

**6th Meeting of the PPN National Advisory Group held in the East Room,
Custom House, Dublin on 7th September 2017.**

Attendance:

Stakeholder Group: PPN Volunteers:

- Charles Stanley-Smith (Tipperary PPN, Environment representative)
- Tess Murphy (Longford PPN, Social Inclusion representative)

Stakeholder Group: Pillar Representatives:

- Seán Healy (Community & Voluntary Pillar)
- Michael Ewing (Environmental Pillar)

Stakeholder Group: PPN Resource Workers:

- Helen Howes (Wicklow PPN)

**Stakeholder Group: Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local
Government:**

- Officials - Deirdre Kearney (Chair), Jason Kearney, Breda Bailey, Ellie Corcoran

Apologies:

- Donal Brennan, (Laois County Council, Director of Services)
- Bernie Doherty, (Dublin City Council, Director of Services)
- Annette Barr Jordan, (Westmeath PPN, Resource Worker)
- Geraldine Timlin, (Sligo PPN, Resource Worker)
- Siobhán O'Dowd, Cork PPN

Opening and Introductions

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Advisory Group Nomination Process

Following receipt of nominations from the PPN volunteers and confirmation of no nomination from some, selection of the three PPN volunteers took place on August 30th, overseen by representatives of the current PPN Advisory Group and the Department. Three PPN volunteers and three reserve candidates were selected. The three selected volunteers were subsequently notified and have accepted their nomination to the Advisory Group. The first meeting of the new Advisory Group is scheduled for early October.

It was agreed that details of the three new PPN volunteer appointees and the three reserve candidates would be made available, along with the remaining membership of the Advisory Group.

Action Point: Details of new PPN advisory Group and the reserve PPN volunteer candidates to be posted on Department's website and notified to all PPNs.

Communications and co-ordination

Representatives of the Resource Workers Network circulated a memo in support of their request for additional staff resources to support the PPN. They reiterated their previous request for additional resources particularly given the range of activities PPNs are required to engage with. As any additional investment would benefit both the PPN and the Local Authority, the issue of apportioning costs was discussed.

In response, the Department re-iterated its position that additional funding is not available for this purpose in 2017.

Salesforce

A small number of PPNs are not currently availing of Salesforce and one has raised concerns regarding data protection. Members of the Resource Workers Network engaged with some of those PPNs to address their concerns. It was agreed that the Department would consult with the Data Protection Commissioners' Office regarding support on Data Protection issues and that Tricia Nolan would address the new Advisory Group on Salesforce also.

Action Point: Department to consult with the Data Protection Commissioner's Office to seek support on data protection issues. Tricia Nolan to be invited to address new Advisory Group on Salesforce. Department to consider additional Salesforce training in 2018.

National PPN conference and seminar

There was a general discussion regarding the proposed PPN conference being hosted by Sligo PPN in October. All members re-iterated the urgency in having the Agenda circulated to all interested stakeholders, accompanied by details of how the conference would be of benefit to the groups.

Action Point: Department to liaise with Sligo PPN regarding the conference.

Audit

The Department advised that a number of PPNs were selected for audit and were requested to provide expenditure details for 2016. These returns are currently being compiled.

Environmental Pillar

Michael Ewing outlined the ongoing work facilitated by the Department's fiscal support. He advised that the EP had engaged a full-time member of staff for 6 months to encourage environmental groups to join the PPNs. He recommended that the Department write to all Resource Workers requesting they facilitate the work of this person.

Action Point: Department to write to all Resource Workers requesting them to engage with Environment Pillar on this matter.

Capacity Building & Training

Sean Healy summarised recent and forthcoming training events and seminars organised by Social Justice Ireland (SJI) for PPNs, including training for local

authority members and staff. Examples of potential future areas for training include the organisation of successful secretariats, media training for secretariats, policy development training. The Department undertook to examine the potential for LCDC/PPN training.

Monitoring & Evaluation

At the Department's request, Social Justice Ireland is compiling a report on PPN 2016 annual reports, which it is intended, will be launched at the Sligo conference. A subgroup of the existing Advisory Group will meet to finalise the document. There was general agreement on the need to circulate the findings of the Annual Report.

It was also agreed that the template for future annual reports may need revision.

AOB

- It was acknowledged that insurance remains an issue for some PPNs. Department to discuss LCDC insurance with Libraries Development and Community Policy Section
- The Department advised that Benefacts wishes to liaise with PPNs and to meet with the new Advisory Group.
- Resource workers suggested that a template for submissions should be introduced to be used for use by all PPNs to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens. The time available for effective consultation was also discussed.
- Ambiguity persists regarding the requirement for PPNs to register under Charities legislation. It was agreed that a representative from the Charities Regulator's Office would be invited to address the new Advisory Group.

The representatives of the Environmental and C&V pillars outlined work on the development of Sustainable Development Goals and work being undertaken for both Social Justice Ireland and the Environment Pillar by the EPA and the Clean Technology Centre in Cork in connection with the overall development of a Wellbeing Statement. They advised that funding was being secured from the EPA to develop a toolkit and the commissioning of further pilot projects.

As this was the final meeting of the current Advisory Group, the Department expressed its appreciation to outgoing members for their work on this group and wished them well for the future.