

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



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BETWEEN

**Kildare County Council
of
Aras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
Co. Kildare.**

And

**Kildare Public Participation Network
of
Aras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
Co. Kildare.**

January 2024

Revised and edited on May 27th 2024 – allowing for an extension to December 31st 2024.

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Purpose and Scope.

To outline the roles and responsibilities of Kildare County Council and Kildare Public Participation Network with regard to the delivery of the PPN structures and activities as outlined in The Handbook for Public Participation Networks (November 2020).

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was signed between the host organisation, County Kildare LEADER Partnership and Kildare County Council.

This covered the following:

- Employment of a PPN Resource Worker & Support Worker
- Accounting for and managing the work of the Resource Worker & Support Worker

Background and Context.

A framework for public engagement and participation, called “The Public Participation Network (PPN)” was developed within each local authority area (engaging in and within municipal districts and at the County level) to enable the public to take an active formal role in the policy making and oversight activities of the Local Authority’s areas of responsibility.

The PPN is the main link through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors without prejudice to other consultation processes.

The aim of the structures and processes is to facilitate and enable the public and the organisations to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system, not to reduce or homogenise this diversity. A parallel and equally important aim should be to facilitate the local authority in making better and timelier decisions.

Members of the local community interact with local government at different levels. The PPN facilitates input by the public into local government through a structure that ensures public participation and representation on decision-making committees within local government.

The Network performs its functions following core principles to facilitate active participation with decision-making bodies as identified earlier i.e. participation, trust, accountability, transparency and independence.

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Goals and Objectives.

To develop the Public Participation Network in Co. Kildare which:

- *Facilitates the participation and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner through the environmental, social inclusion and community & voluntary sectors on decision making bodies.*
- *Strengthens the capacity of communities and of the environmental, social inclusion, and community & voluntary groups to contribute positively to the community in which they reside/participate.*
- *Provides information relevant to the environmental, social inclusion and community & voluntary sector and acts as a hub around which information is distributed and received.*

In particular the role of the Network will be:

1. *To facilitate opportunities for networking, communication and the sharing of information between environmental, community and voluntary groups and between these groups and the local authority.*
2. *To identify issues of collective concern and work to influence policy locally in relation to these issues.*
3. *To actively support inclusion of socially excluded groups, communities experiencing high levels of poverty, communities experiencing discrimination, in conjunction with Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP) to enable them to participate at local and county level and to clearly demonstrate same.*
4. *To encourage and enable public participation in local decision making and planning of services.*
5. *To facilitate the selection of participants from the environmental, social inclusion and community & voluntary sectors onto city/county decision making bodies.*
6. *To support a process that will feed the broad range of ideas, experience, suggestions and proposals of the Network into policies and plans being developed by agencies and decision makers in areas that are of interest and relevant to the Network.*
7. *To support the individual members of the Public Participation Network so that:*
 - *They can develop their capacity and do their work more effectively.*
 - *They can participate effectively in Public Participation Network activities.*
 - *They are included and their voices and concerns are heard.*

(Dept. Community & Rural Development)

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Roles and Responsibilities.

- Kildare County Council support Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) in its operational area.
- Kildare County Council undertakes to provide a minimum of €35,000 matched funding to maximise the departments funding of €85,700, thus ensuring a minimum annual budget of €120,700 for the PPN.
- Kildare County Council undertakes to enter into a Service Level Agreement with County Kildare LEADER Partnership to act as legal employer of a Resource Worker and Support Worker.
- Kildare PPN 2 representatives, Kildare County Council 1 representative and County Kildare LEADER Partnership 1 representative, will form a working group.
- Kildare PPN with support from the working group will take responsibility for the operational rollout of the PPN in Co. Kildare.
- Kildare PPN will delegate up to two individuals to act on its behalf with regard to the negotiation and progress of this MOU. Any change in these individuals must be communicated in writing to both parties.
- The Director of Services whose responsibility includes Community or their appointed representative (minimum Administrative Officer level) will act on behalf of Kildare County Council. Any change in this individual must be communicated in writing to both parties.

Workplan and budget.

