



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Public Participation Networks

Annual Report 2018

Community • Environment • Social Inclusion

Prepared by the  
Department of Rural and Community Development  
and the National PPN Advisory Group.  
[www.gov.ie/drcd](http://www.gov.ie/drcd)

**14,846**  
Member  
Organisations

**11,699** Community  
and Voluntary Member  
organisations

**502** Environmental  
Member organisations

**2,645** Social Inclusion  
Member organisations

An increase of

**16%**  
on 2017

**924** Representatives on  
**375** Boards & Committees

**GENDER  
BALANCE**  **52%**  **48%**

**Wide range of local and  
national submissions**

**Growing Social Media Presence**

 **27,863** Facebook Followers

 **6,130** Twitter Followers

 **7,176** Social Media Communications

# Highlights of 2018



## Communication



**380** Online Newsletters

**67** Roadshows



**331,426** Emails Sent

## Capacity Building

**386**  
Training Sessions

**3,858**  
Attendees



**113**  
Training Programmes

over **1,188**  
hours of training provided



Public Funding of over

**€3.33m**

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## Foreword by Sean Canney, TD. Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development



It is my great pleasure to publish this, the third annual report on Public Participation Networks.

Public Participation Networks emerged on foot of the report of the *Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government* published in 2014, which recommended greater input by communities into decision-making at local government level.

The main role of PPNs is to facilitate participation and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner, through the environmental, social inclusion and voluntary sectors, on decision-making bodies including Local Community Development Committees and Strategic Policy Committees.

We frequently hear how people are disconnected from Government and do not play a role in the shaping of our communities and the governance of our country. PPNs are a framework for public engagement, facilitating the two-way flow of information between local authorities and communities. With the development and growth of PPNs, more and more communities and groups are being empowered, connected and, most importantly, being facilitated to engage with local government in the issues that affect their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their communities.

A testament to the growth of PPNs is that at the end of 2018, 14,846 organisations were affiliated to the national network, an increase of almost 2,000 in a 12 month period. Community groups of all shapes and sizes see membership of their PPN as the key to making certain that their views and that of their communities inform the development of local and national policy. With the views of communities being heard at over 370 local authority committees nationwide, citizen engagement has truly taken shape.

I must congratulate all concerned for what has been a remarkable achievement in such a short space of time. I also want to assure you of my Department's, and indeed Government's, commitment to support PPNs to ensure that all citizens have an input into the policies being considered and the decisions to be made that impact on their lives, particularly in their local communities.

On a related note, and certainly not out of context with the principal of participation and making our communities better places to live, are the Global Goals, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which also come under my brief. There are 17 goals which aim to address the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development and cover a broad range of issues like poverty, health, education, climate change, gender equality and social justice. These goals are universal in nature, applying to developed and developing countries alike, and place sustainable development at their core.

The SDGs work in the spirit of partnership, encouraging all people across the globe to make the right choices now to improve life, in a sustainable way, for our children and for generations to come. Immediately, I can see a connection and a relevance to the work PPNs are currently undertaking, their goals for their communities and the issues that the Sustainable Development Goals intend to address. The commonality for both is to strive to leave a legacy of equal and meaningful societies for future generations. These goals are attainable. Success requires partnerships between government, civil society and citizens just as we see with PPNs. SGDs will be no different and have the potential to be one of the most important turning points in modern history.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sean Canney". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Sean Canney**

**Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development**

# Foreword by the Chairperson of the Public Participation Network (PPN) National Advisory Group

2018 was yet another interesting year in the development of PPNs nationally. Aside from the healthy and continuing growth in the number of groups affiliated to PPNs, one of this year's highlights worth mentioning and one that will make such a difference for PPNs, their members and communities, was the launch at the 2018 PPN Conference in Athlone of a PPN Toolkit for the Development of PPN Community Wellbeing Visions.

The development of a Community Wellbeing Vision which outlines the key issues that member groups in a PPN area consider important for their communities, are especially relevant in the context of the 2019 local elections, following which the membership of a number of local authority committees changes. This Vision will provide a roadmap for the existing and new PPN representatives on the various local authority committees to ensure that the needs of their individual communities are reflected in the work of these committees.

The Athlone Conference was also significant in another respect as it set the wheels in motion for the establishment of a Secretariat Network similar to the established PPN Resource Workers Network. The Resource Workers network has been up and running for some time now and has proved itself a very useful, efficient and beneficial addition to the work and development of PPNs. No doubt the new Secretariat Network will make an equally important contribution to the ongoing development of PPNs.

We are very fortunate that the national network of PPNs are supported and assisted by the National Advisory Group whose members bring to the table a vast array of knowledge and experience from their own particular backgrounds. As Chairperson of the Group, I have to acknowledge the time, commitment and above all, the dedication each and every member, past and present, has given to the Advisory Group.

While supporting all these initiatives during 2018, the Advisory Group will also be advancing a number of new initiatives in 2019 to support the ongoing development of PPNs. These initiatives include an update of the PPN User Handbook, the development of a National PPN Communications Strategy and the ongoing provision of targeted PPN-related training throughout the year.

For its part the Department will be continuing with its support of PPNs including the continued roll out of dedicated training programmes, support of the Salesforce data system, the publication of an Annual Report, the holding of the Annual Conference and the day to day engagement with PPNs. We were particularly pleased to secure additional funding in late 2018 to facilitate the engagement of a Support Worker in 2019 by each PPN to assist the Resource Worker in the delivery of the PPN work programme.

PPNs are relatively new, they are growing, and we are all in a learning process. 2018 brought to the fore a number of challenges being faced by the PPNs. With the assistance of the Advisory Group, we have started down a positive road of addressing these challenges in a consultative inclusive manner and I am confident that by working together we can develop solutions that will support the ongoing growth and development of PPNs.



**Ciara Bates,**  
**Chairperson, National PPN Advisory Group**

# INTRODUCTION

Involving people in making the decisions that affect them and their lives is a core principle of democracy. Real participation goes beyond voting (representative democracy) to a situation where people and government work in partnership to co-create infrastructure and services, solve problems and work towards the well-being of all in this generation and the generations to come (deliberative democracy). By definition, such an approach requires a leaving aside of power differentials, and making a specific effort to ensure that the voices and views of people who are not traditionally influential are heard and taken into account.

In 2014, the Local Government Act was amended to introduce Public Participation Networks (PPNs). The PPN recognises the contribution of volunteer-led organisations to local economic, social and environmental capital. It facilitates input by these organisations into local government through a structure that ensures public participation and representation on decision-making committees within local government. These PPNs have been established in every local authority area in Ireland. By the end of 2018, over 14,800 community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental organisations were members of a PPN. Over 900 PPN representatives were elected to over 370 committees on issues such as strategic policy, local community development, joint policing and so on.

Local authorities and PPNs work together collaboratively to support communities and build the capacity of member organisations to engage meaningfully on issues that concern them. PPNs have a significant role in the development and education of their member groups, sharing information, promoting best practice and facilitating networking. Local authorities also have a vital role to play in facilitating participation through open consultative processes and active engagement. Building real engagement at local level is a developmental process that requires intensive work and investment. In recognition of their key role, PPNs received an increase in resources in 2018 to fund the post of Support Worker in 2019 to support better engagement in communities and ensure that the PPN can place itself as both an information 'hub' and advocate for policy within their area.

## Role of the National Advisory Group

The report of the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government which was set up in September 2013 made recommendations on more extensive and diverse input by citizens into the decision-making processes at local government level. The Working Group Report was published in February 2014.

That report outlined the ways in which structures and processes for securing the engagement of organised civil society with local government could be strengthened. To do this, the Report recommended that a Public Participation Network (PPN) be established in each local authority area to enable the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees of the local authority.

The Working Group Report recommended that the work of PPNs should be monitored and evaluated regularly in line with best practice. The first National PPN Advisory Group was established in 2016 for this purpose and ran until September 2017.

A second National PPN Advisory Group, established immediately after the term of office of the first group ended, is fully representative of all stakeholders. The Group now includes one representative each from the Community and Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion sectors, three PPN Volunteers – one each representing the three different sectors, three PPN resource workers and two Local Authority staff (one at Director of Service level and one directly supporting a PPN). The Group is chaired by the Department of Rural and Community Development who also provide the secretariat services for the Group. Membership of the Advisory group is set out in Table 1.



**Table 1: Membership of the National Advisory Group during 2018**

Name	Representing
Jason Kearney replaced by Ciara Bates	Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Catherine Lane, Women's Council of Ireland	Community and Voluntary Sector
Seán Healy, Social Justice Ireland	Social Inclusion Sector
Michael Ewing, Environmental Pillar	Environmental Sector
Jamie Moore, Fingal PPN	Resource Workers
Helen Howes, Wicklow PPN	Resource Workers
Annette Barr Jordan, Westmeath PPN	Resource Workers
Aileen Eglinton, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown PPN	Volunteer Representatives – Community and Voluntary Sector
David Collins, Galway County PPN	Volunteer Representatives – Social Inclusion Sector
Sadbh O'Neill replaced by Therese Donoghue, Clare PPN	Volunteer Representatives – Environment Sector
Donal Brennan, Laois County Council	Local Authorities
Dymphna Farrell, Dublin City Council	Local Authorities

Along with its monitoring role, the Advisory Group is also charged with advising and supporting the Department of Rural and Community Development to develop the PPNs. This is being achieved through the development of key performance indicators for PPNs and local authorities in conjunction with the Department. This Annual Report, which gives an overview of the work done by PPNs in 2018 was developed by the National PPN Advisory Group for completion by PPNs and Local Authorities.

## Methodology

In early 2019, a consultation template was devised and agreed by the National Advisory Group and circulated to all PPNs and Local Authorities for completion. The completed templates were collated in a database for analysis purposes.

Of the 31 PPNs, 29 reports were returned. The outstanding reports are from Limerick and Roscommon. The data in this report reflects that from those counties which submitted returns. Where possible, comparable data from 2017 is included, however this data will not be directly comparable as South Dublin PPN were not represented in the 2017 report, as they are in this, and Roscommon PPN are not represented in this year's report, as they were for 2017.



