

# County Wicklow PPN

## Minutes of Secretariat meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in CEART, Brockagh Resource Centre, Laragh

**Attendees:** Aoibhinn McCloy, Gertie Salley, Grainne Quinn, Helen Howes, Helen Lawless Mai Quaid, Niamh Wogan and Stephen Kearon (Chair).

**Apologies:** Diana Gallagher.

### **1. Minutes & Matters Arising**

Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were approved on Niamh's proposal and seconded by Stephen

- WhatsApp group for the Secretariat. Grainne informed that meeting that work in proceeding on the setting up of a Chatter Group within the Salesforce system and that as soon as the final instructions are available, we can proceed to set the group up.  
**Action:** Grainne to follow up on the establishment of this chatter group.
- Salesforce Mailings. The meeting was informed that some people are having difficulties accessing Salesforce emails and attachments.  
**Action:** Grainne/Helen to follow up with IT assistance to get some insight into this and consider preparing a brief help/instruction guide.
- Secretariat Visit to Wexford PPN. Helen informed the meeting that following discussions with the Wexford PPN it has been agreed to postpone this visit until summer 2020. the proposed visit to Wexford PPN had been postponed to Nov.  
**Action:** Helen/Grainne to liaise with the Wexford PPN Resource Worker in 2020.
- Meetings with New PPN Reps. Helen informed the meeting that she generally meeting with Reps before their first meeting and invites the other existing reps and the administrator for the SPC/Committee.  
**Action:** Helen still to meet with Mary Anne, Sharon and Keith.
- Policies and PPN Userguide. The meeting was informed that the planned work on policy review was postponed until 2020 and will then be able to draw on the templates included in the new draft PPN userguide which is currently out for consultation. It was noted at the meeting that policy development is often seen as an onerous task, particularly for smaller groups with no staff. It was suggested that Co. Wicklow PPN consider making a bank of policies available to its members.  
**Action:**
  1. Helen to ask at National Level if the templates, where applicable, developed as part of the PPN Userguide, could be shared with other organisations/groups.
  2. Co. Wicklow PPN to consider setting up a Policy Bank Resource for member groups.

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- Bid for National PPN Conference. Helen informed the meeting that the PPN has done some research on hotels options in Wicklow and that the Arklow Bay was the only feasible option. She also notified the meeting that the Department has not yet called for expressions of interest in hosting the National PPN Conference. She also informed the meeting that the Dept are:
  1. considering collaborating with other sections of the Dept (e.g. LCDC) for the conference
  2. considering running the conference over a Fri/Sat instead of Thurs/Fri and holding it in May.**Action:** Helen to follow up with the Dept.

## **2. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence to be read into the meeting.

## **3. Finance**

Helen presented the financial report to the meeting. The figures presented included actual expenditure to the end of November 2019 and estimates for December 2019. She highlighted the following:

- The Dec Salary costs includes the Jan Support Worker salary. Required to carry over one month salary as Dept. grant for 12 month support work was paid in full upfront and the support workers contact commenced in Feb 2019.
- The balance on the budget Web Page/Promotion/Newsletters. Will be carried over to 2020 and be used to contribute to the cost of developing a new Website. The meeting discussed the development of the website and the development of a spec for the new website. Stephen offered to work with Helen and Grainne on this.
- The balance on the Big Hello Grant Funding of €700 will also be carried forward and allocated to the website development budget in 2020.

Helen asked the meeting about the payment of membership fee to Irish Rural Link (approx. €150). The meeting agreed that Co. Wicklow PPN should continue its membership of IRL.

### ***Action:***

1. Helen, Grainne and Stephen to meet to progress the development of a spec for the website. Also to keep in touch with Aoibhinn in relation to their systems and linking with them.
2. Helen to follow up with Irish Rural Link re the payment of their membership fee. Also to discuss forwarding information to them from our seminars etc.

Finance documents were Proposed by Mai and seconded by Gertie.

## **4. Staffing**

Support Worker funding: The meeting was informed that the Dept. have confirmed funding for this position to the end of 2020.

Hours: Helen informed the meeting that both she and Grainne had time in lieu to take and that they will; work shorter days to the end of the year, and take a full 2 weeks off for Christmas in an effort to use up some of this time in lieu

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Userguide recommendation that Secretariats have a HR subgroup: Helen informed the meeting of this recommendation. The Secretariat took this on board and established a HR subgroup; Aoibhinn, Mai and Niamh.

**Action:** This new HR subgroup will commence in the New Year.

## 5. Workplan 2019

The Workplan was circulated prior to the meeting. Discussion took place on the following:

### **Representation – vacant seats, nominations etc**

#### Secretariat

The meeting was informed that Helen Lawless is stepping down from the Secretariat. Helen was thanked for her contribution to the PPN and was given a presentation.

The need to secure nominations for the vacant seats on the Secretariat was acknowledged. The meeting discussed the possibility of seeking nominations for vacant seats and some of the Municipal District seats currently filled by reps from Social Inclusion Groups. This would provide an opportunity for some of the existing MD reps to be nominated for a Social Inclusion seat rather than the MD seat.

The importance of recruiting new member groups and encouraging Associate member groups to become Full member groups was highlighted.

