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Co-operatives and Trade Unions

Generating alliances for better and more meaningful work

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1. Introduction: Co-operatives, trade unions and matters of trust

The co-operative movement, which promotes alternative ways of structuring economic ownership by enabling development of collective ownership and decision making within the capitalist system, has become an increasingly important feature of the economy and the labour movement. Like other types of participation, co-operatives benefit from the workforce's expertise and deeper knowledge of operational processes. Among the positive aspects of co-operatives are first, that they ensure that workplaces and organisations are driven by the workforce and its interests, and second, that they offer an alternative to managerialised and corporate-driven systems, with workers able to steer their organisations in alternative directions at key moments. Third, profit and income more generally can be distributed across the workforce in fairer ways. Fourth, longer-term priorities can be discussed and planned for without the intrusion of shareholders and remote owners. Finally, co-operatives are a relatively more democratic form of economic and social organisation that offers more socially beneficial priorities, with workers becoming active economic and social citizens (Agarwala & Mori, 2025; Esim & Katajamaki, 2017; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2002; Novkovic et al., 2022).

However, co-operatives present some challenges to worker organisations and the way they function. First, much may depend on the worker voice itself, and how core decisions are made and leadership structures elected: there is a need to focus more on members and the actual workers in co-operatives and not just the ownership structures. Second, although, ideally, they are collective co-operative spaces, tensions between workers and the leadership over operational and employment issues often arise. Collective ownership does not reduce

the complexity of management and workplace politics. Third, they may diminish individual rights to speak up or question, or they may generate a false sense of collective ownership and bottom-up leadership, since they are just as bureaucratic as other capitalist corporations and can be, as someone once noted, small islands of socialism in a large sea of capitalism (Hyman, 1974). This latter pessimistic view, however, has been questioned by some (Barratt Brown et al., 1975). There is a need to make sure that co-operatives are – ironically – worker co-operatives and have clearer decision-making input from the workforce itself (Zaunseder, 2022). In some senses, many have therefore indicated a need to move away from an obsession with large scale and relatively more centralised forms of co-operatives such as Mondragon and a range of US examples and focus on the much broader set of organisations that operate at a small and medium scale as well (Ozarow & Croucher, 2014).¹

Links and co-ordinated activities between co-operatives and trade unions are relatively undeveloped, even though one would expect them to be natural allies with a mutual concern over the destructive or debilitating impact of capitalism on labour markets and society. In the UK, during the 19th-century rise of the trade union movement and the co-operative movement, there were many overlaps between the two movements. The Labour Party's links to both of these movements are stronger than many of their European counterparts. With the weakening of trade unions in recent years, there has been extensive interest in the role of coalitions and social movements in countering their declining institutional resources and power (Fairbrother, 2008). Co-operatives have become a part of this alternative social and economic space.

¹ The legitimacy crisis for co-operatives would appear to be a long-term historical trend of waning interest in, and a lack of understanding of, co-operatives as a meaningful alternative to capitalistic businesses. The co-operative movement has recognised this recently and over time invested in programmes of education and its own college structures. However, this has been countered by entrenched neoliberal valorisation and socialisation focused on the fallacies of atomised individualism and competition as a taken for granted natural order of things. Moreover, the larger co-operative institutions have slowly moved away from defined co-operative principles with an overemphasis on retail co-operative approaches, rather than worker oriented ones. There have also been some specific examples of tensions between co-operative and trade union movements, and these have arguably undermined worker affinities for co-operatives. Hence, amongst other deficits, workers and trade union activists do not always appreciate that organising for co-operatives is either an option or, at worse, are ill-disposed.

In their document *A Manifesto for Decent Work*, the organisation *union-coops:uk* argue for increased dialogue between the trade union and co-operative movements for the following reasons:

- Work is changing and there is greater fragmentation and precariousness amongst workers.
- Worker voice is being undermined with the corporate questioning of trade unions.
- There is a general crisis of the political system and social fragmentation, and the workplace should become an important site for rebuilding a new democratic project within the economy and beyond. (*union-coops:uk*, no date, p. 2)

This need for a dialogue between these two dimensions of the labour and progressive tradition has been highlighted by various authors that point to the mutual heritage and links across time that they have (Balnave & Patmore, 2017).