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

There are a broad range of definitions covering the nature and scope of public participation and local government. Some of these are explained below:

<b>Advisory Group</b>	means The National PPN Advisory Group (see also NAG).
<b>Associate Members</b>	are groups that do not fulfil the full criteria for membership of the PPN.
<b>Community</b>	refers to a place (such as a neighbourhood or wider area), identity (such as belonging to an ethnic group), or interest (such as a commitment in common with others, for example, disability rights).
<b>DoS</b>	means Director of Services (Local Authority).
<b>The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government</b>	oversees the operation and development of the local government system and provides the policy framework within which local authorities work and deliver services to the communities that they represent and serve. From July 2017, the policy framework regarding LCDCs, LECPs and PPNs transferred from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government to the Department of Rural & Community Development. Article 28A of the Irish Constitution recognises the role of local government in providing a forum for the democratic representation of communities and in exercising and performing powers conferred by law.
<b>The Elected Council</b>	is the policy making forum of the local authority; the municipal district members act as a decision-making sub-formation of the overall council in respect of their municipal district area. Elected Councils (operating at local authority or municipal district level) exercise 'reserved functions' defined in law across a range of legislation. The day-to-day management of a local authority is carried out by the executive, i.e. the full-time officials led by the chief executive. The chief executive has a duty to advise and assist the Elected Council in the exercise of their functions.
<b>JPC</b>	Joint Policing Committee: a Local Authority Committee comprised of councillors, TDs, Senators, the Gardaí and external stakeholders such as PPNs which makes policy proposals on policing issues. Section 36 of the Garda Síochána Act provided for the establishment of JPC's in each Local Authority administrative area and as part of the Local Government structures.
<b>LAGS</b>	Funding is delivered through Local Action Groups (LAGs) through which LEADER funding is delivered.
<b>LCDC</b>	Local Community Development Committee – a Local Authority Committee with public and private members which oversees community development programmes in an area including LEADER and SICAP. PPNs typically have 5 members on that committee. The aim of LCDC's is to develop, coordinate and implement coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>LEADER</b>	A funding programme delivered via the LCDC, which aims to support economic social and environmental development of rural areas. LEADER is a programme that supports both private enterprise and community groups in delivering projects aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging the diversification of economic activity in rural areas.
<b>Linkage Group:</b>	A group of PPN stakeholders in a particular issue who meet to make policy recommendations and work closely with a PPN representative on a relevant Board or Committee.
<b>Local Authorities (LA)</b>	City or County Councils. Play a key role in supporting economic development and enterprise at a local level. Local Government support on the ground is critical to the success of many initiatives which drive local communities. These range from local festivals and events; design of streetscapes and village renewal schemes; support for micro-enterprises, business parks and incubation units; involvement in energy efficiency projects; promotion of rural broadband; planning for major investments in the green economy.
<b>Local Development Companies (LDC)</b>	Organisations with a remit to support economic and social development in their catchment area. LDCs are typically contracted to deliver programmes such as the Rural Development Programme (LEADER), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Tús.
<b>Local Government Reform Act 2014</b>	provides for a range of changes to the organisation and work of local authorities. Among other things, it provides for the amalgamation of a number of local authorities; the abolition of town councils; the abolition of city and county development boards; the establishment of local community development committees and it provides for a range of changes to the functions carried out by local authorities. Section 46 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 commenced on 1 June 2014, it provides the legislative basis which gives effect to the Framework for Public Participation and the Public Participation Networks (PPNs).
<b>MOU</b>	means Memorandum of Understanding (agreement between LA and PPN).
<b>Municipal District (MD)</b>	A subdivision of a Local Authority area. Councillors meet at Municipal District level as well as in full council. MDs were established following the reform of Local Government Act in 2014.
<b>(n=XX)</b>	Denotes number e.g. number of replies, number who answered question.
<b>NAG</b>	means The National PPN Advisory Group.
<b>Not for profit organisations</b>	are those whose objective is to return any surplus income generated back into the organisation and not pay a dividend to shareholders. It includes a vast range of organisations from very small groups with no income to large charities.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Plenary</b>	All the member groups in a PPN. The Plenary is the ultimate decision making body of the PPN.
<b>PPN Budget</b>	means the annual amount a PPN has available to it, derived from DRCD, LA & other sources.
<b>Salesforce</b>	a data and information management system that is common to all PPNs. The system itself allows PPNs to capture and manage information regarding individuals, store details on organisations and community and network groups, manage funding from organisations, manage campaigns such as email communications, generate custom reports and much more.
<b>SICAP</b>	(Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme): is designed to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality. Each SICAP provider works with both individuals and community groups in a city / county or subdivision thereof, with a focus on people experiencing disadvantage and areas which are designated disadvantaged.
<b>SLA</b>	means Service Level Agreement (generally between PPN and service provider).
<b>Social Inclusion</b>	activity centred on working to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or in unemployment using community development approaches to build sustainable communities, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted and human rights are respected.
<b>SPC (Strategic Policy Committee)</b>	local authority committees in city and county councils whose membership includes Elected Councillors, representatives of business, farming interests, environmental/ conservation groups, trade unions and community and voluntary members. It is the task of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), as committees of the council, to advise and assist the council in the formulation, development and review of policy. They have no remit in relation to routine operational matters regarding the delivery of services. The SPC system is intended to give councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process from the early stages.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
<b>Thematic Group</b>	A group of PPN stakeholders working on a cross-cutting policy theme, e.g. disability, social inclusion, sustainability.
<b>Tús</b>	A community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people.
<b>User Guide</b>	A composite set of Guidelines and advice issued in 2016 to assist PPNs and other stakeholders.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Volunteer-led organisations</b>	are those which are governed by a group of volunteers acting as a committee, board or other structure. They may also have paid staff who act on behalf of the Board.
<b>Well-being</b>	describes a community whose basic needs are met, where people have a sense of purpose and feel able to achieve important goals, to participate in society and to live the lives they value and have reason to value.
<b>Working Group</b>	means the Working Group on Citizen Engagement. This group was set up in September 2013. Its role was to make recommendations on more extensive and diverse input by citizens into the decision making at local government level. The Report of the Working Group was published on 28 February 2014.
<b>Worker</b>	means Resource Worker.

# SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP




## Membership of a PPN offers many benefits. By joining a PPN an organisation will get:

- Access to relevant information on funding and grants coming through the Local Authority;
- The opportunity to advertise their activities via the PPN newsletter, website, emails etc.;
- Access to capacity building and training events which will support them in their work.
- Access to information on decisions and proposals being made in their county / city and the ability to comment on and input to them, along with other PPN member organisations.
- An opportunity to network with and learn from other organisations in the county / city who may be involved in similar types of projects.
- The opportunity to become part of a Linkage Group for a Board or Committee of interest and be able to have their views heard and contribute to local policy.
- The opportunity to nominate members to sit on a Board or Committee on behalf of PPN.

Each organisation must then choose to be part of one “college” which represents their primary interest.

Membership of the PPNs has increased by 16% since 2017, and now extends to 14,846 members (including Associate Members) across the 29 PPNs for which returns were received. Community and Voluntary organisations continue to account for the majority of members (79%), followed by Social Inclusion organisations (18%) and Environmental Organisations (3%). Table 2 below provides a breakdown of full Membership by type of organisation and shows the comparative increase in each area over 2017.

**Table 2: Composition of PPN membership 2017 and 2018\***

College	2017 (n=29)	2018 (n=29)	% total 2018	% increase over 2017
 <b>Community and Voluntary</b>	10,014	11,699	79%	17%
 <b>Environmental</b>	422	502	3%	19%
 <b>Social Inclusion</b>	2,389	2,645	18%	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,825</b>	<b>14,846</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16%</b>

\*Based on 29 Returns. Includes Associate Members

A total of eight PPNs offered an Associate Membership, generally for organisations which did not meet the full membership criteria, but who wished to be involved and receive information. In total, PPNs had 269 Community and Voluntary Associate Members, 17 Environmental Associate Members, and 130 Social Inclusion Associate Members (an increase of 442% from 24 the previous year).

Full re-registration was carried out by 15 PPNs, while the remainder updated members contact details as changes were notified to them.

## SECTION 2: REPRESENTATION AND DECISION MAKING

For 2018, the PPNs were asked to report on how they consulted with their member groups, from distributing information, to attending consultation events and making written submissions. Table 3 provides a summary of the actions taken by PPNs to support their membership to engage in a more deliberative democracy.

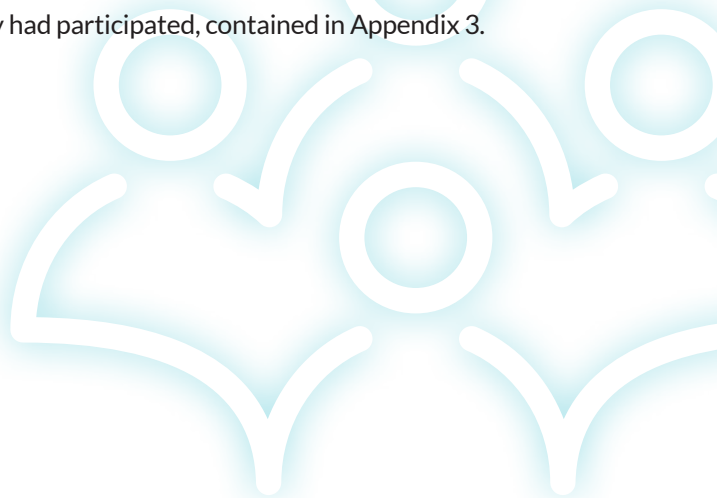
**Table 3: Participation in Consultations, 2018**

Method	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Distributed information to member groups about local consultations	27	2	0	0
Distributed information to member groups about national consultations	24	5	0	0
PPN Reps attended consultation events representing the PPN	7	20	2	0
Resource Worker attended consultation events representing the PPN	6	20	2	1
Made written submissions to consultations as the PPN or as a subgroup (linkage group, etc.)	6	16	4	3
The PPN organised consultations with its membership (i.e. organise meetings and surveys)*	4	21	0	3

\*of 28 responses to this question

As can be seen in Table 3, the majority of PPNs always provided their members with information about local and national consultations taking place. Resource Workers or PPNs Representatives attended consultation events on behalf of the PPN 'Always' or 'Sometimes' in the majority of cases, and again a majority reported that it either made written submissions or organised its own consultation events with its members 'Always' or 'Sometimes'.

All 29 PPNs provided some detail about consultations in which they had participated, contained in Appendix 3.



## Support for Participation

Receipt of appropriate information in a timely manner is key to enabling PPNs to participate, and engage their membership to participate, in consultations. PPNs were asked to provide feedback on their perception of the engagement process, set out in Table 4.

**Table 4: Support for Participation, 2018**

Support	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
The PPN is notified about all local authority consultations.	9	20	0	0
The PPN is notified about local authority consultations in a timely manner (i.e. allows for consultation with membership)	4	22	3	0
The PPN can access feedback on the submissions it makes to consultations*	8	16	3	0

\*of 27 responses to this question

**Feedback provided by the 29 PPNs who responded strongly indicate that more time is needed to fully engage with membership in respect of Local Authority consultations. Other suggestions included:**

- Involving PPNs in the planning and development phase of the consultation process.
- Implementing the Department of Expenditure & Reform's Consultation Principles and Guidance (November 2016) at both local and national level.
- That consulting bodies take cognisance of seasonal work patterns, i.e. there is less engagement during the summer months and in the weeks immediately before and after Christmas and Easter.
- That Local Authorities be required to provide feedback on submissions made by the PPNs.
- Providing more resources to targeting groups that would be more removed from the democratic processes generally.
- That Local Authorities engage internally to ensure that a number of consultations are running concurrently.
- That Local Authorities produce a schedule of consultations in advance (suggested beginning of the year).
- Use of Plain English in all consultation documents.
- That Local Authority staff receive more training on the role of the PPN.
- That submissions to consultations be facilitated in a number of ways, rather than a reliance on public meetings at a specified time.
- The development of an Information Protocol to ensure that all relevant information and consultation documentation for wider public dissemination be made available through the PPN.
- PPNs to be on the circulation list for consultations at both local and national Government level.



## Representation on Decision-making Bodies

One of the key areas in which PPNs can directly influence the decisions made at local government level is by representation on Boards and Committees, such as Strategic Policy Committees, Joint Policing Committees, County Boards and so on. Table 5 provides a full breakdown of Board and Committee composition.

Table 5: Participation of PPN Representatives on Boards and Committees, 2018	
	2018 (n=29)
No. of Representatives	924
Male	483
Female	441
Proportion Male: Female	52:48
No. of new Representatives elected	152
Male	67
Female	85
Proportion Male: Female	45:55
No. of Representatives retired during year	71
Male	39
Female	32
Proportion Male: Female	54:46
Total No. of Boards and Committees	375

The number of representatives on Boards and Committees in 2018 increased from 882 in 2017 to 924 in 2018, however the number of Boards and Committees on which they sit decreased from 382 in 2017 to 375 in 2018.

The number of seats contested in 2018 was 74, whereas 163 were uncontested (that is, only one nomination per seat was permitted or received for the post). The number of open seats available for PPN representation on Boards and Committees in 2018 was 77.

