

23/5/17

**NATIONAL PPN ADVISORY GROUP**

**NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FROM EACH PPN.**

**Background**

The Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government was set up in September 2013. The Group made recommendations on more extensive and diverse input by citizens into the decision-making processes at local government level. It recommended that a Public Participation Network (PPN) be established in each local authority area to enable the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees of the local authority. The Report of the Working Group was published in February 2014.

PPNs are now established in all local authority areas. The Working Group Report recommended that the work of PPNs should be monitored and evaluated regularly in line with best practice. It was envisaged that the focus of this oversight would be on an assessment of whether or not they are achieving their overall purpose of facilitating engagement with the local authority and whether the structures, systems and processes are supporting the achievement of that purpose. This would be undertaken by a **National PPN Advisory Group** appointed by the Minister.

**Membership of the National PPN Advisory Group**

The National PPN Advisory Group would be made up of the following -

* One representative each from the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and the Environmental sectors,
* Three PPN Volunteers, one each from the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental sectors,
* Three PPN resource workers,
* Two Local Authority staff (at least one at Director of Service level and one directly supporting a PPN) and
* an official of the Department (Chair) while secretariat services are also be provided by Department staff.

**Current position of National PPN Advisory Group**

The first National PPN Advisory Group was established in 2016 and, to date, has met on four occasions. The National PPN Advisory Group’s current membership, although representative of the various PPN stakeholder groups, were initially invited by the Department to participate and were not elected or nominated to their positions from within their respective stakeholder groups.

**A new nomination/election process:**

To address a perceived democratic deficit and ensure that the National PPN Advisory Group is fully representative of the various PPN stakeholder groups, it is critical that the Group’s members are nominated, elected or chosen in a fully open and democratic manner.

To achieve this essential principle, the current National PPN Advisory Group, along with the Department, has initiated a process of seeking nominations from all stakeholder groups.

**Nomination and election of PPN Volunteers.**

As a first step in the process of electing three individuals to represent the PPN volunteers, each PPN is now being invited to seek nominations from within their membership and nominate one representative from each sectoral college (Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental).

The process of seeking nominations is being left to each PPN to determine. The only requirements that the National PPN Advisory Group and the Department would make is that whatever process is adopted, that it be inclusive, transparent and fair, and that nominated individuals are actually willing to take up a position on a newly constituted National PPN Advisory Group, if elected.

Nominations must be made to the Department through individual PPN’s by **30th June 2017** and should simply contain the nominee’s name, contact details (mail/phone) and sectoral college being represented. No nomination should be submitted unless agreed to by the nominated individual. Nominations may be mailed to ppn@housing.gov.ie and titled *‘Nominations’*.

Due of the numbers involved and the absence of any overall national representative body, it has been agreed by the current Advisory Group that the names of these representative nominees would be placed in three lots – one per sectoral college - with one name from each college drawn randomly. The selection process will be overseen by representatives of the current National PPN Advisory Group and Department. No two representatives from the same PPN can be permitted to take a position on the Advisory group at the same time.

I would be grateful if you could commence this process for your PPN and return your nominations to the Department as indicated, by **30 June 2017.** If you have any queries, please contact [ppn@housing.gov.ie](mailto:ppn@housing.gov.ie) or Ellie Corcoran at 01 8882958



Deirdre Kearney.

Community & Voluntary Supports and Programmes/National PPP Advisory Group

**To each PPN.**

**Information for prospective nominees**

***The timeframe involved***

It is proposed that the members of the new Advisory Group would meet for the first time in September/October 2017.

***The term of office of the Advisory Group***

The members of the new Advisory Group would each be appointed for a period of **3 years**

(September/October 2017 – August 2020)

***Meetings***

The National Advisory Group will meet at least four times in a full year, typically once a quarter. For convenience purposes meetings meetings to date of the Group have been held in the Custom House, Dublin 1 which is located next to national rail, bus and Luas services. It is expected that this venue will continue to serve for meeting of the new group.

Agenda and minutes are circulated to members within two weeks of a meeting.

Additional meetings may be organised as and when required.

***Travelling & Subsistence.***

Current Civil Service rates apply to travel and subsistence expenses incurred by members of the National PPN Advisory Group travelling to and from meetings. It is Departmental policy that public transport should be used wherever possible if it is deemed necessary to travel for meeting purposes. Members should only use their cars to travel to and from meetings in where no suitable public transport (e.g., train or bus) is available

***Purpose and Objectives of the National PPN Advisory Group***

The National Advisory Group’s role will be to advise and support the Department in the development and operation of the PPNs. In that the Advisory Group will

1. Develop key performance indicators for PPNs and Local Authorities in conjunction with the Department.
2. Analyse and discuss local progress and liaise with DHPCLG on addressing priority issues identified.
3. Monitor progress on the development and implementation of PPNs across the country to ensure consistency of implementation across local authority areas.
4. Where inconsistencies are identified, make proposals on how these issues can be resolved.