



**Galway County  
Public  
Participation  
Network**

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**Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Phoiblí  
Chontae na Gaillimhe**

## ***Galway County Public Participation Network***

# ***Policies and Procedures Documents***

***Revised and updated September 2018***

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# **PPN Representatives Charter**

## **1.0 Introduction**

The Public Participation Network (PPN) for Galway County is an independent umbrella organisation and network that provides a voice for all community & voluntary, environmental and social inclusion groups throughout the county. Galway County PPN was established in November 2014.

*This Representatives Charter is specific to outlining the role, rights and responsibilities of the PPN Representatives serving their communities on behalf of the Galway County PPN.*

## **2.0 Aim**

*Galway County PPN will:*

- 2.1 Act as the representative, collective voice of community & voluntary, environmental and social inclusion organisations in Galway County.
- 2.2 Engage as an equal and independent partner and asserts the rights of the sector to organise and structure its own participation in relevant arenas.
- 2.3 Co-ordinate, enable and support the representation of the community & voluntary, environmental and social inclusion sectors in Galway County on various public and private structures.
- 2.4 Contribute to the community of Galway County through the development and implementation of meaningful Pillar Work Plans.

## **3.0 What is a PPN Representative?**

A PPN Representative (Rep) is elected for a fixed term to represent the issues of PPN members on a Board or Committee. Their election takes place according to procedures established by the PPN. A PPN Rep does not represent the group they are a member of, they represent the entire PPN and are guided by their linkage group.

It is important to acknowledge that most PPN Reps are volunteers and by virtue, this can limit their participation. Though, it is also important to acknowledge that being a PPN Rep is a privilege and with such requires commitment. Potential representatives should be fully briefed on this prior to putting forward their candidacy for election.

### **3.1. *What structures do PPN Representatives sit on?***

The PPN has representatives sitting on a wide range of committees across multiple thematic areas. Most of these are local authority based, though as time goes on and the PPN develops, this will widen to local agencies, forums and boards also.

- Secretariat
- Strategic Policy Committees (SPC)
- Joint Policing Committee (JPC)
- Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
- Other Forums, Boards and Committees.

### **3.2. *Term of Office:***

The term of office held by a PPN Rep varies according to the structure. The following applies:

#### **3.2.1. *Secretariat:***

The term of the Secretariat members is the length of the council term and 3 years thereafter. A Secretariat member can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. A Secretariat member who has served two terms cannot serve a third consecutive term. An outgoing Secretariat member can serve a third time after first taking a one term break.

#### **3.2.2. *LCDC, JPC, and SPCs and other Committees:***

The term of a representative on the JPC, LCDC and SPCs is 3 years in length. A representative can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms (six years in a row). A representative who has served two terms cannot serve a third consecutive term on the same committee. An outgoing representative can serve a further consecutive term only in the event of the linkage group not having a suitable replacement.

#### **3.2.3. *Other Forums, Boards and Committees:***

As prescribed by the requesting body, otherwise, as laid out above. Where possible, a formal handover should take place between a PPN Rep exiting office and a PPN Rep taking up office. This could include shadowing for one meeting.

### **3.3. *Criteria:***

Criteria for PPN Reps is laid out in the PPN election procedure as outlined in the constitution.

### **3.4. *Resignation:***

PPN Reps are required to write to the Secretariat of the PPN in the case that they resign from representing the PPN on a committee.

## **4.0 Role, Responsibilities and Rights of PPN Representatives**

### **4.1. Key Principles:**

The job of a PPN Representative can be summarised in four key action areas: Listen, Discuss, Represent and Feedback. These four key action areas are the foundation of what a PPN representative is all about.

#### **4.1.1. Listen:**

It is important to go into committee meetings with a willingness to listen to the

- A. Business being discussed.
- B. Points being made by all parties at the table.

It is especially important to do this at your first few meetings, acknowledging that it will take a while for you to get to know the business of the SPC and the contributions being made by the other members. Listening will provide you with a balanced insight into what's important and what isn't important when filling out your meeting report, feeding back to the Linkage Group and wider PPN.

#### **4.1.2. Discuss:**

Having listened to everyone's opinion, give yours. You have been selected to be a member of this committee because of your interest in the subject matter and because you are a member of the community in which we all live. The policies and plans being made and discussed affect the community you represent. Don't be afraid to enter discussions. It is important to acknowledge that the PPN seat is equal to all other seats on a committee. Be assured that you can participate fully and knowledgeably in the debate.

#### **4.1.3. Represent:**

In participating in this committee, remember why you were elected by your fellow PPN members - to represent them in every way possible. You are not just there to voice your own views, the views of a particular group you are a part of, or the local area in which you live. You are there to represent the views of your PPN Pillar and Linkage Group. This is one of the most important parts of the PPN Framework – that the community sector raises the vital issues at county level with one collective voice.

Representation does not just apply to the time at which committee meetings take place. You are a PPN representative outside these meetings as well. It is important to use your own network to progress PPN issues, as well as using the PPN to widen your network in progressing PPN issues.

#### **4.1.4. Feedback:**

*It is your responsibility to feed back to your peers within the PPN. Feedback is a two-way street:*

- A. Issues to be raised by you on your particular committee
- B. Feedback from the business of the meeting to your pillar group or linkage group, whichever is appropriate. Without this two-way feedback process, the PPN will not function properly and those that will miss out the most, is the community being represented.

#### **4.2. Role of PPN Representatives:**

##### **4.2.1. Attend and Participate:**

*PPN Reps should attend and fully participate in the following:*

- Meetings of the Board or Committee and any subgroups to which they may be appointed.
- Meetings of the Linkage Group associated with their board or committee.
- Meetings of the PPN Plenary, PPN Rep Forum and relevant PPN Pillar.

##### **4.2.2. Linkage Group and Pillar:**

*The Linkage Group and relevant PPN Pillar are essential to the role of the PPN Rep. PPN Reps should:*

- 4.2.2.1 Bring forward the issues of the Linkage Group and/or Pillar to the Board or Committee for their consideration, including putting items on the agenda. They are not there just to represent their own group or agenda.
- 4.2.2.2 Work collaboratively with the Linkage Group and/or Pillar to identify issues, research, policy proposals, etc.
- 4.2.2.3 Communicate regularly with the Linkage Group and/or Pillar on matters such as:
  - Dates of Board or Committee meetings
  - Agendas for Board or Committee meetings
  - Reports and Feedback from Board or Committee meetings
  - Items which require their input or are of interest

##### **4.2.3. Networking:**

Network and work strategically with other PPN, Board or Committee members for the benefit of the Linkage Group and of the PPN, including being able to compromise while retaining the core objective.