As can be seen in Table 5, there is almost gender parity across PPN representation on Boards and Committees, with a slightly higher proportion of female representatives elected in 2018. There was also a higher number of male retirees than female retirees in 2018.

Of the 28 PPNs who responded to this question, 16 (57%) reported that at least one individual represents their PPN on more than one Board or Committee. A difficulty in attracting people to these roles and a reluctance on the part of some PPNs to lose the skills of those currently in the position were cited as reasons why this was the case. Four PPNs reported their intention to rectify this situation in 2019 when elections take place.

## Supports for PPN Representatives

The role of PPN Representatives is acknowledged across the PPN network and their volunteerism and experience is greatly appreciated. A range of supports have been put in place across the PPNs for their Representatives, on which Table 6 provides greater detail.

Table 6: Supports for PPN Representatives 2018			
Type of Support	No. of PPNs	No. of Groups (if applicable)	Comment
Linkage Groups	26	124	
Thematic / Activity Groups	23	54	
Representatives Charter	26		
Specific Training for PPN Representatives	22		
Training for Linkage Groups	9		
Meeting Feedback Forms completed by Representatives	25		
Local PPN Representatives Network	13		
One-to-One Support	29		2 PPNs reported that this support was provided on an 'as needs' basis.
Local Authority / Committee Host	18		

Asked to comment on these supports, PPNs reported a wide divergence of views as to the efficacy of supports for Representatives. In some cases, the difficulty in securing Representatives who could undertake the role as required, and provide feedback, acted as a barrier to engaging with supports. One-to-one supports seemed to work well in all PPNs, however these are resource intensive. Many of the comments contained in this section were mirrored in the 'Recommendations' section and, as such, have been dealt with in that section of this Report.

## Linkage and Thematic Groups

Where Linkage or Thematic Groups exist, these can either take the form of overarching areas (for example, Social Inclusion, Environmental, Health and Wellbeing, Community and Voluntary, Planning and Strategic Development, Economic Development, Joint Policing Committee and so on) or more specific areas of interest (for example Older People, Climate Change, People with Disabilities, Environment and Water and so on).

Of the 124 Linkage Groups reported as being in existence (Table 6), 62 were deemed to be active, that is hold three or more meetings within the year (including virtual meetings). These 62 Linkage Groups are spread across 17 of the 26 PPNs who responded to this question. Twelve PPNs reported that their Linkage Groups communicated virtually (that is, by email, Facebook or other virtual platform); 11 PPNs also reported that their Linkage Groups communicated in person or through meetings; and three reported communication via the Resource Worker / Co-ordinator. Some PPNs communicated through a mix of these channels.

When asked about the level of participation across Linkage Groups, four PPNs reported that this was 'Excellent'; ten reported it as 'Good'; five reported it as 'Average'; and seven reported it as 'Poor'. When asked the same question about Thematic Groups, five PPNs reported participation as 'Excellent'; ten reported it as 'Good', five reported it as 'Average' and three reported it as 'Poor'.

In response to the question of whether Linkage Groups elected Representatives to the PPN, 13 PPNs responded that they did, while 13 responded that they did not. Nine PPNs reported that Thematic Groups elect PPN Representatives, while 15 reported that they did not. Thematic Groups have been described as becoming "increasingly important" to the PPNs and having a collaborative approach where themes crossover between PPNs and Local Authorities.

### Examples of Linkage and Thematic Groups at Work

- Proposed appointment of a Heritage Officer in Carlow.
- Hosting annual seminars for Cavan's Disability Community via the Disability Network.
- Lobbying for inclusion of Peer to Peer research when estimating the accommodation needs of Travellers in County Clare.
- Promotion of Transparency and access to minutes of meetings of the Cork City Local Community Development Committee.
- Recommendations to broaden the membership of Cork County Local Community Development Committee to become more inclusive.
- Close engagement with local Gardai through the Joint Policing Committee in Donegal.
- Submission to the Consultation on College Green Development by the Disability Thematic Network in Dublin City.
- Proposal to Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council re the facilitation of charging points for electric vehicles in the parking spaces of new developments.
- Plan for a new Cycling and Walking Officer following representation by Fingal PPN Representatives.
- The Environment, Recreation and Amenity SPC and GCCN Environmental Linkage Group representations re protecting biodiversity and against the disturbance of habitats.
- Galway County PPN Representatives ensuring equality of access to funding provided by Sports Ireland.

- Promotion of safety and Home Maintenance Schemes through the Joint Policing Committee in Kerry.
- Submission for Laois to be a “Poster Free Zone”.
- Waste Water Treatment Research in Leitrim.
- Support by the SPC for choice-based letting in Longford.
- Environmental Network advocating for increased consultation timeframes on road projects through the Meath Transport SPC.
- Social Inclusion Linkage Group in Monaghan facilitating workshops to identify areas of social disadvantage in the county.
- Securing Environment funding through the LCDC in Offaly.
- Proposal of a ‘green element’ to the Sligo Chamber Local Business Awards.
- Proposals to expand the SICAP programme to new areas in Tipperary through the LCDC.
- Leading the establishment of the OPC by Representatives on the Age Friendly Alliance in Waterford.
- Full engagement by Westmeath LCDC in meeting the strategic objectives of the Committee.
- Pilot Programme to Tackle Loneliness and isolation among Older People in Wexford.
- Supports for tenants under the RAS scheme whose landlords had their properties repossessed by lenders in Wicklow.

## **Municipal District Representatives**

Thirteen PPNs reported as having Municipal District Representatives. The supports provided to these Representatives were largely the same as referenced in Table 6, with some PPNs holding specific meetings or additional training programmes for their Municipal District Representatives.

Nine PPNs reported having no Municipal District Representatives. This would obviously be the case where there was only one Municipal District in the area, however where there was more than one Municipal District, PPNs expressed a concern that it was difficult to achieve buy-in from membership at this level and meetings can be rolled in with other meetings, such as Community Safety Networks and so on.

## SECTION 3:

# COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTION OF PPNs

Communicating the role and objectives of the PPN is critical to engaging new and existing member groups and other stakeholders. All 29 of the respondent PPNs were actively involved in promoting their PPN in 2018. Social media played a key role in the communications programmes of all PPNs, with dedicated websites, Facebook pages and Twitter used extensively. Being conscious of groups who may not use online platforms, the PPNs also communicated through face to face events and printed materials. Table 7 provides a breakdown of the communications methods used, including the number of PPNs using each method and the total number of communications involved.

**Table 7: Communications by Method Used, 2018**

Communication Method	No. of PPNs	No. of Communications	No. of Followers / Likes
Printed Newsletter	12	1,360	
E-Newsletters Online	24	380	
Emails	24	331,426	
Websites*	24	18,052	
Facebook	23	5,654	27,863
Twitter	15	1,522	6,130
PPN Roadshows	15	67	
Participation in events hosted by others	26	186	
Local Radio	24	509	
Promotional Materials	29		
Use of Local Libraries, Citizens Information Centres etc.	26		

\* 29 PPNs responded to the question on website functionality, reported later in this report, with one advising that their website was under construction. It is therefore presumed that four PPNs did not see their website as a primary communication avenue when responding to this question.

Promotional materials developed by PPNs included pens, trolley key rings, USB keys, bags, leaflets, pull-up banners, magnets, folders, lanyards and hi-vis jackets.

### SECTION 3: COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTION OF PPNs

What is communicated to members is obviously as important as the methods of communication used. To this end, PPNs were asked to detail the type of content communicated from a set list (see Table 8).

Table 8: Content Communicated to Membership, 2018	
Content Communicated	No. of PPNs
PPN Events	29
PPN Activities	25
PPN Vacancies	26
Member Group Activities	27
PPN Representative Reports	16
Funding Information	29
Consultations	29
Other	9

Those who reported 'Other' amongst the content communicated to their membership listed items such as training, Public Service Announcements, Local Authority information about events, meetings and so on.



## Salesforce Usage

Salesforce is used as the primary mechanism to manage the membership database and communications in 28 PPNs (see Table 9 for breakdown). This is a significant improvement on 2017 when only 21 PPNs were using it as their primary database. The PPN not using Salesforce in 2018 undertook training on this system during the year and their Salesforce database went live in December 2018.

Table 9: Salesforce Usage across PPNs, 2018	
Salesforce Usage	No. of PPNs
Primary Database	28
Members Profiles	24
Registering Members directly from Website	24
Mass Emails	26
Sending E-Bulletins / Newsletters	22
Mass Texting	11
Tracking attendance at Plenary Meetings	7
Tracking attendance at Linkage Groups	4
Tracking attendance at Secretariat Meetings	8
Tracking attendance at PPN Organised Training	5
Running Reports on Full Member Numbers	25
Running Reports on Electoral Area or MD Membership Numbers	20
Running Reports on Membership by Pillar	24
Running Reports on Membership by Cause	10
Running Reports on Bounced Emails	11
Running Reports on Email Open Rates	6
Running Reports on Active and Inactive Members	6
Running Reports on Group Structures	5
Tracking participation in consultations	2
Calendar	3
Dashboards	11



## Website Functionality

Access to information through a dedicated website is a given in this digital age. All 29 respondents reported having a website (with one under construction) with varying levels of functionality, as detailed in Table 10.

Table 10: Website Functionality, 2018	
Functions	No. of PPNs
List/Database of registered members	25
Minutes / Reports of Secretariat Meetings	13
Minutes / Reports of Plenary Meetings	14
Minutes / Reports of Linkage Group Meetings	8
PPN Representative Reports	14
PPN Newsletters	19
Advertising Member Events / News	23
Up to date list of all PPN Representatives	21
Adopted PPN Policies	19
Adopted PPN Budgets / Accounts	7



## SECTION 4:

# TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

PPNs provide invaluable free and low-cost training to their membership, Secretariats and Representatives to support them to fully engage within their communities. This training can be technical in nature (for example, the intense training undertaken across the PPNs on the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations early in 2018 and Governance training) or more soft-skills based (for example, one to one mentoring and Reflective Practice). The organisation and provision of this training and capacity building function is time and resource intensive. However, it is an important part of the work of the PPNs to support their communities. Some examples of the types of training provided are listed below and a breakdown of the time involved is provided in Table 11.

### Examples of Training and Capacity Building programmes provided by PPNs in 2018

- Good Governance for non-profits
- Salesforce
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Reflective Practice
- Intercultural Awareness Workshops
- Environmental Gathering
- Tailored Secretariat / Representatives Training
- Grant Scheme Information
- Disability Awareness Training
- Using Social Media
- Implementing the Public Sector Duty
- One-to-One Mentoring
- Skills Development
- Mediation Skills
- Spark Change in Your Community
- Writing Funding Applications
- Tidy Towns Workshops
- SDG Training
- Traveller Culture Awareness Training
- Planning and Urban Development
- Suicide Prevention and Understanding Self-Harm
- CPR
- Field Trips
- The Charities Act
- Tech Tools
- Health and Wellbeing
- Strategic Planning
- Budget 2019 and its Impacts
- Workplan Facilitation
- Mindfulness
- Laudato Si (Caring for our Common Home – a conference on climate action at local and parish level)

One PPN provided a Training Fair in 2018 open to all Members and other groups. This has proven so successful, they intend to repeat it.

In line with their community ethos, where appropriate, training is available to all members and groups in the area. Specific training is, of course, preserved for specific groups / bodies (for example the Secretariat and Representatives training and the Environmental Gathering, which was open to Environmental groups only).

