

County Wicklow PPN

Minutes of Secretariat meeting held 16th January 2017 in CEART, Wicklow Town

Attendees: John Mullen (Chair), Helen Lawless, Gertie Salley, Eamonn McCann, Mai Quaid, Grainne Quinn and Helen Howes,

1. Apologies: Liam O' Loughlin, Alice O'Donnel, Niamh Wogan, and Ann Halpin

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of the 14th September 2017 were approved on Mai's proposal and seconded by Eamonn

- There has been no engagement with the Heritage Forum to date. **Helen/Grainne to contact the Heritage Forum to forge links.**
- It was reported that the first meeting of the PPN Environmental Network had been well attended and positive. The group has undertaken to develop a Terms of Reference

3. Correspondence

- A letter was written to Minister Michael Ring requesting that community groups would get more time between the announcement of funding schemes and their applications along with more advice and support in this regard. This would allow groups to be better prepared and submit better applications which would lead to better outcomes. A response was received from the minister's office advising that the matter would be put before the minister. There has been nothing further
- Letters & Emails were written to Andrew Doyle TD, Pat Casey TD, Simon Harris TD, Stephen Donnelly TD, and John Brady TD asking them to support a letter which was sent to Minister Michael Ring which requested further resources to enable PPNs to fulfil their extensive work requirements. A supportive response was received from Simon Harris TD
- A letter was received from the Dept Community & Rural Development in relation to Co Wicklow PPN financial provisions for 2017

4. Memoranda of Understanding and WTG/WCC Service Level Agreement

Helen informed the meeting that she has reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding between Co Wicklow PPN and Wicklow County Council, the Memorandum of Understanding between Co Wicklow PPN and Wicklow Travellers Group and the Service Level Agreement between Wicklow Travellers Group and Wicklow County Council as it relates to the PPN. There are some slight amendments needed in relation to dates, language and time-frames. Following some discussion, **it was agreed that Helen Lawless would also review the documents. The Secretariat agreed that with Helen's approval the documents could be signed. Proposed by Gertie and seconded by John**

5. Finance

Final Financial Accounts for 2017 were circulated. Accounts showed a carry-over of €9,900.37 on 1 January 2017 in addition €2,242.15 was received from Wicklow Travellers Group as returned overpayments in relation to staff costs, mobile phone charges and bank

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fees, and €80,000 was drawn down from Wicklow County Council. Expenditure for the year was €80,987.78. The carry over into 2017/balance in bank is €11,154.75. **The 2017 accounts were approved on John's proposal and seconded by Gertie**

Grainne left the room

Estimates for 2018 were circulated. Figures were based on 2017 expenditure. Calculations included extending Grainne's contract for January to the end of July and the possibility of renewing it in September to December. **The extension of Grainne's consultancy was agreed on Mai's proposal and seconded by Gertie.** A budget of €85,000 would be needed to cover the estimates. It was also pointed out that more money might be needed to cover training and extra might be needed to print the funding handbook. **The 2018 budgets were approved on Mai's proposal and seconded by Helen L.**

Grainne re-joined the meeting

7. Workplan 2018

- An update was given on the Wellbeing Toolkit development process and outcomes so far. Those involved reported the experience as being beneficial and worthwhile. Concerns were raised in relation to the 3-hour consultation meeting proposal.
- Grainne has pulled the information together to develop the Funding Handbook. It is hoped to launch this in each Municipal District in April and May. Helen is going to contact the area administrators to support the launch and to provide an MD update to attending groups. **Helen to circulate the handbook to the Secretariat**
- Grainne is currently drafting a Co Wicklow PPN Data Protection Policy. To support this she attended a session run by Dun Laoghaire PPN. A data mapping process is now underway. Further work is needed around the Reps Charter and in particular to developing an induction process. This will be discussed further at the next Secretariat and Reps meeting along with holding elections later this year
- A questionnaire was run again at the end of the year to evaluate our work and to feed into the 2018 Workplan. There was a fairly good online response. Indications are that member groups need training in relation to committee skills, social media, data protection, charities regulation, governance code, strategic planning and volunteer management. **Helen & Grainne to link in with KWETB, CWP and other organisations to support training needs**
- Following the establishment of the environmental network, Helen reported that she has been raising the possibility of developing a social inclusion network for the county. This would need to be discussed at length with all our social inclusion reps.

8. Any Other Business

- A concern was raised in relation to commissioning and regulatory compliance. It was stated that commissioning, tendering procedures and increased bureaucracy is making it difficult for small local community groups and services to survive. It appears that there is a government departmental push for group amalgamations and some have developed consortiums in response. It is feared that this is professionalising the community & voluntary sector. **Helen to query if this is a national issue through the Resource Workers Network.**

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- The lack of GAA member groups was raised as a concern and a discussion on increasing membership ensued. **Helen to check in with Liam about raising the PPN profile with the GAA, also to target national organisations to filter down to local groups**
- Helen reported that she has been invited to sit on the steering committee for Co Wicklow Comhairle na Nog. This is the younger people's council. **Agreed that Helen should sit on the Comhairle Steering Committee**
- Helen reported that she is sitting on a sub group of the National Advisory Group set up to develop the 2017 Annual Report Template. So far the draft is extensive and will need feed in from the Secretariat and Representatives
- Arklow Positive Aging AGM will take place 22 January
- **PPN Member Survey Draw** – Winners of €100 towards group activities were: Lacken Community Development Association, Kildare West Wicklow Youth Services, and Wicklow Town ICA. The draw was videoed and uploaded to the PPN Facebook Page.

Next Meeting

To be decided by doodle poll