

Cork County PPN, Secretariat meeting ADOPTED

Tuesday 23rd March 2021, by Zoom

Present: Brid Coakley, Tommy Collins, Colum Cronin, Pat Dooley, Michael Doyle, Peter Dineen, Gavin Falk, Anne Finch, John Fuller, Jude Gilbert, Carol Harpur, Tom Howard, Sean Kelly, Liam McCarthy, Pauline O'Dwyer, José Ospina.

Apologies: none received

Facilitation: Harriet Emerson

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1. Welcome & Agenda: Everyone present was welcomed to the meeting and reminded of the agreed ground rules for conduct during the meeting and to raise their hands or say their name to indicate that they wished to contribute to discussions. The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising: The Draft Minutes (previously circulated of the previous meeting held on 23rd February 2021) were adopted. The following matters were noted –

- i. Harriet thanked Secretariat members for their inputs and reported that her Report to the Department had been submitted.
- ii. A letter had been sent to the Department of Housing proposing and invitation to PPN's to participate in the current consultation on Marine Protected Areas running until 31st July 2021 and future related work. The Department has responded looking for a contact list of all PPNs in order to invite them to take part. Harriet has submitted a list of all current contact details.
- iii. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications has requested participation of a small group in the Climate Action Plan Consultation that were ideally representative of different PPN Colleges, areas of the County, gender, etc. It was agreed that group originally chosen to engage with the Department (Michael Doyle, Carol Harpur and Jose Ospina) should be joined by Anne Finch and Liam McCarthy.

3. Staff Recruitment: Jude Gilbert reported that the Interview Panel for the Resource Worker position had met initially to agreed a shortlist from the 28 applications received. They had just completed two days of interviews with 10 candidates and have made a recommendation to the Human Resources Department of the County Council. It is likely that it will take around a month to have staff in place; allowing for an offer to be made, accepted and notice served. Jude indicated that it had taken a week's work for herself and Pat Dooley to prepare for and carry out the process with the Council nominee. All the other members present expressed their considerable thanks to Jude and Pat for their work on the recruitment process. It was seen as a very positive step forward that the PPN could look forward to welcoming a full staff team shortly.

Staff Liaison Committee: There was discussion about the Staff Liaison Committee, which is the standing sub-committee of the Secretariat responsible for working directly with staff. It was agreed that there should be a rolling turnover of membership at 6 monthly intervals to ensure that experience is retained and passed on to new members. One member will stand down every 6 months. Since all three Committee members to be selected at this meeting will commence their roles together, it was agreed that they will draw lots at the end of September to choose one person to stand down and allow a new Secretariat member to join. At the end of March 2022 one of the two remaining original members will step down and be replaced. From that point on, the longest serving of the Committee will stand down every 6 months. This means that the normal full term of membership on the Committee for each individual will be 18 months (excluding the first two members to retire as set out above). Further details of the operation of the Staff Liaison Committee will be considered when the new staff team is in place.

Three nominations had been received for the Staff Liaison Committee; Jude Gilbert, Carol Harpur and Liam McCarthy. As the number of nominations matched the number of places available all three were taken as elected.

4. Memorandum of Understanding & Service Level Agreement: Liam reported that Kay Keegan and the Corporate Affairs section of the Council are still to revert on the two matters relating to a) the claiming of PPN representatives expenses, and b) a protocol for support of PPN representatives. The Department has requested return of signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) and Income and Expenditure details by the end of March so the matter is now pressing. Since it is referred to in the MoU, the Council wished to see the PPN Grievance procedure (see further agenda point). As this has not yet been finalised, the sample from the Handbook was provided for information. It was agreed to leave the negotiating group to finalise details of the MoU and Service Level Agreement.

5. Budget: The Draft Income and Expenditure figures for 2020, prepared by Andrew Lewis in the Council and previously circulated, were reviewed and discussed. It was AGREED to approve these and to ask the group overseeing the MoU to sign the document and return it to Kay Keegan so that it can be submitted to the Department with the MoU.

No response has been received from the Department to the PPN's request for confirmation of approval for roll-over of the 2020 unspent budget. It was AGREED that this should be followed up once the Department has received the MoU and Income and Expenditure information.

6. Mayor's Awards: Pauline O'Dwyer, Tom Howard and Gavin Falk each reported on their participation as judges in the recent Mayor's Awards. Having received hard copies of the nominations, each was involved in the judges' discussion for their area and winners will be announced at a pre-recorded award ceremony to be broadcast on Council Youtube channel at 7.30pm on Wednesday 24th March. Gavin was also asked to record a brief speech on behalf of the PPN to be included in the award ceremony. In discussion, it was felt that numbers of nominations were probably down as a result of the pandemic but that it was nonetheless important to recognise the extraordinary work done by volunteers in communities. The three judges were thanked for taking on this work on behalf of the PPN.

7. PPN Documentation, policies and procedures (pre-circulated): Secretariat members had contributed to some fourteen policy and procedure documents (see list at end of this document) relating to the operation of the PPN which had been circulated by email, made available in Google Docs and sent out in hard copy, where requested.

Those present then spent some time reviewing the text of the Draft Constitution, discussing and agreeing amendments. This AGREED draft will now be sent forward to the Plenary for approval.

It was acknowledged that it is a painstaking process to review each document line-by-line, and harder still over Zoom. In order to address this, it was AGREED that all Secretariat members will review the documents ahead of the next meeting and highlight any areas where they have queries, comments or proposed amendments. The discussion will then be limited to these points. Members were asked to focus first on the Grievance Procedure as this is linked specifically to the Memorandum of Understanding. Any issues with the draft of this should be notified to Harriet by Monday 29th March.

All documents will be made available on Google Docs and via email. Hard copies were requested and will be sent to Brid Coakley, Pat Dooley, Gavin Falk, John Fuller, Jose Ospina, Tom Howard and Pauline O'Dwyer.

8. Any other business: Michael Doyle expressed his thanks for a link to an environmental podcast which he found to be excellent.

9. Date of next meeting: It was AGREED that the next meeting will take place

via Zoom at 7.30pm on Tuesday 13rd April

Cork County PPN – Policies and Procedures

Document	Handbook ref	Status
Memorandum of Understanding	p.187	Completed (2021)
Service Level Agreement	p.202	Completed (2021)
Constitution	p.108	Draft for Plenary (agreed by Secretariat)
<u>Appendices to Constitution</u>		
Standing Orders	p.126	Initial draft
Gathering Signatures	p.128	Initial draft
Expectations & Responsibilities of a Board and Committee with PPN Representation	p.130	Initial draft
Electoral Process	p.131	Initial draft
Complaints Policy	p.132 & p.154	Initial draft
Code of Conduct	p.136 & p.169	Initial draft
Travel & Subsistence Policy	p.139 & p.164	Initial draft
Email & Internet Usage Policy	p.166	Initial draft
Grievance procedure	p.171	Initial draft
Re-registration Protocol	p.201	Initial draft
Nomination Form	p.163	Initial draft
Representatives Charter	p.159	Initial draft
Representatives Reporting Template	p.162	Initial draft
Driving for Work Policy	p.174	Initial draft
Vulnerable Adults Policy	p.176	Initial draft
Dignity in the Workplace Policy	p.182	Initial draft
Job description for Resource Worker		Completed