



Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Phoiblí Chontae na Gaillimhe
Public Participation Network Galway County

Galway County PPN Secretariat Meeting

21st November 2023 @ 10am

Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Mary Mullen (RW), Duana Tuite (SW), Vincent Lyons, Dan Dowling, Jarlath Canney, Martina Finn, Carmel McGrath.

Apologies: Patrick McHugh, George Francis, Nicola Johnston, Aodán MacDonncha, Martin Ward.

Absent: Tom Madden.

AGENDA

Welcomes

Approve minutes from previous meeting 10.10.2023

PPN Updates

PPN Budget Update

Agree Meeting Dates and Plenary Dates for 2024

Update From Chairperson

Plenary Planning:

- Assign roes for Plenary*
- Finalise running order*

AOB

Welcomes

Mary Mullen welcomed PPN Secretariat to the meeting. Apologies were noted from those who sent them. A quorum of 4 members was met.

Approve Minutes of Last Meeting

- Minutes of 10/10/2023 approved. Proposed by Vincent Lyons, seconded by Martina Finn.

Updates

- **PPN Plenary** is next week, in-person, Claregalway Hotel, 6:30-9:00pm. More in agenda later. Registration is required.
- **Training** for PPN members with Caroline Egan from CramdenTech – 3 trainings in this series. The upcoming training '*Growing Your Social Enterprise*' is on December 5th at 7pm online. Registration link has been sent to all PPN member groups.
- **Directory of Services for Older People - launch event** - This Friday 24th November at 9:30am-2pm In the Hardiman Hotel Eyre Square. This is a joint Galway County and City project. Registration is required - If you live in Galway County, please contact the Community Section of Galway County Council on 091 509 521 or e-mail agefriendly@galwaycoco.ie.
- **Disability Forum Meeting** – Friday 24th November, 3pm, online.
- **Disability Training with DFI** – Inclusive Community Groups – was held yesterday online and went well.
- **Energy Master Plan (EMP)** – project of Green Recovery Working Group/PPN, was discussed. There will hopefully be a launch in each Municipal District early in 2024.
- **2024 MD/Town Hall meetings** – hoping to have PPN Municipal District meetings in early 2024, one per MD, to find out opportunities and needs for community groups.

Budget

- **Budget** – Mary Mullen provided a budget report verbally, some expenses are to be paid soon, Plenary and Training, then we will be able to present figures more clearly before year end.
- **Discussion on budget potential uses** – it was suggested that training on climate action could be organised in 2024. Training from GAP (global action plan) in Dublin, and Aoife Munn, and TASK was all discussed, as well as ‘People’s Transition Mountbellew’. Technical equipment to purchase was also discussed, including an A3 laminator, and a portable projector, office supplies.

Agree Meeting Dates and Plenary Dates for 2024

- **Proposed dates for Secretariat Meetings for 2024** were shared with the group, and **proposed dates for the two Plenary events 2024**. Approved. New PPN Representatives/Secretariat members will be elected in 2024, so meeting dates could change. Provisional Dates proposed by Vincent Lyons, seconded by Martina Finn. Approved.
- It was suggested that the in-person Plenary should be west of the river Corrib next year. Likely Conamara Coast Hotel.
- PPN workers might do another poll to see what times suit people for meetings.

Secretariat Meeting Dates 2024

[every 6 weeks on Tuesdays –alternating between mornings 10am and evenings 7pm]

Date	Chairperson
January 16 th @ 10am	Patrick McHugh
February 27 th @ 7pm	Vincent Lyons
April 9 th @ 10am	George Francis
May 21 st @ 7pm	Aodán Mac Donnacha
July 02 nd @ 10am	Carmel McGrath
August 13 th @ 7pm	Dan Dowling
September 24 th @ 10am	Jarlath Canney
November 05 th @ 7pm	Martin Ward
December 17 th @ 10am	Martina Finn
	Nicola Johnston

**** Plenary Dates 2024 ****

May 28 th , 2024	Summer Plenary (in-person)
November 19 th , 2024	Winter Plenary (online)

Update from Chairperson

- **Martina Finn stepped in as Chairperson** as Nicola Johnston was unavailable. Martina provided updates on various climate and environmental events she has attended recently and spoke about some documents and projects she is aware of which are in progress.
- Tipperary Toolkit for climate action being developed with Cloughjordan Eco Village.
- **Portumna Forest Park Consultations – concerns from community.**

Information on Consultations below:

- **Portumna Public Realm Enhancement Scheme – by Galway County Council –**
Open: 5 Oct, 2023, 2:15pm - 21 Nov, 2023 5:00pm.
<https://consult.galway.ie/en/consultation/portumna-public-realm-enhancement-scheme-stage-2-consultation>
- **Portumna Forest Park 5-10 year Sustainable Strategy & Masterplan Public Consultation October 2023 – by Coillte and Fáilte Ireland** have extended the public consultation on Portumna Forest Park opened in October, closing extended from 8th November to 21st November.
<https://www.portumnaforestpark.com/public-consultation>

Martina Finn said that there are concerns in the community about the plan, and the consultation process, not enough time given for consultation, and not sufficient community engagement. The consultation was extended. Concerns include that it seems like a big development project not considering biodiversity protection enough. There are Natura sites beside the planned development area, with special ecological concerns.