### **4.3. Responsibilities of PPN Representatives:**

- Organise Linkage Group Meetings and effective two-way communications with Linkage Group members with the support of the co-ordinator.
- Be able to communicate effectively.
- Prepare thoroughly for, attend and participate actively in Linkage Groups and Board or Committee meetings solely on behalf of PPN, leaving any personal, business or political interests outside.
- Work openly and collaboratively with all Linkage Group and/or Pillar members to identify issues, research, policy proposals etc., respecting the diversity of views expressed.
- Put forward opinions / views of Linkage Group and/or Pillar to The Board or Committee and feedback clearly (non-jargon) to the Linkage Group
- Attend relevant training or networking events organised by PPN or the Committee.
- Be open and honest in dealings with all stakeholders
- Build positive relationships with other committee members for the benefit of the PPN.
- Portray the PPN and the Linkage Group in a positive and constructive way.

#### **4.3.1. Reporting:**

PPN Representatives should fill out a short meeting report after each committee meeting using the template provided. This can be typed or written. This should be submitted at most, 2 weeks after the meeting takes place. *(Sample Reporting template attached to this document)*

### **4.4. Rights of PPN Representatives:**

- Have active engagement from the Linkage Group, including timely responses to issues.
- Be heard and respected at both the Linkage Group and Board or Committee, with an appreciation that they are a volunteer.
- Be supported by both Linkage Group and Board or Committee members, understanding that PPN is a new and evolving process.
- Have access to an agreed outcome statement from meetings which can be circulated immediately afterwards.
- Receive relevant training to enable them to participate effectively on the Board or Committee.
- Receive expenses for attending Board or Committee meetings including any subgroups and relevant training.
- Receive timely notice of meetings.
- Have meetings conducted in a way that facilitates participation, open discussion and transparent decision making.
- Receive support from the PPN Secretariat and / or Co-ordinator where relevant.
- Receive an induction pack for the Board or Committee on taking up appointment.
- Receive timely notice of meetings and documentation



#### **4.5. *Non-attendance and Non-participation:***

A PPN Representative will be notified if they have missed two committee meetings. If a PPN Representative misses a third committee meeting, they may be asked to step down from their committee.

#### **5.0 *Grievance Procedure:***

Galway County PPN endeavours to protect its integrity, including the integrity of its Reps. It is important that:

- If a PPN Rep feels dissatisfied with any matter relating to their role, they have a means by which such a grievance can be aired and resolved.
- If a PPN Rep acts in a manner that is contrary to the values, aims or objectives of the PPN or fails to comply with the Representatives Charter, a procedure may be followed to remedy the situation or remove the PPN Representative from office.

The procedure aims to balance justice for the PPN, the PPN Rep and the relevant committee.

The PPN should always try to informally resolve any issues, disputes, complaints, etc. that arise involving a PPN Representative before proceeding with this procedure.

#### **5.1. *Reasons for initiating a Grievance Procedure:***

##### **5.1.1. *PPN Rep:***

- Lack of support on the committee they sit on.
- Lack of support from the PPN.
- Barriers to the fulfilment of their role as a PPN Rep.
- Any other matter relating to their role as a PPN Rep.

##### **5.1.2. *PPN:***

- Lack of fulfilment of the role and responsibilities as laid out in the Representatives Charter.
- The PPN receives a complaint about a PPN Representative.
- A PPN Rep acts in a manner contrary to the values, aims or objectives of the PPN, including publicly criticising the PPN.

#### **5.2. *General Principles Applying to The Resolution Procedure:***

- The Secretariat will ensure that a proper investigation of the facts is carried out and that the whole process is kept confidential.
- At all stages, disciplinary proceedings will be completed as quickly as is possible with the need to ensure that justice is done and seen to be done.

- Any resolutions will be appropriate to the issue established.
- The PPN Rep will first be contacted informally by the PPN Coordinator, under the direction of the Secretariat, to discuss the situation and attempt to reach an agreement about how it can be addressed.
- The PPN Rep, at all stages in this procedure, can be advised or accompanied by a representative of their choice.

### ***5.3. Stages of Resolution Procedure:***

The Secretariat is best placed to decide what approach to take on a case by case basis in the context of which the issue has arisen. The following procedure 5.3.1 – 5.3.3 is to offer guidance.

For any grievance procedure to be initiated, a grievance must have been brought to the attention of the Secretariat. If the Secretariat are satisfied that the grievance raised warrants further investigation, the Secretariat will appoint two Secretariat members to work with the PPN Co-ordinator and the following procedure will take place:

#### ***5.3.1. Formally Meet the PPN Representative:***

- The PPN Representative will be invited to meet the appointed Secretariat Members and the PPN Co-ordinator to discuss the grievance. At this meeting:
- The grievance will be discussed with both the Secretariat Reps and the PPN Rep given the opportunity to make their own input on the grievance.
- It will be agreed what action or improvement is to be taken to remedy the grievance.
- The time limit by which action should be taken or improvement made.
- A plan for assistance and review.

#### ***5.3.2. Review Meeting:***

If the Secretariat or PPN Rep considers after the review that the progress is unsatisfactory then they will investigate further action which could include the conducting of a disciplinary meeting and may issue a formal written warning of breach of the Reps Charter (in the case of a grievance to do with a PPN Rep) or a withdrawal of membership (in the case of a grievance to do with a PPN Member Group) or a withdrawal of representation (in the case of a grievance to do with a committee).

#### ***5.3.3. Final Action:***

If the grievance has not been resolved after the review meeting and written warning has been issued, a notice to formally remove the PPN Rep (in the case of a grievance to do with a PPN Rep) or to formally withdraw membership of a committee (in the case of a grievance to do with a committee) will be issued and the relevant Linkage Group (or in the case of a Secretariat member, the Plenary) is notified.

#### **5.4. Appeal of Decision:**

Appeals will be heard by the Secretariat. The PPN Representative will be informed of their right to appeal, and how to exercise that appeal. An appeal should be initiated in writing by the appellant and done so within 10 working days of the decision. The appeal will be heard as soon as possible but not later than 20 working days from the receipt of notification from the appellant.

#### **6.0. Amendments to the Reps Charter:**

*A proposal to amend this Representatives Charter may be made by:*

- The Secretariat;
- The Representatives Forum;
- A PPN Linkage Group;
- A PPN Pillar;

The proposal will be discussed by the Secretariat and placed on the agenda for the next plenary meeting. The amendment will be effective if passed by a majority of the members present at the plenary meeting.

### ***DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GALWAY COUNTY PPN SECRETARIAT***

The Secretariat is elected by the PPN members and is charged with managing the PPN between Plenaries and directing the Resource Worker. It operates in accordance with the PPN governing document – its Constitution– which should therefore be read in conjunction with this document. Furthermore, the Secretariat works according to the Galway County PPN Annual Work Plan. Galway County PPN Secretariat structure is that of an unincorporated body.

