



Mr. Robert Collins
Meetings Administrator
Meath County Council
Buvinda House
Dublin Road
Navan
County Meath
C15 Y291

Via email: Robert.collins@meathcoco.ie

Our Ref: DRCD-MoS-00033-2022

28th February 2022

Dear Mr. Collins,

I have been asked by Mr. Joe O'Brien T.D., Minister of State for Community Development and Charities, to refer to your recent correspondence regarding Meath County Council's motion to request a greater input and consultation with voluntary community based organisations when preparing strategies like the National Volunteering Strategy.

The purpose of this Strategy is to acknowledge, encourage and advance the exceptional magnitude of volunteers and volunteering to Irish society. The opinions, experiences and observations of all volunteers are central to our knowledge, policies and advice, and were a key part of developing the Strategy.

In December 2018, in line with the Department's mission "*to promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland*", a call for input issued in relation to the development of the National Volunteering Strategy. In excess of 130 initial submissions were received, providing strong underpinning for the first draft of the strategy.

The draft Strategy was then circulated for further comment. Over 90 submissions were received from community groups, individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations across Ireland. While some submissions provided feedback on the entire draft Strategy, many focused on sections most important to them. This input was taken in to account in finalising the Strategy, which was published in December 2020.



Any and all correspondence with volunteer organisations is initiated using a regularly updated and expanding mailing list, in addition to further dissemination by Volunteer Ireland, Volunteer Centres and Public Participation Networks.

This inclusive practice will be maintained in the preparation of all future strategic policies and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Kilcommons

Private Secretary to Mr. Joe O'Brien T.D.,

Minister of State for Community Development and Charities

*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015
(details available on www.lobbying.ie)*