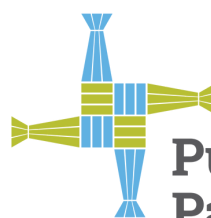


2023

ANNUAL REPORT



**Public
Participation
Network
Kildare**



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INTRODUCTION

As we embark on the journey of reflection and progress, it is with great pleasure that we present to you the Annual Report for the Kildare Public Participation Network (Kildare PPN) for the year 2023. This document encapsulates the collective efforts, achievements, and strides we have made as a network over the past twelve months.

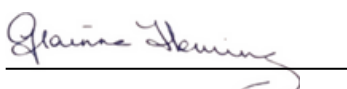
In a year that has tested the resilience of communities, Kildare PPN has emerged as a beacon of collaboration and commitment within Kildare. Our network, comprised of dedicated individuals, organisations, and community leaders, has continued to play a pivotal role in fostering civic engagement, amplifying local voices, and driving positive change across Kildare.

The year 2023 has been marked by challenges, yet within every challenge lies an opportunity for growth. As we navigated the complexities of an ever-evolving landscape, Kildare PPN remained steadfast in its commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and empowerment. Through a series of impactful initiatives, we have strived to bridge gaps, facilitate dialogue, and ensure that the diverse needs and aspirations of our community members are not only heard but actively addressed.

This report will showcase the projects, events, and partnerships that have defined our collective journey throughout the year. From fostering sustainable development to promoting social cohesion, Kildare PPN has been at the forefront of initiatives that contribute to the holistic well-being of Kildare.

The work we have achieved this year is a testament to the collaborative spirit that defines Kildare PPN. It is a reflection of the passion and dedication of each member, volunteer, and partner who has contributed to the network's strength. As we celebrate our achievements, we also acknowledge the areas where there is room for improvement, recognising that the journey towards a stronger, more resilient community is an ongoing one.

In the pages that follow, you will discover the faces behind the initiatives, and the collaborative ethos that defines Kildare PPN. Thank you for being an integral part of this journey, and we look forward to continuing our shared commitment to building a vibrant and inclusive Kildare.



Grainne Fleming

Kildare Public Participation Network Coordinator



MISSION STATEMENT

Kildare Public Participation Network is the collective voice for all community and voluntary, environmental, and social inclusion organisations in Kildare, its purpose is to improve people's well-being by involving the community in local decision-making.

AIMS

- To facilitate and encourage public participation in local decision making
 - To facilitate the representation of the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups onto decision making bodies
 - To strengthen the capacity of organisations to contribute positively to the community
-

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage greater participation in public decision making which leads to more effective and better targeted policies and programmes at local level and where necessary at a regional and national level
- Develop alternative methods and models of working which seek to directly involve and empower groups and individuals within the community
- Support Kildare PPN Representatives in achieving the policy objective of Kildare PPN

OUR NETWORK

Membership

Kildare PPN is committed to support all Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups in Kildare. We are committed to strengthening the capacity for these groups through information sharing, capacity building and training. We will endeavour to strengthen key relationships to ensure that the voice of all groups in Kildare will have their voices heard, and through representation we will influence policy making for the greater good of all groups in the county.



664

Total Members in 2023



97

New member groups in 2023



Community & Voluntary

572



Environmental

31



Social Inclusion

61

SECRETARIAT

Kildare PPN is overseen by a Secretariat of 11 members. Two members are elected from each of the three Electoral Pillars and the remaining five members, one each from the five Municipal Districts (MD). The Secretariat is a flat structure (i.e. there are no elected officers).