**Table 11: Training and Capacity Building, Resources and Reach, 2018**

No. of Training programmes	113
No. of Training Sessions	386
No. of Training Hours delivered	1,188
No. of attendees	3,858

## National and Regional Networking and Initiatives

Networking is central to the establishment of the PPNs within their communities. Engaging with membership at local and regional level, and networking with stakeholders at a national level ensures that PPNs are up to date on new developments, are accessible to their membership and are supporting, and supported by, their peers. In 2018, 28 PPNs reported engaging in some national and regional networking initiatives. Table 12 provides a breakdown of these engagements.

**Table 12: National and Regional Networking and Initiatives, 2018**

Event	No. of PPNs	Comment
National PPN Conference	27	
Regional Social Justice Ireland Meetings	20	
National PPN Resource Workers Network	28	
Ploughing Championship	14	
The Wheel Conference (PPN Stall / Masterclass)	3	
Locally Organised Regional PPN Networks	16	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ South East Coordinator Meeting</li> <li>→ Training in Tipperary organised by PPN</li> <li>→ Regional Consultation Exercise</li> <li>→ Dublin Environmental Gathering</li> <li>→ Dublin PPN Network</li> <li>→ North West Regional PPN Network</li> <li>→ Reception held by An Taoiseach for Community and Voluntary organisations in response to Storms Ophelia and Emma</li> <li>→ Age Friendly Event</li> <li>→ Midlands Regional PPN Meeting</li> <li>→ Shared Training</li> <li>→ National Community Development Conference</li> <li>→ National Advisory Group and sub Groups</li> </ul>

## SECTION 5: MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The administration of the PPN is overseen by a voluntary secretariat drawn from the membership. This body reports to the Plenary of the PPN, which should meet at least twice every year. PPNs may also meet on a Municipal District or other local level. The Secretariat is also responsible for the management of the Resource Worker and implementation of the Work Plan.

In 2018, 338 places were allocated across the 29 PPN Secretariats, each having an average allocation of 12 Secretariat Members (the numbers range from 6 to 22). Allocation of membership is based primarily on a distribution to the PPNs Colleges/Pillars (Community & Voluntary; Social Inclusion; and Environment), with 22 PPNs also allocating a role in respect of their Municipal Districts. The term of office of a Secretariat member ranges from 2 to 5 years, with 3 PPNs specifying that the term of office of their Secretariat is aligned with that of the elected representatives to the Local Authority. Of the 338 allocated places, there are currently 277 filled and 61 vacant seats. 24 PPNs reported an attendance rate of greater than 60 per cent from within the Secretariat membership in 2018, with four PPNs reporting a rate of less than 60 per cent, and one absent response (see Table 13).

**Table 13: Secretariat Allocation, Vacancies and Attendance Rate per PPN, 2018**

Name of PPN	Allocation	Vacancies	Attendance Rate
Carlow	8	3	100%
Cavan	12	0	80%
Clare	10	0	75%
Cork City	6	1	80%
Cork County	22	:	In excess of 60%
Donegal	19	6	50%
Dublin City	9	2	66%
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	9	2	82%
Fingal	9	3	57%
Galway City	16	4	At least 75%
Galway County	11	0	50%
Kerry	10	0	80%
Kildare	11	3	50%
Kilkenny	10	1	90%
Laois	12	4	79%
Leitrim	9	0	73.4%
Longford	9	:	80%
Louth	18	4	61%
Mayo	14	5	70%
Meath	12	0	80%

Name of PPN	Allocation	Vacancies	Attendance Rate
Monaghan	17	4	:
Offaly	9	2	95%
Sligo	8	0	85%
South Dublin	12	3	71%
Tipperary	15	5	80%
Waterford	11	2	70%
Westmeath	8	1	90%
Wexford	10	2	79%
Wicklow	12	4	80%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>61</b>	

## Managing a Flat Structure

The PPNs are established on the basis of a Flat Structure. Having a Flat Structure ensures that no single voice or group of voices controls the PPN. It means that there is collective responsibility for getting things done and achieving the aims of the workplan. This develops the capacity of the whole group and means that all members understand all aspects of the process. The flat structure is maintained in a number of ways across the PPNs, as detailed in Table 14.

**Table 14: Managing a Flat Structure, 2018**

Operational Mechanism	No. of PPNs
Rotating Facilitator	22
Rotating Roles (Staff Liaison, Finance etc.)	12
Decisions made by consensus	29
Proposals brought to Plenary	25
Terms of Reference emphasising flat structure	24
Minutes / Reports available to all PPN members	24

In addition to the above, 25 PPNs reported that their Secretariat have had at least one subgroup in 2018. These include Finance, HR, Communications, Employment, Staff Liaison, Data Protection and Legal.

## Meetings

A total of 58 Plenary Meetings were held across 29 PPNs in 2018. Of these, five were held during the day, 51 were held in the evening and two were held at the weekend. In addition, 269 Secretariat Meetings were held across the 29 PPNs in 2018, of which 65 were held during the day and 204 were held in the evening.

Seventeen PPNs held a total of 138 Linkage Group Meetings in 2018, of which 42 were held during the day and 96 were held in the evening. Eighteen PPNs held a total of 93 Municipal District meetings, of which 15 were held during the day, 70 were held in the evening and eight were held at the weekend.

Twenty PPNs held a selection of other meetings (163 in total), which covered topics such as Africa Day, Voter Registration drives, Wellbeing, Disability, Social Inclusion Week, Older People and Recycling.

## Memorandum of Understanding

An active Memorandum of Understanding was in place between each of the 29 PPNs and the Local Authority in 2018. For those 25 PPNs who operated through a host organisation, a Service Level Agreement was in place in respect of ten of them.

## Structure of the PPNs

PPNs may be established and operate under a number of legal and administrative structures. Of the 29 PPN respondents, six were hosted by another Community Organisation; 19 were hosted by the Local Authority; three operated as Independent Companies for the full year and one was hosted until October 2018 before operating as an Independent Company for the remainder of the year.

## Staff and Recruitment 2018

In 2018 all PPNs had at least one member of staff and some had contracted some support work. In October 2018 it was announced that funding would be made available by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with a contribution from the Local Authorities, to recruit a Support Worker to each PPN. While some PPNs started this process in late 2018, this remains ongoing for others. A breakdown of the staffing arrangements is provided in Table 14.

**Table 14: Staffing Arrangements per PPN, 2018**

PPN	Resource Worker (WTE)	Administrator (WTE)	Development Worker (WTE)	Volunteer	Other (Detail)
Carlow	0.7	0.4			15 hours
Cavan	1.0				1 Tus Worker
Clare	1.2	0.6	0.6		
Cork City	1.0	0.4			
Cork County	1.0				
Donegal	1.0				
Dublin City	1.0				additional full time staff member (Grade 4) provided and funded by Dublin City Council

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PPN	Resource Worker (WTE)	Administrator (WTE)	Development Worker (WTE)	Volunteer	Other (Detail)
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	1.0				1 Tús worker
Fingal	1.0	0.4			
Galway City	0.7		0.6		
Galway County	1.0				
Kerry	1.0				
Kildare	1.0				
Kilkenny	1.0				Financial Administration support from LA and a Community Employment Worker employed part time for some admin support
Laois	1.0				
Leitrim	1.0				8 hrs a week contracted support for Social Media and Online content. This resource was available for 48 weeks of 2018.
Longford		0.5	1.0		
Louth	1.0				
Mayo	1.0				
Meath	1.0				
Monaghan	1.0				
Offaly	1.0				
Sligo	0.6	0.5			
South Dublin	1.0	0.5			
Tipperary	1.0	0.4		Volunteer hired on a contractual basis to assist with re-registration, October to December.	1 CE Worker
Waterford	1.0			Work Experience	
Westmeath	1.0	0.5			0.1 SEO
Wexford	1.0				1.0



PPN	Resource Worker (WTE)	Administrator (WTE)	Development Worker (WTE)	Volunteer	Other (Detail)
Wicklow	1.0	0.4			Contracted Support Worker 14 hours per week for 10 months
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>2.2</b>		

Of the 29 PPNs who responded, 9 PPNs recruited staff in 2018 – three Resource Workers, three Administrative staff, one Development Worker, one Tús worker and one part-time Summer Staff, while one reported commencing the process of recruitment of a Support Worker in November 2018. Nine of the ten PPNs reported recruiting through an open process, while one came through the Local Authority.

Staff of 19 PPNs are employed by the Local Authority, four are employed by the PPN directly and six are employed by the Host Organisation. PPNs also differ in how, and by whom, staff are managed, with 17 PPNs reporting shared management between the Local Authority and the Secretariat, five PPNs reporting management being the sole remit of the Secretariat, one PPN reported management being the sole remit of the Local Authority, one PPN reported management as being shared between the PPN Company Board and Secretariat, and five PPNs reporting management as being shared between the Host Organisation and the Secretariat.

Where the management of staff is shared, the Secretariat manage the workplan, while the administrative and HR functions were the remit of the Local Authority / Host organisation.

Twenty two of the 29 respondent PPNs reported that their office space was located within the Local Authority building (one split between City and County); three were located in the Host Organisation's building; one was in a standalone rented space; one in a separate space leased by the Local Authority; one rents from a community resource centre; and in one PPN, the staff work from home with the Host Organisation providing a postal address for the PPN.

## Finance

Funding for PPNs is provided between the Department of Rural and Community Development (the Department) and the Local Authorities. While the Department provides the bulk of the core funding for PPNs, a small number receive amounts in excess of their expected allocation from their own authority to support their work. Table 15 provides a breakdown of the income sources for each of the 29 respondent PPNs.

**Table 15: PPN Income by Type, 2018**

PPN	Local Authority	Department	Other	Total Income	Comment re Other Income
Carlow	41,322.47	50,000.00	32,400.00	123,722.47	Re Towns and Village Scheme
Cavan	27,500.00	45,833.00	11,000.00	84,333.00	Employment of a Volunteer Information Worker
Clare	30,000.00	50,000.00	300.00	80,300.00	Re Futureproof
Cork City	30,000.00	50,000.00	300.00	80,300.00	Cork Healthy Cities

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PPN	Local Authority	Department	Other	Total Income	Comment re Other Income
Cork County	44,000.00	50,000.00		94,000.00	
Donegal	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Dublin City	55,400.00~	72,500.00*		127,900.00	
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Fingal	39,891.00	50,000.00		89,891.00	
Galway City	30,000.00	50,000.00	48,114.04	128,114.04	Acted as host for a number of LA initiatives, income use for specific related expenditures.
Galway County	29,739.00	50,000.00		79,739.00	
Kerry	30,550.00	75,700.00*		106,250.00	
Kildare	30,000.00	23,607.00		53,607.00	
Kilkenny	30,684.67	50,000.00		80,684.67	
Laois	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Leitrim	31,806.00	47,904.00		79,710.00	
Longford	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Louth	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Mayo	30,000.00	47,877.00		77,877.00	
Meath	30,230.37	50,000.00		80,230.37	
Monaghan	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Offaly	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Sligo	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
South Dublin	33,455.42	48,410.00*		81,865.42	
Tipperary	40,660.72	50,000.00		90,660.72	Healthy Ireland grant
Waterford	30,000.00	50,000.00	17,545.00	97,545.00	Sponsorship for C&V Awards
Westmeath	71,230.00	50,000.00		121,230.00	
Wexford	30,000.00	50,000.00		80,000.00	
Wicklow	37,000.00	78,500.00*^	547.08	116,047.08	IEN contribution to Vision for Community Wellbeing pilot.
<b>Total</b>	<b>993,469.65</b>	<b>1,490,331.00</b>	<b>110,206.12</b>	<b>2,594,006.77</b>	

