

Waterford Public Participation Network (PPN) Representatives Charter

Introduction

Waterford Public Participation Network (PPN) realises that all those who represent the network need to be supported, respected and informed in order to fulfil their role and their potential as a Representative and that all representatives need to be clear on their role. With this in mind this Charter lays out responsibilities, roles and rights for the PPN's Representatives, Linkage Groups/Thematic Networks and the Secretariat and also for the Committees & Boards that the Representatives sit on.

Waterford PPN recognises that it is not always possible to have meetings prior to Representatives attending their relevant Committee or Group meeting and it is understood that consultation between the Representative, other PPN reps on the same body, the Programme Coordinator and the Linkage Group/Thematic Network may be via email, phone or other means.

Waterford PPN is appreciative of the experience and knowledge that Representatives bring to their roles, and the time that Representatives give, this helps to make the PPN a stronger and more effective voice on behalf of community and voluntary, environmental and social inclusion groups in Waterford

PPNs have representatives sitting on a wide range of communities across multiple thematic areas. Many of these are Local Authority based, but as the PPN develops this will widen to local agencies, forums and boards also. Representation structures include;

- PPN Secretariat
- Strategic Policy Committees (SPC)
- Joint Policing Committee (JPC)
- Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
- Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP)
- Other Forums, Boards and Committees

The term of office held by a PPN Representative varies according to the structure.

Responsibilities of the PPN to the Representatives

Representatives are Waterford PPN's most valuable resource and our organisation aims to encourage and support them in their role by:

- Ensuring that Representatives are provided with an induction to the PPN and provide training for representatives where possible.
- Be familiar with the Representatives (including other PPN reps on the same body) and the role of the Committees and Groups that they have representation on.
- Listen to the issues raised by Representatives and respond promptly to these issues.
- Take the time to read, understand and respond to communications that are received in relation to the PPN.
- Consult directly with the Representative, or through the Linkage group/Thematic Network, to discuss any matters to be raised at meetings.
- Ensure that Representatives are advised directly, or through the Linkage Groups/Thematic Network, of any consultations or issues the PPN or Secretariat is undertaking.
- Treat all Representatives in accordance with the PPN's Policies and adhere to the PPN's Charter.
- Provide the Representative with a clear indication of decisions made that might impact on their work on behalf of the PPN
- Ensure feedback from Representatives is shared with PPN member groups.
- Waterford PPN will ensure that Representatives receive out of pocket/travel expenses to enable them to participate in committees they were elected to as per the Waterford PPN Travel and Expenses Policy.

Responsibilities of the PPN through Linkage Group/Thematic Network/PPN Programme Coordinator to the PPN Representatives.

- Elect and Support Representatives to sit on Committees and Groups.
- Recognise that the Linkage Group/Thematic Network/Programme Coordinator is representative of the PPN and part of this larger network.
- Recognise that Linkage Groups/Thematic Network can operate quite informally and that each Linkage Group may operate differently.
- Take the time to read, understand and respond to communications that are received in relation to the Linkage Group/Thematic Network/Programme Coordinator.
- Listen to the issues raised by Representatives and respond promptly to these issues.
- Engage directly with the Representative to discuss any matters to be raised at meetings.

- Feed back to their member groups on the work of the Linkage Group and Committee.
- Adhere to the PPN's Charter and policies.

Responsibilities of Committees to the PPN Representatives

- Recognise that PPN Representatives are there to represent a diverse range of community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups in the Local Authority area.
- Provide a briefing to all members of the Committee or Group on the role of the PPN and its Representatives.
- Treat PPN Representatives with respect and equally involve them in the work and decision-making of the Committee or Group.
- To hold some meetings at times, dates and locations that facilitate the participation of volunteers. Ideally these dates should be set annually.
- To provide the PPN Representatives with an induction to the Committee or Group clearly outlining the Terms of Reference for the Committee, Committee Standing Orders, how to have issues put on the agenda etc.
- Work collaboratively with PPN Representatives to ensure that they have an opportunity to input on matters and issues that they are there to represent.
- Provide Minutes and Agendas for meetings at least two weeks in advance of meetings to allow the PPN Representative an opportunity to gain input from the PPN/Linkage Group.
- To offer relevant training to PPN Representatives and to provide support to them in interpreting technical documents.
- Ensure that any conflict of interest are clearly stated and dealt with appropriately.
- Produce an agreed meeting outcome document at the end of each meeting which can be shared with the PPN membership.
- Be familiar with and adhere to the PPN's Charter and Policies with regard to Representatives.

Responsibilities of Representatives

- To be committed to the aims, objectives and principles of Waterford Public Participation Network.
- Be willing to be representative of the PPN as a whole and to advocate for the PPN, Secretariat and Linkage Group/Thematic Network.
- Ask for support or backup when needed.
- Be willing and able to attend meetings of the relevant Committee or Group that they sit on.
- Take the time to read, understand and respond to communications that are received in relation to the PPN and the Committee or Group.
- Be willing and able to engage with the PPN/Linkage group/Thematic Network for consultation and identification of issues either through meetings, electronic or other means. Ensuring that there is an agreed record of relevant discussion and all decisions.
- Ensure that any conflict of interest is clearly stated in relation to discussions and decision making on committees.
- Clearly indicate whether feedback provided reflects a factual view of the meeting or a personal view.
- Recognise that the Linkage Group/Thematic Network or PPN is the decision-making body and that decisions may conflict with their own opinion.
- Provide a brief written report from each committee meeting they attend on the PPN's behalf. The report should provide a brief synopsis of any discussions at the meeting and the resulting decision using the PPN Reporting Template.
- Where there are multiple PPN Reps on one committee, a commitment should be made to meet prior to the meeting, to rotate the reporting responsibility and to ensure that the report is approved by all Reps prior to further circulation.
- Have due regard to issues of confidentiality when reporting from meetings.
- Ensure that the Resource worker is kept informed of all meetings attended and reports issued.
- To be readily contactable by members of the PPN, through the Programme Coordinator.
- Adhere to the PPN's Charter and Policies.

Length of Tenure

All PPN reps can serve for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms (effective from the 2019 elections) after which they must step down.

The PPN Secretariat reserves the right to vary this provision if no suitable replacement representative comes forward.