

County Wicklow PPN

Minutes of Secretariat meeting held 29th April 2020 by Zoom Call

Attendees: Aoibhinn McCloy, Diana Gallagher, Gertie Salley, Grainne Quinn, Helen Howes (Chair), Mai Quaid, Niamh Wogan and Phyllis Farrell.

Apologies: Aisling Foran and Stephen Kearon.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of the 1st April 2020 were approved on Mai's proposal and seconded by Phyllis.

- **WhatsApp or Salesforces group** for the Secretariat: Decision not to set up a What's App group, Secretariat happy with current methods of communication. Difficulty in accessing/opening attachments to emails was raised.
Action: Grainne to follow up on problems with attachments.
- **PPN User guide.**
Helen informed the meeting that there had been no further developments or communication from the Department in relation to the PPN User Guide.
- **PPN HR Subgroup** (Aoibhinn, Mai & Niamh)
This group is continuing to work on reviewing HR guidelines of similar groups/organisations with a view to drafting own.
Action: Niamh to forward documents to subgroup
- **PPN Representatives.**
Following discussion in relation to PPN Representatives and the recruitment and management of new Reps. It was suggested that when new people are taking up Rep position that a meeting/training be organised. This is particularly relevant in relation to the LCDC, where a number of the reps are due to stand down this year.
- **PPN Liaison Subgroup.**
Following discussion, it was generally felt that it was not necessary to hold the planned Liaison subgroup meeting.
Action: Helen to contact Patricia Reilly WCC and notify her of the decision.

2. Correspondence

The following correspondence were read into the minutes:

- CVSP4/2020: Re Update on PPN Funding
- CVSP5/2020: Re PPN Annual Report 2019

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3. Finance

Helen presented the April Finance Report, the following points were highlighted:

- Total expenditure for April was €7,977.20
- Drawdown request from Wicklow County Council due into the PPN account on 4/5th May.
- The Department's 1st tranche payment for 2020, will not be linked to the submission of a PPN's Annual Report, as is usually the criteria.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our workplan and budget was discussed. It was agreed that in the event of an underspend in 2020 due to the cancellation of events etc the PPN would not establish a grant scheme for groups, as this is not in keeping with the role/function of the PPN, rather we would continue to utilise funds on building group capacity and the participation.

Finance report approved: proposed by Gertie and seconded by Phyllis.

4. Workplan 2020 **COVID-19 Response**

Helen presented an update on the work undertaken by the PPN in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Much of this work is being undertaken in collaboration with the Wicklow COVID-19 Community Response Forum.

This group is currently exploring the establishment of a project to 'Get Wicklow Talking'. This project will seek to provide phone contact support to older vulnerable members of the community.

Helen also notified the Secretariat about the discussion at the Forum around Digital Poverty. The COVID-19 crisis and the subsequent dependence on access to digital technology to stay connected and informed has highlighted this as a real issue within communities.

The Department's request for information on the work undertaken by the PPN in response to COVID-19 and the lessons learnt was discussed.

Action:

- Helen to follow up with Deirdre Whitfield re 'Get Wicklow Talking' Project.
- Digital Poverty – explore funding options or corporate donations (IBM?)
- Mai to share Age Action Daily COVID-19 Update email with Niamh.
- All to consider lessons learnt from COVID-19 response for submission to the Dept.
Helen to compile and email the Dept by end of week (Fri 1st May)

Funding Schemes administered by Wicklow Co. Co.

This topic came up for discussion within the context of the impact that the COVID-19 crisis is having on community organisations, vulnerable members of the community and groups providing emergency response services.

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Action: Helen/Grainne to contact Wicklow Co. Co. to enquire about the following:

- Take up of the COVID-19 Emergency Fund and plans for unsubscribed funds
- Situation/plan in relation to the Community Grants scheme
- Situation in relation to other funding schemes due to open for applications in the coming months.