The purpose of the Secretariat is to:

- Ensure the aims and objectives of the Kildare PPN Network are met
- Ensure that member groups are informed of developments relevant to their groups
- Represent member group's interests
- Ensure the proper functioning of the PPN between plenary meetings
- Facilitate the implementation of the decisions of the plenary
- Support the coordinator to achieve the PPN's objectives through the implementation of the annual workplan.
- Develop Kildare PPN into an effective collective voice for community groups in Kildare
- Engage with and support the PPN Representatives
- Operate as defined under Section 46 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014

2023 Secretariat Members



Anne Crowe

Social Inclusion



Liz Denieffe

Naas MD



Anthony Egan

Community and Voluntary



P.J Fagan

Social Inclusion



Paul Leighton

Environmental



Dermot O'Donnell

Celbridge - Leixlip MD



Evelyn O'Rourke

Athy MD



Naomi Scott - Hayward

Clane - Maynooth MD



Linda Walsh

Community and Voluntary

SECRETARIAT MEMBERS THAT COMPLETED THEIR TERM / STEPPED DOWN IN 2023

- Sarah Shakespeare – Kildare MD Seat
- Cliona Kelliher – Environmental Seat
- Jill Mulhern – Community & Voluntary Seat

REPRESENTATION

Kildare County Council Strategic Policy Committee's

| Committee | Representative | Pillar |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Economic Development Enterprise & Planning | Vacant | Environmental |
| Economic Development Enterprise & Planning | Majella O'Keefe | Social Inclusion |
| Environmental Services & Water | Emer Conway | Environmental |
| Environmental Services & Water | Vacant | Community & Voluntary |
| Housing | Tom O'Malley | Community & Voluntary |
| Housing | Vacant | Social Inclusion |
| Local Community & Cultural | Vacant | Environmental |
| Local Community & Cultural | Vivienne Kelly-Keane | Community & Voluntary |
| Local Community & Cultural | P.J Fagan | Social Inclusion |
| Transportation, Safety & Emergency Services | Vacant | Community & Voluntary |
| Climate Action | Nathan Flaherty | Environmental |
| Climate Action | Louise Rawlins Traynor | Community & Voluntary |

Local Community Development Committee

| Representative | Pillar |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Evonne Boland | Community & Voluntary |
| Michael Kenny | Community & Voluntary |
| Liz Denieffe | Environment |
| Jide Sadiq | Social Inclusion |
| Alan Kerry | Social Inclusion |

Joint Policing Committee

| Representative | Pillar |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Michael Corcoran | Community & Voluntary |
| John Daly | Community & Voluntary |

County Kildare Heritage Forum

| Representative | Pillar |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Patrick Byrne | Community & Voluntary |
| Brian McCabe | Community & Voluntary |
| Pat Pender | Environment |

Clane Town Team

| Representative | Pillar |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Marie Sheehy | Community & Voluntary |

Drehid Liaison Committee

| Representative | Pillar |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Colin Cash | Community & Voluntary |
| Thomas Brennan | Community & Voluntary |



Representative Network

A Representative's Network continued throughout 2023 to give Kildare PPN Representatives an opportunity to meet, network and share information with each other.

Retirements in 2023

Unfortunately during 2023, we had 10 of our representatives retire/step down from their role. Reasons for the retirements included reaching the end of their second term, declaring their candidacy for the upcoming local elections, and personal reasons. Our retirees include:

- Lorraine Benson – Local Community & Culture SPC – Community & Voluntary
- Ursula King – Climate Action SPC – Environmental
- Pat Balfe – LCDC – Community & Voluntary Seat
- Gerry Dornan – Transportation Safety and Emergency Services
- Declan Nolan – LCDC – Social Inclusion Seat
- Dermot O'Donnell – LCDC – Community & Voluntary Seat
- Sarah Shakespeare – LCDC – Social Inclusion Seat
- Anthony Egan – LCDC – Community & Voluntary Seat
- Bob Quinn – LCDC – Environmental
- John McLoughlin – Housing SPC – Social Inclusion Seat

Linkage Groups

Linkage/Thematic groups are the way that PPN member groups can have a real input into policy in their area of operation. They bring together organisations with a common interest to discuss their views and interests in a specific policy area linked to a committee or board with PPN representation.

Active in 2023:



**Climate Action
Linkage Group**



**Transport
Linkage Group**

The development of Linkage groups will be an area of focus in 2024.