#### ***Purpose of The PPN Secretariat:***

The Secretariat is broad and representative of the different geographical areas and the three colleges within County Galway and reflective of the diversity of the membership. Galway County PPN Secretariat is made up of 11 members; 2 from each the electoral colleges (Environmental, Social Inclusion, Community and Voluntary) and one representative from each of the five Municipal Districts (Connemara, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Oranmore/Athenry and Tuam)

The Secretariat is an administrative body and has delegated responsibility for the day to day running of the PPN, its role includes:

- Facilitate the implementation of the decisions of the Plenary.
- Ensure the proper functioning of the PPN in between Plenaries.
- Coordinate activities of PPN.

- Communicate extensively and regularly with all PPN members and in this process share information concerning all PPN activities as widely as possible.
- Maintain accurate records of PPN Business (hard and soft copies), including minuting meetings and circulating agendas.
- Act as a point of contact for the PPN in relation to the LA, DECLG, other PPNs and all third parties.
- Handle all correspondence on behalf of PPN, through distributing copies and drafting agreed responses.
- Draw up an annual workplan in agreement with Galway County Council and the PPN.
- Manage the PPN Resource Worker.
- The PPN Resource Worker is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the PPN and for enabling the delivery of the aims and purpose of the PPN and in line with the agreed workplan.

### ***Role of Secretariat Members:***

In line with the mission and ethos of PPN the Secretariat operates a flat structure. To ensure effective function of meetings Galway County PPN Secretariat will operate the role of *facilitator/ convenor* of meetings. This individual will rotate regularly i.e. every 2 to 3 meetings. This facilitator is mandated by the Secretariat to sign documents etc. on behalf of PPN. Each Secretariat member will receive an induction on appointment (Appendix 2 Induction of new Secretariat Members).

### ***Decision Making Powers:***

*To achieve its purpose Galway County PPN Secretariat has decision making powers which includes;*

- Make decisions in relation to the day to day running of the PPN.
- Establish appropriate sub committees/working groups or other sub structures to support effectively carry out their functions i.e. Finance and Governance, Membership, Communication. These structures will have clear remits, reporting requirements and allocation of powers and will be wound up once the task is completed and as appropriate.
- Manage and monitor the PPN budget.
- Devise implement & review the work plan with the local authority.
- Appoint and manage staff for the PPN as appropriate.
- Monitor and evaluate the work of the PPN.
- Maintain a database of membership groups and contacts within the PPN area for communicating and data reporting purposes.
- Facilitate the establishment of Linkage Groups.
- Monitor the adherence of representative to the representative charter.

## ***1. GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES***

### ***Planning:***

On an annual basis in agreement with the PPN a **Galway County Public PPN Work Plan** will be devised. The purpose of this document is to present a Work Plan for Galway County Public Participation Network which will enable member groups to develop a shared understanding of the key priorities and actions for the coming year, focus the work of the PPN's Secretariat, and fulfil the requirements of Galway County Council and directives from the Department of Environment Community & Local Government. The Secretariat in agreement with the PPN will oversee the implementation of this work plan with the local authority and review it regularly communicating its progress to the Plenary.

### ***Financial Responsibilities:***

The Secretariat in conjunction with the PPN will ensure the financial affairs of the PPN are conducted properly. This includes raising funds, spending money and record keeping. Certain tasks may be delegated to the finance subcommittee but will remain under the control of the PPN. An annual budget is prepared as part of the Annual work plan which will be validated by the Plenary and under its control.

- Only expenditure in line with the budget can be authorised.
- All invoices must be matched with their expenditure authorisation and linked to the budget item.
- One bank account will be held in the name of Galway County PPN with three authorised signatories.
- Bank statements will be checked off against income and expenditure items with any discrepancies investigated.
- Financial statements will be prepared and presented to the Plenary for ratification.
- All financial records will be retained for six years.

### ***Correspondence, Feedback & Complaints:***

The Secretariat welcome feedback from the PPN on how it is operating, and the Plenary will be the opportunity for this. However, the Plenary is not the only time and place that the PPN and members can provide feedback. All feedback will be co-ordinated via the Resource Worker

### ***Equality:***

The Secretariat ensures all its activities and services are as accessible as possible and will take all reasonable practical steps to prevent discrimination bearing in mind the 9 grounds [age, gender, civil status, family status, disability, sexual orientation, member of the Traveller community, Race, Religion].

### ***Health & Safety Statement:***

Galway County PPN is not an employer and the resource worker is covered under Galway County Councils employee Health & safety policies. The PPN administrator is covered under Galway Rural Development Health & Safety policies.

### ***Data Protection:***

The Secretariat maintains a database of membership groups and contacts within the PPN area for communicating and data reporting purposes and will be guided by the 7 Data Protection Principles in the use of this data ensuring personal data is: *(see separate data protection policy in this document)*

1. Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner
2. Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes
3. Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary
4. Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
5. Retained only for as long as necessary
6. Processed in an appropriate manner to maintain security
7. Accountability

## **2. FUNCTIONING EFFECTIVELY AS A COMMITTEE**

### ***Secretariat meetings:***

Secretariat meetings should be conducted in a manner which ensures that the Committee can effectively carry out its functions and in line with the PPN Constitution and the flat structure ethos.

- The Secretariat meets a minimum of 4 times annually.
- The facilitator will liaise with the Resource Worker to set the agenda for meetings.
- The quorum for Secretariat meetings is 4 members.
- Notice along with the agenda is circulated to members prior to the date of the meeting
- All members can suggest items for the agenda in advance of the meeting – the meeting notice will indicate the timeline for this.
- Minutes are taken by the Resource Worker or, as required, by a nominated Secretariat member on a rotating basis.
- Minutes reflect decisions taken, actions agreed, and a synopsis of the discussion.
- Minutes of the meeting are proposed and seconded and adopted by the members.
- A copy of the minutes is published on the PPN website and kept on file.
- The decision-making process where possible is consensus but in the event of a vote being required decisions will be carried by a simple majority of all members present. As a last resort the Facilitator has the casting vote.
- In the event of a Secretariat member failing to attend three consecutive meetings, of which s/he has been properly notified, without sending apologies prior to the meeting s/he will have deemed to have resigned from the Secretariat and a replacement will be sought in line with the PPN election process.
- The term of the Secretariat shall be five years in line with the term of the council

The Secretariat is required to take flexible procedures for dealing with urgent matters that require action between meetings. To deal with urgent matters two nominated members of which one will be

the facilitator will be authorised to take urgent decisions on behalf of the Committee; any such delegation is minuted during meetings.

### ***Sub-committees/Working Groups:***

To assist the Secretariats' work it will establish sub-committees as necessary e.g. Financial & Governance, Membership, Communication and specific project Working Groups as required.

