

Meath Public Participation Network

Representatives Charter

Approved at meeting of Meath PPN Plenary held on



**Public Participation
Network Meath**

Background

The aim of this Representatives Charter for Meath PPN is to provide you with guidelines on how to fulfil your role as a Representative effectively. It should be used in conjunction with the PPN User Handbook and the Meath PPN policy documents.

Role of the Public Participation Network

Meath PPN was established in 2014 as the representative voice for Community and Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion groups in County Meath.

Meath PPN will identify the issues that matter and try to influence policy in a way that improves the quality of life and opportunities for people and groups in County Meath.

Membership of Meath PPN is open to community and voluntary groups, clubs, and organisations working on a voluntary, co-operative, or not-for-profit basis for the benefit of the community.

Meath PPN is overseen by a Secretariat, elected by member groups of the PPN.

Meath PPN elects Representatives to committees and organisations to speak on behalf of member groups of the PPN.

Meath PPN is the main link through which Meath County Council and other decision-making bodies connect with the Community and Voluntary, Environmental, and Social Inclusion sectors in County Meath.

Meath PPN is committed to working in an open, inclusive and transparent manner on behalf of all member groups.

Public Participation Network Representatives

The role of the Representative is a rewarding one. It is also a commitment of time and energy to make sure that it is carried out fully. To do this, the Representative should:

- Be members of, and attend, Linkage Group meetings appropriate to their representation. This may include collaboration with other Linkage Groups.
- Work collaboratively with the Linkage Group to identify issues, research, policy proposals etc. of interest or concern to the Group.

- Bring forward the issues of the Linkage Group to the Board or Committee on which they are PPN Representatives for their consideration, including putting items on the agenda.
- It is the Representative's responsibility to represent the consensus view of members of the Linkage Group, rather than those of their organisation, nominating body, Municipal District, or sector and setting aside personal, business, or political interests.
- Issue written reports to both the PPN Resource Worker and to the Linkage Group following each meeting.
- If there is more than one Representative on a Committee, the reporting duties should be rotated.
- Confidentiality should be always respected and considered whilst reporting.
- Promote the work of the PPN positively across all platforms internally and externally of the PPN.
- Communicate regularly (at least as often as meetings are held) with the Linkage Group and the PPN Workers about:
 - Dates of Board or Committee meetings.
 - Agendas for Board or Committee meetings.
 - Items which require their input and / or are of interest to the Linkage Group.

Rights of the Representative

All Representatives of Meath PPN have rights in relation to how they are supported in the fulfilment of their role. They should:

- Receive active engagement from Linkage Group members, including timely responses to issues and requests.
- Be heard and respected at both the Linkage Group and Board or Committee on which they are PPN Representatives, with an appreciation that Representatives act in a voluntary capacity.
- Be supported by both Linkage Group and Committee / Board members.
- Receive relevant induction and training to enable them to participate effectively on Committees / Boards.

- Receive expenses for attending Committee / Board meetings including any sub-groups and relevant training of which they are required to attend.
- Receive an induction pack for the Committee / Board on taking up their appointment, to include:
 - Terms of reference.
 - Standing orders /procedures.
 - Meeting schedules, locations, and times.
 - Contact details for all Committees / Board members.
 - Access to technical support where required.
- Receive timely notice of Committee / Board meetings, including:
 - Dates and venues.
 - Agendas.
- Have meetings conducted in a way that facilitates participation, open discussion and transparent decision making.

Linkage Groups and the Representative

Linkage Groups were established to support the work of Meath PPN Representatives on decision making committees at local authority and community level. It is important to note that the role of the Linkage Group is to facilitate and enable organisations to voice a wide range of views and interests within the local government system and other relevant forums. It is intended to add to the participation of member groups, not replace or reduce it in any way. In addition to Linkage Groups, or perhaps in situations where it is difficult to set up Linkage Groups. Representatives can be selected and supported by the PPN Plenary, PPN Secretariat⁸ and PPN Colleges/Pillars (Community and Voluntary; Environmental; Social Inclusion).

Election

Representatives are elected for a fixed term to represent the issues of PPN members on a particular Committee or Board. Their election takes place according to procedures established by the Secretariat and approved by the Plenary.

- Nominations for Meath PPN roles shall be invited through electronic communication with member groups.
- Voting, if required, is organised according to Electoral Pillar or Municipal District.
- When the number of nominations received exceeds the number of seats available a ballot will take place.

Resignation

The Representative is required to notify both the Committee and the Meath PPN in advance of resignation.

Circumstances where Representatives would be required to resign their position

Representatives would be required to resign their position if they:

- Are no longer a member of Meath PPN member organisation that nominated them.
- No longer have the formal support of their nominating member organisation.
- Fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Linkage Group and/or committees they were elected to without reasonable explanation.
- Declare as a candidate for local, general, or European elections.
- Are in breach of the Meath PPN Code of Conduct.

Agreement Sheet

I _____ as a Representative of Meath PPN, agree to abide by the terms of the PPN Representatives Charter at all times in my role/s.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Agreement received and verified by Meath PPN Secretariat

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Member of Meath PPN Secretariat on behalf of Meath PPN.