

County Wicklow PPN

Minutes of Secretariat meeting held
2nd February 2021 @ 7.30pm
via Zoom Call

Attendees: Aoibhinn McCloy (Facilitated), Diana Gallagher, Eleanor Phillips, Gertie Salley, Grainne Quinn, Helen Howes, Mai Quaid, Niamh Wogan, Phyllis Farrell, Sarah MacArtain and Stephen Kearon.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of the 14th Dec 2020 were approved by the Meeting.

HR Subgroup Update: The meeting was informed that the subgroup (Aoibhinn, Mai & Niamh) has drafted Terms of Reference which need to be finalised.

Action: HR Subgroup to organise meeting for week of 15th Feb

2. Correspondence

The meeting was notified of the following correspondence:

- CVSP 7 PPN Handbook, Financial Controls, & Other Financial Information
New Handbook supersedes all previous versions of PPN User Guide.
Outline of how PPN funding to be used.
Accounts, Audit & MOU requirements
Reconciliation of funding
- Dept Letter (14th Jan 2021) *Confirming funding for Support Worker position.*
- Representative & Secretariat Resignations

The meeting was informed of the following resignations:

Aisling Foran (Wicklow Triple A) resigned from the Secretariat (Social Inclusion seat)
Annette Vaucanson Kelly (Wicklow Planning Alliance) resigned from the Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC (East Wicklow Environmental Seat)

3. Finance

January 2021 Finance Report

Helen highlighted the following in the financial report:

- The Opening Balance of €12,528.36 was all committed to specific items/projects (€10,000 payment from WCC for the National Conference, carry over of one month Support Worker salary and balance from the National Resource Worker Training)

Projected Income and Expenditure

Helen talked the meeting through these figures. Issues raised by the Secretariat included:

Staff Salaries: It was noted that the Resource Worker had not received a salary increase since she took up the position in July 2015. Following discussion around; direction from the Dept on this issue, who has permission to grant a Salary increase, the sustainability of a decision to increase salary - any decision to grant an annual increment to be linked to an annual increase in the PPN budget, the following was agreed:

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Agreed/Action:

- This issue will be set as a priority.
- The HR subgroup will look into staff salaries and increments further.
- Mai will raise the issue at the National Secretariat Network.

IT/Multimedia Equipment: This expenditure line promoted a discussion around the development of a Procurement Policy. Aoibhinn informed the meeting that this was an area that WTG was also working on and indicated that she would share information with the PPN. Differences in requirements was acknowledged.

Agreed/Action:

- The PPN to develop a general procurement policy.
- The PPN to develop a spec for its IT support needs and seek tenders. Stephen offered to help with this process.

Line Management/Hosting Cost: Helen explained that this is based on the following: 4% of Aoibhinn's time and 1.4% of Wicklow Travellers Groups Administrators time.

Bank Charges: The meeting was informed that expenditure was based on a quarterly bank charges fee plus a fee to Wicklow Travellers Group for processing online banking payments. The meeting was informed that there is an expectation that Bank Charges could increase during 2021.

Insurance and Audit & Account Costs: The meeting was informed that these costs are paid to Wicklow Travellers Group in line with their apportionment policy. The charge to the PPN is calculated on the following criteria:

- the percentage of the total WTG funding that the PPN core funding represents.
- and in the case of the Insurance cost footfall is also considered.
- WTG Building costs are excluded as the PPN is not housed in the Building.

(Further discussion on the hosting and apportionment costs held under the Agenda item SLA & MOUs)

National Conference: Helen explained that she had allocated €3,000 of PPN core funding to this event.

Agreed/Action:

- The meeting approved the January Finance Report and the Projected Income and Expenditure figures.
- The figures will be brought to the PPN Liaison Subgroup Meeting on Friday 5th Feb.

Financial Approval Roles 2021

Agreed: The meeting agreed that Mai and Gertie will continue to be responsible for the approval of PPN payments during 2021.

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4. Work Report

Membership

The meeting was informed that 2 groups had joined the PPN since the December meeting. Details of the new member groups were presented, and their membership was approved by the Meeting.

Members Survey Draw

All 39 responses to the 2020 Members Survey were entered into the draw. Each entry was assigned a number and members of the Secretariat (Mai, Sarah and Stephen) whose group was not involved in the draw were asked to choose a number between 1 and 39 inclusive. The three groups chosen were:

- Coolkenno GAA Club
- Golden Circle Social Group
- Wicklow SPCA

It was suggested that the PPN do a press release, announcing the winners and encourage groups to join the PPN.

