

Cork County PPN, Secretariat meeting – DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday 22nd June 2021, by Microsoft Teams

Present: Tommy Collins, Colum Cronin, Michael Doyle, Peter Dineen, Pauline O’Dwyer, Pat Dooley, Gavin Falk, Anne Finch, Jude Gilbert, Carol Harpur, Liam McCarthy, José Ospina, Patrick Buckley, Sandy McGroarty, Brid Coakley.

Guest: Harriet Emerson

Apologies: - Sean Kelly

Not Present: - Sean Kelly, Tomas O’Sullivan, Iniobong Usanga, Ronan Kenneally, Tom Howard

Chair: Liam McCarthy

Minutes: Patrick Buckley

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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 of the previous meeting held on the **20th of July** (pre-circulated) were adopted. Tommy Collins ratified it and John Fuller second it.

3. Grievances/Complaints: No grievances/complaints noted

5. Re-negotiation of MOU

- Reps Expenses Outcome

The sub-committee sent a letter to Kay Keegan and Sharon Corcoran around the MOU and while they have not received an official letter back the news is very positive. They have confirmed by email that the Council will cover expenses related to the PPN Representatives attending their relevant meetings ie travel and subsistence. But the Reps will still need to indemnify the council on their car insurance at their own cost or covered by the PPN budget. While some members commented that the Council should also cover any additional costs such as car insurance indemnity, it was agreed that this is standard across the board and it is unlikely that we will get a different outcome. It is normally between €10 and €50 per year to cover this and it was accepted that this will have to come out of the PPN budget going forward.

Michael Doyle commented that he had been fighting for this issue with the Council for eight years to no avail and so it is a very positive outcome.

Sandy has asked for permission to put up the current MOU up on our new website and all attending the meeting are in agreement with this.

- Date for meeting with Council to re-negotiate MOU for 2022

Sandy is waiting on Kay Keegan to confirm the date for the meeting, once Sandy receives it she will circulate it with the group.

6. Workplan Update

- Timeline of key dates

Everyone is happy with the key dates.

- Re-registration progress

Patrick has confirmed that there is a total of 382 groups registered with the PPN as of today. There are 282 groups re-registered and 100 new groups. Patrick has confirmed he has sent two emails to groups asking them to re-register and he has text over 700 groups reminding them to re-register with the PPN. He also in the process of ringing anyone that only has a landline.

- New Website progress

Jose thinks the website is very good and it looks more like an app. He would like more information on groups put up on the website. Sandy has confirmed this will be added as more pages are completed by the web company. Sandy has also confirmed other items that will be added to the website are, events, weekly newsletter, member spotlight. A soft launch of the website will take place on the 21st of September. Gavin has enquired about getting a link to the new website but it's not available yet and all Sandy can send him is some screen shots for the moment.

- Training booked

Patrick has confirmed that the first training session will take place on the 21st of October between 7.00pm and 9.30pm. It will be run by Kevin Delaney from Academy Street Workshop and the training session will be on Introduction to Fundraising. Kevin has recommended that no more than 30 people should attend the training, it will be held online, and the cost will be €500. Sandy and Patrick agreed this would be a good topic to start with. The second training will take place on 2nd of November between 7.00pm and 8.00pm. It will be run by Karen Twomey from Communication Hub and the training session will be an Introduction to Social Media for Community groups. Karen has recommended no more than 15 people attend the training, it will be held online, and the cost will be €125. Sandy and Patrick agreed this is another good topic to start with. There is a third training session planned for early December with Cramden Tech. The training would be in the area of GDPR, we are waiting on Caroline to confirm the details. Hopefully, we will have one training session a month in the new year.

- Animation progress

After receiving 3 written quotes, Standpoint were chosen to do the animation video. They are drafting the script and aim to make it as simple and clear as possible. The target audience is people and community groups who have never heard of the PPN. Sandy wants to show the video at the plenary and use some of the stills on our new website.

- Finance

Sandy has confirmed we have a budget of €99,000 to spend this year, this includes the roll over budget from last year and unspent salary from January to May when no staff were in place. As of today, we have €55,000 left, Sandy has asked Andrew about rolling over what we have left in this year budget and she is waiting on him to come back to her. Also, the department looks at the budget in October so it might be idea to plan where we want to spend the money. Sandy has suggested giving out small grants to groups. Harriet has raised concerns about this as it raises expectation for

future years when we won't have the additional budget as well as adding unsustainable administrative workload. Jude who has knowledge of the level of administration that goes into awarding grants, fully agrees with Harriet, that we do not have the capacity to do this. Jose has suggested making short videos about local groups and the work they do. He wants to get a questionnaire sent out to see what work they do. We can then go to a production companies get pricing. Pat, Liam, Jude and Harriet think this is a very good idea. Harriet has suggested this would tie in with the PPN awards that Peter and Paula are working on. Peter has confirmed he will have an update on the awards at the next meeting.

7.PR Campaign

Sandy received three quotes for the PPN PR Campaign and the company that won is Fuzion, they are Cork based company. We met the Director Deirdre Waldron last week and she has loads of experience around this type of work. The campaign will launch once the website is ready (week of 27th Sept), Sandy has asked all the secretariat to ask a group from their area would they be interested in participate in the PR campaign we would need to do a profile on them and some will be picked for the photoshoot. Secretariat members were also asked if they would like to speak on their respective local radio stations to promote the PPN and plenary. Any group picked for the PR Campaign must be a member of the PPN and it would be important to have groups from each LCDC area, college and a mix of demographics. Groups will benefit from the PR. Sandy has also confirmed that she has invited Minister Humphreys and Minister O'Brien to attend the photoshoot planned for the week of 21st September. Sandy has also confirmed that Fuzion will provide social media training on the morning of the 22nd of September between 9.30am and 12.00pm for PPN Staff and Secretariat.