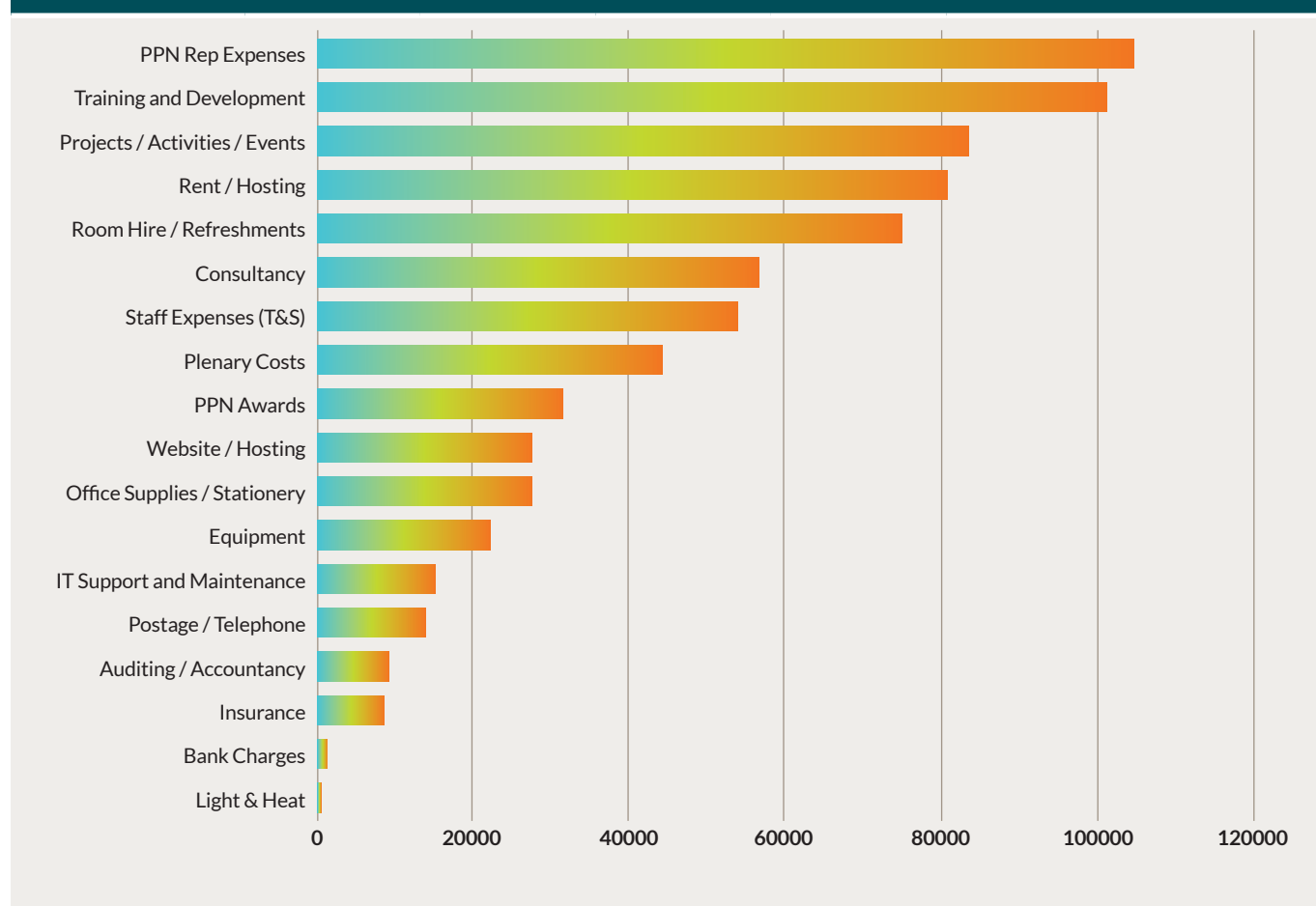
Note: \* Includes an advance contribution towards the engagement of a Support Worker in 2019.

^ Includes €6,000 towards funding the Resource Workers' CPD event.

~ Includes cover for Res. Worker.

PPNs were asked to report on specific expenditure areas from their 2018 Budget. A breakdown of this expenditure across all 29 PPNs is provided in Chart 1. As salary costs amount to the largest proportion of the overall spending, this has been removed from the chart for clarity. In total, the 29 respondent PPNs spent €1.5 million on salaries, including PRSI contributions and so on.

**Chart 1: Breakdown of PPN Expenditure (Non-Salary), 2018**



## Agreeing the Annual Budget

The process for approving the annual PPN Budget is much the same across the 28 respondents to this question. The Budget is either drawn up by the Resource Worker and/or the Finance Subcommittee of the Secretariat. This is then approved by the Secretariat before being presented to the Plenary and Local Authority (in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding in place).

## Spending the Annual Budget

Spending by the PPNs is overseen by the Secretariat and discussed at Secretariat meetings, either on foot of a financial report to the meeting or as a standing item. Where the PPN uses the Local Authority Aggresso system to manage its Budget, the approval system inherent in that system is followed.

## Informing the Plenary

Most respondents (n=25) reported that their PPN either posts its Budget online or discusses its Budget at Plenary meetings. Two PPNs did not respond to this question and one reported that responsibility for the PPN Budget rests entirely with the Secretariat.

## Reimbursement of Expenses to Representatives

The largest expenditure item in the total PPN Budget (excluding salaries and related) for 2018 was Representative's Expenses (which totalled €104,590.60). It is therefore important for the PPNs to have an agreed method of recouping expenses. For expenses related to Local Authority Boards and Committees, 12 PPNs reported that these came from the Core PPN Budget; 14 PPNs reported that these were paid by the Local Authority; and 3 PPNs reported that it was some combination of the two.

Where PPN Representatives are invited to sit on non-PPN and non-Local Authority Boards and Committees, 10 PPNs reported that these expenses were paid by the organisation hosting the meeting; and 6 PPNs reported that they were not. The remaining 6 respondents to this question for whom this was an issue reported that it was either a mixture of both the hosting organisation or the PPN, with one PPN reporting that the administrative costs in trying to recoup those expenses was disproportionate and it was therefore easier to pay them from the PPN Budget.

## Hosting Charge

Fourteen of the 29 PPNs reported that they paid a hosting charge or management fee. The mechanism for determining this fee varied across these PPNS, with 6 PPNs reporting that they pay a fixed charge, while the remaining 8 PPNs pay a charge based on a percentage of gross salary costs.

## Budget Management

Only 5 of the 29 PPNs had their full Budget transferred to a PPN bank account; the Budget of 19 PPNs was managed by the Local Authority (1 PPN reported that their Budget was transferred to a PPN account within the Local Authority and managed by the Resource Worker); and 5 PPNs reported having some of their Budget transferred to a PPN bank account on a phased basis. A breakdown of how Budget expenditure is approved is set out in Table 16.

Table 16: PPN Budget Approval Process, 2018	
Approval Process	No. of PPNs
Secretariat approves all expenditure	15
Secretariat and Resource Worker share approval	10
Resource Worker approves all expenditure	0
Local Authority approves all expenditure	0
Secretariat, Local Authority and Resource Worker share approval	4

## Financial Policy

Three of the 29 PPNs have a formal Financial Policy in place. The remaining 22 respondents to this question reported that their Secretariat or Local Authority approved expenditure decisions within their respective administrative systems. One PPN specifically reported that they follow all public procurement guidelines in relation to their expenditures.



## Policies and Procedures

In order to ensure best practice in the governance of PPNs, each PPN has developed a set of Policies and Procedures to support its Secretariat, Representatives, Staff and Members. Table 17 provides a breakdown of the policies and procedures in place during 2018.

Table 17: Policies and Procedures in place, 2018	
Policy / Procedure	No. of PPNs
Constitution	20
Terms of Reference for:	
→ Secretariat	25
→ Subgroups (of Secretariat)	7
→ Linkage Groups	10
→ Plenary	11
Representative Charter	27
Expenses Policy	26
Dignity for All	11
Grievance / Conflict Procedure	17
Access Policy	7
HR Procedure	15
Induction Programme for new Representatives	19
Procurement Procedure	15
Staff Recruitment Procedure	15
Staff Development Procedure	10
PPN Rep Reporting Templates	25
Glossary of Terms for Member Groups	15
Health and Safety Policy	13
Other	11
<i>Details of 'Other'</i>	
Code of Conduct; Training Policy; Data Protection Policy; Healthy Environment Policy; Vulnerable Adults Policy; Conflict of Interest Policy; Data Retention Policy; Elections Policy; Financial Policy (host's); Secretariat Handbook; Communications Toolkit; Asset Register and Management Policy; Secretariat Group Agreement; and HR Policies of the Local Authority.	

## **Interagency Collaboration**

Of the 29 respondents, 28 reported engaging in some interagency collaboration in 2018. This took the form of partnerships with the Community Development section of the Local Authority; inter-agency collaboration on the implementation of the Healthy Ireland strategy at local level; co-hosting seminars with Disability Networks; co-hosting meetings with Travellers groups; collaborations with volunteer centres and local development companies; being represented on the Older People's council; and the establishment of a Training Fair in the county.

## **Social Inclusion**

PPNs are uniquely placed within communities to engage a whole range of marginalised groups and to support them to engage in democratic processes. All 29 respondent PPNs reported having engaged in social inclusion activities in 2018. Actions taken on behalf of the PPN in furtherance of their social inclusion agenda have included targeted consultations (for example in Carlow, in the development of its Consultation Toolkit); holding themed events (such as Age Friendly events in Kerry; events for Travellers in Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown, Galway City, Waterford and Wicklow; and events for migrant communities in Longford, Laois and Donegal); and the use of a Communication Booklet to target marginalised groups in Louth.



## SECTION 6: WORK WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The current iteration of the PPN User Guide<sup>1</sup> provides “The PPN will be the main link through which the Local Authority (LA) connects with the community, voluntary, environmental and social inclusion sectors” and “PPN ... will ... enable the public to take an active formal role in the policy making and oversight activities of the LA’s area of responsibility.” The intention is for a collaborative partnership approach. Positive relationships between PPN and the LA are essential for success.

As part of the Annual Report process, Local Authorities were asked to provide examples of how they had supported the development of PPN, and the active participation of environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary organisations in policy and decision making, information sharing and capacity building (other than the provision of the Budget allocation or the core duties of the Resource Worker, where the Resource Worker is employed by the Local Authority). Table 18 provides a breakdown of supports identified in respect of the 29 PPNs for which responses were received.

Table 18: Local Authority Supports to PPNs, 2018	
Support Mechanism	Number
Active Memorandum of Understanding in Place for 2018	29
Memorandum of Understanding Reviewed in 2018	21
Assist, where appropriate, the PPN in achieving its Work Plan	26
Supported the PPN to be active Actors in the LECP	22
Cross-departmental participation in PPN Events	22
Involvement of Local Authority PPN Contact Person in PPN	22
Provided additional core funding to the PPN to support its work (additional to the €30,000)	12
Provided additional funding for specific PPN projects	7
Specific campaigns to promote the work of the PPN within the local authority	9
<i>Details of Specific Campaigns</i> Active promotion of PPNs across all Local Authority Departments; Promotion through LECP Newsletter and Taste of Cavan; Making facilities available for use by the PPN; Active engagement of PPN staff in decision making; Mentoring and Advice; Administrative support with Membership applications in the absence of a staff resource; and Attendance at Secretariat Meetings.	

