

County Wicklow PPN

Minutes of Secretariat meeting held 14th September in The Brockagh Centre, Laragh

Attendees: John Mullen, Helen Lawless, Alice O'Donnel, Gertie Salley (Chair), Niamh Wogan, Ann Halpin, Eamonn McCann, Mai Quaid, and Helen Howes,

1. Apologies: Liam O' Loughlin

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of the 20th June 2017 were approved on Mai's proposal and seconded by Eamonn

There has been only one nomination to the vacant Representative seat advertised for the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC. Kate Duggan was nominated by An Tairseach to the committee

It was agreed that as there were no other nominations, Kate would take the Environmental College Representative seat on the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC

A discussion took place in relation to other vacant representative seats

Helen to: Contact Linda McDonald, Arklow MD Administrator Re setting up a coastal network for FLAG

Put out a focused call to fill the C & V seat on the Housing SPC

3. Financial Report

- An up to date Financial Report was circulated with a revised budget proposal
- The revised budget proposal included an increase in contract hours from 7-14 hours per week which if implemented would result in an overspend of the €80,000 budget. It was reported that an Email from Michael Nicholsan confirmed that WCC would cover an overspend of up to €3,500
- It was pointed out that salaries plus travel amounts to 83% of the total PPN budget. The Secretariat recognised that PPN work is labour intensive and that the percentage reflects the nature of the work

Decisions:

- The Financial Report was approved
- Helen to ask Grainne about increasing her contracted hours

The above decisions were carried on Gertie's proposal and seconded by Niamh

4. Workplan

A report to date was circulated as well as the action plan for the remainder of the year and the following points were noted:

- Membership is up by 21 groups so far this year.
- The presentations to the Municipal Districts and at the Community Awards went well and were thought to have resulted in an increase in membership
- Submissions – The importance of encouraging participation and engagement in public consultations was highlighted. PPN Submissions were seen to increase the value of the PPN and support the PPN Representatives. However, concerns were raised in relation to the large amount of public consultations during the summer and the tight time frame for responses. It was highlighted that it is unreasonable to expect responses in the holiday period and within a short timeframe. It is also disrespectful of our member groups when consultations are not rolled out in a qualitative and inclusive manner. Concerns were also raised in relation to the amount of time taken up preparing submissions when there is a lot to be done locally. Suggestions were made regarding setting criteria and priorities in relation to decisions on participating in a public consultation/submission. Also, running at

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least one regional meeting to get a broad view from members might help further consultation

Helen to draft a proposal in relation to community engagement with public consultations that highlights the importance of giving time to qualitative participation. The proposal should also highlight the importance of there being an impact that reflects the views of the people who responded. The proposal should be presented to the Advisory Group asking their support in circulating it to all government departments.

- Rural Seminar – Helen provided a brief report in relation to organising a seminar on rural issues. Irish Rural Link have agreed to participate and it is hoped that Seamus Boland will be a key note speaker. The Secretariat advised that: 1. Holywood Community Centre is only available on Tuesday nights – Donard Community Centre would be a good alternative 2. Due to the huge area coverage of the Baltinglass Municipal District it would be more inclusive to hold the seminar in 2 locations – Carnew & Tinahely were suggested as possible 2nd areas. 3. Contact Carlow, Wexford & Kildare PPNs to advertise the event as some people on/across the border may be interested in attending
- Plenary – Secretariat & Reps meeting – It was agreed that it was a good idea to hold the Secretariat and Representatives meeting before the Plenary meeting with the suggestion of holding the first meeting from 3.30 – 5.30, breaking for dinner and the Plenary starting at 7.30pm

5. National Update

A discussion took place in relation to attending the National PPN Conference in Sligo. The Secretariat advised that Helen and Grainne should attend and if necessary travel the day before and stay overnight – with due regard to fiscal prudence

Helen circulated her notes from the National Advisory Committee meeting. It was pointed out that the Advisory Group is supporting a proposal for extra staffing resources for PPNs. Helen also reported that plans were underway to organise PPN Resource Worker professional development training. It has been suggested that this might be done over 2 days with an overnight stay (possibly in Glenree)

7. Any Other Business

- A query was raised in relation to the Healthy Ireland funding. It was reported that these grants are being released through LCDCs and CYPSCs (Children & Young Peoples Services Committees) Applications were circulated recently with a very tight timeframe. **Helen to put together a proposal to bring to the department asking that more guidance is provided when funding streams are first flagged so that groups can be more prepared when the funding stream does come on line. Also if it would be possible to find out what % of funds is not spent and if money is being used well.**
- Heritage Forum – It was pointed out that the Co Wicklow Heritage Forum has no PPN Representative on it. It was suggested that it would be beneficial if there was a PPN representative on the forum. **Helen to bring this to the attention of WCC**
- Environmental Network – Helen reported having a positive meeting with Moira Byrne re working together to build a PPN environmental network and raising awareness of the development of a WCC adaptation plan. Efforts to progress this have had no response to date

Next Meeting

To be decided by doodle poll