- Each sub-committee must have terms of reference covering purpose, membership, limits of decision-making and method of reporting to the Secretariat/PPN.
- Whilst PPN Members not on the Secretariat can be members of sub-committees, all sub-committees should have at least one Secretariat member.
- The number of sub-committees and their purpose should be reviewed on a periodic basis.
- Sub-Committees are supported as required by the PPN Resource Worker.

### ***Secretariat Annual Performance Review:***

The Secretariat will conduct an annual appraisal of its own performance, that of its sub-committees and working groups and that of individual Members. This will be done within the context of the PPNs plans and policies, as well as this handbook. Consideration of the development of current members will take place as required.

### ***Conflict of Interest & Conflict of Loyalty Register:***

Situations may arise involving potential conflicts of interest and/or loyalty. Secretariat members have a responsibility to declare any such potential conflict, where possible, in advance to the committee. These will be noted in writing at meetings. Depending on the nature of the possible conflict(s), s/he will be asked to withdraw from the a) discussion, b) voting or c) meeting while the issue in question is being dealt with [Appendix 3 Secretariat Members Declaration of Interest and Register of Interests – *also refer to Galway County PPN Members Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest Protocol*].

### ***Code of Conduct:***

All Secretariat members will be required to sign up to the Code of Conduct for PPN Members [Appendix 1].

### ***Procedures and Guidelines for the Appointment of a PPN Secretariat Member:***

A truly participative PPN requires a regular refreshing of different roles. As the PPN evolves, it may be appropriate to have rotating retirements from the Secretariat to ensure continuity. Where Secretariat vacancies occur, they will be filled as soon as possible. People elected to the Secretariat must be nominated by a member organisation in their community or college. The electorate for that position is comprised of the members of that geographical community or college. For example, candidates for a Social Inclusion vacancy must be nominated by a Social Inclusion organisation, and it is only the Social Inclusion organisations which have a vote for this position [*refer to Galway County PPN Constitution*]

*Section 7 Election of Representatives to Committees]. All new Secretariat Member will be inducted in line with Appendix 2.*

## **APPENDIX 1 - CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SECRETARIAT MEMBERS**

I will:

- Abide by and support Galway County PPNs principles and values.
- Abide by Galway County PPNs policies and procedures.
- Always act in the best interests of Galway County PPN.
- Act honestly, fairly and respectfully to my fellow Secretariat members and all other members and anyone I come into contact with in my role as Secretariat member.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest and if necessary leave the meeting while that matter is being dealt with, these are to be included in the register and recorded in the minutes.
- Strive to promote a culture of openness and transparency so that members of the public, beneficiaries and regulators have confidence in Galway County PPN.
- Not personally gain from my role as Secretariat member.
- Document expenses and seeking reimbursement in line with policy.
- Not accept gifts or hospitality without the consent of Galway County PPN.
- Use the PPN resources responsibly and only in accordance with authorised procedure.
- Commit to attend all Secretariat and other meetings and in the event of unavoidable inability to attend I will give advance apologies to the committee.
- Accept that if I am absent without apologies at three meetings in a row I will be deemed to have resigned and relinquished my role as Secretariat member.
- Strive to be familiar with agenda items and be prepared to contribute during meeting.
- Accept and support decisions made by majority vote even if I did not vote in favour of the decision.
- Maintain the confidentiality on all business conducted unless I have been expressly authorised to speak on matters outside of the meeting.
- Understand that any substantial breach of this code may result in my removal from the Secretariat.
- Notify in writing my wish to resign from the Secretariat.

**I have read, and I commit to comply with Galway County Secretariat PPN Code of Conduct**

---

**Printed Name of Secretariat Member**

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**Signature of Secretariat Member**

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**Date**



## **APPENDIX 2 - INDUCTION OF NEW SECRETARIAT MEMBERS**

It is important that any new Secretariat members have a good introduction to their role on the Secretariat. This induction to include, at a minimum, introductions to other Secretariat members and key staff, consideration of the Code of Conduct for Secretariat Members as well as the provision of an information pack containing:

- Secretariat Handbook
- Copy of Galway County PPN Constitution
- Copy of the Annual Work Plan
- Publicity Materials as relevant
- Contact details of other Secretariat Members/Resource Worker
- Dates of future meetings if agreed.
- Minutes of the last two meetings.
- All other relevant policies

**I wish to confirm that I have read and understand the contents of this Handbook and received the above documentation and that constitutes part of my terms and conditions as a Secretariat Member. I am willing to partake in training for this role. I understand my responsibility to declare any conflicts of interest.**

---

**Printed Name of Secretariat Member**

---

**Signature of Secretariat Member**

---

**Date**

**APPENDIX 3 –**

**SECRETARIAT MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST & REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

When they are appointed to the Secretariat Members are required to declare to the PPN all interests which are relevant and material and may give rise to conflict of interest or loyalty in their position as a Secretariat Member.

On an ongoing basis Secretariat Members should also inform the PPN of any additions to the list as and when they arise.

This is done by completing the below document. If as a Secretariat Member you have no relevant interest you should register a nil return.

The Register of Interests is kept in PPN Resource Workers office.

Positions on external bodies which might give rise to a conflict of interest/loyalty	
Relationship [family or friend] which might give rise to a conflict of interest/loyalty	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of Person Declaring: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Declaration: \_\_\_\_\_

# ***Galway County Public Participation Network Data Protection Policy***

## ***Introduction:***

The purpose of this document is to provide a concise policy statement regarding the Data Protection obligations of Galway County Public Participation Network. This includes obligations in dealing with personal data in order to, ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of the relevant Irish legislation, namely the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, the Irish Data Protection Act (1988), and the Irish Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003).

## ***Policy Statement:***

Galway County Public Participation Network is fully committed to protect the rights and privacy of Individuals and adhering to the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## ***Purpose:***

This privacy statement sets out how we process personal data and information that you give to us. We are committed to protecting your personal information. You are not required to provide us with personal data unless you wish to register and receive updates about the work of RPPN.

*This privacy statement explains:*

- Who we are and why we collect your personal data
- For how long we hold your data and who receives it
- How you may request the personal data we store about you
- Who to contact about data protection issues in our organisation.

## ***Data We Collect:***

We collect personal data that identifies you as an individual. We do this when you have provided us with information and consented for its use in your interest and for the purposes set out in this privacy statement. The personal information we collect includes your name, postal address, email address and telephone number. In collecting and processing your data we are committed to:

- Putting you in control of your privacy and providing you with clear choices
- Being transparent about how we collect and use your data
- Securely protecting the data, you entrust to us and data processors used by us, using appropriate organisational and technical measures
- Adhering to data protection laws

When you register, telephone or email Galway County PPN, visit our website or fill our contact forms you consent to the use of that information as set out in this statement.

