



It's what we do



Council Secretary



Welcome

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining Co-op as our next Council Secretary. One of the world's largest consumer co-operatives, our business interests span the Food, Funeral, General Insurance, Legal Services and Wholesale sectors. We have a very different way of doing business and are focused on bringing that difference to life for our members and communities. We have celebrated raising £100 million for local communities, causes and charity partners over the last five years, which includes supporting more than 25,000 Local Community Fund causes across the UK since 2016. We also continue to play our part in addressing the big issues of our time such as diversity and inclusion, access to food and climate change.

Because we are a different type of organisation, our governance structures are different too. This includes our 100-strong elected Members' Council which holds our Board to account and acts as guardian of our purpose, values and principles and constitution. Having effective, responsive and well-developed arrangements in place to support our Council is critical. Our Council Secretary, who provides governance and administrative services to the Council, Senate and committees, and manages the Council Secretariat, is therefore one of the most important roles in our structure today.

This is a serious leadership role. In serving the National Members' Council, one of the two constitutional pillars of the Society, you will be occupying a trusted position that routinely interfaces with members on a range of governance matters. As an office holder of the Society, you will manage the democratic elections for our Council members as well as Council member learning. A huge part of this role is about engagement: you will be helping to ensure that relationships with the Board and Executive, among many others, are positive.

We are looking for an exceptional new Council Secretary to take up this influential appointment. Because this is a significant leadership and stakeholder engagement opportunity, we're seeking an experienced, intuitive leader with great maturity of judgement and a down to earth personal style. In addition to your thorough understanding of the principles of good governance, you will be adept at handling nuance and complexity, and bring exceptional communication and relationship-building skills. Already an accomplished diplomat, your own personal values will also align closely with those of Co-op, enabling you to build respect and rapport quickly. Co-operative values and principles are shared by the international co-operative movement, which Co-op actively supports.

If you believe you have the skills, personal qualities and values we are looking for then we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Denise Scott-McDonald
Council President

Helen Grantham
Group Secretary and General Counsel



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About Coop

Co-op is truly different, co-operating for a fairer world, representing community and fairness for our members and customers. We're one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives, owned by millions of members. We operate more than 2,500 food stores. We're also the UK's number 1 funeral services provider, a major general insurer and a growing legal services business.

As well as having clear financial and operational objectives and employing more than 62,000 people, we're a recognised leader for our social goals and community-led programmes. We exist to meet members' needs and stand up for the things they believe in. So, the more successful we are, the more we can give back to you and your local community.

