

Meath Public Participation Network Secretariat Code of Conduct Policy

Approved at meeting of Meath PPN Plenary held on 14th May 2024



Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Phoiblí An Mhí
Public Participation Network Meath

General

The membership of the Meath Public Participation Network Secretariat is limited to 12 representatives that is 2 representatives from each of the 2 pillars and 1 representative from each Municipal District in Meath.

Rights of Secretariat Members

- The right to receive correct information – agendas, minutes etc.
- The right to be heard.
- The right to be consulted and included in decision making.
- The right to respect from colleagues.
- The right to confidentiality around sensitive issues.
- The right not to participate in any discussion or vote on grounds of conflict of interest.
- The right to make a valid claim for reimbursement for expenses incurred in the work of the Secretariat.

Responsibilities of Secretariat Members

- To attend all meetings or to send an apology to the Secretariat.
- To participate in at least one sub group of the Secretariat.
- To adhere to the standing orders and abide by the constitution.
- To participate in decision making.
- To carry out any tasks agreed.
- To contribute your skills to the projects of the Secretariat.
- To be loyal to the Secretariat and its members.
- To respect the Secretariat and its work.
- To respect the confidentiality of the business of the Secretariat.
- To be accountable to other members of the Secretariat and to the PPN membership as a whole.
- To ensure that all expense claims are correct and relate to the work of the Secretariat.

Attendance at meetings

Members should make every effort to attend all meetings and to that end:

- The Secretariat shall produce a schedule of meetings once per year of all secretariat meetings.
- Any member missing three meetings without giving apologies shall be replaced by convening a meeting of the body from which the representative was appointed at its earliest convenience.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest can be described as any form of personal interest, which may affect, or might reasonably be thought to affect, on an individual's impartiality in decision-making. Personal interest includes an interest of a relative or connected person or organisation.

In accordance with the Ethics Act 2005, a member must disclose any pecuniary or other beneficial interest in, or material to, any matter which is to be considered by the organisation and in such case he or she shall;

- Disclose to the Secretariat the nature of the interest in advance of any consideration of the matter.
- Neither influence nor seek to influence a decision relating to the matter.
- Take no part in any consideration of the matter.
- Not take part in any vote on the matter to influence the decision of the Secretariat or be considered part of the quorum for that matter.

If a disclosure is made at a meeting of the Secretariat, particulars of the disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned, and for so long as the matter to which the disclosure relates is being dealt with by the meeting, the person by whom the disclosure is made shall not be counted in the quorum for the meeting.

In addition in such cases the Secretary to the Secretariat shall maintain a separate record of the discussion (to which the member shall not have access).

Where a question arises as to whether or not a matter for consideration by the Secretariat relates to the interests of a member or a person or body connected with that Secretariat member, the Facilitator / Chairperson of the meeting should determine the question.

Breaches of Code of Conduct Policy

The Meath Public Participation Network Secretariat reserves the right to uphold the conditions of the Code of Conduct Policy and will take the following action:

In matters relating to code of conduct at meetings, all matters of order are the responsibility of the Chairperson. In such cases the Chairperson 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 this circumstance 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

For all other matters where a Breach of the Code of Conduct is suspected the Secretariat will gather all evidence and take all necessary steps up to and including permanently removing representatives from the PPN Secretariat