If you wish to withdraw consent to being contacted by us, please do so by sending an email to [resourceworker@galwaycountypn.ie](mailto:resourceworker@galwaycountypn.ie) with 'UNSUBSCRIBE' in the message subject line or click the unsubscribe links contained in our ebulletin emails.

The personal data that you provide us with will only be used for the purpose for which it has been originally obtained or to fulfil legal or regulatory requirements as appropriate.

Individuals have a responsibility to ensure that any emails including attachments that they send us must be within the bounds of the law. Unsolicited content or mail of a criminal nature will be reported to the relevant authorities and blocked.

### ***Why We Collect Data:***

We collect data to provide club/organisation with information of meetings, events, funding, training opportunities, consultations and relevant news.

### ***Subject Access Requests:***

Any formal, written request by a Data Subject for a copy of their personal data (a Subject Access Request) will be referred, as soon as possible, to the Data Protection Officer, and will be processed as soon as possible.

### ***Third-Party Processors:***

Data shared with third party

We share your data with third parties only for the purposes set out below:

- Salesforce – online database (cloud based)
- Mail Chimp - ebulletin
- Survey Monkey - survey
- Galway County Council - email system.
- Website – Western Webs

### ***Website Usage:***

We automatically collect information about browser type and operating system, pages you visit and your Internet Protocol addresses through Google Analytics. We do so, to help us to better understand how website visitors use our web sites so that we can improve the user experience. This information is aggregated, providing us with data about the total number of visitors to our websites and the total number of visitors to each page. Individual users are not typically identified through these analytics.

### ***The Data Protection Principles:***

We will carry out our GDPR responsibilities in accordance with the following six principles. Galway County PPN shall:

***be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.*** Galway County PPN ensures that data is gathered and used in a way that is legal, fair and transparent.

***be obtained only for one or more specified, legitimate purposes.*** Galway County PPN only use data for a legitimate purpose specified at the time of collection

***not be further processed in a manner incompatible with the specified purpose(s).*** Data collected will only be used for the purpose stated.

***be kept safe and secure.*** Appropriate security measures will be taken to protect against unauthorised access to, or alteration, destruction or disclosure of any personal data held by Galway County PPN in its capacity as Data Controller.

***be kept accurate, complete and up-to-date where necessary.*** Galway County PPN will conduct regular assessments in order to establish the need to keep certain Personal Data.

***be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose(s) for which the data were collected and processed.*** Galway County PPN will ensure to the best of our abilities to hold accurate, up to date data. If it is no longer accurate, it will be rectified or erased.

***not be kept for longer than is necessary to satisfy the specified purpose(s).*** Galway County PPN will only store data for as long as is necessary.

***be managed and stored in such a manner that, in the event a data subject submits a valid subject access request seeking a copy of their personal data, this data can be readily retrieved and provided to them.***

### ***Data Subject Access Requests:***

If you wish to contact us regarding data protection issues or to make a personal data request, you may do so via the following options:

**Post your enquiry to:** Denise Feeney PPN Resource Officer Economic, Rural & Community Development Unit Galway County Council Aras an Chontae Prospect Hill Galway

**Email your enquiry to:** [resourceworker@galwaycountypn.ie](mailto:resourceworker@galwaycountypn.ie)

**Telephone your enquiry to:** 091 509 579

**Website :** [www.galwaycountypn.ie](http://www.galwaycountypn.ie) [facebook.com/GalwayCountyPPN](https://facebook.com/GalwayCountyPPN) [twitter.com/GalwayCoPPN](https://twitter.com/GalwayCoPPN)

### ***Complaints:***

If you wish to make a complaint about how your personal data is processed by us or how your data processing complaint has been handled by us, you have a right to lodge a complaint with the Supervisory Authority. The contact details for the Data Protection Commissioner's office is as follows:

**Post:** Office of the Data Protection Commissioner. Canal House, Station Road, Portarlinton, Co. Laois, R32 AP23, Ireland.

**Telephone:** +353 (0761) 104 800; LoCall 1890 25 22 31 **Email:** [info@dataprotection.ie](mailto:info@dataprotection.ie)

### ***Changes to this policy:***

We keep our policy under regular review. This policy was last updated 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

## ***Appendix 1. Data Protection Policy Definitions***

### ***Data:***

This includes both automated and manual data. Automated data means data held on computer or stored with the intention that it is processed on computer. Manual data means data that is processed as part of a relevant filing system, or which is stored with the intention that it forms part of a relevant filing system.

### ***Personal Data:***

Information which relates to a living individual, who can be identified either directly from that data, or indirectly in conjunction with other data which is likely to come into the legitimate possession of the Data Controller. (If in doubt, Charities Institute Ireland refers to the definition issued by the Article 29 Working Party and updated from time to time.)

### ***Sensitive Personal Data:***

A particular category of Personal data, relating to: Racial or Ethnic Origin, Political Opinions, Religious, Ideological or Philosophical beliefs, Trade Union membership, Information relating to mental or physical health, information in relation to one's Sexual Orientation, information in relation to commission of a crime and information relating to conviction for a criminal offence.

### ***Data Controller:***

A person or entity who, either alone or with others, controls the content and use of Personal Data by determining the purposes and means by which that Personal Data is processed.

### ***Data Subject:***

A living individual who is the subject of the Personal Data, i.e. to whom the data relates either directly or indirectly.

### ***Data Processor:***

A person or entity who processes Personal Data on behalf of a Data Controller on the basis of a formal, written contract, but who is not an employee of the Data Controller, processing such Data in the course of his/her employment.

### ***Data Protection Officer:***

A person appointed by Charities Institute Ireland to monitor compliance with the appropriate Data Protection legislation, to deal with Subject Access Requests, and to respond to Data Protection queries from staff members and service recipients

### ***Relevant Filing System:***

Any set of information in relation to living individuals which is not processed by means of equipment operating automatically (computers), and that is structured, either by reference to individuals, or by reference to criteria relating to individuals, in such a manner that specific information relating to an individual is readily retrievable.

## ***Galway County PPN FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:***

### ***PPN Financial Management Policy Statement:***

Galway County PPN shall be maintained on a sound financial basis at all times. No expenditure shall take place without the authorisation of the treasurer. In the event, that the treasurer deems that the financial position of the PPN is unsustainable, an extraordinary meeting of the Secretariat shall be called immediately (no later than seven days) to determine the future of the PPN. The PPN reserves the right to raise funds as they see fit from time to time by any lawful means i.e. by voluntary contribution, donation subscription, or otherwise. Electronic banking may be used, the treasurer and one other person to be decided by the Secretariat shall have access to the Password and pin numbers. The treasurer shall make a financial report at every meeting of the Secretariat or within 48 hours to the Secretariat if requested to do by three members of the Secretariat. In the event, that the treasurer is unable to attend a meeting of the Secretariat, he/she shall submit the report to the facilitator to present it to the meeting on his/her behalf. In the event, that the PPN is abolished or ceases to exist the Secretariat can make a decision as to how to distribute any existing funds that the PPN may hold. Further financial policy is detailed later in this section.