8.Plenary

Sandy has confirmed the plenary will be held the 27th of October 7.30-9pm on Zoom, the IT company Aura will allow us to use their Zoom account for the night. We need to set up a sub-group for the plenary and pick a chairperson for the night of the plenary. Sandy has asked do we want to feature a performance on the night (theatre, music, etc) to bring a bit more life to the event. Harriet and Peter think that there is no need for this because of the number of items on the agenda and the time will go quickly. Peter has questioned can we hold it in person and not online. Liam has suggested that because of restrictions in place we should hold it online. Sandy also added that staff of Cork County Council ie PPN Staff, Sandy has also suggested that the Mayor and Minister Humphreys might prerecord a video to open the plenary. Jose has suggested an online chat would be great on the night so people can ask questions. Sandy confirmed that they will most likely use the chat box for Q+A.. Jose has raised concerns around people not being able to ask questions if they bring a motion to the floor and Liam said that all motions must be put on the agenda before the meeting. Sandy has suggested we should tell people from the start that it will be short and there will be limited amount of people speaking on the night. Carol wants to get a graphic design company to do a PDF on a guide to what is happening on the night.

- Sub-Group to be set up

Sandy has asked for sub-group to be set up, Jose and Liam have volunteered. Peter, Jude and Harriet have spoken about getting more people from the secretariat involved. It is, the same people all the time volunteering for the sub groups. Sandy said it would be great to have different voices from around the county. Sandy has asked if anyone is interested in being chair on the night to ring or email her. If the person has poor internet, they can come to the County Hall and use the internet there.

9. Elections- Sub-Group to be set up

Sandy has confirmed that nominations open from 27th September (or as soon as the website is ready), close on 5th November and the elections to take place online from 29th November to the 6th December. Liam has asked for another sub-group to be set up to help with the elections and counting of the votes. If people are interested people should contact Sandy. Gavin has asked will it be a staggered approach to the hand over from rep to rep. So, all the knowledge is not lost. Harriet noted the PPN Reps term on committees coincides with local elections and begins and ends in the same timeframe as the county councillors are elected on ie every 5 years. Therefore when PPN Reps are eventually elected onto council committees, they are there for only 3 more years until the next local election cycle. At this point, we can plan for a handover between the old and new reps.

10. Wellbeing Statement

Sandy has confirmed that the tender document has been drafted and there needs to be a sub group set up to review it and sign off on them. Harriet has suggested that we don't really need the sub group until wellbeing has been sent out. Sandy based the cost of our Wellbeing on Waterford Wellbeing statement it has cost around €5000 so Sandy has budgeted around €5000 for our Wellbeing Statement work.

11. PPN Insurance Review

Patrick has been in contact with Patrick O'Herlihy who heads up the insurance section of the Cork County Council in regard to the PPN insurance. Patrick O'Herlihy has confirmed that the PPN is covered under the Cork County Council when it comes to public liability. This includes Plenaries and the PPN Staff as part of the Public Participation Network, even if not County Council's staff, their legal liability in respect of their activities as part of the Public Participation Network would be covered under the Public Section. Patrick has also looked into Directors and Officers insurance which is up for renewal at the end of this month, we are still waiting on a quote. Last year it was €420 so hopefully it will be the same. Paul Bambrick has confirmed that we are covered even if we are not a limited company and we need this cover in case a claim is made specifically against anyone in your organisation that holds a decision making position. This would cover claims against individuals in your group who were deemed negligible in their role as a director/officer.

12. Any other Business

A. Harriet's timeline for continued support- when do we expect her to finish with us?

Harriet has her exit interview with the Department in about ten days' time and she will circulate her report with the Secretariat. The one area she would like to highlight is around expenses. Everyone at the meeting is happy for Harriet to send the email to the secretariat and to share this information with the council. Gavin feels like we don't have a voice in the community, Liam makes the point that once we have our reps in place on the boards, then we can make a real difference.

B. WIT Creating Capable Communities Course in September- 7 places secured.

Sandy has confirmed that she has secured 7 participants for the upcoming WIT PPN Course. These are 3 secretariat members, Jude, Carol and Colum, the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) administrator Enda O'Halloran, Kay Keegan and 2 county councillors, Cllr Frank O'Flynn (Chair Economic Development SPC, Member of Corporate Policy Committee) and Cllr Anthony Barry (Chair of Environment SPC and member of Corporate Policy Committee) are signed up for the course. Cllr Gobnait Moynihan was interested and may participate in the next intake in 2022. Everyone at the meeting is very happy with this.

C. Secretariat members not turning up to meeting

Liam wanted to make one final point around Secretariat members not turning up to meetings. Sandy had contacted the members that are not turning up, but they have not replied. Everyone is in agreement that we need to send an official letter to them, as we will need to fill the seats in the upcoming elections. It was noted that if a Secretariat member does not attend 2 meetings in a row and unless they have a legitimate reason, they are asked to step down.

Next meeting scheduled: - Oct 12th @ 7.30pm