For some, employers have been developing new individualised forms of participation at work that bypass the collective and inclusive worker voice of trade unions (Marchington et al., 1993; Stewart, 2006). Collective bargaining is declining as new forms of participation at work emerge that fragment worker voice through team briefings, surveys and symbolic management-driven forms of integration such as wellbeing strategies.

However, despite these challenges, developments in the economy are opening up new possibilities of co-operative forms of working and organisation. With the growth of the platform economy, many workers have been forced into bogus self-employment, as in the cases of Uber and Deliveroo (Todolí-Signes, 2017). However, the developing technology in terms of online apps and programmes that have underpinned online platform working (e.g., crowd working) and offline platform working (e.g., delivery workers) may allow workers to form alternative co-operative service delivery structures and new forms of networking (Wood & Lehdonvirta, 2021). The possibility of having worker owned taxi and delivery firms that adopt the technology and redistribute the charges the organisation normally put on each 'ride' in a fairer way, for example, is not an impossibility (e.g. funds for sick pay and worker development). Employers, in using bogus forms of self-employment, unintentionally reveal how such approaches can be redefined in a more collective and supportive manner through co-operative



approaches. Thus, alongside new challenges with the way work is structured, these new forms of contract and employment arrangements are also providing curious opportunities for trade unions and the co-operative movement.

This study examines how co-operative-based activists in a variety of contexts view the role of trade unions, and how a renewed dialogue might emerge. It is based on a series of seven interviews with consultancies dealing with co-operatives, as well as with co-operatives themselves, and attendance at various conferences concerning trade unions and co-operatives. A series of short case studies demonstrates the challenges and barriers to trade unions and co-operatives developing closer links, while also highlighting the benefits of setting up and being involved in co-operative forms of organisation and structures from a trade union point of view. It also discusses the strategic opportunities for setting up co-operative-oriented ventures that are missed by the labour movement, and especially trade unions. The report concludes with recommendations based on discussions between the authors and research participants.

2. Remaking co-operative engagement, challenges and potential roles across the sectors

There are many different types of and approaches to co-operative working. These include the sometimes overlapping categories of: worker co-operatives, producer co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, credit unions, retail or purchasing co-operatives, social co-operatives, multi-stakeholder co-operatives and housing co-operatives. What is key to them all is that it is members rather than shareholders/individuals who own and control them, in theory. This variety illustrates the flexibility of worker co-operatives as a way of generating alternative and more democratic forms of worker control.

Co-operatives and Unions: new ways, old dilemmas and thinking outside the box

In this section we look at how trade unions can provide strategic advice and resources to co-operative ventures in food retailing and manufacturing, and the music industry, supporting workers without the need to sacrifice their autonomy and independence. These cases illustrate the relevance of the ILO's promotion of co-operative forms (ILO, 2002).

The role of trade unions in maintaining labour standards in co-operatives

Retailing and food production are areas that have seen a range of, especially small, co-operative ventures, with co-operative shops and restaurants becoming increasingly common. Our first case study is of an extensive food and cosmetics retail business which, together with a restaurant, has established itself around the market of vegetarianism. This co-operative emerged from a range of lifestyle changes and new forms of concerns with worker control that were current in the 1970s. After a certain period of employment, employees may become part of the co-operative and can participate in discussions around a range of core decisions. This co-operative has worked on developing labour standards by adopting such initiatives as the living wage, as well as engaging with the Fairtrade movement and purchasing many products from other local small businesses and co-operatives.

Trade union engagement in retail and hospitality has become increasingly challenging due to the sector's fragmented nature, and if the employment practices of co-operatives result in decent work standards, trade unions may not be motivated to engage and organise within them. The real issue for trade unions in this industrial and service sector of the UK is how to reach out to smaller businesses, given the absence of sector-level collective agreements. In some senses, the co-operative and trade union movement are two universes that live parallel lives but do not seem to engage when there are no obvious reasons to. Nevertheless, some form of mutual engagement between key retailers and food outlets and trade unions would benefit both parties by providing the information needed to enhance labour standards in the sector.