Staff



Grainne Fleming
Coordinator



Grace Clarke
Support Worker



CAPACITY BUILDING

PPN Stakeholders Breakfast

The Stakeholder breakfast event took place on May 15th in the Osprey hotel. Twenty-five people were in attendance including PPN Representatives, Secretariat members and Kildare County Council elected members and staff.

The event focused on building capacity and relationship building between all stakeholders. The beginning of the event focused on recapping our 'working together for public participation' which took place the previous November, highlighting the role, remit and statutory basis of the PPN along with the committee processes and structure within Kildare County Council.

Marian Higgins, Director of Service for Climate, Community, Environment & Water delivered a presentation on the policy journey from the pre-development stage right through to the implementation.



This event was very well received. It worked on closing gaps between all stakeholders, sharing information and strengthening the role of the PPN representatives on all SPCs and committees.



EVENTS

Plenary Meeting 28th February 2023

Kildare Public Participation Network gathered at the Curragh Racecourse on February 28th to hold our first Plenary meeting of 2023. We welcomed over seventy members to address annual administration, ratification of the 2023 workplan and the budget, along with the launch of the 2022 annual report.

The Plenary, which is held twice a year followed a call out for new members as a new national brand identity and awareness campaign for Public Participation Networks was launched by Minister for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien in Dublin. On the evening Lorraine Benson, the Kildare PPN representative on the Local Community and Cultural SPC with Kildare County Council talked about the positive experience of being a PPN representative and the impact that representatives can have on local decision making. The Annual Report for 2022 was launched by Jill Mulhern, a member of the Secretariat and this highlighted the work completed by both Secretariat and staff throughout the year.

After the meeting, attendees were invited to a behind the scenes tour of the Curragh grandstand, where our members had the opportunity to visit locations that are off limits to members of the public including the weighing room and jockeys dressing room. In addition, all members received tickets to the opening race meeting of the season. The Plenary was held in collaboration with the Curragh racecourse, and we must extend a huge thank you to the team there.





Plenary Meeting

1st November 2023

November 1st saw the final Plenary meeting of the year been held in the Osprey hotel, where member groups were presented with the work plan progress report and financial report for 2023. One of the most important items on the agenda included the change for the future hosting arrangement of Kildare PPN moving forward. The Secretariat presented their chosen option to set up as an independent company to which the Plenary agreed.

We were also delighted to welcome Meabh Boylan, Biodiversity Officer with Kildare County Council as our guest speaker on the evening.

Information session on the future Vision for Community Wellbeing Statements, incorporating the community consultations for the Local Economic Community Plan

We launched the vision for community wellbeing consultation process at the PPN Stakeholder breakfast in February. We gave attendees an overview of the consultation process including workshop dates and a timeline for the project, along with discussing the benefits that will come from the development of the visions for each Municipal District.

Eirgrid Roadshow

We had an information stand at the Eirgrid Energy Citizens Roadshow which was held in the Osprey hotel on February 1st 2023. It was a great networking event and we met with plenty of member organisations.





County Kildare Social Inclusion Week

September 25th – September 29th

County Kildare Social Inclusion week is growing year on year and has become an annual event in the county. We were delighted to collaborate with County Kildare LEADER Partnership for the 7th year in a row on this meaningful initiative. This year, we had over sixteen events happening right across Kildare with events ranging from age friendly roadshows to Traveller and Roma information events.

We were delighted to see the meaningful participation and inclusion at all venues.

The opening event for County Kildare Social Inclusion Week was held in Teach Dara in Kildare town on Monday 25th September. The week was launched by Ken Kavanagh, from Kare, along with two of the Special Olympics medallists from the 2023 Berlin competition.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the steering committee, organisations and all participants who contributed to the success of the week, for their ongoing support and dedication to this event.