Find out more

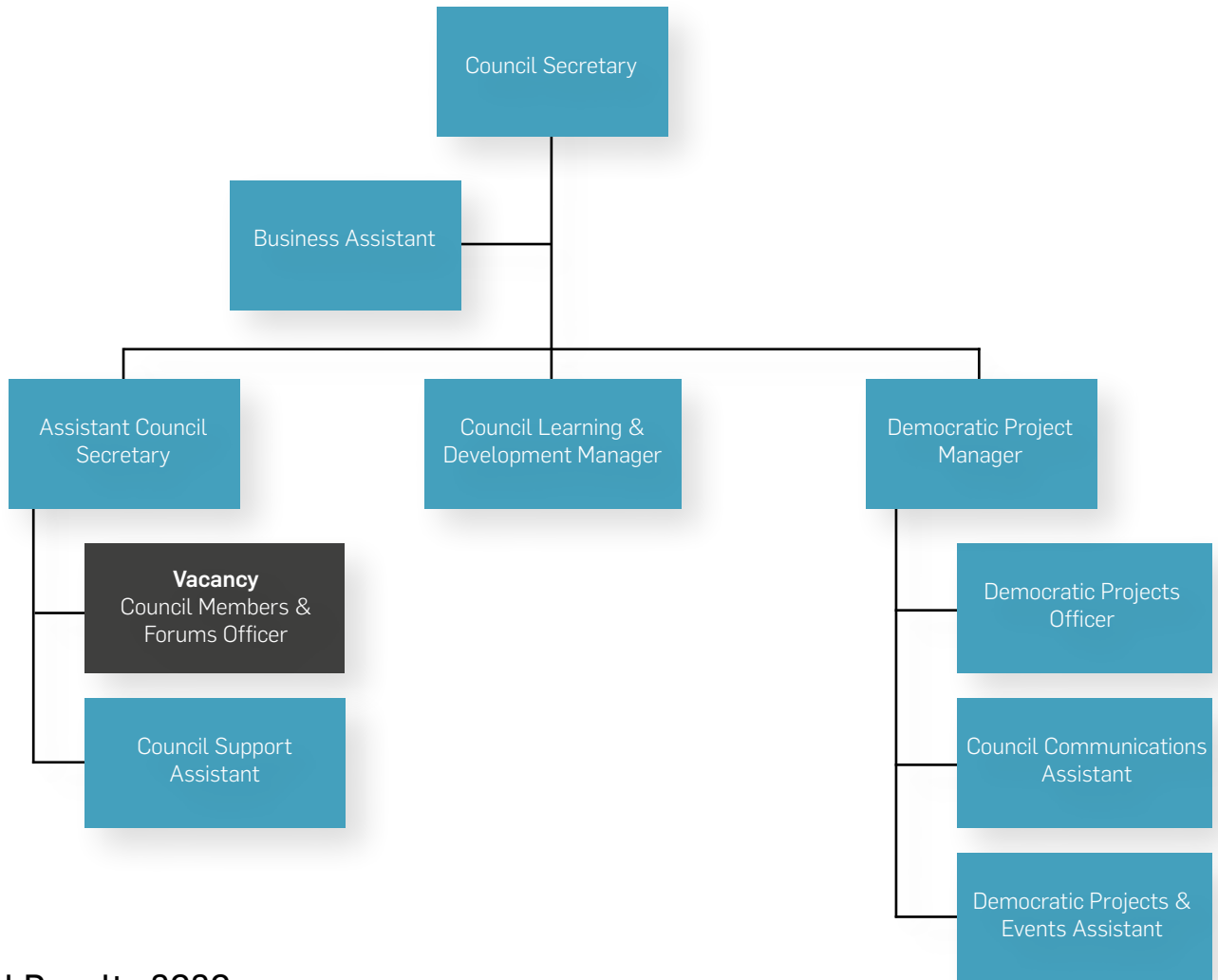
Everything you need to know about Co-op can be found at <https://www.coop.co.uk/>



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Structure



Annual Results 2020

The numbers

Co-op revenue

£11.5bn

2019: £10.9bn

Group underlying operating profit before tax

£100m

2019: £35m

Profit after tax

£77m*

2019: £33m

Net debt – excluding leases

£550m

2019: £695m

Food total sales

£7.8bn

2019: £7.5bn

Funeralcare revenue

£272m

2019: £272m

Insurance – gross written premiums

£363.4m

Legal Services revenue

£37m

2019: £40m

Extra costs responding to Covid-19 and rewarding colleagues

£84m

* Post IFRS15, after discontinued operations



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Role Profile

Role title	Council Secretary
Reports to	President of the Council (direct) and Group Secretary and General Counsel (indirect)
Budget	£1.5m+
Accountable for	4 direct reports to the role (5 indirect)

Main accountabilities of the role

- Ensure Co-operative Values and Principles are at the heart of decisions made by the President, the Council and the Senate.
- Provide the highest levels of service, professional advice and guidance to the Council; define, set and evolve relevant policies and procedures.
- Work with the Council President to ensure that the Council discharges its obligations to the Society in accordance with the requirements of the Rules. This will be in line with the direction of the Group Secretary, including adherence to best practice governance requirements for Consumer Co-operatives.
- Assist the Group Secretary in organising the AGM and other General Meetings. Regularly review Council and Committees working practices, produce appropriate meeting agendas, circulate papers in advance of meetings, and produce minutes for the Council (and its committees).
- Act as Returning Officer of Council elections and is responsible for the conduct of all Council elections except where the rules provide otherwise.
- Responsible (together with the Group Secretary) for ensuring co-ordination between the Board, the Executive, the Council and the Senate; this includes Independent Society members and the wider movement.
- Foster productive and positive relationships with the Group Secretary, Board and wider Co-op. To work with the Group Secretary to ensure Council has appropriate information to enable Council to fulfil their role of holding the Board to account.
- Work closely with the Group Secretary on Member Register maintenance, ensuring any communication on behalf of the Council or Board is fulfilled.
- Contract management and supplier engagement to drive efficiency and cost effectiveness in supplier relationships relating to the operation of elections, and training and learning programme, and MND recruitment.
- Identify, anticipate and manage key governance risks.
- Lead, develop and motivate a multidisciplinary team.
- Keep up to date with external standards and practices to ensure that Co-op aligns with and contributes to best practice in the market.