However, in some cases in the food sector there is a co-operative system of organisation as well as organised



union representation to deal with employee-related issues. These cases seem to have a very detailed system of co-operative-based participation where management practices are developed through collective processes of some form but at times act without constant collective endorsement (possibly due to the operational pressures on decision-making). Yet they also have a traditional system of union representation to deal with employment issues linked to collective, or seemingly collective, decisions. Trade union representatives and officers play an important role in these co-operatives, which draw on their skills and links to a traditional role and view of trade unions as specialising in representing workers and their concerns vis-à-vis management. Inevitably there may be tension, but this is to be expected in any collectively owned or managed organisation, as collective or collectively derived leadership may not always align with the interests of the workforce on every single matter. Through their workplace representatives, trade unions can stand outside the system of co-operative management, ensuring that individual and other collective issues are not ignored. We will return to this duality in the next case.

Unions as agents for change and moderators of co-operative politics

There are some sectors that lend themselves to co-operative forms of organisation. In the music industry, the nature of the 'production unit' — such as music bands, opera companies and orchestras — facilitate co-operative arrangements due to their scale and in some cases the collective nature of some of their informal decision-making processes. The Musicians' Union has developed a proactive strategy of advising certain groups of musicians (instrumental music teachers who were employed by local authorities) on how to reorganise themselves and become co-operatives. This work complements their traditional role of collective and individual representation in relation to the employer.

Within the music industry generally there is a vast potential for the development of co-operatives. In an ever-volatile economic environment with declining levels of public subsidy, the attraction of self-managing has increased. Providing advice to encourage its members and others to set up co-operatives and more self-managed forms of organisation is a potential route for union support. In the arts sector, trade unions are becoming highly innovative and provide dual support roles, both rethinking the employing organisation and providing worker support on employment issues.

Co-operatives as a regulatory response to the crisis of service delivery and as a way of raising labour standards

This section examines four cases where the resources and support of trade unions can play an important role. The lost opportunities observed in some of the cases highlight potential ways for trade unions to intervene and develop or support co-operative initiatives.

Co-operatives and the engagement of clients in residential care

The first case, an informal venture that might nevertheless eventually evolve into a co-operative, sought to bring people together around the issue of accommodation. Two former social workers attempted to match individuals seeking accommodation with spare rooms offered by other people in their own homes. It was not a formal profit-making enterprise but aimed to eventually integrate people into an entity that was jointly owned. Their reference point was a co-operative in the north-east of England which showed that there was a collective way of working with the homeless, sharing facilities – and using social security benefits creatively. The idea was to move away from the increasingly business-oriented approach of charities towards the idea of responsible shared and collective use of available resources. Moving away from a traditional market view of housing agencies and actively bringing people on board within collective decision-making processes was in line with a community approach. Many references were made in the interviews about this case to how this could be relevant to trade unions. First, it would allow trade unions in the housing and accommodation sector to present an alternative to the business-oriented agency approach, making the case for other more socially engaged businesses. Second, those unions involved in community-oriented approaches would be able to fuse this approach on housing with their other local strategies, given that 'community unionism' is seen as a way ahead for the trade union movement (Holgate, 2015).



The establishment of alternative forms of co-operative working in social care/social work

The logic of co-operative working is also apparent in social care, a sector that has been increasingly commercialised and attracted the attention of large-scale national and transnational companies. Working conditions have been fundamentally undermined in recent years and there is a greater dependence on vulnerable and low-paid staff. In one case, though, a group of individuals have formed a co-operative that has been recognised as a provider by a local council and arranges for individuals to deliver care support across a range of activities. In Australia, there has been a greater push towards this alternative co-operative and local way of delivering social care. In the case studied in the UK, these individuals contacted trade unions so that they were aware of the initiative – which could be seen as an alternative form of contracting services from local authorities – but it was not the policy of this particular union to consider co-operative approaches to delivering social care. Non-profit approaches, such as those of co-operatives, were not included in the debate on countering outsourcing and private provision.²

Yet increasingly we are seeing this type of social care delivery being developed across co-operative structures. Such initiatives in the care sector could begin to address the crisis of care more generally in the UK. The current government's nascent notion of a national care service lacks structural detail, particularly in regard to how provision will be organised and delivered. One vision of a national care service could be an aggregation of smaller, local care co-operatives that are networked and share resources, training and knowledge. There is also the idea that, particularly post-pandemic, this approach could provide alignment with calls to consider different organising principles for society as a whole (Bird et al., 2024). An alternative to neoliberal (anti-society) principles could be a collective and co-operative care ethic, and this would possibly chime with both grass-roots approaches to mutual support and formal care services organised in co-operatives.

