

Transcript:

Shape Your Community events – Q&A between Nick Crofts and Steve Murrells

(Short version: 3mins)

Nick Crofts, President, National Members' Council

Hello, welcome. My name is Nick Crofts I'm the President of the National Members' Council here at the Co-op. I'm joined by Steve Murrells our Chief Executive and we are here to put questions to Steve that have come through our Shape Your Community meetings. We've also taken questions that have come through the blog post that I wrote, and questions that have been raised online.

'On our campaigning Co-op'

Steve Murrells, CEO, Co-op Group

It's early days. I think the team have done a great job connecting into Government to begin with and getting us a seat at the table on these important issues. Now we've kind of got to move a little bit away from a low-cost budget to more of turning the volume up - telling the story and finding a way that shouts loud and proud about what we're doing so colleagues know where our efforts are going, and as importantly members and customers know those causes that we're trying to campaign on.

'On the sustainability of our membership offer'

There's considerably much more to do, I mean this was just the start of it. Matt Atkinson [*new Chief Membership Officer*] joins us later in the year and he will bring, I think, new insight, new energy and lots of new ideas about how we can grow and build on what we've already started.

'On member participation'

I think one of the opportunities for us to get a greater democracy into our Co-op's going to be: how do we connect with people's frustrations? How do we connect with their needs? That would then actually encourage them to come out and have their say.

'On developing pub sites for new stores'

Well the first thing is there is the myth that suggests that we close pubs. We don't close pubs.

Nick

We do not close pubs?

Steve

We do not close pubs. Where we build a food store is where a pub has closed because it didn't meet the community's needs. If the pubs were actually appealing and doing the right thing they would be vibrant and open. So this is actually us coming in at the end of the problem, saying: here's a solution.

'On expanding local sourcing'

We are in over a thousand stores across over 35 different kind of regional territories. Some of our ranges from local beers is extraordinary high quality, and it makes a difference. If we can help small businesses become big businesses on the back of us as a window into people's needs and that's a good thing.

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