



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

# PPN Hosting Arrangements Webinar

25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 @ 4.00pm

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# Overview

1. Context
2. Purpose of hosting arrangements
3. Review and analysis of options
4. Host selection process guidance
5. Q&A

# 1. Context

- A number of PPN's are considering a review or change of their current hosting arrangements.
- Provide guidance on 3 options available to PPN's.
- Provide independent and impartial view on pro's and con's of each option.

If current arrangements are working – no need to consider a change.

## 2. Purpose of hosting arrangement

- Provide a legal structure through which the PPN can operate.
- Perform the role of employer for the PPN Resource Worker and Support Worker.
- Provide appropriate serviced and accessible office accommodation.
- Provide administrative function for the PPN.
- Carry out a range of other functions required of an employer/health and safety/reporting/custodian of public money etc.

# 3. Review and Analysis of Options

Guided by PPN Handbook and Department Circular CVSP1/2015.

3 options

- Local Authority
- External organisation
- PPN Support Company

### 3. Review of Options

Regardless of the hosting arrangement used;

It is an express condition of funding that the resource worker would operate independently from the local authority/third party host and be answerable to the PPN Secretariat in the performance of their duties.

Budget will remain the same for core operational costs.

# Practical considerations

- Sustainable
- Effective
- Makes best use of limited resources
- Retains independence of PPN decision making
- Encourage high engagement levels from C&V sector.
- Appropriate level of Governance
- Allows for effective decision making
- Security for staff
- Does not unduly take away from the core functionality of the PPN.

# 3. Option 1 – Local Authority

Pro's	Con's
Existing governance structure	Perceived independence and control.
Security for staff / possible career progression, synergy with other staff/sections.	Sometimes public sector led can result in lower levels of C&V engagement.
No company returns	If there is a disagreement with LA policy on certain issues, this can lead to conflict
Health and Safety and other requirements delegated to LA.	Relationship needs to be managed.
PPN Secretariat, Linkage Groups and Plenary can concentrate on policy, representation and capacity building.	



# 3. Option 2 – Self Hosting

Pro's	Con's
Perceived independence and control.	Responsible as an employer.
Potential as a CLG/Charity to apply for funding from other sources.	Company and CRA returns and associated costs borne from existing budgets.
Less potential for conflict of interest with contributions to policy in LA matters.	Health and Safety and other requirements borne by PPN company directors.
	PPN Secretariat, Linkage Groups and Plenary need to divert time towards running the company as well as PPN core business.
	Individual members will need to sign as directors and charity trustees. This can put people off putting their name forward. Rotation of directors – current secretariat will not always be in situ – different skillsets will be required.

# 3. Option 3 – Third party host

Pro's	Con's
Existing governance structure	Perceived independence and control.
Security for staff, synergy with other staff and programmes.	Relationship needs to be managed.
No company returns	Limited availability of competent suitable local organisations to undertake this function.
Health and Safety and other requirements delegated to host	Can be discrepancies in remuneration with other host organisation staff.
PPN Secretariat, Linkage Groups and Plenary can concentrate on policy, representation and capacity building.	

# Considerations

- Is the current arrangement working ?
- If not, why not?
- Can it be repaired /fixed/reset?
- Are relevance safeguards in place to ensure seamless hosting arrangements (where they are third party) i.e. MOU's/SLA's.
- Regular communication and engagement – clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities. Changes of officers/secretariat – change of staff in LA.

# SLA and MOU

- Must be in place at all times
- Is required to be in place in order to draw down funding from Dept and Local Authority and avoids future conflicts over responsibilities and duties.

# If third party host

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Authority and the PPN in respect of the current year.
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Hosting Organisation and the PPN.
- An SLA between the local authority and the Hosting Organisation.

*(SLA – is a contract for services)*

# Under Third Party Hosting Arrangement

Responsibilities of employer are delegated to the host.

# Roles

The host would act as employer.

Legal responsibility for Health and Welfare of Staff.

Provide office and facility from which the PPN operates.

Processes payroll and makes returns to revenue.

# Management of Staff

Staff report ultimately to a designated officer of the host-in regards to hosting arrangements.

On day to day basis work closely with the Staff Liaison Committee of the PPN.

Support Worker is line managed and directed by the Resource Worker as a direct report.



# Staff policies

- Handled by the host organisation;

i.e. staff handbook, policies on travel, mobile phone use, performance appraisals.

Not the responsibility of the PPN secretariat but agreement at outset of hosting arrangement of what these will be.

# Dealing with staff

- Provide support and guidance.
- Do not micro manage. – oversight role.
- Lead in period for new staff.
- Develop a good working relationship.
- Be realistic in terms of workload (work plan)
- Keep good channels of communications open.

# Review of staff and work of PPN

- A HR subcommittee between host and the Secretariat. (quarterly)
- A Programme Management committee between LA, host and the Secretariat (quarterly)
- Could in practice be same committee with Council joining programme mgt items.

# Grievances/Disciplinary Issues

In the unlikely event for the need for intervention;

Refer to host (employer)

Secretariat is not the employer by law

## 4. Host selection process guidance

# Indicative process

- Host would be agreed following a process to select the most appropriate organisation to perform this role.
- The process would involve publicly advertising for interested organisations to apply to host the PPN. Following a scoring process, the results of which would be presented by the secretariat to a plenary for approval.
- Membership of selection panel – a panel consisting of a member of the PPN secretariat, an official from Local Authority and an independent member would assess the proposals using the agreed criteria for presentation to the secretariat and plenary.

# Suggested Essential Criteria

Essential Criteria	YES(Pass) / NO(Fail)
Located and registered as a company within the PPN operational area.	
CLG company status	
CRA registered charity	
CRO returns up to date	
Registered as an employer	
Have existing office base in PPN operational area.	
Present clean set of accounts and prove company is solvent.	

Note -Failure to meet any of the 7 essential criteria will result in disqualification from the process.

	Criteria	Description of Criteria	Marking Weight
1	The organisation must be able to demonstrate a background of community and voluntary activity in the Local Authority Administrative Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the primary function of the organisation in the community and voluntary sector across the county?</li> <li>Does the organisation have a similar client base to the PPN and does the organisation operate on a County basis.</li> </ul>	20marks 20%
2	The organisation must demonstrate a knowledge of, and a willingness to support the ongoing development of the Public Participation Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the organisation been involved in or provided support to the PPN or any of its members to date.</li> <li>The Organisations demonstration of their understanding of what the PPN is.</li> </ul>	20 marks 20%
3	The organisation must be able to demonstrate the capacities required to act as the host organization-including financial management, human resources management, and technical capacities.	<p>The organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial management capacity, including managing public funding.</li> <li>A number of existing staff (demonstrates HR capacity).</li> </ul>	20 marks 20%
4	The organisation must be able to demonstrate the provision of suitable accommodation for the Resource Worker/Support Workers to enable them to carry out their role	<p>The organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An accessible premises (rents or owns) with parking.</li> <li>A meeting room.</li> <li>The capacity to house up to two PPN Workers at the same time in the office.</li> </ul>	20 marks 20%
5	Value for money	<p>Does the overall cost provide certainty and value to the PPN?</p> <p>i.e. does the annual hosting fee include rent, insurance, HR functions, pay roll, bank charges, internet, invoice processing, desk space, meeting room use, auditing fees, regular review meetings, etc.</p>	20 marks 20%

Applicants must score a minimum of 60% (12 marks) under each of the 5 selection criteria



# Summarise

- If current arrangements are working – no need to change
- No perfect model
- Manage relationships
- Clear demarcation of duties
- Upskill when key people change in host, LA or PPN secretariat.

Q&A ?