### ***Travel and Subsistence:***

***Purpose:*** Travel and Subsistence Policy for members conducting PPN business

***Scope:*** Secretariat Members, Galway County PPN representatives

### ***Policy and Procedures:***

PPN Representatives (those representing the PPN on local decision-making structures) are entitled to make a request for travel and subsistence expenses for carrying out PPN business. A request for travel expenses can be made when travel and expenses cannot be covered by another source (i.e. the committee being attended).

### ***For this purpose, the following will count as travel expenses:***

- Travel by PPN representatives to the Secretariat
- Travel by PPN representatives to meetings on decision making structures – this will include LCDC, Strategic policy committees and other committees approved by the Secretariat
- Travel by PPN representatives to other meetings with the approval of the Galway County PPN Secretariat
- Where possible members should use public transport where available, in these cases the cost of public transport will be reimbursed to the claimant. Travel by standard class on buses or trains is allowed
- PPN Representatives who do not have access to other means of transport may use taxis upon approval of the PPN Secretariat treasurer.

### ***Making Travel/Sub Claims:***

- Claims will only be made when payment of expenses cannot be covered by another source.
- Members must state the start and end-point of each journey and who they were visiting and the purpose of the visit. (*This information is necessary for all modes of travel.*)
- All original receipts should be submitted with claim forms for using public transport or taxis
- All claims for travel should be submitted for payment to the PPN team within six months to which the claim relates and approved by the Secretariat.
- Claims for January – June should be submitted no later than 31<sup>st</sup> July of that year and the claim for Aug - December should be submitted not later than 31<sup>st</sup> December of that year.

### ***Authorising Claims:***

The finance sub-committee of the Secretariat consisting of the Facilitator, Secretary and Treasurer will meet every 6 months to sign off any travel or subsistence claims made.

### ***Reimbursement of Expenses:***

Expenses will only be reimbursed if they are:

- Submitted on the expense claim form which is fully completed in line with this policy
- Accompanied by original receipts where appropriate
- Appropriately authorized: by the PPN Secretariat Treasurer and authorized by the SEO in Galway County Council.
- If a PPN Rep participates in the PPN as part of their professional work, they should only claim expenses from the PPN if they cannot claim them from their employer.
- Authorisation for expenses payment can also be provided by an accompanying email from the PPN Secretariat Treasurer.

### ***Financial Policy:***

The members of the PPN Secretariat are responsible for the financial management of the PPN. The PPN is committed to maintaining proper financial management systems - which in turn means having:

- Detailed and accessible documentation
- Appropriate and agreed procedures and controls
- Proper accounting records ensuring openness and transparency in all financial matters
- An appropriate filing system



The PPN Secretariat aims to be fully informed and up to date on the financial circumstances of the PPN in order to make appropriate financial decisions. A presentation of the Income & Expenditure Accounts is made to the PPN Secretariat at the PPN Secretariat and also at the county Plenary meetings.

Annual Financial accounts are formally signed off at the PPN County Plenary. All financial records are kept on computer and an appropriate backup system. The finance sub-group reports to the Executive committee and is responsible for overseeing all matters in relation to the finances of the PPN.

It is the responsibility of the PPN Secretariat to ensure that all members of the organisation adhere to the PPN financial policy and procedures. Failure to comply with the agreed procedures could result in disciplinary action. The matter will be referred to the Liaison membership Working group.

The Finance sub-committee should meet a minimum of 4 times a year and as and when required after that at the discretion of the Facilitator.

### ***Financial Policies and Procedures are necessary in the following areas:***

#### ***(a) Methods of Payment:***

Payments made by the PPN Secretariat are made by cheque or electronic transfer.

Cheques have to be signed off by 2 members of the Finance sub-committee who are authorised signatories on the PPN bank account. Signatories for the bank account are Facilitator, Secretary and Treasurer.

#### ***(b) Approval of Expenditure:***

The Facilitator and Treasurer in consultation with support worker approve expenditure. A requisition form has to be signed off by the Facilitator and the Treasurer. The Support worker raises a requisition and it is brought to the Facilitator and the Treasurer for approval.

#### ***(c) Making Payments:***

The Treasurer in consultation with the Support worker is responsible for making payments on behalf of the project?

The Treasurer and the Support worker keeps a record of project expenditure and is responsible for ensuring that proper records are kept.

Payment is made when required by cheque and / or electronic transfer.

Expense claim forms, invoices and / or receipts are needed for all payments.

Expense claims should be submitted to the Support worker who then raises a requisition and is signed off by the Treasurer and the Support worker.

#### ***(d) Cheque Authorisation & Electronic Transfer:***

The authorised signatures are of those who are authorized signatories and are members of the Finance committee. These include the, Facilitator, Secretary and Treasurer and they sign the cheques. There are 3 signatories in the organization.

A signatory cannot sign a cheque if it is their own cheque or if the cheque is not in line with the Financial Policy.

Accounts are presented to the Secretariat at each Secretariat meeting and accounts are sent to the Director of Services for Community, Enterprise and Economic section for review annually. This ensures that all financial transactions in relation to the PPN are transparent and accountable.

All electronic transfers are to contain the name of the person or organisation who send and receive the transfer of funds.

***(e) Electronic Funds Transfers:***

The finance sub- committee are responsible for doing the electronic transfers.

3 people within the organisation hold the relevant password(s).

***(f) General Expenses:***

Members of the Secretariat, the PPN support worker and members of working groups can claim expenses or any PPN representative attending meetings or training sessions organised or approved by the PPN Secretariat. Expenses can be claimed for travel, subsistence and accommodation with the prior approval of the Treasurer. Expenses are claimed with an expense form. The expenses are recorded within the organisation on a PC and on hard copy. The treasurer and support worker are responsible for the above. Expenses are ‘approved’ within the organization when a requisition form is presented to the finance sub- committee and is signed off by them. The Treasurer is responsible for payment of the expenses.