Action:

- Helen/Grainne to notify groups, get bank account details and forward €100 to each.
- Helen to prepare a piece for the papers.

Service Level Agreement & Memorandum of Association

Helen presented the draft documents to the meeting. She outlined the changes to the 2021 documents as follows:

SLA (between Wicklow Travellers Group and Wicklow County Council): Only changes to this document from previous years are those required to reflect the adoption nationally of the PPN Handbook and Financial Controls Documents.

MOU (between PPN and Wicklow County Council): Only changes to this document from previous years are those required to reflect the adoption nationally of the PPN Handbook and Financial Controls Documents.

MOU (between PPN and Wicklow Travellers Group): Changes include:

- those required to reflect the adoption nationally of the PPN Handbook and Financial Controls Documents
- more detail and clarification on the WTG Apportionment Policy as it pertains to Co Wicklow PPN.

The increase in some of the costs apportioned to the PPN was noted, Helen and Aoibhinn presented further details and explanations on the apportionment policy. Following a robust discussion which considered the basis of apportionment and its impact on the PPN budget and the policy/procedures in other PPNs the Secretariat agreed that the total of hosting fees and apportioned costs paid to Wicklow Travellers Group should not exceed 8% of the PPN Core Funding.

Agreed & Action:

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- If, at a future date, the total of hosting fees and apportioned costs due to Wicklow Travellers Group appeared to exceed 8% of the PPN Core Funding, a meeting of the Secretariat will be called to mitigate for any severe impacts to the PPN work programme.
- Helen to update MOU (PPN & WTG) to reflect the above.
- Draft SLA & MOU documents to be brought to the Liaison Sub-group Meeting on Friday (5th Feb) for final approval.

Training.

Good Governance Training in collaboration with Carmichael.

Helen reported that the second session of this training had been well attended and that feedback was positive. She also informed the meeting that the third and fourth sessions are scheduled for Monday 1st March and Monday 12th April.

Stakeholder Training SJI Creating Capable Communities

The meeting was informed that up to 17 representatives from Co. Wicklow will be involved in this training which is due to commence on the 8th March. Helen highlighted the absence of Local County Councilors from the participants from Wicklow but noted that the time available for recruitment was very tight.

Action: Helen/Grainne to progress work on this training with SJI.

Climate Change Consultation

The meeting was informed that the Department of Environment Climate and Communications plan to collaborate with the PPNs to hold a national dialogue on Climate Action. Helen notified the Secretariat that Co. Wicklow PPN had expressed interest in working on hosting an online climate conversation and that Helen Lawless was willing to work with us to access the training available from the Department and facilitate such a conversation.

Consultation/Members event on Windfarms

Helen informed the meeting about an approach received from Colding Wind Farm in relation to holding a public meeting/consultation. She also spoke about a request in relation to the PPN facilitating an event/discussion around Kilranelagh Wind Farm. Based on these requests' advice was sought from IEN on how to proceed and it was suggested that the PPN should not get involved in holding an event on windfarms, but rather encourage the companies to hold public consultations.

Action: The Secretariat agreed with this advice

2020 Members Survey findings

Grainne presented a brief overview of the feedback received from members to the 2020 Members Survey.

Agreed/Action

- Infographic presenting the overview of the survey results to be posted to our website.
- Helen & Grainne to work through the detail of the replies.

PPN National Reports

National Secretariat Network

Mai presented the following information from the National Secretariat Network meeting:

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- The National Secretariat Network had voted in Linda O'Shea (Waterford PPN) as their representative on the National Advisory Group.
- The Network had prepared a submission to the Department on making IT equipment available for Secretariat members to enable them to continue in their role for the PPN.
- The Dept. had informed that Network that they want to meet PPN Secretariats during 2021.
- The Dept. congratulated the Network on their work on the PPN Handbook.

Mai reminded the meeting that she was willing to join the National subgroup on the PPN National Conference.

Action: Helen to let Mai know when the next meeting of the Conference sub-group will be held.

National Resource Worker Network – next meeting on Thursday 11th Feb.

6. Date for Next Secretariat Meeting

Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom call.