Supply teachers and co-operatives – and the redefining of the role of employment agencies

Supply teaching in schools and colleges has greatly expanded over the past few years due to increasingly precarious working conditions for teachers and more short-term contracting. Employment agencies have mushroomed and for many teachers have been the main link into local education authorities and schools. Self-managed co-operative employment agencies run by teachers have emerged, and in one case a group of teachers have established a body that allows them to control the labour supply, reducing the cost of supply teachers for schools but, ironically, paying those teachers a higher rate than if they had worked through established private employment agencies. This cutting out of the 'agent' brings economic gains to both sides, but it also allows teachers to exert a greater collective influence on terms and conditions of employment. The case demonstrates how co-operative forms of organisation can directly and positively influence working conditions and socially orientate the way workers are contracted.

² Union policies and attitudes are often complicated on such issues, and much may depend on internal democratic traditions, e.g. the level of branch level autonomy may be an important factor in decisions about supporting co-operatives or not. The policies of some unions are not necessarily completely antithetical, but they may close off contemplation of co-operative alternatives. Given the difficulties that exist in much of the private sector provision in care for example there is ambivalence as to how to respond and re-regulate this sector. The policies promoting insourcing may be focused on bringing such service back in and because of this, co-operatives are neglected (or treated suspiciously as potential steppingstones to privatisation). However, some trade union regions in the UK have been supportive of dialogue around co-operative possibilities in the sector but require decent concrete examples to emerge. Unfortunately, this is representative of the apprehension of trade unions in mobilising union resources into raising the potential co-operatives to emerge. We have written about this dialogue (Bird et al., 2021).

However, this may not necessarily lead to permanent employment, and much may depend on the terms and conditions negotiated by trade unions nationally not being undermined. Tensions in these cases between trade unions and such co-operatives have been noted although there is much potential for dialogue (Monaco & Pastorelli, 2013). Yet this is where trade unions can play an important role by advising these alternative and co-operative forms of agencies on the agreed terms and conditions of employment in their particular labour market. A further possibility is for unions themselves to directly establish these types of employment agencies and co-operatives — which has happened in some traditional sectors such as construction and dock work where trade unions have partly organised the labour supply. Given that the role of labour market intermediaries such as employment agencies is unlikely to diminish, trade unions need to decide how to engage positively with these developments.

The telecoms sector, broadband and local internet providers and the lost opportunity of community and union-based co-operatives

An interviewee from one of our research cases had a long history of involvement in the co-operative movement and progressive organisations generally, having worked in the telecommunications sector, especially cable telephony, during the early 1980s.³ Previously mostly a nationalised industry, this sector is currently dominated by a range of multinational corporations. During the 1980s and 1990s, local councils ran franchising systems for local cable operators and began to develop an interest in new forms of communication providers other than British Telecom, which by then had been privatised. The potential to offer local cable channels, provide a media voice to local communities (in pre-internet days), and save telephone charges was a major attraction to the more forward-looking local councils.

The relevance of this sector and this period to the current discussion is that it represents a window of opportunity that the trade union movement did not, in the main, address beyond issues related to working conditions. Prior to this period various local councils in Manchester and London had been experimenting with local technologies and communication systems.⁴ 'Poptel', a local online communications service and subsequently an internet service provider for NGOs, left-leaning political parties and parts of local government, was run as a co-operative. Hence, there have been plenty of opportunities where trade unions, in addition to their interventions, could have generated alternative co-operative-based support systems. Trade unions work very closely with independent and socially responsible service providers in a range of areas, but there are many occasions when they could intervene more directly to counter the increasing corporatisation and privatisation of service delivery.



3 The lead author of the report also worked in local government, based in south London, in the late 1980s and researched the impact and potential uses of cable television and communications by local councils and social groups. He has an interest in alternative forms of social media and traditional media communications.

4 One should not forget that for many decades Hull had its own telephone company and ran local communications services as a public and local municipal operation for much of the 20th century.