Kildare County Council will:

- Endorse the Workplan for 2024.
- Agree a resource allocation for 2024 and a payment schedule based on satisfactory reports to County Kildare LEADER Partnership.
- Appoint a liaison person between Kildare County Council and the PPN/CKLP working group, who is at least at Administrative Officer level.
- Facilitate the provision of suitable workspace and equipment for the resource worker and support worker.
- Return financial reports to the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Kildare PPN will:

- Devise an annual detailed Workplan which will clearly demonstrate how it will achieve the aims and objectives of the PPN within that period.
- Identify the itemised budget and resource requirements under the Workplan.
- Through the working group have in place a robust financial management and financial reporting structure.

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- Have a clear reporting mechanism on key performance indicators and other items related to PPN activity

Staffing.

- Kildare PPN and Kildare County Council will through County Kildare LEADER Partnership employ a Resource Worker & Support Worker for the duration of committed funding by the Dept. of Community & Rural Development.

The working group in collaboration with Kildare PPN will:

- Devise a job description of employment for the Resource Worker & Support Worker
- Manage the day-to-day work of the Resource Worker & Support Worker in the furtherance of the workplan.
- Offer support, supervision and relevant training and development opportunities to the worker through the Working Group.

Operational Co-operation.

Kildare PPN will:

- Work constructively and collaboratively with Kildare County Council in the furtherance of the aims of the Co. Kildare PPN as set out in The PPN Handbook (November 2020).
- Maintain an up-to-date Salesforce database of PPN Member groups. This database will be the sole responsibility of Kildare PPN and the information therein will not be shared with any other organisation without prior approval of the information giver.
- Take out suitable insurance policies as are required for its activities, and those policies will specifically indemnify Kildare County Council.
- Engage in other activities provided they are complementary to this Workplan and that they can access the extra resources required to undertake such work.
- Work with Kildare County Council on any funding applications which may be appropriate.

Kildare County Council will:

- Approach PPN for representatives for all seats on decision-making/advisory bodies under their auspices which require Environmental, Social Inclusion, or Community and Voluntary members.
- Pay expenses to the PPN representatives on such structures according to a mechanism to be agreed with the PPN.
- Work with the PPN to agree, adopt and implement a protocol for all committees/decision-making bodies with PPN representatives that will enable the

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representatives to engage fully, taking into consideration timing, location, documentation etc.

- Use the PPN as their main way of communicating with the Environmental, Social Inclusion and Community & Voluntary Sector, including formal consultations.
- Offer workshops and training as required to PPN members to build their capacity to feed into policies and plans.
- Provide a designated official who will liaise with and support the PPN.
- Work with Kildare PPN on any funding applications which may be appropriate.

Reporting and Evaluation.

Kildare PPN will:

- Submit quarterly reports to Kildare County Council detailing progress on the workplan.
- Facilitate an end of year review meeting with Kildare County Council.
- Devise, agree and implement a participatory evaluation framework which involves all stakeholders in the PPN process.
- Produce an Annual Report on the PPN.

Kildare County Council will:

- Submit reports to the Department as required to draw down funds.
- Pay over approved funds to PPN in a timely way to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
- Participate in evaluation and monitoring of the PPN's performance.

Conflict resolution.

Every effort should be made to avoid serious conflict between the parties, by providing good communication protocols that will enable any issues to be dealt with early and in a timely manner.

In the event that any dispute relating to this MOU cannot be resolved by settlement between the parties, the parties shall attempt to resolve all disputes through informal means. Dispute resolution may include mediation, arbitration, or any other procedures upon which the parties agree.

Review.

This MOU will be reviewed in writing every year on the anniversary of its signing. Any recommended changes must be agreed by both parties.

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Commencement.

This agreement will come into force on 01/01/2024 and be effective until 31/03/2024.

Revised and edited on May 27th 2024 – allowing for an extension to December 31st 2024.

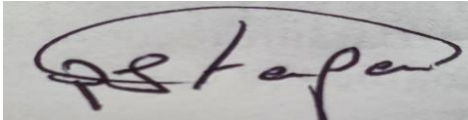
Signed *Paula O'Brien*

Name Paula O'Brien

Date 07th June 2024

On behalf of Kildare County Council

Name

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Paula O'Brien'.

Date May 27th 2024

On behalf of Kildare Public Participation Network