

PPN National Advisory Group

Date/Time: Thursday 07 November 2019 10.45.

Venue: Department of Rural and Community Development, Conference Room, 5th Floor, Trinity Point, 10-11 Leinster Street South, Dublin 2, D02 EF85.

Minutes

Attendees:

Pillar Representatives:

- Seán Healy (Social Inclusion Pillar).
- Michael Ewing, (Environment pillar),

PPN Volunteers:

- Aileen Eglington (Dún Laoghaire Rathdown PPN; C&V representative),
- Bibiana Savin (South Dublin PPN; Social Inclusion representative),
- Terrence Mc Donough (Galway City Community Network; Environmental representative)

PPN Resource Workers:

- Helen Howes (Wicklow PPN),
- Avril Wilson (Tipperary PPN)
- Jamie Moore (Fingal PPN).

CCMA Representatives:

- Alan Farrell (Galway County Council),

Department of Rural and Community Development:

- Ciara Bates (Chair), Deirdre Kearney, Niall Hayden, Ellie Corcoran,

Apologies:

- Rebecca Loughry, (Cork City Council),
- Catherine Lane (C&V Pillar).

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Mr Terrence Mc Donough to the group. Terrence represents the Environmental pillar in Galway City Community Network.

Adoption of Minutes.

The minutes of 10th Meeting of the Group held on 4th. September 2019 were adopted. There were no matters arising.

Jamie Moore presented Fingal PPN's on-line Directory to the group. Fingal Community County Register is co-managed by Fingal Local Authority and PPN. Using the Fingal PPN website, the add-on facility, enabled by Salesforce, facilitates full view of each of the PPN member groups. Filters allow groups to be accessed by group type, location, pillar, or many other approaches, facilitating greater exposure for the groups and easier access for all with guaranteed GDPR compliance. Jamie has agreed to prepare a brief demonstration link for dissemination to other PPNs.

Engagement with Local Authorities-

- DRCD Management Board to meet CCMA on 22 November and will raise PPNs for discussion.
- Chair acknowledged the work of the CCMA in reviewing PPNs and confirmed that EECC of CCMA will be requested to input into the PPN structural review to be carried out in 2020. Alan Farrell agreed to keep the group informed of developments, particularly regarding concerns raised in relation to SPCs which were not taken into account in CCMA document.
- Meeting was advised that Department of Housing confirmed that the 2014 SPC Guidelines remain in use; there have been no amendments to date, however it is understood that work on updating the Guidelines is to start in early 2020. DOH will welcome any input from the Group and PPNs in the matter of representation. A proposed review will include contribution from DRCD. DRCD will liaise with DOH in the matter.

Review of PPN Structure

- A sub-group will be assembled to oversee the proposed review. Terms of Reference must be agreed; a draft TOR will be produced by DRCD and circulated to NAG membership for debate. Avril Wilson, Seán Healy and Bibiana Savin have offered to join the sub-group.

Subgroups

User Handbook

- Social Justice Ireland have been appointed to draft the new Handbook based on the submissions received following the call for input.
- A schedule was outlined that involved an initial draft being submitted to the sub group for comment and in due course circulated to all stakeholder groups in early December. While a period for consultation had been factored into this schedule – late December/early January, it was accepted that an extension to this consultation period might very well be required.

Communications Strategy

- It is proposed to seek tenders for a communications strategy in 2020 subject to the availability of the required budget. It was agreed that Community Radio with approximately 160,000 listeners should be a feature of any communications plan. Recent CRAOL (Community Radio Forum of Ireland) conference made frequent reference to PPNs.

Annual Report

- Minister Canney launched the 2018 Annual Report on 25 September. It was agreed that the Annual Report sub group would be reconvened if possible in 2019 to assess whether the questions being asked and the data being reported on are relevant going forward and to commence preparations for the 2019 Annual Report.

Annual Conference

- The conference hosted by Carlow PPN and Carlow County Council was well attended and by all accounts very well received.
- Some feedback on the event included –
 - it would be more accessible for many attendees if the workshops were grouped together in future events with the field trips on another day.
 - A Friday-Saturday conference should be considered.
 - Changing the conference to earlier in the year
 - Avoiding other events – Budget week, Social Inclusion week etc.
 - Pro-active Local Authority involvement with strong PPN relationship is crucial for a successful event. Networking, Information-sharing and Best Practice are the fundamental functions of PPN conferences; how to go from strategy to practice is another theme.
- The Chair on behalf of the Department and NAG congratulated Carlow PPN and the local authority for organising a very successful event.
- It was agreed that the 2020 conference would be held on Friday (pm) and Saturday (full day). The meeting was advised that a template would be drafted and issued to

all PPNs, Directors of Service and Chief Executive Officers to invite Joint Expressions of Interest for the 2020 conference, requesting details on the proposed collaboration between the PPN and the LA and the resources to be provided by the LA to support the Conference. Among the Conference themes discussed were Climate Change strategies (how communities can contribute) and it was recommended that D/Housing be requested to present a consultative piece on the SPC guidelines.

- Support Workers

The Chair explained to the meeting what the Department was proposing in relation to Support Worker funding already allocated and funding for 2020.

The meeting was advised that six PPNs had yet to engage a Support Worker and that the Department would be writing to PPNs and LAs in this regard. The role of the Support Worker would again be outlined as that of providing support for the Resource Worker in the operation and development of the PPN specifically, and nothing else.

The Handbook will provide added clarity in this matter.

Training Needs.

The Department is currently in discussion with the tender proposer to finalise a pilot training initiative to commence in February 2020. A number of issues require to be addressed and the group will be updated on the outcome of these discussions.

Secretariat Network

The meeting was advised that the Secretariat Network is up and running and had their inaugural meeting in September. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for January 2020. The Network, along with other Stakeholders, will be involved in the forthcoming consultation process on the Handbook.

A.O.B

- DRCD will update contact list as necessary.
- LCDC Conference to take place on Saturday 9/11/19.
- National Social Enterprise Conference to take place on 21/11/19 in Croke Park.
- Volunteering Strategy – First draft to be discussed shortly by the Volunteer National Group. Consultation in December with a final draft ready in early 2020.
- Wellbeing project – training will be extended until end Q1 2020.
- Michael Ewing thanked DRCD for all the assistance with Roscommon PPN. Michael also noted that Donegal County Council allows alternates to attend for PSC meetings for PPN representatives.

Chair thanked Jamie Moore for his contributions to the National Advisory Group and PPNs generally and on behalf of the group wished him every success in his new role.

Next meeting: 05 February 2020