***(g) Travel:***

***Civil Service motoring and bicycle rates      Cars (rate per kilometre)***

<b>Band</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Engine capacity up to 1200cc</b>	<b>Engine capacity 1201cc - 1500cc</b>	<b>Engine capacity 1501cc and over</b>
<b>Band 1</b>	0 - 1,500 km	37.95 cent	39.86 cent	44.79 cent
<b>Band 2</b>	1,501 - 5,500 km	70.00 cent	73.21 cent	83.53 cent
<b>Band 3</b>	5,501 - 25,000 km	27.55 cent	29.03 cent	32.21 cent
<b>Band 4</b>	25,001 km and over	21.36 cent	22.23 cent	25.85 cent

***(h) Accommodation:***

Domestic overnight subsistence rates (from 1 April 2017)

Normal Rate (up to 14 Nights)	€133.73
Reduced Rate (next 14 Nights)	€120.36
Detention Rate (for Next 28 Nights)	€66.87

### ***Overnight allowance:***

Overnight allowance covers an overnight absence of up to 24 hours. This must be at least 100km from the employee's home and their normal place of work. For absences over 56 nights, you must make an application to Revenue.

### ***(i) Meals:***

Up to a maximum of € 25 will be paid for meals for any one day – to cover breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.

### ***(j) 'Out of Pocket' Expenses:***

A requisition form must be presented to the finance sub- committee for 'out of pocket' expenses.

### ***(k) Gifts / Tokens of Appreciation:***

Bestowing gifts / tokens of appreciation for services rendered to the PPN are at the discretion of the Facilitator and the Finance sub- committee.

### ***(l) Training & Development Budgets:***

Subject to a need's analysis survey conducted with the PPN Secretariat, a training and development budget may be approved by the finance sub -committee subject to an annual review.

The above policy and procedures will be reviewed on an annual basis by the executive committee.

Subject to budgetary demands on the PPN and at the discretion of the finance sub-group - these procedures may be reviewed more often.

### ***What can expenses be claimed for?***

Expenses can only be claimed by PPN Reps for secretariat and committee meetings, and for training, events, etc. which they are attending in their capacity as PPN representatives. In the context of Linkage Group meetings, expenses can only be claimed by the PPN Rep attached to that Linkage Group.

PPN Reps that attend other PPN organised events or meetings not specifically organised for their attendance, cannot claim expenses.

Associated costs (i.e. Meals for day long events where refreshments are not provided) may only be claimed with pre-approval from the PPN worker. Overnight costs will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and where it is absolutely necessary.

### ***Who Should Pay the Expenses of PPN Representatives?***

Expenses will be covered by the PPN's own budget.

### ***Public Transport:***

Expenses for public transport tickets will be reimbursed at face value provided that original tickets are provided.

### ***Day Allowances:***

There are two categories, five to ten hours and over ten hours absence. The absence must be outside eight kilometres of the employee's home or normal place of work (five kilometres prior to 1 April 2017).

### ***Domestic day subsistence rates (from 1 April 2017)***

Ten hours or more	€33.61
Between five and ten hours	€14.01

### ***Childcare:***

The PPN will pay a €15 per event contribution to childcare costs for representatives who need such. This should be brought to the attention of the Coordinator in advance of the claim. The Coordinator will consult with the Secretariat before approval.

### ***Payments and Claim Notes:***

PPN Reps and Secretariat members must submit claims quarterly, using the official expense claim form provided by the PPN Coordinator. All expense must be claimed by December 14<sup>th</sup> of the current year.

## ***INTERNAL COMMUNICATION POLICY:***

***Purpose:*** This policy relates to communication within Galway County PPN

***Scope:*** PPN membership groups, PPN staff

### ***Policy and Procedures:***

- All members of the PPN are encouraged to communicate with other members of the PPN.
- Groups can use the PPN social media platforms to publicise their information to support their position as influencers of public policy, information can be submitted to these platforms through the PPN email address.
- Decisions about the information displayed on PPN social media platforms are decided by the Secretariat
- Linkage group and Electoral College representatives and members should be guided by the representatives' charter in how they communicate with each other.
- Linkage group and Electoral College reps will decide on a mode/s of communication with their linkage group/electoral college members.
- While the PPN encourages the use of online communication, the Secretariat and all members should make specific efforts to communicate with members who are not online (including the provision of training to support online communication)

- In all communications members should not disclose any personal or confidential information or information that could be considered inappropriate, offensive or defamatory.
- Email addresses and contact details of PPN members should not be shared by any member with people outside of the PPN.

## ***EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION POLICY:***

***Purpose:*** This policy relates to communication between Galway County PPN and other bodies

***Scope:*** PPN membership groups, PPN staff

### ***Policy and Procedures:***

- All structures within the PPN are encouraged to use channels open to them to communicate their message to the public
- When speaking as members of the PPN, all communication should go first to the Secretariat for approval, to maintain the public identity of the organisation
- Groups are encouraged to use the PPN social media platforms to publicise their information and support their position as influencers in public policy, information can be submitted to these platforms through the PPN email address.
- Decisions about the information displayed on PPN social media platforms are decided by the Secretariat.

## ***CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:***

***This Policy applies to all Committees that the PPN members have representation on.***

***Policy:*** For the PPN openness about information is part of their philosophy:

Giving the community full and honest accounts of what the executive is doing is seen as part of the way of getting the community involved or at least in touch with the executive. It can also encourage participation in the activities of the PPN. However, there are particular issues that should remain confidential to the organisation and it is important that everyone involved – the executive, staff, sub-groups and working groups – are aware of the issues that are confidential. All confidential documents should be marked as ‘confidential’.

There may be many different views about what confidentiality means in the PPN often it is assumed that everyone means the same thing. Therefore, it is important that there is clarity on what issues should remain confidential. Misunderstandings and lack of clarity about what should be confidential can cause significant problems.

### ***Guidelines / Procedures:***

#### ***PPN Secretariat Committee Meetings.***

Most of the business of the PPN takes place at Secretariat meetings or plenaries. At such meetings it is advised that the following remain confidential:

- Individual statements or opinions that are expressed during meetings. The group decision can be reported - not the preceding discussion.
- Information – relating to groups or individuals in the area – that is not already in the public arena.

### ***Employment Issues:***

Any issues concerning employment within the executive committee are confidential including;

- Salaries and / or salary scales.
- Disciplinary, grievance and /or complaints issues.
- Personal difficulties that either voluntary members or staff may be experiencing

### ***PPN Management and / or Staff Issues:***

Any internal difficulties within the PPN should remain strictly, confidential including:

- Staff / management relations
- Disagreements or difficulties between individuals within the project, Management members, other volunteers or staff.
- Personal information on staff, management members or other volunteers.

### ***Electronic Resources Monitoring/Bounds of Confidentiality:***

The PPN does not actively monitor electronic resources/ data resources (including e-mail and the Internet). However, members should be aware that records are kept of all usage and could be made available in specific circumstances. In addition, the PPN reserves the right to audit information in various electronic formats in order to safeguard the interests of members and to fulfil statutory obligations as per relevant legislation. Electronic format encompasses both, information/data transmitted in real time as well as historical information.

There should be no expectation of personal privacy when using the PPN equipment and services. All information, data or files created, received, downloaded, stored, transmitted, deleted or used are the PPN property.