#### **Action:**

1. New members drive
2. All members of the Secretariat to consider possible candidates for vacant Secretariat seats.

JPC – The meeting was informed that Liz Ferris will be stepping down from her seat (Bray MD) on the JPC.

*Update to Minutes: At the Plenary that followed the Secretariat meeting, Liz informed Co. Wicklow PPN that her circumstances had changed and that it was no longer necessary for her to set down.*

Stephen informed the meeting that he had attended a sub-group meeting of the JPC in Arklow and that it was stated at the meeting that anything mentioned in the room was to be kept confidential and not discussed elsewhere. Stephen sought direction and clarification from the Secretariat on this and its implications for PPN Reps reporting back to member groups.

**Action:** The meeting agreed that Mai raise the issue at the National Secretariat.

### **Membership**

Total membership as at the 4<sup>th</sup> December was reported to be 292. The meeting was informed that Re-registration of members was underway and that 64 groups were still to reregister.

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The list of new member group applications (8 since last meeting) was read into the minutes.

The list of new member groups was Proposed by Niamh and seconded by Aoibhinn.

**Action:** Re-registration process to be continued.

## **National PPN**

### National Resource Workers Network

Based on her involvement in the NAG and the Resource Workers Network Helen informed the meeting of the following:

- The Dept of Housing, Planning and Local Government is planning to conduct a review of the SPC guidelines (last reviewed in 2014)
- The Dept of Rural & Community Development plan to conduct a full review of PPN structures in 2020
- The review of the Draft PPN User Guide is open until 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020
- There are plans to run a National Communications campaign for PPNs in 2020. The aim of which is to raise awareness of and encourage engagement with PPNs.
- The funding for the Support Worker position has been confirmed for 2020.
- The Dept are rolling out a pilot training programme for all PPN stakeholders in Leinster during 2020
- The Volunteer Strategy will be going out for consultation in 2020.

### National Secretariat Network

Mai informed the meeting that this new network is experiencing some difficulties and that one member of the Network had resigned from their position. Mai also informed the meeting that the Network does have the option to ask for an extension of the facilitators time with the group. The meeting suggested that the development of group ground rules may be helpful.

The Secretariat expressed its confidence in Mai as its Representative on this National Network.

## **Social Inclusion – Housing Seminar**

Helen reported to the meeting on the Housing Seminar which the PPN held on the 20<sup>th</sup> November in Bray.

**Action:** The Seminar subgroup to meet to evaluate the Seminar and develop further plans based on the priorities identified by the seminar participants.

## **Submissions**

Helen notified the meeting of the submissions made during the year by Co. Wicklow PPN. A list of the submission made during 2019 was available.

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## 6. 2020 Workplan

Helen outlined some of the proposed projects for 2020.

**Action:** Helen/Grainne to prepare a draft Workplan for 2020 which will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting of the Secretariat

### Revival of Social Inclusion Week.

The meeting agreed with this proposal.

**Action:** The meeting agreed to this suggestion and it was agreed that a brief proposal be prepared and circulated to the PPN Reps on the CCSD SPC and the LCDC with a view to them raising at their committees and seek agreement and support from WCC for this proposal.

### Environmentally Themed Event

The Secretariat supported the plan to organise an environmentally themed event early in 2020.

**Action:** Helen and Grainne to liaise with Environmental Reps, Catherine (IEN), Jim Callery (WCC) etc on the plans for this event

### June Plenary

Helen informed the meeting that the plan is to focus this meeting on County Council Finance and Participatory Budgeting. She also told the meeting that contact with WCC has already been made and they have agreed to do a presentation.

**Action:** South Dublin CC to be contacted in relation to their Participatory Budget scheme with a view to them making a presentation at the Plenary

### Meet the Candidates for the General Election

The meeting agreed to the hosting of a 'Meet the Candidate' event during the general election campaign. The holding of 2 events was suggest, to facilitate attendance across the county. The meeting was informed that a general election is likely to be held in May so these events would happen in April.

### Training Fair

Following a brief discussion on this and how to proceed in relation to this event in 2020 the Secretariat agreed to discuss this further at their next meeting.

**Action:** Discussion of Training Fair to be included on the agenda for the next Secretariat meeting.

### Strategic Plan

Helen informed the meeting that the Draft User Guide refers to the need for PPN's to have a strategic plan. The meeting discussed this and its links to the Vision for Community Wellbeing. The meeting acknowledged the benefit of contracting out this work and spoke about the following possible consultations: online survey with member groups and focus group with Secretariat and Reps and meeting with staff.

**Action:** Helen/Grainne to prepare a spec for this piece of work with a view to getting quotes for this work.

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## Disability Event/Project

The Secretariat was informed that there are a number of possibilities open to the PPN to work collaboratively on such an event/project during 2020.

## **7. Any Other Business**

### Nominations to KWETB

Stephen notified the meeting that no feedback was received by the nominees made to the KWETB through the Wheel early in 2019. The meeting agreed that this should be followed up with both organisations to seek clarification on the final decision of the KWETB and the criteria used to select people to its Board.

**Action:** Helen/Grainne to write to both organisations to seek clarification.

## **8. Date for Next Secretariat Meeting**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February in Little Bray Family Resource Centre at 6.30pm.

**Action:** Helen to bring some hot food.