Ministerial Visit

Staff and Secretariat members of Kildare PPN attended a private meeting with Joe O'Brien, Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities on Tuesday 16th May. Minister O'Brien was very open and interested in the work of Kildare PPN.

The Midlands Regional PPN Meeting

Kildare PPN was delighted to welcome sixteen of our colleagues from the midlands to join us for a meeting at the Osprey hotel, in Kildare on the 2nd of October.

These meetings are a forum for Secretariat members and staff from the six PPN's across the midlands to come together to network, share best practice and collaborate.

Representative Breakfast

The Secretariat was pleased to welcome Kildare PPN Representatives to a final gathering for 2023. This breakfast was a great networking event for our Representatives and Secretariat members. We would like to extend our thanks to all Representatives for volunteering their time throughout the year for Kildare PPN.



TRAINING



Members Training

A training needs analysis was conducted to identify the training needs of our members. A total of five training modules were delivered with a total of 136 members attending.

2023 Training Modules

- Community Grants Information evening (In person)
- Community Grants Information evening (Online)
- Community Leadership
- Social Media Bootcamp
- Good Governance for Community Groups

Staff Training

- Salesforce Data Cleansing Training
- Media Relations
- Developing an integrated strategy
- Media Spokesperson
- Salesforce
- Plain English
- Community Leadership
- Social Media (Intermediate)
- Inclusive Community Engagement
- Flat Structure Training

Secretariat Training

All Secretariat members along with Kildare PPN Representatives were offered PPN Stakeholder training with Social Justice Ireland 'Creating Capable Communities'.

- Facilitator training for the Wellbeing Statement Workshops



PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

Community Wellbeing Consultations

The Vision for Community wellbeing was one of the most important projects that we undertook during 2023, which included training, 5 in person workshops, online consultations, data compiling and report writing. The development of our Community Wellbeing Visions outline the key issues that member groups consider important for their communities.

Clane/Maynooth Municipal District

The consultation for our member groups in the Clane – Maynooth Municipal District was held in the North Kildare Sports Club on the 17th of July. 18 member groups were in attendance.



Athy Municipal District

The consultation for our member groups in the Athy Municipal District was held in the Irish Wheelchair Association on the 20th of July. 16 member groups were in attendance.



Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District

The consultation for our member groups in the Kildare – Newbridge Municipal District was held in the Town Hall in Newbridge on the 24th of July. 26 member groups were in attendance.



Leixlip/Celbridge Municipal District

The consultation for our member groups in the Celbridge – Leixlip Municipal District was held in Leixlip Youth and Community Centre on the 27th of July. 20 member groups were in attendance.

Naas Municipal District

The consultation for our member groups in the Naas Municipal District was held in McAuley Place on the 14th of September. 14 member groups were in attendance.



Following the consultation process, an online survey was sent out to our membership within each of the MD's to ensure maximum participation. 51 individual submissions were received.

The draft statements were then produced and circulated to participants for feedback.

Following the final consultation process, we were delighted to ratify the 6 wellbeing Visions at our Plenary in November. We look forward to using the visions as a roadmap to ensure that the needs of their individual communities are reflected in the work we do. All visions are available to view and download from our website: www.kildareppn.ie/wellbeing/





Building Vibrant Rural Communities through LEADER

Kildare PPN collaborated with County Kildare LEADER Partnership to help host a series of roadshows. Community groups had an opportunity to share their ideas on how to build a vibrant rural community, and shape the priorities of LEADER for the 2023-2027 funding Programme. Five (5) workshops were held throughout the process, one in each of the five (5) Municipal Districts.



Public Participation Network National Conference

Delegates of Kildare PPN were delighted to attend the 2023 PPN National Conference hosted by Wicklow PPN in Arklow. Kildare PPN were invited to run a workshop on 'How we Network' during the conference, highlighting 2 key initiatives ran by Kildare PPN that contribute to positive networking, the Representative / KCC collaborative events and County Kildare Social Inclusion Week.

