling in this very difficult climate. But we're trying something new, and we'll follow that very closely and see how it goes.

Julian: Thank you, Rachel. I do think that everyone who knows a little bit about what's been going on in Preston during the coronavirus pandemic is very appreciative of the food hub network. And it's fantastic work. So, thanks for bringing that up. So, we've come to the end now. Just for me to say, those of you who want and are interested, we have from one o'clock to three o'clock, a whole series of bite sized state of the art ideas on cooperatives given by members of the Cooperative Research Network. If you can't go to that, then there's tomorrow morning, which is the final project committee meeting. So, it would be great if as many people as possible in the project committee could attend tomorrow morning. And tomorrow afternoon is a more open debate with whoever wants to come along and discuss the issues that the project committee's been thinking about. So, I just like to ask, Ibon and Marta, if you would like to conclude and finish us off.

Ibon: Yes. Thank you, Julian. Marta, can we very briefly show the last slides of the of the document. We just wanted to give an idea of how we are going to move forward from today to tomorrow, like Julian suggested. So, the whole idea is to go from the assessment to the actions, to how we jointly think we should move forward, or the Preston Cooperative Development Network should, especially in in terms of the entrepreneurship ecosystem, move forward. So, we have identified four challenges together with Julian, related to inter-



cooperation, shared leadership, social value approach and cooperative culture and awareness. These are very related to everything we've been discussing this morning. And Julian was kindly asking us to also give an example from Mondragon. So how Mondragon is addressing those four challenges or has been addressing these four challenges from the very beginning. We have prepared a new PowerPoint document that Alina will share with all of you today. And we are analyzing these four challenges and giving concrete examples in the case of Mondragon, so that tomorrow, we can continue the discussion but already focusing on these four challenges. It would be great if you could have a look at this document that Alina will send to you today. And then tomorrow the discussion will work even better if you are able to do so. So, thank you very much from our side. Thank you for great participation today and we look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

Julian: Thank you, Ibon. Thank you, Marta. Thank you, everybody. If you can stay, I'll see some of you at one o'clock and if not, see you hopefully tomorrow morning.

Ibon: Thank you. Bye bye.