Martina queried if PPN or Green Recovery Working Group (GRWG) could put in a submission to the plan and was informed it is too late to do so as the closing date is today.

The group was informed that the PPN shared the consultation to the whole of the PPN membership over 1200 groups well before the deadline. It was discussed that local community and groups would need to lead the response to local plans, and engage in consultation processes, as theirs is the most effective voice.

It was suggested that groups could raise their concerns with the Climate and Biodiversity teams in the council, and/or their elected representatives.

- It was suggested that PPN members could in future please re-share the consultations that the PPN staff share (via email to members, social media posts and the PPN website), to encourage engagement from their local community, their group members, and the PPN Pillar or Municipal District they represent, if relevant.

Additional Discussion

- There was discussion about various environmental concerns, and the lack of progress on the climate and biodiversity emergency nationally and locally. It was highlighted that PPN staff resources do not allow for as much time to be dedicated to environmental topics as some PPN members would like. It was explained that the Galway County PPN work plan and obligations to the whole of the PPN membership and overall admin workload, means PPN workers must be mindful of how much time is given to each pillar, topic, or project, so as not to neglect other important PPN work. It was noted that there is a call nationally for 3 additional staff for each PPN team, to manage workload, especially with emerging crisis such as the environment. So, in the meantime PPN staff can only do what they are resourced to do, while ensuring that the obligatory administrative and community participation work is completed. It was also highlighted that there is a new Climate Team including a Community Climate Officer, where requests for assistance, or proposals for projects from environmental groups could be directed.

Plenary Planning

- There was only 1 response (George Francis) to the email inviting PPN Secretariat to sign up for specific roles in the upcoming in-person plenary on 28th November 6:30pm-9:00pm in Claregalway Hotel.
- PPN Plenary Planning meeting on 19th October attended by Vincent and Jarlath.

- The proposed agenda for the Plenary was agreed on at the planning meeting. And it was agreed that PPN workers would assign roles at today's meeting, if they were not allocated already, or people volunteered for them at today's meeting.
- It was agreed that the voting, on the PPN Workplan 2024 and any other items, would be done by a show of hands on the night.
- It was noted that a number of PPN Member Roles will need to be filled after the elections in the middle of 2024. Vincent Lyons assured that the outgoing Secretariat members would give support to the new representatives for a time after the changeover. And that the outgoing members will still be there for the in-person Plenary in May 2024.
- A request for a last-minute addition to the Plenary Agenda was submitted by Martina Finn in advance of today's meeting, for the GRWG to do a presentation. Martina Finn and Jen Fisher to present on mainly the topic 'Rights to Nature'. Martina also wanted to play a video on 'Rights to Nature' of around 10 minutes length. There was much discussion around the length of time available for this item in the overall Plenary agenda, Martina requested at least 20 minutes timeslot. It was explained that there is not enough time for this allocation, as the agenda was already set based on the planning meeting and already confirmed agenda items. That SPC updates from PPN Reps are only allocated 5 minutes each, and guest speakers have maximum 10-minute slots. Martina expressed dissatisfaction with this time constraint, citing the importance of the environmental crisis, which everyone agreed is important. A compromise was reached that the GRWG would be allocated a 10-minute slot, that the video would not be played as there is not sufficient time, and that Martina would forward the proposed presentation to the PPN workers by no later than Monday morning, as all presentations need to be collated and ensure the technology works.

Roles allocated:

- Jarlath – photographer
- Vincent Lyons – welcome address and MC for the night

- Martina Finn, Carmel McGrath, Dan Dowling – helping facilitate the table discussions and gather the sheets of paper with notes for collation at the top table.

AOB

- People's transition was discussed by Martina Finn
- Fair Clare report was discussed – there is a digital addition which could be included in December PPN Newsletter. Vincent Lyons delivered a physical copy to the PPN documents library in the office, along with a number of other reports, plans and strategy documents he collected from recent meetings and events attended.
- This Friday event in the Hardiman Eyre Square, from 9:30am, launch and information on the Directory of Services for Older People. PPN Reps welcome to attend. Mary Mullen and Duana Tuite (PPN workers) and Vincent Lyons will be attending the information table for PPN and helping with the event.
- PPN December Newsletter, submissions due by Friday 24th November. This issue has a special focus on Social Inclusion, so any PPN Reps with activities under that topic/pillar are encouraged to submit content. All content topics are welcome in each issue. Deadline is always a working week before the end of the month.

MEETING ENDED: 11:30am

NEXT MEETING DATE: **16th January 2024 @ 10am– Chairperson: Patrick McHugh**