Person Specification

Please respond directly to the criteria listed under Knowledge and Experience in your supporting statement. Criteria listed under Parts Two and Three will be further tested at interview for selected candidates.

Part One

Knowledge and Experience

- Outstanding record of achievement gained at Leadership Team level, with direct experience of leadership and management as part of an established organisational setting and / or an organisation with a strong public profile.
- Direct personal experience of advising, influencing and providing high quality services to the most senior members of an organisation (such as the Chair, Board, Governing Council, Elected Members, Patrons and / or CEO and Executive Board).
- Thorough understanding of best practice in governance; this may have been gained leading a similarly complex Secretariat function, or in another setting that has required upward management and / or service provision to influential stakeholder groups.
- An appreciation of organisations with a significant stakeholder, member and / or shared ownership structure and their characteristics in terms of performance, governance and decision-making.

Part Two

Skills and Abilities

- Highly effective influencing, negotiation, communication and relationship skills: able to secure trust and confidence quickly through a warm, professional and collaborative style.
- Able to anticipate and respond early to emerging issues, and to formulate strategy and operational plans in line with customer, commercial and organisational priorities.
- Rounded managerial capabilities, including effective budget management skills and the ability to inspire and motivate a small and high-performing team.
- Outstanding organisational abilities and can manage and plan for competing priorities in a way that consistently delivers results.

Part Three

Leadership Style and Personal Attributes

- Flexible and adaptable: comfortable working with nuance and ambiguity.
- Resilient, proactive and professional style: a confident and objective decision-maker who owns their remit and responsibilities, is pragmatic, solutions-focused and knows when and how to escalate issues appropriately.
- Maturity of judgement: operates with undisputed personal integrity and discretion, and has a diplomatic and down to earth style.
- Demonstrable commitment to the Co-op Values and Principles.

Coop welcomes applications from everyone.



Terms of Appointment

As a Co-op colleague you'll do work that matters in an organisation where principles are just as important as profits.

Salary

This role attracts a salary of up to £100,000. Starting salary will be dependent on experience.

Location

Manchester based with hybrid working

Benefits

You'll also get a package that includes:

- a car allowance
- private health cover
- an annual incentive scheme
- 28 days holiday
- discounts on Co-op products and services
- a pension with up to 10% employer contributions.

Our commitment to diversity

We're actively building diverse teams and welcome applications from everyone. But simply having a diverse workforce is not enough. We want to build an inclusive environment, where everyone can contribute their best work and develop to their full potential. We celebrate our differences, and recognise the importance of teams reflecting the communities they serve.

Coop welcomes applications from everyone. We can make adjustments to the interview process according to your needs. We offer a flexible working environment so you can adjust your hours to suit your personal circumstances.



How to Apply

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/coop-council-sec/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides)
- A short supporting statement (maximum two sides) that sets out why you are interested in joining Coop and in this role
- We would be grateful if you would also tell us your current salary details and any dates when you are not available to attend interview.

Please also ensure you have completed and submitted the equal opportunities monitoring form that appears on this site as you submit your application. The information you provide will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

Closing date is Monday 14th February 2022

Longlist confirmed	w/c 21st February 2022
First stage interviews	w/c 21st or 28th February 2022
Candidates notified about the shortlist	by w/c 7th March 2022
First stage meetings	w/c 14th March 2022
Final formal interviews	w/c 21st March 2022



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