Membership

The list of new member groups since the Feb Secretariat meeting was circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting was notified that there are now 332 members groups and since the Feb Secretariat meeting 33 new member groups have joined the PPN.

The meeting was notified that the Re-registration of member groups is continuing and that there are now only 24 groups still to re-register.

Action:

- Grainne to continue re-registration process, she may contact members of the Secretariat for assistance with the re-registration of groups known to them.
- Next project on membership is to encourage associate members to become full members. This will be progressed when the Re-registration is complete.

Procurement Policy

Meeting agreed that the draft policy be circulated to members for feedback prior to adoption.

Action: Helen/Grainne to circulate the draft policy to member groups and give a closing date for submission of feedback.

Website Development

The meeting was informed that work on this project has been delayed.

Action: Grainne to contact Aisling and Stephen to organise a meeting to review proposals/quotes for this job.

PPN National Conference

Helen informed the meeting that following discussions with Harriet Emerson a revised plan for the 2020 National Conference had been submitted to the Conference Subgroup for consideration and feedback. She also notified that meeting that the Hotel would not impose a cancellation fee, that a Spring date was not an option with the Hotel, but that Oct 2021 would be available.

Discussion around the 2020 National Conference addressed the following:

Should the Conference be held in 2020: The general consensus of the Secretariat was that the National Conference should not be held in October 2020 due to the uncertainty around events as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding for the Conference: Should the event be postponed until 2021 two options in relation to the funding were discussed: to submit a proposal to the Dept. to reallocate the funding to a research piece on 'learning from the COVID-19 response'; or the Dept to

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transfer the funding to Co. Wicklow PPN who would hold it in account for 2021 event. The meeting felt that given the financial demands that the Govt will face in 2021 the second option may be the safest option to ensure that a Conference could go ahead in 2021.

Helen notified the meeting that Sligo PPN are already liaising with IT Sligo in relation to a research project around the learning and PPN role in response to COVID-19.

Action: Helen to discuss the National Conference with Patricia Reilly and notify her of the Secretariats thoughts on it as outlined above.

PPN Events Update

Environmental Event / SDG Mapping

When this event was being planned, the development of a mapping system/app where Community Groups in the County could map their work against the Sustainable Development Goals was raised. Work on progressing this system/app is continuing in collaboration with Jim Callery WCC.

Action: Helen/Grainne to work with Jim to progress this project.

Training Fair

The meeting was informed that an outline plan in line with discussions held at the previous Secretariat meeting has been developed and initial approaches have been made to possible providers/consultants

Action: Helen/Grainne to continue to progress this work.

Members Event on Supporting Mental Health/Wellness

The meeting was informed of work undertaken to organise an online session for member groups on this topic.

Action: Helen to discuss further with Avril Bailey with a view to running this event in the coming weeks.

Social Inclusion Week

The meeting agreed:

- That some work could continue to ensure that a focus on Social Inclusion within Co. Wicklow was achieved.

Action: Helen/Grainne to organise a meeting of the SI planning subgroup and progress the establishment of a SI Facebook page.

PPN June Plenary

Concerns around the holding of the Plenary remotely were noted.

Action: Helen/Grainne to explore possibilities in relation to the June Plenary.

Disability Awareness Piece

It was agreed that a further meeting of this working group be called to explore options/possibilities around this collaborative piece of work within the context of COVID-19.

Action: Helen/Grainne to organise a meeting with partner organisations on this work.

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Virtual Event Suggestion: Consider event with non COVID-19 theme, and focus on something that people/group would enjoy and be interested in.

Action: All to consider possibilities/ideas

Strategic Plan

The development of a Strategic Plan for Co. Wicklow PPN during 2020 was discussed. Given the current crisis and the uncertainty around what the future will hold for the community and voluntary sector the meeting decided not to progress work on a Strategic Plan during 2020.

Action: Postpone any action on the development of a Strategic Plan

5. Date for Next Secretariat Meeting

Not discussed at the meeting. Arrange by Doodle Poll.