



## Co Wicklow Public Participation Network

### Representatives

### Code of Conduct

1.Responsibility for approval of policy	<i>Secretariat</i>
2.Responsibility for implementation	<i>Resource Worker, Secretariat, Host</i>
3.Responsibility for ensuring review	<i>Secretariat</i>
4. Date of Adoption	<i>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021</i>
5. Date for Review	

# County Wicklow Public Participation Network

## Representatives' Code of Conduct

County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN) is committed to ensuring that involvement with the Network is a positive and meaningful experience. Therefore, County Wicklow PPN has adopted a Code of Conduct for its voluntary Representatives which aims to contribute to a constructive and pleasant experience for all involved in representing the PPN. This Code of Conduct details what each voluntary Representative shall commit to in their role as a Representative of the PPN and in all areas relating to their interaction with, and on behalf of, the PPN.

Every person elected to the PPN Secretariat and to a representative position on the various committees/Boards where the PPN has such representation will be asked to sign this Code of Conduct.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- Co. Wicklow PPN Representatives' Charter.
  - Co Wicklow PPN Constitution.
  - Safe Driving Policy.
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## Attendance at Meetings

*The representation of the PPN on the Secretariat, Local Authority and other County Committees/Boards is a key link for the PPN member organisations and so the issue of non-attendance or non-participation is a serious breach of this code.*

*All PPN Representatives should make every effort to attend meetings.*

*The PPN Secretariat shall produce a schedule of meetings once per year for all secretariat meetings.*

*The schedule for all external Committees and Boards is the responsibility of that Committee/Board.*

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**When representing the PPN, Representatives agree to:**

- Uphold the aims, objectives, and principles of County Wicklow PPN.
- Abide by the fundamental principles and values that underpin the activities of County Wicklow PPN.
- Abide by the Constitution, Representatives' Charter, policies and procedures of County Wicklow PPN.
- Act with Integrity and Honesty.

These shall be the hallmarks of all conduct within and on behalf of the PPN particularly when dealing with fellow members and colleagues and external individuals and agencies.

  - Act in a way which enhances trust and confidence in the PPN.
  - Maintain the confidentiality required by their committee/meeting
  - Maintain a respectful attitude to the opinions of others.
  - Not speak as a PPN Representative to the media or any public forum without the prior knowledge and approval of the Resource Worker/Secretariat.
  - Use PPN resources responsibly, when authorised in accordance with procedures.
  - Not personally gain from their role as a PPN Representatives nor accept gifts or hospitality without the consent of County Wicklow PPN.
  - Avoid conduct which would jeopardise the effectiveness of the PPN or bring the PPN into disrepute.
- Be Accountable and Transparent
  - Ensure actions shall be able to stand the test of scrutiny by members of the public, the media, member groups, beneficiaries, stakeholders, and the regulatory authorities.
  - Comply with PPN communications and decisions.
  - Provide reports from meetings to the PPN.
  - Document expenses and seek reimbursement according to agreed procedures. (see Finance policy)
  - Perform functions in a responsible and diligent manner.
  - Strive to promote a culture of openness, transparency, and equality.

- Governance

Representatives shall always support the ethos and values of the PPN and ensure compliance with good governance including:

- Commit to supporting and advocating compliance with good governance for the Community & Voluntary sector.
- Seek support for their role by participating in meetings and training opportunities.
- Be familiar with agenda items and be prepared to contribute on behalf of the PPN members.
- Formal communication by the Representatives on behalf of the PPN should be prepared in consultation with the Resource Worker/Secretariat.

- Avoid conflicts of interest

Representatives shall always:

- Act in the best interests of the PPN.
- Declare any potential 'Conflict of Interest/Loyalty' or any such circumstance as may be viewed by others as conflicting as soon as it arises.
- Keep personal opinions and actions, and those of your nominating group, separate from those made as a Representative of the PPN.