Meetings

- The Kildare Integration Strategy steering group x 4
- The Law reform commission – The liability of unincorporated association and organisations x 1
- County Kildare LEADER Partnership staff meeting x 1
- Kildare County Council x 2
- KCC Climate Action Team x 3
- Mazars - Implementation Roadmap group x 2
- Meeting with LECP Coordinator – community consultations x 3
- Social Inclusion Week steering group x7
- National PPN Staff Meeting x 5
- KWETB x 1
- Representatives Meeting x 1
- Staff Liaison Meeting x 7
- Secretariat meeting x 11
- Midlands Regional PPN meetings x4

Community consultations for the Kildare Local Economic Community Plan

As part of the consultation workshops undertaken for the visions for community wellbeing, we were delighted to partner with Kildare County Council to run the community consultations for the upcoming Local Economic Community Plan (LECP). The data from all the workshops were compiled and submitted to the coordinator of the LECP to help feed into and shape the upcoming strategy.

Submissions

This year we fed into a number of consultations on behalf of Kildare PPN:

- The Law Reform Commission Consultation Paper on the Liability of Clubs, Societies and Unincorporated Associations was submitted on Tuesday May 2nd
- “Future democracy ahead of the local election June 2024”. Submitted this to the Seanad committee on 9th August.
- Kildare PPN make a submission to the pre-draft public consultation for the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031
- Kildare Local Economic Community Plan
- The Baseline funding for Local Authorities via the Local Government Fund
- “We Act” communications training for Charities & Community groups
- Review of local authority Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)
- Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan
- National Strategy for Migrant Integration

Consultation workshops attended:

- The formulation of the Climate Action Strategy April 20th
- The formulation of the Climate Action Strategy – May 4th



Elections

2023 was a busy year for elections in Kildare PPN. We launched numerous seats across 8 different sets of elections and welcomed several new representatives and Secretariat members. As always, filling seats can be challenging, however, we look forward to welcoming additional representatives in 2024. following the Local Elections.

Clane Town Centre First Town Team – February

In February we filled a PPN seat on a new Kildare County Council committee for the town of Clane. The successful nominee was Marie Sheehy nominated by Clane Project Centre CLG.

Local Community Development Committee – March

- Community and Voluntary x2 Filled
- Social Inclusion x1 Filled

Local Community Development Committee – April

- Social inclusion seat - Filled

Strategic Policy Committees (SPC) - April

- Climate Action SPC x 2 Filled
- Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning x 1 Vacant
- Environmental & Water Services SPC x 1 Vacant

Kildare PPN Secretariat – May

- Athy MD seat - Filled
- Kildare/ Newbridge MD seat Vacant
- Environmental seat Vacant

Kildare Sustainable Transport Forum - May

Elections for 2 positions on the Kildare Sustainable Transport Forum were ran. 0 positions filled.

Secretariat Elections – November

Following a call for nominations in November, the following seats have been filled:

- Secretariat: (Community and Voluntary seat) x 1 Filled

LCDC Elections – November

Following a call for nominations in November, the following seats have been filled:

- Local Community Development Committee: (Environmental Seat) x 1 Filled
- Local Community Development Committee: (Community & Voluntary Seat) x 1 Filled



COMMUNICATION

We communicate with our members through our bi-monthly e-Bulletins, our website and social media channels. Our online platforms are updated regularly to ensure that our member groups receive up-to-date information in matters relating to our network.



