



24/7/19

**Circular Letter CVSP 7/2019**

**Role of PPNs & Conference 2019.**

Dear Director,

***Role of PPNs – new Boards and Committees requiring PPN Representation.***

Following the recent local elections, a number of new local authority boards and committees, such as SPCS, are currently being established. Since the last local elections in 2014, PPNs have been established in all local authority areas and are the “go to” organisation for all bodies in a county / city who wish to benefit from community and voluntary expertise at their table.

The representation of environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary voices on local authority boards and committees is a core function of PPNs and where such community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the local authority, such as SPCs or LCDCs, local authorities **must** source this through the PPN. We would like to take this opportunity to remind authorities of this requirement and bring it to the attention of colleagues in your authority who may be in the process of establishing boards/committees that require representation as outlined above.

In Circular Letter CVSP1/2014 dated 10 April 2014 it was stated that Government and local authorities need to play their part in ensuring that the community, voluntary and environmental sectors can actively and positively engage with its decision making forums. A number of actions were suggested in that circular to achieve the goal of engagement and in the context of new boards/committees being established, it is considered appropriate that a number of these actions be restated as follows:

- that Local Authorities agree to and adopt a Protocol for all committees/decision making committees with PPN representatives which will enable the representatives to engage appropriately
- that Local Authorities set aside resources for participation on key decision making committees to cover travel and subsistence expenses for PPN representatives
- that Local Authorities facilitate access to a library of relevant thematic documents focused on groups and committees that the **Network** are represented on, **and**
- that Local Authorities provide Training Supports that may be required for Representatives to enable them build their capacity for the role of PPN Representative.

We would also ask you and your colleagues to be cognisant of the voluntary nature of PPN representatives and that due consideration be given when arranging meetings.

**2019 Annual PPN Conference**

The National PPN Annual Conference is a collaborative event between this Department as funders and the hosting PPN in partnership with their local authority. The conference provides an invaluable networking opportunity for stakeholders to share experiences and to learn from one another.

The purpose of Annual Conference is to showcase the operation of PPNs in practice and highlight best practice experiences. It is also an ideal occasion for local authorities particularly to demonstrate their commitment and support of the Network and the fundamental principles behind Citizen Engagement.

This year's Conference is being held in the Woodford Dolmen Hotel Carlow on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> and Friday 12<sup>th</sup>. October and is being hosted by your colleagues in Carlow County Council in partnership with Carlow PPN. The participation of local authorities at such conferences is seen as critical in the furtherance of the ideals of citizen engagement and in the development of PPNs. With that in mind, the Department on behalf of the National PPN Advisory Group and PPNs nationally would welcome your attendance at this year's Conference in Carlow.

A significant attendance by local authority personnel at the Conference in Carlow will undoubtedly demonstrate the commitment of Local Authorities to the process of engagement and development of PPNs.

Mise le meas,



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cc each PPN (for onward transmission to each member of your Secretariat)