3. Overview and Discussion: How can organised labour be co-operatively reimaged?

One of the challenges of looking at the relationship between trade unions and co-operatives is the tendency to see them as either natural allies representing alternative forms of worker representation to the socio-economic system and its capital-based approach to decision making, or as ultimately at odds with each other as trade unions represent worker organisation in terms of their work and labour, whilst co-operatives represent worker organisation as owners and in some senses employers. This typical historical division has tended to generate an unhelpful binary, with observers and practitioners positioning themselves in one or other of these two positions and narratives. However, the interaction between the two forms of representation needs to be viewed more dynamically, and we should increasingly see trade unions as being able to relate to the co-operative movement in a variety of positive ways.

First, we have seen how **they can help maintain an individual worker's voice and represent traditional trade union matters even in the most developed of co-operatives**, as there will always be workplace issues that cannot be co-operatively resolved. There is no reason, as seen in the cases of the food manufacturer and the music industry, why unions cannot support co-operatives but maintain their independent voice in relation to the workforce and its working conditions. Trade unions are central to the propagation of collective bargaining frameworks, living wage arrangements and more positive working conditions and thus provide an important service to co-operatives and their workforce. The development of greater levels of sector level regulation and bargaining with trade unions pivotal within these as seen in various parts of Europe can help sustain worker standards and the working practices of co-operatives (UNI EUROPA, 2024).

Second, **trade unions can in fact be proactive in supporting the development of co-operatives** when the nature of the work and activity lends itself to co-operative forms of ownership and decision making. Trade unions can assist in the development of worker-oriented economic activity and still maintain an advisory role on traditional industrial relations matters. Where there are concerns with the nature of the employer and

the absence of a co-ordinated worker response to labour standards issues it is possible for trade unions to be more proactive and directly support the development of co-operatives. In the examples described above with the Musicians Union but more particularly the social care case, employers had become large-scale organisations that were ignoring issues related to terms and conditions of employment. Social care is an area which maintains strong links with local government and political allies within this sphere can occasionally facilitate the development of co-operatives that can then tender for services. In the case of the teachers and worker-owned or worker-led employment agencies, we can see how important it is for collectives of workers to counter the individualising roles of 'new wave' teaching institutions by setting higher labour standards, especially around pay. This is an area that is ripe for intervention from trade unions in these sectors.

Third, **trade unions can, through their community- and socially-oriented organisational roles, benefit communities by establishing more flexible co-operative structures in relation to consumption** so that people are connected with each other and supported around the exchange of services, as we saw with residential and housing matters (almost like a consumer-led co-operative). Community unionism — for example, UNITE's development of community representatives — is another, more coordinated and co-operative way of organising support and mutual exchange of services amongst workers. The organising approach trade unions increasingly take can also be extended and reimaged through the engagement with social and economic issues beyond just that of raising membership. There has been interest in programmes of union renewal framed by models of organising. Arguably, the organising approach has the ultimate aim of deepening union and workplace democracy. Yet, it is also arguably the case that many of these initiatives have been more successful at short-term recruitment than longer-term retention, and relatively less successful at strengthening union democracy and membership participation. The ultimate goals of extending industrial democracy as a means of delivering decent work appear some way off their realisation. The



implicit democratisation of workplaces and boost to worker voice and confidence within a dialogue around co-operative organisation could enhance unions' organising mission, offer opportunities to organise on a situated basis within specific sectors or workplaces around co-operative formation as alternatives to worker dissatisfaction or precarity. What is more, it is not as if we are bereft of examples of cases where union renewal and engagement has been positively tied to new forms of co-operative developments and examples (Ji, 2016; Quijoux, 2020).

Fourth, **trade unions can also potentially engage with embryonic areas linked to technological development and new forms of communication, providing not just co-operative forms of organisation but alternative worker- and society-friendly services** such as those related to the internet, media production and social media in general: some of these technologies can, in turn, support union organising, co-operative development and mutual learning, e.g. the NewsSocial worker co-operative has worked with communities in Preston to digitally support grass-roots asset mapping and community activist networking and communication, and have been keen for trade unions to get involved in such initiatives. Co-operatives can be developed in the 'creative economy' that push for better labour standards and generate a more collective and socially oriented

approach to how services are developed and for whom, as we saw with the examples of actual and lost opportunities around early developments in the internet.

The way trade unions can support, develop and work with co-operatives is much broader than we can imagine. There are moments when key industrial sectors that we take for granted as being inevitably linked to the current capitalist context could have been rethought in terms of their relations to workers and consumers. Just as trade unions exist in many – although not all – co-operatives and play a clearly delineated role, they can also intervene and establish worker co-operatives and flexible forms of co-operative-type activity without compromising their core roles as worker representatives.