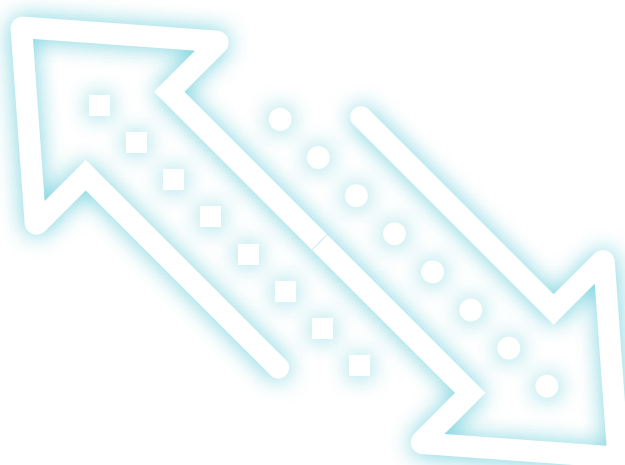
1 <https://assets.gov.ie/6843/89a565eed98a4b7fbfdcdf840a46a144.pdf>

## Local Authority Consultations

The PPNs can and should be a key mechanism for Local Authorities to gather the views of their communities in response to calls for consultations. They are best placed to engage with a membership of community groups and have a track record in producing and supporting submissions. Table 19 provides an overview of the number of consultations undertaken by Local Authorities in 2018 and the engagement with PPNs during this process (based on responses of 24 respondents).

Table 19: Local Authority Consultations, 2018	
Consultations	No. of PPNs
Local Authority Public Consultations in 2018	219
Notifications of Consultations sent to PPNs in 2018	210
Local Authority Consultations carried out via PPNs as the main vehicle in 2018	47
Consultation workshops jointly hosted by the Local Authority and the PPN	39

The total number of consultations conducted by Local Authorities was considerably lower than in 2017 (when there were 819 consultations reported), consequently the number of consultation notifications sent to PPNs in 2018 was also lower (from 558 to 210). However, the number of consultations carried out via PPNs as the main vehicle in 2018 is higher than that in 2017 (from 34 to 47), and the number of consultation workshops jointly hosted has almost doubled, from 20 to 39, during this period.



## Specific Areas of Collaboration

Local Authorities and PPNs also collaborated on a host of other events and initiatives in 2018. These include:

- Tidy Towns
- Plenary Events
- Health Ireland
- Socio-Economic Profiles
- Access Movement
- LECP
- LCDC
- Voter Registration
- Networking November
- Interreg Atlantic Social Lab
- Cork City UrbACT Phase 2
- City/County Boundary Implementation
- Cork Summer Show
- SICAP
- Rural Taskforce
- Community Integration Advisory Committee
- Fingal Social Cohesion and Integration Strategy
- Healthy Galway
- Human Rights and Equality Statement
- Green Leaf Galway and the Green/Blue Festival
- Sports Partnership
- Mayor Awards
- Comhairle na nÓg
- Age Friendly initiatives
- Community Awards
- Love Where You Live Leitrim
- Disability Awareness
- Joint Bulletins in Louth
- The Ogham Tree Trail
- Healthy Tipperary
- Men's Sheds
- Women's Group Grants
- Local Authority Community Resilience Program
- Coastal Communities Network
- Wicklow Digital Strategy

## Allocation of Community Seats

Local Authorities are responsible for a range of Boards and Committees in respect of areas of local interest. In 2018, 708 community seats were available, of which 573 were allocated through the PPNs while the others were allocated through other means. Where plans were in place to change the way the remaining seats were allocated, these included amending the Standing Orders on election of a new council in 2019 or on the expiry of the current term of office. Examples of these Boards and Committees include:

- Fingal Heritage Forum
- Northwest Fisheries
- Monaghan Peace Partnership
- Wicklow Tourism Board
- Traveller Interagency Group
- SDC Sports Partnership
- Joint Policing Committee
- Western Region Drug & Alcohol Taskforce
- LCDCs
- Social Inclusion, Community & Rural Affairs SPC
- SICAP Oversight
- Age Friendly Alliance
- Leitrim County Enterprise Fund

## Grant Eligibility

PPNs act as an information hub for community groups in accessing information and supports about Local Authority grants. In recognition of this, and the role of PPNs in enhancing the efficacy of community groups through capacity building, training, networking and so on, some Local Authorities have made membership of the PPN an eligibility requirement for accessing grants. In 2018, five Local Authorities had this requirement in respect of all grants; ten had this requirement for most, but not all grants; and in 11 Local Authorities, groups were advised to join, but it was not compulsory. Only two Local Authorities did not attach this condition to their grant applications at all.

## Training and Induction by Local Authorities

Only ten of the 27 Local Authorities who responded to the question reported providing specific induction or training to newly nominated PPN Representatives in 2018. In terms of training and awareness building of Local Authority staff, 18 Local Authorities reported engaging in training or awareness building activities with staff working in their Community Department, 13 reported engaging in these activities with staff working outside the Community Department; and 12 reported in engaging in these activities with other Local Authority staff. Some Local Authority staff have not received any training or awareness raising about PPNs since the introduction of the PPN in 2014.

## Additional Supports from the Department

Local Authorities were asked to provide suggestions as to how the Department of Rural and Community Development might further support the development of the PPNs. Twenty-two responses were received, including:

- Cross-Departmental information and awareness campaigns.
- Standardised training packs and templates.
- Review of the User Guide.
- Greater collaboration with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government re engagement between PPNs and Local Authorities.
- Long-term funding commitment.
- Acknowledgement of the importance of independence and autonomy.
- Bi-lingual materials.
- Training on policy-making and making submissions.
- Development of a national training programme.
- Additional administrative supports.
- Expansion of the PPN brief to cover both the public and community sector.
- Clarity on roles and responsibilities within the PPNs.
- Creation of a national PPN logo.

# SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS

Having reviewed the work of the PPNs over 2018, PPNs and Local Authorities were asked to make a series of recommendations to develop the PPNs under the following headings:

Development  
of the PPNs

Training

Policy and Decision  
Making in Partnership

## Development of the PPNs

Recommendations made under this heading, fell broadly within the following categories:

### Resources

- Job security for current staff and increase in funding allocation for administrative support.
- Review of resource allocation to provide for geographic and demographic disparities.
- Increase resources to support the development and roll-out of the Visions for Community Wellbeing.
- Develop a national resource hub for materials, policies and procedures.
- Develop an 'action' template for use at the end of meetings to ensure that all present are aware of, and sign off on, agreed actions.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- Clearer definition of the role and function of Linkage Groups.
- Increase understanding of the roles and systems, e.g. SPCs.
- Ensure adherence to Departmental circulars at all levels.
- Mandate rotation of SPC and other meetings between day and evening to ensure most comprehensive engagement.
- Greater inter-Departmental support for the PPNs.
- Develop a national Charter of Conduct.
- Mandate bi-annual meetings between Local Authority and PPN.
- Review requirement of a national PPN resource role.
- Develop specific guidelines on the role of the Secretariat.

### Communications

- Ensure consistent and timely communication from Local Authorities.
- Develop a Communications Protocol between the PPN and the Local Authorities.
- Build greater awareness of the PPNs across Local Authority Departments.
- Develop a national PR campaign, with national branding and website, to provide greater public awareness of PPNs and encourage active member participation.

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## Structure

- Maintain choice of hosting arrangement.
- Simplify the PPN structure.
- Review and simplify the language used to describe PPNs and its component parts.
- Review current MOUs and standardise.
- Develop and resource a national Secretariat structure.

## Training

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### Recommendations of the PPN

- Standardised Induction Training pack.
- Training for Local Authority staff and Elected Representatives.
- Administrative and Financial Support training for PPNs, particularly on Aggresso for those PPN staff who are using it.
- More capacity building programmes for member groups aimed at policy development and influence, to include input from Local Authorities.
- Oblige each SPC to undertake a training module within 18 months of forming and make this compulsory through the SPC guidelines.
- Capacity building on the use of the Wellbeing Statement.
- Data Protection.
- Good Governance.
- Roles and Responsibilities.
- Training for Representatives, Secretariat Members and Linkage Groups.
- Lobbying Act.
- Salesforce training to be ongoing.
- Public Procurement training.
- Strategic Planning.
- Communications.
- Facilitation Skills.
- Social Media.
- Team Building and Conflict Resolution.
- Employment Law and HR for Secretariats.
- Community Development.
- Strategic Working / Time Management.

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## Recommendations of the Local Authority

- Development of a standardised training pack.
- Bespoke training for Senior Management within Local Authorities.
- Training for Local Authority staff on the Vision for Community Wellbeing and its consequences.
- Data Protection.
- Capacity Building and Animation for less active groups.
- Community Engagement.
- Role and function of the PPN.
- Diversity and anti-racism.
- Induction training for all elected representatives.
- Discipline-specific training for Local Authority staff on how to best engage with PPNs.
- Charities Regulation and Governance.
- Continuous Professional Development / ongoing training programme for Local Authority staff on PPNs.
- Use of Plain English.

## Policy and Decision Making in Partnership

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### Recommendations of the PPN

- Training for Representatives.
- Information sharing by Linkage and Thematic Groups with the Local Authority in a structured way.
- PPN to input into new Strategic Policy Committee Scheme.
- Greater awareness raising of role and function of the various Local Authority Committees.
- Monitoring and reporting of policy inputs by the PPN and their implementation by the Local Authorities.
- Quarterly meetings between PPN and Local Authority staff.
- Supported input into policy development.
- PPN to circulate Local Authority decisions to its membership.
- Local Authorities to make the agenda and minutes of meetings available at an early date to facilitate greater engagement.
- Creation of protocols and templates between Local Authorities, Elected Representatives and PPN Representatives.
- Development of regional learning sessions.
- Committees to ensure equal access and opportunity to speak at meetings.

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## Recommendations of the Local Authority

- Developing a timetable of Linkage Group meetings.
- Ensuring timely communication from the Local Authority to PPNs.
- Allow Local Authorities to present and share relevant information with Linkage and Thematic Groups.
- National Review of PPNs and Strategic Policy Committees.
- Review of the timing of meeting to support family friendly engagement and enable volunteers, who may be working, to participate.
- Develop a Communications Protocol between the Local Authorities and PPNs.
- Ensure a notification of decisions on policy is made by the Local Authority to the PPNs.
- Development of Terms of Reference for each Committee.
- PPN to be referenced as a forum for participation across all Departmental Guidelines.
- Create a list of standing agenda items for meetings.
- More regular meetings between PPNs and Local Authorities.