*Conflicts of Interest: County Wicklow PPN Representatives should avoid situations that may lead to conflicts of interest by:*

- *Consulting with the PPN Secretariat, Resource Worker and the Committee on which they sit before undertaking other roles in organisations whose goals, purposes or activities conflict with the PPN.*
- *Making sure other commitments do not conflict with the performance of duties as a Representative for the PPN.*
- *Advising the Committee, PPN Secretariat and Resource Worker immediately if a conflict of interest exists, occurs, or could possibly occur.*

*PPN Representatives must disclose to the PPN and at a meeting of the Committee on which they represent the PPN any conflict of interest (personal or professional). Following the disclosure, the PPN Representative must withdraw from the meeting and must not vote or take part in any discussion or consideration of the matter.*

*The test to be applied is not just what you think but rather whether a member of the PPN and the public knowing the facts of the situation would reasonably think that the interest concerned might influence the person in the performance of his or her function as a PPN representative.*

## **Breaches of Code of Conduct Policy**

*Co. Wicklow PPN Secretariat reserves the right to uphold the conditions of this Code of Conduct Policy.*

Breaches of the Representatives Code of Conduct may lead to a notification of unacceptable behaviour and a warning or a request to discontinue their representative role within the PPN. Repeated breaches will lead to the ending of their association with the PPN.

Section 11 of County Wicklow PPNs Constitution outlines the circumstances where Secretariat members and representatives would be required to resign their position.

### **Nonattendance at Meetings**

Any member missing three meetings without giving apologies shall be found to be in breach of this Code of Conduct.

Each external Committee/Board will have their own terms of reference and so nonattendance implications may in the first instance be governed by the Committee/Board.

Where a PPN Rep has missed meetings, the following procedures will be implemented:

- If absent (with no apology), the PPN Resource Worker will contact the Rep after 2 meetings to discuss the situation and seek to find a solution.
- If apologies received, the PPN Resource Worker will contact the Rep after 3 meeting to discuss the situation and seek to find a solution.
- If absence is due to long-term illness the PPN Secretariat will work with the Representative to ensure that 1. They are supported 2. That the community voice is maintained on the committee which they sit on. This may mean that the Secretariat seeks a temporary replacement for the Representative if the committee allows. A temporary replacement may be sought from the Secretariat, The Reps nominating group, or through a call for nominations to PPN members. Dialogue between all parties will remain open and be reviewed regularly.

### **In meeting breaches of the Code of Conduct**

All matters of order at a meeting are the responsibility of the Facilitator. In cases of a breach in the Code of Conduct during a PPN Meeting the Facilitator has the right to the following courses of action:

- Deem a matter or proposal 'Out of Order'.
- Deem the behaviour or conduct of a member to be in breach of the code of conduct. In these circumstances the member can be warned of their conduct and can be asked to leave the meeting either temporarily or permanently.
- Suspend or adjourn a meeting or part of a meeting.

- **Dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct**
- County Wicklow PPN will act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise.
- Representatives who have any sort of issue/problem are encouraged to contact the Resource Worker and/or the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity.

**The following procedures will apply:**

- The PPN Representative will first be contacted informally by the PPN Resource Worker, under the direction of the Secretariat, to discuss the situation and attempt to reach an agreement about how it can be addressed.
- If the Secretariat are satisfied that the issue raised warrants further investigation, the Secretariat will appoint two Secretariat members to work with the PPN Resource Worker
- The PPN Representative, at all stages in this procedure, can be advised or accompanied by a person of their choice.
- The sub-committee of the Secretariat will work to address any issue/complaint and will keep the Secretariat updated throughout the process.
- The Secretariat will ensure that a proper investigation of the facts is carried out and that the whole process is kept confidential.
- Where the Secretariat sub-committee is unable to resolve a situation, a mutually acceptable independent person will be appointed to work towards a resolution of the issue.
- At all stages, proceedings, if required, will be completed as quickly and as fairly as possible.
- Any resolutions will be appropriate to the issue established.

### **Appeal of Decisions**

The PPN Representative will be informed of their right to appeal. For details on how to exercise an appeal they will be referred to the Co. Wicklow PPN Complaints Procedure.

Signed:

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Name:

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PPN Representative Seat: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_