There are occasions when joint decision making and a more collective approach to issues beyond 'traditional' working conditions can be developed by trade unions as part of their portfolio of work (education, research and advice) and social engagement. Thinking more broadly and perhaps flexibly about what we mean by co-operative working and decision making is essential if we are to generate a more proactive and supportive trade union approach to co-operatives.

In turn the co-operative tradition needs to understand the industrial experience, knowledge and resources of trade unions in relation to the areas they work in and appreciate that trade unions' local and workplace structures involve a wide range of co-operative-style activity. Material and knowledge-based resources can be mutually shared with the aim of identifying opportunities for development of co-operatives and the improvement of worker rights.

Finally, the potential move to new forms of worker led co-operatives and their development relates to the ignored question of small and medium sized enterprises. Part of the problem facing the co-operative movement is the vast majority do not have the knowledge and material resources of those that are more established and are able to rely on a network of individual and small-scale networks of progressive consultants. Many of the challenges for co-operatives are dealing with a regulatory context which is focused much more on larger firms that have clearer and more established organisational resources.



4. Proposals: Moving ahead

Co-operative ventures are occurring across many sectors and there is a case for a greater dialogue with trade unions in those sectors. Much can be gained by co-operatives working with trade unions on a range of work-related issues, including *mutual sharing of experiences*, collaborating on improving working conditions and worker rights, and actively ensuring that worker voice in relation to worker interests is maintained in a co-operative setting. Beyond the traditional concerns of industrial relations, the relationship between these two sets of actors may be essential for rethinking how services are provided and how non-profit views of the economy are developed. Underpinning this dialogue, a set of policies and practices for the relationship between trade unions and co-operatives is therefore required.

Practical suggestions: increasing awareness of mutual interests

- **Understanding work:** Making the co-operative sector aware of the importance of the traditional roles of trade unions and their importance in relation to improving working conditions. The value added by trade unions is that they can enhance the knowledge of organisations on such matters as the development

of decent work and good working conditions. Jointly organised technical and work focused training and learning between these different movements could facilitate a broader understanding of the changing nature of work.

- **Understanding the economy:** Ensuring that both trade unions and co-operatives (individually and collectively) are aware of the knowledge resources each has on economic and social issues. Research is a major activity for both sets of actors and the ability to share insights into developments within a specific economic and social sector can be of vital importance. Each actor is also part of a larger supportive academic and consultative community that could be brought together in a more systematic manner.
- **Providing economic alternatives:** Making it clear that establishing co-operative forms of economic organisation is an alternative to many of the profit-oriented approaches in sectors such as retail, information technology, social care, entertainment, and others, and that this should be part of trade unions' portfolio of work and advice to members in key situations.



- A better concordat between co-operative movements and trade unions could facilitate new imaginative approaches to learning and organising. For example, extending political/economic education for workers and citizens, that raises consciousness of the rich mutual heritage of co-operatives and unions and looks forward to future alliances and developments

Policy: generating a long-term dialogue

- A formal set of national links should be established within and with the trade union movement where a more structured dialogue on co-operative working can take place.
- A more systematic link with trade unions, through annual conferences and networks, should be established within national bodies representing co-operatives development.
- A steering policy network is needed involving key representatives from the trade union and co-operative movements, aimed at securing greater information sharing on alternative forms of economic organisation and approaches to a socially oriented economy.

- Organising and lobbying for resources for education and training materials should be developed both on the co-operative and trade union movements historically, and on cases demonstrating the advantages and practicality of engaging with a collective approach to work and the economy.
- A collective lobby for legislation covering a different, more supportive operating environment for co-operatives could be developed, e.g. more forgiving tax arrangements for worker take-overs aimed at forming co-operatives, making co-operatives in the community and the voluntary sector as financially advantageous as establishing social enterprises, and other forms of economic support.
- Finally, a common approach and re-set of common principles that are based on an alternative view of the economy and the voice of workers within it would provide an overarching ethical framework. The need to motivate members of trade unions and co-operatives in relation to a different vision and view of the way organisations can be run and a rethinking of their purpose is essential if we are to generate a common space and dialogue between these key parts of the progressive social and labour traditions in the UK.

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