



REPRESENTATIVE CHARTER

Reference	Approved	Ratified	For Review	Amended
Ref: RC 0001	June 2018	June 2018	April 2021	April 2021
Ref: RC 0002	May 17 th 2021	June 15 th 2021	May 2023	N/A



Background

The aim of this Representatives Charter is to provide you with guidelines on how to fulfil your role as a Representative effectively. It should be used in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for Linkage Groups, Representatives and Facilitators, the Public Participation Members Handbook and the Public Participation Network Policy Documents.

Role of the Public Participation Network

The Public Participation Network was established in 2014 as the representative voice for all Community and Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion groups.

The Public Participation Network will identify the issues that matter and try to influence policy in a way that improves the quality of life and opportunities for people within the Local Authority area.

Membership of the Public Participation Network is open to all community and voluntary groups, clubs, and organisations, working on a voluntary, co-operative, or not-for-profit basis for the benefit of the community.

The Public Participation Network is overseen by a Secretariat, elected by full member groups of the network.

The Public Participation Network elects representatives to committees and organisations to speak on behalf of all member groups of the network.

The Public Participation Network is the main link through which the Local Authority and other decision-making bodies connect with the Community and Voluntary, Environmental, and Social Inclusion sectors.

The Public Participation Network is committed to working in an open, inclusive and transparent manner on behalf of all member groups.

Public Participation Network Representatives

The role of the Representative is a rewarding one. It is also a commitment of time and energy to make sure that it is carried out fully. To do this, the Representative must:

- Be members of and attend Linkage Group meetings appropriate to their representation. This may include collaboration with other Linkage Groups.
- Work collaboratively with the Linkage Group to identify issues, research, policy proposals etc. of interest or concern to the Group.
- Bring forward the issues of the Linkage Group to the Board or Committee for their consideration, including putting items on the agenda.
- It is the Representatives responsibility to represent the consensus view of all members of the Linkage Group, rather than those of their organisation, nominating body, municipal district, or sector, setting aside personal, business, or political interests.
- Issue written reports to both the CoOrdinator and to the Linkage Group following each meeting.

- If there is more than one Representative on a Committee, the reporting duties should be rotated.
- Confidentiality should be always respected and considered whilst reporting.
- Promote the work of the Public Participation Network positively across all platforms internally and externally of the organisation.
- Communicate regularly (at least as often as meetings are held) with the Linkage Group and the Facilitator about:
 - ❖ Dates of Board or Committee meetings.
 - ❖ Agendas for Board or Committee meetings.
 - ❖ Items which require their input and / or are of interest to the Linkage Group.

Rights of the Representative

All Representatives of the Public Participation Network have rights in relation to how they are supported in the fulfilment of their role, they should:

- Receive active engagement from all Linkage Group members, including timely responses to issues.
- Be heard and respected at both the Linkage Group and Board or Committee, with an appreciation that Representatives act in a voluntary capacity.
- Be supported by both Linkage Group and Committee / Board members.
- Receive relevant induction and training to enable them to participate effectively on Committees / Boards.
- Receive expenses for attending Committee / Board meetings including any subgroups and relevant training of which they are required to attend.
- Receive an induction pack for the Committee / Board on taking up their appointment, to include:
 - ❖ Terms of reference.
 - ❖ Standing orders /procedures.
 - ❖ Meeting schedules, locations, and times.
 - ❖ Contact details for all Committees / Board members.
 - ❖ Access to technical support where required.
- Receive timely notice of Committee / Board meetings, including:
 - ❖ Dates and venues.
 - ❖ Agenda.
 - ❖ Documents.
 - ❖ Have meetings conducted in a way that facilitates participation, open discussion and transparent decision making.

Linkage Groups & the Representative

Structure



Linkage Groups were established to support the work of Kildare Public Participation Network Representatives on decision making committees at local authority and community level. It is important to note that the role of the Linkage Group is to facilitate and enable organisations to voice a wide range of views and interests within the local Government system. It is intended to add to the participation of member groups, not replace or reduce it in any way.

Election

Representatives are elected for a fixed term to represent the issues of Public Participation Network members on a particular Committee or Board. Their election takes place according to procedures established by the Secretariat and approved by the Plenary.

- ❖ Nominations for Kildare Public Participation Network Representative roles shall be invited through electronic communication with member groups.
- ❖ Voting is streamed according to electoral pillar or Municipal District.
- ❖ When the number of nominations received exceeds the number of seats available a ballot will take place.

Resignation

The Representative is required to notify both the Committee and the Kildare Public Participation Network in advance of resignation.

Circumstances where Representatives would be required to resign their position

Representatives would be required to resign their position if they:

- ❖ Are no longer a member of the Kildare Public Participation Network member organisation that nominated them.
- ❖ No longer have the formal support of their nominating member organisation.
- ❖ Fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Linkage Group and/or committees they were elected to without reasonable explanation.
- ❖ Declare as a candidate for local, general, or European elections.
- ❖ Are in breach of the Kildare Public Participation Network Code of Conduct.