

Between

Tipperary County Council (TCC) c/o Community and Social Inclusion Ballingarrane House, Cahir Road, Clonmel Co. Tipperary

And

Public Participation Network (PPN) Tipperary of Thurles Chamber Enterprise Centre, LIT, Nenagh Road, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

Tipperary PPN will, inter alia, administer the non-payroll costs associated with the operation of the PPN

And

Tipperary PPN Operations CLG (TPPNO) of Thurles Chamber Enterprise Centre, LIT, Nenagh Road, Thurles.

Tipperary PPN Operations CLG will, inter alia, administer the payroll associated costs with the operation of the PPN

Purpose and Scope

To outline in a clear and unambiguous manner the roles and responsibilities of Tipperary County Council, Tipperary Public Participation Network and Tipperary PPN Operations CLG with regard to the delivery of the PPN Programme as laid down by the former Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Context

A framework for public engagement and participation, to be 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 will be 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 is expected to perform its functions following core principles to facilitate active participation with decision making bodies as identified earlier i.e. participation, inclusivity, trust, accountability, transparency, independence and valuing diversity.

Goals and Objectives

To develop a Public Participation Network in County Tipperary which:

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

In particular, the role of the Tipperary PPN is:

1. to contribute to the Local Authority's development for the County of a vision for the well-being of this and future generations.
2. to facilitate opportunities for networking, communication and the sharing of information between environmental, social inclusion and community and voluntary groups and between these groups and the Local Authority.
3. to identify issues of collective concern and work to influence policy locally in relation to these issues.
4. to actively support inclusion of socially excluded groups, communities experiencing high levels of deprivation, poverty, communities experiencing discrimination, including Travellers to enable them to participate at local and county level and to clearly demonstrate same.
5. to encourage and enable public participation in local decision making and planning of services.
6. to facilitate the selection of participants from the environmental, social inclusion and voluntary sectors onto county decision making bodies.
7. 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
8. to work to develop the Environmental, Community and Voluntary sectors so that the work of the sectors is clearly recognised and acknowledged and the sectors have a strong collective voice within the County.
9. to support the development of resilient communities so that they have the capacity and ability to input into the PPN and other decision-making structures of local government.
10. 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 the Public Participation Network activities.
 - They are included and their voices and concerns are heard.

Roles and Responsibilities (TCC)

- Tipperary County Council will contract with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government to deliver a Public Participation Network in its operational area.
- Tipperary County Council undertakes to provide an agreed portion of funding to the PPN for so long as the relevant Government Department continues to financially support same.
- Tipperary County Council will actively and positively work to support the PPN in its operation and in the development of the structure.
- Tipperary County Council will maintain a broad oversight of the functioning and operation of the PPN in order to ensure that it continues to meet the highest standards

ethically and principally in the context of the rationale for the setting up the PPN structure.

- The Director of Services with responsibility for Community or their appointed representative will act on behalf of Tipperary County Council. Any change in this individual must be communicated in writing to both parties.

Roles and Responsibilities TPPN & TPPNO

- Tipperary PPN will take responsibility for the operational rollout of the PPN in County Tipperary.
- Tipperary PPN Operations CLG will take responsibility for discharging the payroll costs and all obligatory payroll and revenue returns associated with the operation of the PPN
- Tipperary PPN will delegate at least three individuals (in case of any undisclosed conflict of interest) 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.

Workplan and budget

Tipperary PPN will:

- Devise and submit an annual detailed work plan which will be presented for approval at Plenary which will clearly demonstrate how it will achieve the aims and objectives of PPN within that period.
- The workplan will reflect the payroll costs administered and accounted for through the TPPNO and the non-payroll costs administered and accounted for through the TPPN
- Identify the itemised budget and resource requirements under the work plan and under the budget headings as set out in the annual financial return for the Department
- Have in place a robust financial management system and financial reporting structure and provide the necessary backup documentation to the Council in relation to same, ensuring the budget is expended effectively and appropriately.
- Have a clear reporting mechanism on key performance indicators and other items related to PPN activity.
- Be open to any recommended audit processes as requested by TCC in the interests of probity, protecting PPN members and ensuring good resilient transparent practices to the broader public.

