

**Approved by
Plenary
23/04/2026**



**CORK COUNTY
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)**

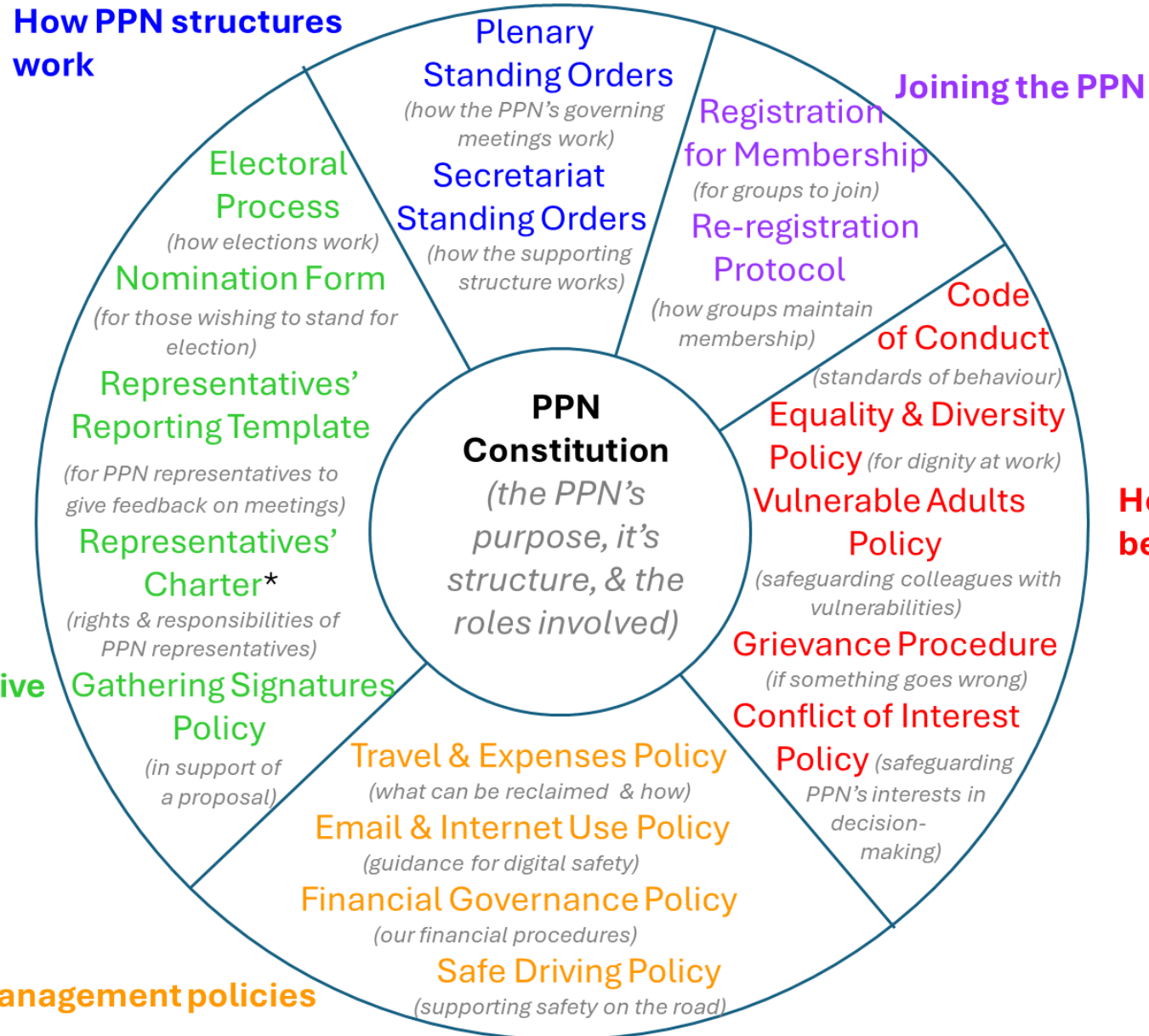
**What the Cork County PPN is
and how it operates**

SUMMARY

Date last approved: 23rd April 2026

PPN Governance Documents

Being a PPN Representative



What the Cork County PPN is and how it operates: our Constitution

1.0 SUMMARY

This summary section sets out what the PPN is and how it works. Further details are contained in the following sections of the Constitution and accompanying documents and can be located by clicking on the links included here.

1.1 WHAT IS THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

The Public Participation Network (the PPN) was set up as the main link through which Cork County Council (the Council) and local community groups engage with one another, and does this in a way that is fair, clear and respectful. It is a formal network open to all community and voluntary organisations in the County.

1.2 WHAT THE PPN DOES

1.2.i Our Mission

The mission of the PPN is to enable the voluntary community groups of Cork County to:

- take an active role in the policy making and overseeing of the Council's areas of responsibilities
- influence and improve decision-making in the Cork County Council area, and
- to be the main link through which the Council engages with the community groups

1.2.ii Our Vision

Our vision is to have the PPN as an integral and respected local decision-making partner and network. We want to see the PPN engaged and pro-actively consulted in the development of all Cork County economic, social, community, environmental and infrastructural policies. We want to ensure that all PPN Member Groups are aware of their ability to make a difference for their community and are well supported to do this.

Greater detail about our Vision is contained in the [PPN Vision for Community Wellbeing](#).

