

Preston Model Project Committee Meeting

2nd November 2021 9:00-10:30am

Present:

Ali Al-Assam
Inigo Albizuri
Alina Belousova
Marta Boixados
Chris Davis
Olga Kuznetsova
Aitor Lizartza
Julian Manley
Mick Mckeown
Oscar Muguerza
Giannis Prinos
Kate Smyth
John Taylor
Ann Vanner
Phil Whyman
Ibon Zugasti

Agenda

1. Brief overview of the 4 Challenges and 25 strategic action lines
2. Identify level of progress
3. Assessment of level of validity of Challenges, identification of enablers and barriers

Meeting Minutes

MAIN ADVANCES IDENTIFIED:

- Creation of four groups (one for each identified challenge) to share ideas and to reach agreements for facilitating the action.
- Starting the Preston stakeholder mapping process. It would be a relevant tool to identify projects to be developed in collaboration among different stakeholders. And it will help to detect the needs of each of them and what they want. This information can help us to move forward. This map should be done for each identified challenge.
- The launch of the NewsSocial platform that will facilitate sharing views, visions and agreements.
- PCEC has already been constituted as a worker-coop.
- Procurement has engaged and moved forward.
- Now we are preparing the infrastructure for the development of the movement.

- The following up process of the Committee project has been established. This group meets bi-monthly, and the members of each action group can meet as much as they want.

DIFFICULTIES

- Engage and find people to do things, to get involved in the development of actions.
- Persuading people to commit to this.
- The development of infrastructure takes a long time, so to engage people it is important to visualize small things to the community.
- In general, the society is more focused on the short-term vision, that is where the tension exists now. But social change implies a long-term view. This short-term vision is becoming more prevalent than the long-term one, and it is winning in terms of resources relocation.
- The legal framework does not help companies convert into cooperatives.
- It is necessary to persuade people that a structure of ecosystem is necessary to have a higher impact. Creation of co-ops is important, but also the need that these new co-ops stay connected and cooperate among each other. The network and the existence of an ecosystem are the elements that make Mondragon resilient. It is difficult to transmit this concept to people.

ENABLERS

- Post pandemic scenario, where people can meet can facilitate collaboration.
- Existence of some funding opportunities from OSF (£7'800) for the development of PCEC and from City Council.
- Development of learning resources from the USA to be adapted to UK reality, and to the PCEC needs.
- Unions should work for people who have lost their jobs or are at risk of losing them, and also, for entrepreneurs. This could help introduce cooperative education to this target group with the funding from the City Council.
- Pandemic has provoked the need to rescue some local economic sectors (hospitality, retail). With the engagement of Unions it is possible to facilitate conversion of companies into co-ops.
- The NewsSocial platform can help us connect the dots and enable the connection of the different stakeholders. So, it is important to bring them together on this platform and generate content for the debate and the decision-making process to move forward. In the action plan, there are linked and related actions, in that sense the platform has to help us to be more efficient and to dynamize debates with the support of an external moderator. This platform can be also useful to generate and spread debates in community. The platform can become an asset to create new businesses.
- Project Committee has to be focused on the action while maintaining the strategic vision. It is important to keep the balance between these two orientations: action and strategy.
- Project Committee meetings is where debates about execution should be done and where decisions for actions are made.

- Shared leadership and inter-cooperation are things that some people want to see in Preston. And it is easier to develop those in communities.
- It is important to have a narrative of the project.
- Importance of fixing solidarity funds in the early stages of cooperatives' creation just before the development of the company. Solidarity rules should be fixed to diversify future risks.