# APPENDIX 1:

## PPN CONTACT DETAILS (JULY 2019)

PPN	Email	Website
Carlow	<a href="mailto:carlowppn@carlowcoco.ie">carlowppn@carlowcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.carlowppn.ie">www.carlowppn.ie</a>
Cavan	<a href="mailto:cavanppn@gmail.com">cavanppn@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.cavancommunity.ie">www.cavancommunity.ie</a>
Clare	<a href="mailto:sarah@clareppn.ie">sarah@clareppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.clareppn.ie">www.clareppn.ie</a>
Cork City	<a href="mailto:coordinator@corkcityppn.ie">coordinator@corkcityppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.corkcityppn.ie">www.corkcityppn.ie</a>
Cork County	<a href="mailto:ppn@corkcoco.ie">ppn@corkcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.corkcountyppn.com">www.corkcountyppn.com</a>
Donegal	<a href="mailto:donegalppn@donegalcoco.ie">donegalppn@donegalcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.donegalcoco.ie/community/supportingcommunities/donegalpublicparticipationnetworkppn/">www.donegalcoco.ie/community/supportingcommunities/donegalpublicparticipationnetworkppn/</a>
Dublin City	<a href="mailto:ppn@dublincity.ie">ppn@dublincity.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.dublincityppn.ie">www.dublincityppn.ie</a>
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	<a href="mailto:enquiries@dlrppn.ie">enquiries@dlrppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.dlrppn.ie">www.dlrppn.ie</a>
Fingal	<a href="mailto:info@fingalppn.ie">info@fingalppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.fingalppn.ie">www.fingalppn.ie</a>
Galway City	<a href="mailto:info@galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie">info@galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie">www.galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie</a>
Galway County	<a href="mailto:dfeeney@galwaycoco.ie">dfeeney@galwaycoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.galwaycountyppn.ie">www.galwaycountyppn.ie</a>
Kerry	<a href="mailto:ppn@kerrycoco.ie">ppn@kerrycoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.kerryppn.ie">www.kerryppn.ie</a>
Kildare	<a href="mailto:kildareppn@gmail.com">kildareppn@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.kildareppn.ie">www.kildareppn.ie</a>
Kilkenny	<a href="mailto:ppnkilkenny@kilkennycoco.ie">ppnkilkenny@kilkennycoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.kilkennyppn.ie">www.kilkennyppn.ie</a>
Laois	<a href="mailto:ppn@laoiscoco.ie">ppn@laoiscoco.ie</a> ;	<a href="http://www.laoisppn.ie">www.laoisppn.ie</a>
Leitrim	<a href="mailto:info@leitrimppn.ie">info@leitrimppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.leitrimppn.ie">www.leitrimppn.ie</a>
Limerick		<a href="http://www.limerickppn.ie">www.limerickppn.ie</a>
Longford	<a href="mailto:ppn@longfordcoco.ie">ppn@longfordcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.longfordppn.ie">www.longfordppn.ie</a>
Louth	<a href="mailto:mairead.murdock@louthcoco.ie">mairead.murdock@louthcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.louthppn.ie">www.louthppn.ie</a>
Mayo	<a href="mailto:office@mayoppn.net">office@mayoppn.net</a>	<a href="http://www.mayoppn.net">www.mayoppn.net</a>
Meath	<a href="mailto:meathppn@meathcoco.ie">meathppn@meathcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.meathppn.ie">www.meathppn.ie</a>
Monaghan	<a href="mailto:ppn@monaghancoco.ie">ppn@monaghancoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.ppnmonaghan.ie">www.ppnmonaghan.ie</a>
Offaly	<a href="mailto:ppn@offalycoco.ie">ppn@offalycoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.offalyppn.ie">www.offalyppn.ie</a>
Roscommon	<a href="mailto:info@roscommonppn.ie">info@roscommonppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.roscommonppn.ie/">www.roscommonppn.ie/</a>
Sligo	<a href="mailto:ppn@sligococo.ie">ppn@sligococo.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.sligoppn.com/">www.sligoppn.com/</a>
South Dublin	<a href="mailto:mary@sdcppn.ie">mary@sdcppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.sdcppn.ie/">www.sdcppn.ie/</a>
Tipperary	<a href="mailto:ppntipperary@gmail.com">ppntipperary@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.ppntipperary.org/">www.ppntipperary.org/</a>
Waterford	<a href="mailto:mtobin@waterfordcouncil.ie">mtobin@waterfordcouncil.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.waterfordppn.ie">www.waterfordppn.ie</a>
Westmeath	<a href="mailto:info@westmeathppn.ie">info@westmeathppn.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.westmeathppn.ie/">www.westmeathppn.ie/</a>
Wexford	<a href="mailto:wexfordppn@wexfordcoco.ie">wexfordppn@wexfordcoco.ie</a>	<a href="http://www.wexfordppn.ie">www.wexfordppn.ie</a>
Wicklow	<a href="mailto:countywicklowppn@gmail.com">countywicklowppn@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.countywicklowppn.ie/">www.countywicklowppn.ie/</a>

## APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF PPN ACTIVITY

PPN	Number of Secretariat places allocated	Number of PPN Representatives	Number of Active Linkage Groups	Number of Plenary Meetings Held	Total Expenditure (2018)	Number of E-Newsletters Produced	
Carlow	8	21	6	2	91,322	12	
Cavan	12	29	5	2	73,829	12	
Clare	10	22	5	2	84,324	12	
Cork City	6	21	1	3	88,178	20	
Cork County	22	35		1	92,808	3	
Donegal	19	54	8	1	80,050		
Dublin City	9	24	1	2	78,367	42	
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	9	33	3	2	80,774	11	
Fingal	9	24	5	2	89,891	9	
Galway City	16	44	5	4	80,283	24	
Galway County	11	41		2	67,657	0	
Kerry	10	21			95,988	1	
Kildare	11	25		1	52,152	7	
Kilkenny	10	32	4	2	61,655	42	
Laois	12	27	12	2	79,213	12	
Leitrim	9	45	2	1	80,174	13	
Longford	9	41	14	5	80,001	30	
Louth	18	28	1	2	131,433	0	
Mayo	14	20		2	78,615	20	
Meath	12	39	7	2	80,230		
Monaghan	17	34	1	4	80,190	2	
Offaly	9	22		2	80,436	28	
Sligo	8	41	8	2	80,000	6	
South Dublin	12	25	13	1	33,455	0	
Tipperary	15	43	5	2	85,245	11	
Waterford	11	62	2	1	80,362	15	
Westmeath	8	25	3	2	122,699	7	
Wexford	10	22	12	2	83,450	34	
Wicklow	12	24	1	2	87,119	7	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>2,379,900</b>	<b>380</b>	

## APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF PPN ACTIVITY

	Number of Decision Making Committees PPN Sits On	Hosting Arrangement	Total Membership	Social Inclusion Pillar Members	Environment Pillar Members	Community Pillar Members
	9	Hosted by the Local Authority	379	40	9	330
	14	Operating as an independent company	240	70	25	145
	10	Hosted by another Community Organisation	257	50	15	192
	8	Hosted by another Community Organisation	146	82	10	54
	12	Hosted by the Local Authority	924	164	34	726
	22	Hosted by the Local Authority	516	35	13	468
	10	Hosted by the Local Authority	712	226	26	460
	9	Hosted by another Community Organisation	494	88	14	392
	8	Hosted by the Local Authority	715	138	19	558
	20	Operating as an independent company	150	63	15	72
	9	Hosted by the Local Authority	815	111	15	689
	10	Hosted by the Local Authority	590	60	13	517
	9	Hosted by another Community Organisation	826	113	23	690
	13	Hosted by the Local Authority	289	77	7	205
	13	Hosted by the Local Authority	480	62	9	409
	11	Hosted by the Local Authority	263	77	7	179
	16	Hosted by the Local Authority	298	43	5	250
	15	Hosted by the Local Authority	303	101	6	196
	10	Hosted by the Local Authority	611	112	45	454
	14	Hosted by the Local Authority	610	76	16	518
	16	Hosted by the Local Authority	436	69	37	330
	12	Hosted by the Local Authority	424	40	5	379
	13	Hosted by the Local Authority	506	55	17	434
	13	Hosted by another Community Organisation	606	147	27	432
	16	Hosted until October end 2018 then set up as an independent Company	1,434	163	25	1,246
	18	Operating as an independent company	646	111	28	507
	17	Hosted by the Local Authority	617	155	9	453
	12	Hosted by the Local Authority	319	61	10	248
	16	Hosted by another Community Organisation	240	56	18	166
	<b>375</b>		<b>14,846</b>	<b>2,645</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>11,699</b>

## APPENDIX 3:

# CONSULTATION EXAMPLES

### Carlow

In November 2017, Carlow PPN began a journey to try and improve the way local communities are consulted on different issues within the county and to develop and produce a user-friendly document on effective consultation. 380 member groups/organisations had the opportunity to feed in to the process which included focus group meetings held in early 2018. Carlow PPN also consulted with our new communities, traveller health workers, members of Comhairle Na Nog, Carlow County Council management and local elected members.

### Cavan

Consultations undertaken by organisations submitted to the PPN were always passed on to members. Other consultations, such as the nuclear power station consultation or North-South Interconnector were hosted by Linkage Groups for members to devise submissions themselves.

### Clare

Clare PPN made a submission to the Traveller Accommodation Programme. Clare PPN attended the open meeting re: the Marine Spatial Strategy and circulated the consultation documents to members. Clare PPN representatives attended Climate Dialogue in Tralee, November 2018. The Southern Regional assembly Issues Paper was distributed to our data base.

Clare PPN representative attended Creative Ireland Focus Group. UCC interviewed four of our reps for research into PPNs.

### Cork City

The fortnightly PPN newsletter was used to distribute details of consultations being run both nationally and locally.

The most significant consultation exercise run by the PPN this year was around the Southern Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Following discussion amongst the Environmental College, Cork City PPN approached other PPNs within the Southern Regional Assembly Area (10 in all) offering to facilitate and host a bespoke consultation information session in Cork in early 2018. This was attended by staff members of the Regional Assembly, who presented on main issues arising in the policy areas to be covered by the document at hand, as well as by representatives from Environmental Colleges across the region. As a result of the discussions held at this meeting, a draft consultation response was written up by Cork City PPN, and then distributed to our PPNs in the region for dissemination to the broader networks, response and feedback. A final version was submitted by Cork City PPN to the Regional Assembly.

This approach to a regional consultation allowed a high quality, considered response to be submitted within a challenging timeframe, but more significantly, the method allowed for the most efficient use of resource possible, for all PPNs in question. The networks recognised the many shared priorities of their members and the opportunities to streamline consultation processes.

The PPN in Cork has also participated in consultation exercises with sub-groups of the network, and facilitated consultation with groups in which the PPN had a high representation. For example, the PPN coordinated facilitated and drafted a consultation on living conditions in direct provision centres, with a sub-group of the Cork City of Sanctuary movement.

### Cork County

Cork County PPN participated in the following consultations: Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment public consultation on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the National Broadband Plan – Intervention Strategy. In addition the Department consultation on the updates to its High Speed Broadband Map. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Fáilte Ireland Visitor Experience Development Plan for the Three Heads Region. The Future of Government 2030+: A Citizen Centric Perspective on Open Government. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and European Movement Cork | Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of Europe. European Funding and Policy: An Interactive Discussion with Liadh Ni Riada, MEP. Loneliness Taskforce consultation. Griffin's Garden Centre Open Day for Tidy Town and Residential Groups. What women want, what women get – a series of Women's Studies talks with the Centre for Adult Continuing Education, (ACE) UCC. Heritage Europe and the County of Cork Publication-engagement sought from public with regards to this publication. Celtic Interconnector-Eirgrid Mobile Information Unit consultations in East Cork. The European Minimum Income bus tour consultation run by European Anti-Poverty Network.:

National Transport Access Survey. Dept. of Rural and Community Development & Dublin City University (DCU) research on the experiences of citizens in the light of Storm Emma – survey. Local Government Funding Baseline Review consultation.

DRCD 'Be Winter Ready' consultation. Bantry bay mechanical kelp harvest-UCC masters research- local consultation.

Dursey Island Cable car community tourism consultation. Getting Ireland Brexit Ready consultation workshop. Cork County Council's Historic Monuments Advisory Committee 'Conservation of Historic Ruins' consultation workshops. Moving in the Right Direction: A series of five symposia on responding to the needs of refugee children- Children's Rights Alliance. The Sustainable Development Goals –implications for Ireland and the wider world- local consultation. Public Consultation on Ireland's new National Digital Strategy. Community Meeting –Allow River Catchment. Consultation on seasonal clock changes. Dept. of Rural and Community Development National Volunteering Strategy-call for input.

### Donegal

Donegal PPN participated in the following consultations: Future Policing Ireland, Marine Spatial Strategy, National Broadband, Climate Action, National Volunteering, Brexit, National Library, Local Draft County Development Plan, Local Area Plans-Letterkenny/Buncrana, Roads - Ten T, Riverine Project-Cross Border, Hericoast Project, Local Waters Authority.

### Dublin City

Invitation to all initial consultations are extended to all members. Low attendance noticed.

### Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown

Local consultations we informed PPN members about directly included Draft Local Area Plans for Ballyogan & Environs and Dundrum, a survey in relation to the county development of Healthy Ireland, a survey on behalf of the local Sports Partnership and the Draft Marlay Park Masterplan.

We did a lot of work on the Bus Connects-Redesign of the Dublin Area Bus Network Consultation July-September, making sure all members knew about it and knew about the public information sessions and keeping them updated on venue changes. We also managed to get printed copies of the consultation information from the National Transport Authority and then worked with DLR Libraries to put the information packs into some of the local libraries. We also worked with the Network for Older People to make their members aware that the information was in the libraries. The PPN manager and some Secretariat members attended the public information sessions.

In our e-zine we shared information about 15 local consultations and 18 national consultations.

### Fingal

- Linkage Groups would respond to public consultation if they felt strong about the matter.
- PPN Reps would attend ad-hoc consultation events if relevant to their role.
- PPN would host consultation events with relevant officials for Linkage Groups to feedback.

### Galway City

GCCN has developed and adopted a model for the development of submissions. All GCCN submissions are based on the GCCN Policies and Positions document, developed and adopted by GCCN members.

Subsequent to information about a consultation process or call for submissions being circulated, GCCN organises a workshop/thematic meeting on the issue. This is done either through the appropriate Linkage Group(s) or a general call.

A draft submission or paper is then drawn up by the resource worker and circulated for comment before the final document is submitted.

Subsequent to information about a consultation process or call for submissions being circulated, GCCN organises a workshop/thematic meeting on the issue. This is done either through the appropriate Linkage Group(s) or a general call. A draft submission or paper is then drawn up by the resource worker and circulated for comment before the final document is submitted. In 2018, GCCN circulated information on all local, regional and national consultations. Following the distribution of information, in 2018, GCCN made the following submissions:

- Healthy Galway
- The development of the LCDC Equality and Human Rights Statement
- Submission on the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion
- Submission on the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
- Submission on the N6 Galway City Ring Road
- Submission on the Public Realm Strategy
- Submission on Nuns Island Regeneration
- Submission on the draft Estate Management Plan
- Submissions on the review of the Local Economic and Community Plan and the development of an Implementation Plan
- Submissions on the need for a Biodiversity Officer in Galway City
- Submission on the Canal Works

### Galway County

Via the MD plenaries, the main plenaries, Community Support Scheme info nights, training evening sessions, via our emails, via events organised by other statutory and non-statutory groups, GCC

### Kerry

Examples of Consultations include:

Submission to Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy to Southern Regional Assembly.

Kerry Age Friendly Strategy.

With Disability Federation of Ireland, consultation on Access For All.

### Kildare

Town & Village Health Checks in Maynooth, Clane, Prosperous and Kilcock. This involved 12 meetings in total organised by Kildare PPN. First meeting for all MD groups was facilitated.

## Kilkenny

### Consultations Advertised:

National Planning framework PPN Submission; Review of Out of School Education Provision 20/3/18 CYPSC; Loneliness Task force 21 Mar 18; The Rower Design Plan Section 38; SE regional Assembly submissions on planning framework; Action 88 of the DEIS Plan 2017; Ireland's New National Digital Strategy; Kilkenny District Policing Plan 2019; Consultation on National Heritage Plan;

Resource Worker attended consultations/meetings representing the PPN:

Access For All Work meeting 05/03/18; Access For All Work meeting 26/02/18; Access For All committee meeting 20/3/18; Social Inclusion Working Group 25/01/18; Social Inclusion Working Group 11/4/18; Environmental network 12/04/18; Access for all Committee meeting 26/04/18; Social Inclusion Working group meeting 28/06/18; Access for All committee meeting 04/07/18; Age Friendly town initiative meeting 07/18; Access for All committee Meeting 16/06/18; enterprising Town Committee Meeting 27/07/18; Enterprising town Committee meeting 17/08/18; Social inclusion working group 28/10/18; Access for All committee Meeting 06/12/18; Age Friendly Meeting 10/12/18; Kilkenny Age Friendly County Meeting 13/12/18.

### Submissions Made 2018-

National Planning framework PPN Submission 19/01/18; Kilkenny PPN Submission to RSES; National Spatial Planning workshop 19/01/18; Launch of Eurobugs Kilkenny 09/01/18; Access for All Consultation Strategy Workplan 7/02/18; Healthy Ireland Workshops attended by 2 PPN reps 14/2/18; HI Workshop attended by PPN reps 26/2/18; Community Work Ireland - SI forum anti-poverty strategy workshop to draft a submission 25/04/18; Access for All workshop with Committee 15/05/18; Launch of migrant strategy 26/07/18; Enterprising Town Awards Judging day 1/2 day 20/08/18; Community connects conference in Kilkenny 10/10/18 part funded by the PPN; International Day of Persons with Disabilities 03/12/2018.

## Laois

Be Winter Ready, Consultation On Seasonal Clock Change, Draft Litter Management Plan 2018-2020, National Volunteer Strategy, Laois Library Strategy, Healthy Laois Plan 2018-2020, Greenpire Consultation - Kilminchy Estate.

## Leitrim

During 2018 Leitrim PPN held one major consultation on Forestry in Leitrim, the aim of which was to provide an opportunity for the views of local people to be recorded for presentation to the Leitrim Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning. The consultation involved an online and hard copy survey which was distributed through email, post, in the county libraries and at public meetings. The timespan of the consultation spanned from November 2018 through to late January 2019 and the full findings have yet to be collated.

National and local consultations were issued on the website and highlighted in newsletters with members urged to consider the issues and submit especially when submissions were easy to make through questionnaire type surveys. Collaboration with SICAP workers of Leitrim Local Development Company publicising consultation events and assistance with submissions.

## Longford

PPN Groups participated in the Review of Longford Intercultural Strategy. PPN Disability Network were consulted before DFI delivered Disability Awareness Training to Council Staff. PPN groups were consulted about Regeneration work i.e. Connolly Barracks. Also the Longford Integrated Action Plan. PPN held consultations with its members in each MD to develop their Wellbeing Visions for their MD and County. Results of the Wellbeing Visions fed in to Longford County Councils Walking /Cycling Strategy and Healthy Longford Plan. PPN Groups were consulted and participated in the establishment of Town Teams.

## Louth

Environmental Consultation re. expansion of UK Nuclear Programme



<b>Mayo</b>
Mayo Co Council Arts Plan Volunteer Survey/Consultation
<b>Meath</b>
<p>Ashbourne town centre, information event, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region Pre-Draft Public Consultation, Public Consultation National Broadband Plan Intervention Strategy, Ashbourne Public Realm Strategy, Give your views on Mental Health Reform, Notice of Transboundary Environmental Public Consultation Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Plant, Bridgwater, Somerset, United Kingdom, Consultation on Loneliness, Hill of Tara Conservation Management Plan, Consultation on Poverty and Social Inclusion, New Navan Road Scheme Consultation, Meath County Council Draft Climate Action Strategy, Oaklawn and Windtown Residents Navan, Public Meeting, Policing in Your Community National Digital Strategy, Seasonal Time Change, Navan Cycle Route, Meath Befrienders Consultation, Social Inclusion Consultation on Poverty, Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, MEATH Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of Europe</p> <p>What should be included in the Be Winter Ready Leaflet, Review on Local Government Funding, Trim Family Resource Centre Want Your Views, Draft Beach Management Plan &amp; Natura Impact Statement (NIS) for Laytown, Bettystown &amp; Mornington, National Volunteering Strategy, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), Planning for unexpected weather events.</p>
<b>Monaghan</b>
<p>Monaghan PPN informed members about 17 different consultations. Some of these were consultations from the local authority such as Monaghan CCTV Scheme, Ballybay Town Park Development, and Draft County Development Plan. The planning department presented at a plenary on the Draft Development Plan Whilst local authority departments do inform the PPN about their consultations, very few specifically ask to come meet the PPN via workshops/surveys etc. Monaghan informed members of some National Consultations such as Future Policing of Ireland and the National Volunteer Strategy. We also promoted consultations for other organisations such as HSE Little Things Matter campaign and Dochas For Women Strategy.</p>
<b>Offaly</b>
<p>Info Distributed via Salesforce and on Social Media re Healthy Ireland Local Consultation event - PPN promoted the opportunity and organized buses to location. Age Friendly Local Consultation events x 4. LEO Offaly Survey. Waterways Ireland Consultations in 3 MD. Sports Partnership consultations.</p>
<b>Sligo</b>
<p>All information on consultations distributed by either social media or email: Meetings facilitated where required for interest groups, Written submissions on Disability Action Plan, Creative Ireland strategy and Library Strategy, Consultation organised on Disability Strategy, National Volunteer Strategy.</p>
<b>Tipperary</b>
<p>LCDC PPN Reps Contributed to making a submission to National Planning Framework. PPN Secretariat submission on the PPN user guide. Secretariat members and RW attended RSES consultation meetings and contributed to a joint submission from the South. Healthy Tipperary consultation took place at our Health and well-being plenary.</p>
<b>Waterford</b>
<p>Member groups are informed of National &amp; Local consultations by email or social media. We have an area on our newsletter for Consultations. Both Reps and Workers will try if possible to attend consultations but this depends on location if not we will submit on behalf of the PPN.</p>



### Westmeath

Westmeath PPN consulted with its members in relation to the following: WESTMEATH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020-2026, Consultation on Seasonal Clock Changes opens from 26 October 2018, Draft River Basin, Expressions of Interest – Playgrounds, Future of Policing in Ireland, Getting Ireland Brexit Ready public information campaign, Have your Say - Questionnaires on Community, Employment Schemes & LEADER, New Heritage Ireland Plan 2030, Issues to be raised by PPN to Westmeath Municipal Districts Sept 2018, National Library Strategy, Mobile Coverage Survey, National Volunteering Strategy – 2018, Preparation of Westmeath County Development Plan 2020-2026, Public Consultation - Arts, Creative Ire. & Libraries, Public consultation of Nat. Broadband Plan, Public Consultation on Ireland's new National Digital Strategy, Public Information Meeting - Water Framework Directive, Public Meetings - Towns & Villages (18 in total), Public Service Consultation, Regional Climate Dialogue - Citizens Gathering: Athlone 23rd June, Royal Canal Blueway, Suicide Awareness Consultation, Suicide Prevention Action Plan Consultation Process, Survey - Why don't you Drink!., Survey for Homecare, The Waters and Communities Office public meetings within the coming Town & Village Action Plans, Westmeath Heritage plan - Public Meetings, Westmeath PPN Action Plan for 2018-19, Heritage Plan for County Westmeath.

### Wexford

Wexford PPN sent representatives to the RSES consultation events. Wexford PPN Resource Worker attended Marine Spatial Planning information event in Kilmore. Wexford PPN was one of the PPNs who were part of a joint regional PPN submission to the RSES Issues Paper Submission in Feb 18

### Wicklow

We put what we learned through our consultations and talking to people into written submissions to: The Local Government Funding Baseline Review, The Transboundary Environmental Public Consultation on the Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Plant, and The Draft Code of Conduct for Persons Carrying on Lobbying Activities. These submissions can be viewed on our website.

Elected Representatives and the Chief Executive were also written to at the end of the year with suggestions/proposals relating to a 3rd lane on the N11 and in relation to the Transboundary Environmental Public Consultation on the Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Plant. These can also be viewed on our website

Co Wicklow PPN ran 11 workshops, 5 online consultations and received 2 submissions from community groups and members to develop Our Vision for Community Wellbeing for each of the 5 MDs in Wicklow and the county as a whole

Co Wicklow PPN runs an annual consultation/survey with members as an evaluation of the years' work and to steer the next year's work.