Appendix 6 (From PPN User Guide 2016 - Dept. Environment, Community & Local Government

**Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of Linkage Group**

A Linkage Group for a Board or Committee is a collection of PPN member organisations who are stakeholders or have a particular interest or expertise in the issues being discussed at that Board or Committee. The PPN will invite all member groups to join a Linkage Group, and all who wish to join can do so, nominating individuals to attend on their behalf.

**Role of the Linkage Group is to**

• Elect representative(s) to the Board or Committee

• Discuss and debate the matters being discussed by the Board or Committee, to inform the representative(s), and where relevant to prioritise and develop policy positions.

• To mandate the representative to bring forward the diversity of views within the Linkage Group to the Board or Committee.

• Agree and implement a way of communicating with the representative(s) and with each other, which is effective and realistic.

• With the Secretariat to censure / remove the representative(s) if they are not fulfilling the terms of their appointment.

• To work with the PPN Secretariat and report to the Plenary as relevant.

• To work collaboratively with other Linkage Groups and representatives in furtherance of the aims of PPN.

**Responsibilities of Linkage Group members are to**

• To operate in accordance with the principles and values of PPN.

• Make themselves aware of what the Board or Committee they are linked to can and cannot do, having realistic expectations of what a representative can achieve, and understanding confidentiality issues which may arise.

• Be open to new organisations joining the Linkage Group, and to actively seek the input of all groups who have an interest in the area, particularly those who are traditionally excluded.

• Communicate and engage clearly and openly with the representative and other Linkage Group members, recognising that there may be differing views expressed on issues, and that the representative must bring the diversity of views to the Board or Committee.

• Take the time to read / absorb / understand communications that are received.

• Seek to develop realistic policy proposals to address issues raised and support the representative to bring views forward, by providing relevant facts and research where possible.

• Feed back to their own member groups on the work of the Linkage Group and Board or Committee.

• Inform the wider PPN of key issues and policy positions.

• Keep records of dates, attendance, outputs etc. for meetings (virtual or face to face)

**Rights of the Linkage Group members are to**

• Receive relevant information about the work of the Board or Committee to help them to participate fully.

• Receive regular communications (at least as frequently as Board or Committee meetings are held) from the representative on matters such as

* Dates of Board or Committee meetings
* Agendas for Board or Committee meetings o Reports from Board or Committee meetings
* Items which require their input

• Have regular discussions by an agreed mechanism (face to face / Skype conference calls / email / social media groups etc.).

• Have their issues brought forward by the rep.

• Have Linkage Group discussions facilitated in an open inclusive way, and the views of all members accommodated.