

County Wicklow PPN

Minutes of Secretariat meeting held 1st April 2020 by Zoom Call

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

Apologies: Aoibhinn McCloy and Stephen Kearon.

Welcome new Member: Helen welcomed Aisling to the Co. Wicklow PPN Secretariat.

1. Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of the 11th February 2020 were approved on Phyllis's proposal and seconded by Mai.

- **WhatsApp or Salesforces group** for the Secretariat: This continues to be on hold due to diversion of focus to COVID-19 response.
Action: Grainne to follow up on the establishment of the chatter group.
- **PPN User guide.**
 - Helen informed the meeting that submissions were made, but there had been no further developments or communications in relation to the finalisation of the User guide.
 - Mai reported that the National Secretariat had finalised their review of the User guide, submitted it, but had not received any communication from the Department.**Action:** Mai and Helen will forward feedback if received.
- **PPN HR Subgroup** (Aoibhinn, Mai & Niamh): The meeting planned for Tues 10th March did not go ahead. The sub-group is currently reviewing HR guidelines of similar groups/organisations with a view to drafting own.
Action: The Subgroup will continue to progress this work.
- **PPN Representatives.**
 - Secretariat: Aisling Foran was welcomed to the Secretariat as one of the Social Inclusion Reps. Helen apologies for not being able to meet with Aisling prior to her first Secretariat meeting.
Action: Helen/Grainne to forward Co. Wicklow PPN policies, reps charter etc to Aisling.
 - Climate & Biodiversity Action SPC Rep. The meeting was notified that Keith Scanlon had stood down from the PPN East Wicklow Rep position to run in the Seanad election. Nominations for a replacement were sought and one received prior to the deadline – Annette Kelly was nominated by Wicklow Planning Alliance. The meeting approved her appointment till the next Plenary meeting.

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Action: Helen/Grainne to notify Annette and forward Co. Wicklow PPN policies, reps charter etc to her.

2. Correspondence – there was no correspondence to read into the meeting.

3. Finance

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

- Average monthly spend is circa €8,500, as balance close to this figure a drawdown request was submitted to Wicklow County Council.
- PPN funding is usually tied to the submission of the Annual Report. As the template for the annual report has not been circulated by the Department the issue of the release of funding has been raised.
- A payment of €13,000 was received from the Department which related to the Support Workers salary.

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

Action: Helen to follow up with both Wicklow County Council and Department in relation to the release/drawdown of 2020 funding.

4. Workplan 2020 COVID-19 Response

Helen informed the meeting that the workplan was seriously impacted by the COVID-19 developments and that it had become the main focus of the work of the PPN in recent weeks:

- Co. Wicklow PPN began mapping the community effort and recording it on our website, social media and circulating it to member groups.
- Sending regular updates to member groups on local and national developments etc.
- We joined the Wicklow County Council COVID-19 Community Response Forum. Mai raised the issue about the representation of the Older Peoples' Council on the Forum. Helen highlighted that Richella Wood from the Co. Co. is a member and as their link to the Older Peoples' Network she could be representing this grouping.
- In collaboration with the Volunteer Centre, Co. Wicklow Partnership, Muintir na Tire and DFI we developed and circulated a survey to capture community response services and input the details into the Wicklow County Council COVID-19 mapping system to support the work of the Helpline.

Helen notified the meeting that the Department had decided to use PPN contact databases to share information on the COVID-19 developments. They instructed South Dublin Volunteer Centre (organisation who support PPN database systems) to circulate the mailings directly to PPN databases. This raised issues around GDPR and the duplication of some emails to members. The issue was raised with the Dept and they accepted responsibility should an issue of a breach of GDPR be raised. Helen asked for direction on this and it was agreed that no further action be taken at this time.

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The meeting was also informed of other COVID-19 related developments:

Garda Vetting: current direction.

If volunteer going into home – Garda Vetting required

If dropping supplies at the doorstep – Garda Vetting not required

There are plans to fast track Garda Vetting where required.

Community Champion Initiative – driven by The Wheel and IRL. Brian Carty, CWP is the Community Champion for Wicklow. Unclear if the role of the Community Champion. In Wicklow now linked into to County Council COVID-19 Community Response Forum.

County Helpline established. Information from our survey and what we had already gathered feeding into this County central resource.

BHP Insurance – providing free insurance cover for groups responding to COVID-19. Helen working with BHP to establish and ensure groups are aware of terms and conditions.

The need for supports for peoples' mental health during these very difficult and stressful times was discussed by the meeting. While it was acknowledged that there are probably many resources available the coordination of and the circulation of this information is essential.

Action:

- Helen/Grainne to continue current work and role in relation to Community Response to COVID-19
- Helen/Grainne to explore doing something around mental health support/wellbeing for members groups.

Membership

The list of new member group for March was read into the minutes and approved by Gertie (proposed) and Aisling (seconded).

Website Development

A comparative spreadsheet of the proposals received on the development of a new website for Co. Wicklow PPN were circulated prior to the meeting. Following discussion on how to proceed in relation to the assessment of bids the following was agreed:

Action:

- The procurement procedures to be clarified
- A sub-group to be formed to assess the proposals/bids and make final decision. The subgroup will be made up as follows: Aisling, Grainne and Stephen. Grainne to circulate full proposals and bid analysis draft framework.

National PPN Conference

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Helen informed the meeting about the first meeting of the National PPN Conference subgroup was held in the Arklow Bay Hotel. In attendance was Niall Hayden (Dept), Grainne O'Neill (Carlow PPN 2019 host county), Aileen Eglinton (DLR PPN), Patrica Reilly (WCC) and Helen & Grainne. The outcome of the meeting was a major rethink on our proposal for the Conference. Since then discussions with Harriet Emerson had resulted in a redevelopment of the plan. The meeting raised the question around the plans for this event is light of COVID-19

Action: Helen/Grainne to follow up with the Dept and Hotel and to continue to plan for the event.

Planned PPN Events

In light of COVID-19 Helen sought the Secretariat's direction on the holding of the following events:

Environmental Event – Decision to postpone to possibly early 2021

Action: Helen/Grainne to notify all involved.

Meet your Elected Representatives Events – Decision to cancel

Action: Helen/Grainne to notify all involved.

Training Fair – Decision to cancel in its current form.

The meeting discussed how the focus and needs of member groups may be affected by the COVID-19 situation, eg: raising issues around supporting your staff and volunteers, supporting people to deal with stress etc. The Secretariat suggested exploring the offering of Zoom sessions, webinars etc and the provision online of a pack of policy templates for members.

Action: Helen/Grainne to explore these options.

Policing, Safety and Security Network – Decision to hold decision on this event

Action: Raise at next Secretariat meeting.

Social Inclusion Week – Keep on the Agenda

The meeting agreed:

- that much of the work and focus of Social Inclusion week was what groups are actually providing now in response to COVID-19.
- Important to capture this work

Action: Helen/Grainne to explore options for capturing the community response to COVID-19.

Disability Awareness Work – Decision to postpone

Action: Helen/Grainne to pick this up again when time available.

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PPN June Plenary – Decision to explore doing something remotely

Action: Helen/Grainne to explore this option.

Event Suggestion- A Celebration of Community Effort

5. Migrant Strategy

Helen informed the meeting that WCC has engaged a consultant to work on the development of this strategy and that she had an initial meeting with the consultant. The meeting agreed that when this work recommences the PPN should be involved.

6. Any Other Business

Change Niamh's email address on our system.

7. Date for Next Secretariat Meeting

Wed 29th April at 10am by Zoom Call.