



15th April 2019

Circular Letter CVSP 5/2019

To: Each Director of Services with responsibility for Public Participation Network (PPN)

A Chara

I refer to Circular CSVP 9/2018 of 22 November 2018 in which the Department advised that it had secured additional funding to facilitate the engagement, on a fixed term one year temporary contract, of a Support Worker by each PPN in 2019 to support the work of the PPN Resource Worker.

This particular funding was secured following a progressive and affirmative campaign by this Department with the Department of Public Enterprise and Reform on behalf of PPNs. The Department's rationale in part for additional funding, was that local authorities, given the partnership funding model already in place for the funding of PPNs, would be asked to make a small financial contribution themselves in 2019 towards the engagement of Support Workers to support the PPNs.

The clear understanding when seeking additional funding was that it would be ring-fenced specifically for the purposes of engaging a PPN Support Worker and would not be used for any other purposes. Circular CSVP 9/2018 was quite clear in that regard when notifying local authorities and PPNs that funding had been secured.

It has come to the Departments attention that a number of local authorities may have appropriated the new Support Worker and assigned them to administrative work on behalf of the local authority. In some instances, the Department understands that these particular workers have little or no engagement whatsoever with the PPN and are certainly not operating as Support workers for the PPN Resource Workers as intended.

We are anxious that arrangements and the assignment of duties to the Support workers is in line with Circular CSVP 9/2018 and that no arrangement is in place that undermines the good work undertaken by the PPN National Advisory Group and the support of this Department to the development of PPNs and the network nationally. As outlined in the circular, the additional support was to allow the Resource Worker to focus on growing and developing the PPN and its members, in order to realise the full potential of PPNs as envisaged in the Report of the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government.

PPNs will now be requested to submit to the Department details of the appointment of their Support Workers and importantly, in the context of the foregoing, the duties and responsibilities currently being undertaken by those individuals.

Yours sincerely



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cc to each Resource Worker.