1.2.iii Aims

We have a number of general aims that inform our work. *(More details can be found [HERE](#).)* We work actively to the specific aims set out in our [Annual Workplan](#), which are in line with our general aims.

1.3 WHAT GUIDES HOW THE PPN OPERATES

The operation of the PPN and its relationships internally and with outside organisations are guided by our commitment to a set of 6 core values and principles. More details are given in [other policies](#).

1.3 i Our Values

Our values mean that we are:

- **Inclusive** of all volunteer-led groups in the County, and we actively look to include groups that might not otherwise be included or who might not often have their voice heard
- **Participatory**, open, welcoming, respectful, willing to work together and support each other. We encourage participation by Member Groups in all PPN work and support the involvement of new Member Groups
- **Independent** from the Council and of any vested interests in our work (although the PPN must account to the Council for its budget)
- **Valuing of Diversity** and recognise that the PPN is made up of people and Member Groups with a wide range of different views, experiences and opinions. The PPN works to represent all their range of views
- **Transparent** in everything that we do. We communicate clearly, concisely, simply and in a timely manner with all Member Groups, using modern technology as appropriate and ensuring that information is accessible
- **Accountable** to our Member Groups, and this is supported through the [policies and procedures](#) we have in place which set out how we operate.

1.3.ii Essential characteristics

In addition, the PPN is committed to being:

- **democratic** in its processes, and to using consensus or qualified consensus in decision-making wherever possible
- **a flat structure** where everyone has the opportunity to participate in the different roles involved (see sections 1.5 and 5 below)
- **supportive** of Member Groups developing their skills and capacity to get involved in representation.

1.3.iii Detailed guidance documents

We have a number of guidance documents setting out policies and procedures in addition to the Constitution and further details of these can be found [HERE](#). (This list may be amended over time.)

1.4 WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE PPN

1.4.i Full membership of the PPN is open to all community groups and organisations that:

- ✓ have an address in Cork County and are volunteer led
- ✓ are not for profit, non-political and non-sectarian organisations
- ✓ are independent
- ✓ have at least three (3) members and are open to new members
- ✓ are in existence for at least six (6) months
- ✓ have an appropriate formal structure with an agreed set of rules and financial procedures
- ✓ meet regularly, and at least quarterly
- ✓ are national organisations with headquarters in Cork County or they are a local County Branch
- ✓ complete the PPN [Membership Registration Form](#) satisfactorily





1.4.ii Associate membership is open to groups and organisations not eligible for full membership but who:

- engage with or support the PPN
- are a valid community group, organisation or service
- work in related, supportive or similar fields to that of the PPN or its members
- agree to comply with PPN policies and Constitution
- have a Branch, Group, Association, etc. established in Cork County for at least one year

1.4.iii Member Groups elect to belong to 1 of the 3 “**Electoral Colleges**” of the PPN:

- ❖ Social and Inclusion
- ❖ Community and Voluntary
- ❖ Environmental (subject to approval by the Irish Environmental Network)

1.5 HOW THE PPN IS ORGANISED The PPN structure is illustrated below.

1.5.i PLENARY		The PPN PLENARY is the <u>network</u> of ALL MEMBER GROUPS. It meets twice each year to agree what work the PPN is to undertake & sets this out in our Annual Work Plan.
1.5.ii SECRETARIAT		The Plenary elects the SECRETARIAT to oversee the work that the Plenary has agreed.
1.5.iii LINKAGE GROUPS		We set up LINKAGE GROUPS to discuss particular policy areas Member Groups are interested in.
1.5.iv STAFF		Our staff of CO-ORDINATOR & SUPPORT WORKER support the Plenary and Secretariat in their work.

1.6 REPRESENTING the PPN

PPN Representatives are nominated by Member Groups and elected by the Plenary (all Member Groups) to carry out specific roles including;

- representing the view of Member Groups at external committees
- working on the Secretariat on behalf of all Member Groups
- being a facilitator for a Linkage Group
- carrying out any other PPN representative role

(Details of the representatives' role, responsibilities and rights, elections and conduct can be found in the Representatives' Charter [HERE](#).)

1.7 LINKAGE GROUPS

These Groups are made up of Member Groups with a shared interest, who meet together to discuss their diverse views and interests in a specific policy area, and to advocate to the Council for policy changes on behalf of the community.

(Further details of how Linkage Groups operate can be found [HERE](#).)

1.8 HOW THE PPN IS FUNDED

The PPN is funded annually through the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) and Cork County Council. Funding is to cover the cost of the two PPN staff and their office, and expenses that arise for PPN activities or Representatives attending meetings. The Financial Statement approved by the Secretariat is sent to all Member Groups ahead of the Plenary AGM and a financial report is made to the DRCDG. The PPN is currently hosted by Cork County Council as set out in the agreed Memorandum of Understanding. *(More details on financial management can be found [HERE](#).)*

1.9 MAKING CHANGES TO OUR CONSTITUTION

Changes can be made to the PPN Constitution and our policies and procedures by either the Secretariat or 30 or more active Member Groups. The proposed change must be sent to all Member Groups and put on the agenda of the next Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Plenary arranged for that purpose. A change comes into effect immediately if it is passed by a simple majority of those present at the Plenary.

2.0 ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION

This revised version of our Constitution was adopted at the PPN Plenary held on

Signed on behalf of Cork County Public Participation Network by

Present chairperson

Date: 23/04/2026