Email Newsletters
24 e-Bulletins sent

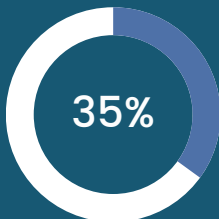


2023 Website Statistics
1,700 Unique Users

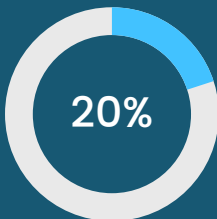
Social Media



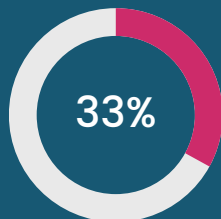
2197 Followers in 2023



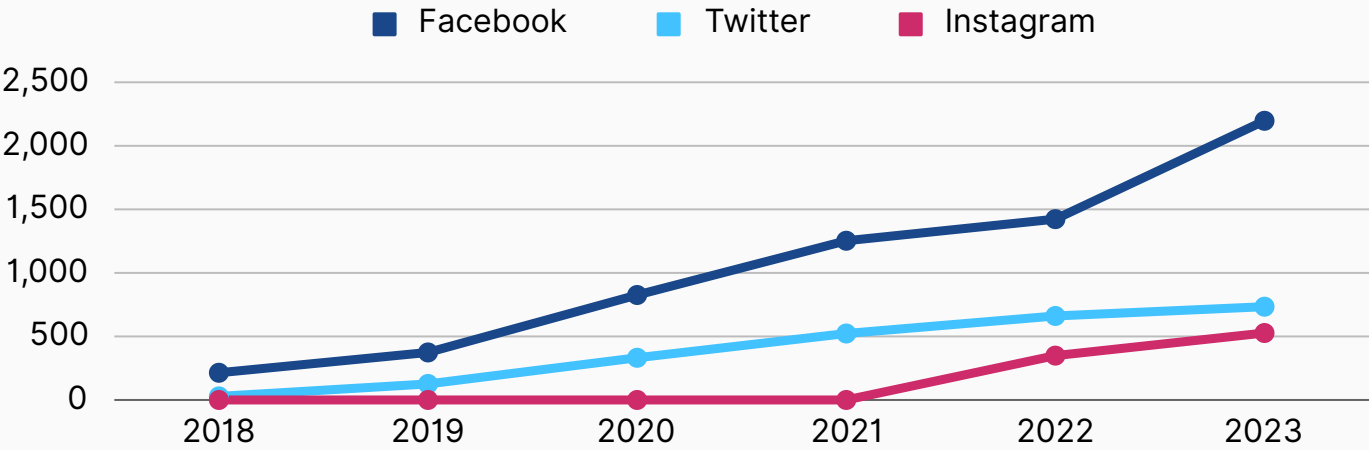
734 Followers in 2023



527 Followers in 2023



% Increase in followers in 2023



Governance



Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreement

The Memorandum of Understanding and the Service Level Agreement with County Kildare LEADER Partnership for 2023 was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development and is available to view on the website.



Policy

New Policy: Elections policy

All Kildare PPN policies are aligned to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)



Department Expenditure Report and Annual Report for 2022

The 2022 Expenditure Report and Annual Report for the Department of Rural and Community Development was completed and submitted.



Transparency

To ensure full transparency, the following documents are available for public viewing on the PPN website:

- Secretariat meeting minutes
- Plenary meeting minutes
- Kildare PPN Income & Expenditure Reports
- Kildare PPN Quarterly Reports
- Kildare Annual Reports
- Kildare Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026
- Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreement

Governance



Change in Hosting Arrangement

At the end of 2022, Kildare PPN were notified that County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) would no longer be in a position to host the PPN from 2024 onward and that we would need to source a new hosting arrangement.

In preparation for this, the Secretariat reviewed three potential hosting options:

- To set up an independent entity (or CLG) to host Kildare PPN
- To find a new host in the community, voluntary or environment sector to replace the role played by CKLP to date or
- To ask Kildare County Council, to host Kildare PPN.

Once their preferred option was chosen, the Secretariat held an online information session for Kildare PPN member groups to answer any questions or concerns they had.

The Secretariat presented options to the Plenary on November 1st and made a recommendation for Kildare PPN to set up as a CLG. This option was then approved by the Plenary and a business case will now be submitted to the Dept of Rural and Community Development by the Secretariat as soon as possible.



Kildare PPN Strategic Plan 2022-2026

As 2023 was the first full year in which our Strategic Plan was in place, we are delighted to report that we have completed or commenced 72% of ongoing objectives. These objectives will continue year on year as we continue to achieve all aims and objectives by 2026.