### ***Email:***

The PPN does not routinely monitor email; it may do so for the following reasons:

- To detect virus or other malicious content;
- To locate information urgently required by the PPN.
- To respond to legal or regulatory requirements;
- To fulfil our obligations to members, third parties and relevant regulatory authorities;
- During an investigation triggered by indications of misconduct.

## ***EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY***

### ***Equality Awareness***

If a voluntary, community or charity organisation provides any goods, facilities or services to members of the public, it must make sure it does what equality law says it must do.

Equality law can affect everyone responsible for running an organisation or charity.

It doesn't matter if the service the organisation provides is free, or if people have to pay towards it.

The size of the organisation does not matter either.

Organisations should also be mindful that a volunteer is eligible to lodge a claim to the Equality Tribunal under the Equality Acts 1998-2011.

Therefore, training and awareness should be provided on issues such as Equality & Diversity.

### ***Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015***

### ***Equal Status Acts 2000-2015***

Irish policy has conceptualized equality as including:

**Equality of Access:** An equal right to participate in employment and activities Access to employment, activities, services, education, based on right.

**Equality of Opportunity:** this builds on the existence of equality of access and provides for positive action interventions that enable groups or individuals, who experience participation barriers to fully participate in the workforce, activities or services.

**Equality of outcome:** This considers the outcome of full participation and means that marginalized individuals or groups have equal outcomes to participation in the labour market, services and activities.

### ***Equal Status 10 Grounds***

People are protected against discrimination on the grounds of:

**Gender:** male, female transsexual or transgendered;

**Martial or Civil Status:** single, married, separated, divorced or widowed;

**Family Status:** pregnant, parent or resident, primary carer;

**Sexual Orientation:** heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual;

**Religion:** different religious beliefs or none;

**Age:** employees between 18 and 65 and 15 to 65 for those in vocational training;

**Disability:** includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disability or a range of medical conditions;

**Race, Ethnicity, National Origins:** skin colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;

**Membership of the Traveller Community:** an indigenous minority who, historical sources confirm, have been part of Irish society for centuries;

**Housing Assistance:** in relation to the provision of residential accommodation;

**The Disability Ground:** This is broadly defined as including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

The Acts apply to people and organisations who:

- Hire employees including volunteers;
- Buy, sell a wide variety of goods;
- Use or provide a wide range of services including the voluntary sector;
- Obtain or dispose of accommodation;
- Attend at, or are in charge of educational establishments;

### ***Disability – Reasonable Accommodation:***

This involves providing special treatment or facilities in circumstances where without these, it would be impossible or unduly difficult to avail of the goods, services, accommodation, education etc.

However, they are not obliged to provide special facilities or treatment when this costs more than what is called a nominal cost.

What amounts to nominal cost will depend on the circumstances such as the size and resources of the body involved.

If the state provides grants or aids for assisting in providing special treatment or facilities, there maybe an onus on the service providers etc. to avail of these grants.

***Direct Discrimination:*** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another, in similar circumstances, based on one of the 10 grounds.

Direct Discrimination is outlawed by the Acts in the following areas;

- Discrimination in collective agreements.
- Discrimination by employers.
- Discrimination by employees.
- Discrimination by employment agencies.
- Discriminatory advertising.
- Discrimination in vocational training.
- Discrimination by professional trade associations, trade unions, clubs and voluntary organisations.

***Indirect discrimination:*** is about practices or policies which seem fair at first sight but in effect either intentionally or more often un-intentionally, result in discrimination against a minority, ethnic groups or groups.

However, it will not be indirect discrimination if the employer can objectively justify (on grounds unrelated to the discriminatory ground) the condition or provision is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary to achieve a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is more difficult to combat and direct discrimination. Because on its face it is neutral and is more difficult to identify.

***Discrimination by Association:*** happens when a person associated with another person who belongs to a particular ethnic minority or group is treated less favourably because of that association.



The legislation merely states that one must be 'associated' with another person. There is no guide as to how close the association has to be to be deemed discrimination under the legislation.

## **Diversity Awareness:**

### ***So what now.....***

Look for volunteers of mixed skill sets and diversity.

Run diversity week/workshops for your own organisation.

Devise update new equality and diversity policy.

### ***1. Commit to promoting Equality and Diversity:***

Ensure there is a written policy statement on the promotion of equality of opportunity in volunteering roles.

All related volunteer policies are assessed to promote equality and regularly reviewed.

All employees and volunteers understand equality expectation and commitments.

### ***2. Allocate appropriate resources:***

Someone has overall responsibility for promoting equality and diversity.

Volunteer co-ordinators are trained in equality and diversity matters.

Promotion and practice are regularly reviewed.

### ***3. Encourage participation for all:***

Any restrictions to participation will be clearly explained and justified.

Words and images in public material reflect the diversity of the community.

Volunteering opportunities are promoted as widely as possible and will reach marginalised sections of the community.

Ensure Equality monitoring and review mechanisms are in place.

Take action, to address if under representation is identified.

### ***4. Develop inclusive and diverse volunteering roles:***

Task descriptions are developed for volunteer roles.

Requirements for each role are clearly defined.

As far as possible roles are adapted to meet individual needs, abilities, interests.

### ***5. Protect volunteers from harassment:***

Promote fair and harmonious working environments.

Any complaints are investigated quickly and thoroughly.

Volunteers from different backgrounds are treated with respect.

Information for monitoring purposes is kept confidential.

### ***6. Promote fair and transparent recruitment:***

There is an accessible recruitment/information pack.

Consistent procedures and recording in place.

Only relevant information is asked for.

A, confidential equal opportunities, monitoring system is in place.

Feedback is given to unsuccessful applicants.

Consistent approach to references and checks.

**7. *Communicate clear and fair procedures:***

Volunteers receive thorough induction including relevant guidelines and procedures.

Volunteers are made aware of equality expectations and commitments.

Volunteers know how to raise a complaint or concern.

**8. *Support diverse individual needs:***

Individual volunteer needs and commitments are accommodated as far as possible.

Different support needs are recognised, and systems of support and supervision take account of this

Volunteers have opportunity to input via consultation and feedback processes.

**The Policies and Procedures of Galway County PPN may-be reviewed by the members on a yearly basis or as required in line with current legislation and developing PPN national policy.**

**PPN Reps reporting Template**



**Galway County  
Public  
Participation  
Network**

Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Phoiblí  
Chontae na Gaillimhe

**Reporting Template**

**For Community Representatives on SPC's, JPC, GSP & LCDC Committees**

<b>Representative's Name</b>	
<b>Name of committee from which the Rep is reporting on.</b>	
<b>Date of the meeting,</b>	
<b>Agenda for meeting</b>	
<b>Key issues discussed</b>	<hr/>