PPN Evaluation Checklist

Kildare PPN are compliant with 91% of the PPN Handbook's evaluation checklist.

Governance



Preparation for 2024

In preparation for 2024, the draft 2024 workplan and 2024 budget has been approved by the Secretariat and ready to bring to the Plenary for ratification in Q1 of 2024.



Sub-Committees

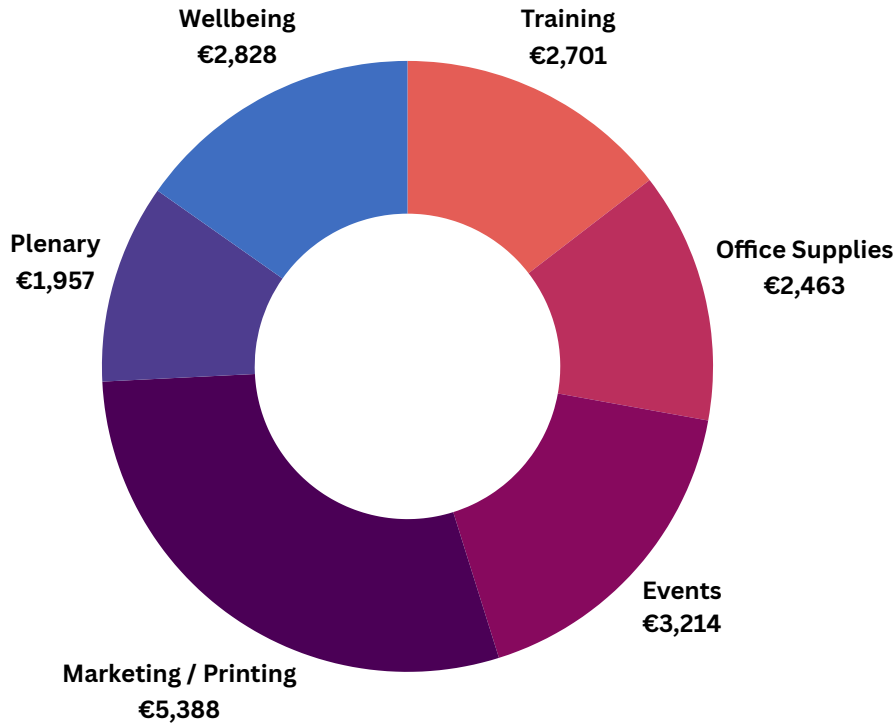
- The Finance sub-committee
- The Staff Liaison sub- committee
- The Policy sub-committee
- Hosting Transition sub-committee
- The Linkage/Thematic sub-committee

SECRETARIAT ATTENDANCE

| Name | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | S | O | p | N |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anne Crowe | Y | Y | | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | | Y |
| Anthony Egan | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Dermot O'Donnell | Y | Y | Y | | | Y | Y | Y | | Y | Y |
| Jill Mulhern | Y | | Y | Y | Y | | | | | | |
| Liz Denieffe | Y | Y | Y | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Naomi Scott-Hayward | Y | | Y | Y | | | Y | Y | Y | Y | |
| P.J Fagan | | Y | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | | Y | Y |
| Paul Leighton | | Y | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | |
| Evelyn O'Rourke | | | | | | | Y | Y | | Y | Y |

FINANCIAL REPORT

Programme Costs



Operational Costs

| Operational Costs | Amount |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Salaries and Employer PRSI | €91,774 |
| Insurance | €528 |
| Hosting (Administration) Fee | €3,000 |
| Communications / IT Subscriptions | €1,177 |
| Website | €1,105 |
| Travel Expenses / Misc | €1,380 |
| Phone | €408 |
| Wheel Membership | €150 |
| Hosting Transition Fees | €2,844 |



Community & Culture, Level 7, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co. Kildare



www.kildareppn.ie



@KildarePPN



@PPN_Kildare



Public Participation
Network Kildare



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development