Tipperary County Council will, in agreement with the PPN:

- Agree the annual work plan where it meets the general ethos, principles and founding rationale for the PPN and where the actions being proposed are appropriate in this context.
- The Council will, where it is appropriate and acceptable to it and where funds and resources allow, agree to undertake certain key actions within that Plan to support the PPN.
- Agree a resource allocation for the year and a payment schedule based on satisfactory reports from the PPN which have been approved by the appointed TCC liaison person.
- Provide advance funding on an agreed basis to TPPNO to enable it to pay the salaries and associated costs of the staff of the PPN in a timely manner and as agreed between Tipperary County Council and the PPN
- Appoint a liaison person between the TCC and PPN.
- The appointed liaison person from TCC will attend a minimum of 2 Secretariat meetings with the agreement of the PPN Secretariat
- Tipperary LCDC Chief Officer will attend or meet with the Secretariat annually.
- Facilitate and ensure the development of PPN as an independent organisation, which is charged with bringing forward the views of its members to decision making fora.

- Maintain general oversight of the PPN structure to ensure that it aligns with the ethos and principles of the PPN in its operation, structures and functioning and take any necessary corrective action if required.
- Process payment for PPN reps travel for those reps nominated on the Council and LCDC structures for attendance at meetings

Other Financing Arrangements

If the PPN requires to access loans to undertake any activity, it is good practice that the Council is made aware of this. However, the Council cannot act as guarantor for same as it is no longer permitted by Government policy. It will be important, therefore, that the PPN has a very strong case for entering into such a financial arrangement and be fully satisfied that they have the facility to make the necessary repayments on time. The Council will not take on such repayment in the event of the PPN failing to do so.

TCC will strive to partner with PPN on an annual basis to access additional funding to deliver on its objectives of enhancing participation, capacity and information for the community sector.

Communication

TCC will promote and showcase Tipperary PPN on the Council website

The PPN will promote through its newsletter events, activities, and consultations as provided by TCC

The PPN website will host a link to "what's on in Tipp" and grant a portal on the PPN site

TCC will provide updates on the PPN in its annual report and also within Management and MD meeting reports to promote the activity of PPN.

Staffing

PPN Will

- Devise a job description, and terms and conditions of employment for the Coordinator resource worker and any other staff as provided by the department funding.
- Facilitate the provision of suitable workspace and equipment for the Coordinator and staff of the PPN
- Manage the day to day work of the Coordinator in the furtherance of the work plan.
- Offer support, supervision and relevant training and development opportunities to the worker.
- Ensure that all relevant insurances are in place.
- Ensure that up to date HR, health & safety, and other policies relating to staff management and organisational governance are in place and adhered to.

Operational Co-operation

PPN Tipperary will:

- Work constructively and collaboratively with Tipperary County Council in the furtherance of the aims of PPN as set out in the guidelines.
- Respond to requests from Tipperary County Council and hold elections for representatives to sit on decision making and advisory bodies and to elect such representatives in an open and transparent manner.
- Take out suitable insurance policies as are required for its activities, which policies will specifically indemnify Tipperary County Council.

- Engage in other activities provided they are complementary to its workplan and provided that they can access the extra resources required to undertake such work.
- Work with Tipperary County Council on any funding applications which may be appropriate.

Tipperary County Council will:

- Work constructively with PPN Tipperary to build its capacity and that of its members to make a major contribution to the continuing economic, social, environmental and sustainable development of Tipperary.
- 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.
- Work with PPN to agree, adopt and implement a protocol for all committees/decision making bodies with PPN representatives which will enable the 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 and Voluntary Sector, including formal consultations.
- Offer workshops and training as required to PPN members to build their capacity to feed into policies and plans.
- Offer workshops and training to staff and elected members to raise awareness of the role of PPN and how to maximise the benefit of PPN to the county.
- Provide a designated official who will liaise with and support PPN.
- Work with Tipperary PPN on any funding applications which may be appropriate
- Support the development of a wellbeing statement at local and county level.

Reporting and Evaluation

PPN Tipperary will

- Submit quarterly written reports to Tipperary County Council detailing progress on the work plan in accordance with agreed KPIs.
- Submit quarterly written financial reports in hard and soft copy to Tipperary County Council.
- Facilitate the attendance of staff with the Secretariat for bi-annual review meeting with TCC
- Devise, agree and implement a participatory evaluation framework which involves all stakeholders in the PPN process.
- Carry out Annual Reviews and produce an Annual Report on PPN in collaboration with TCC as required by the Department.

Tipperary County Council will

- Submit reports to DECLG as required.
- Draw down finance from DECLG in a timely way, and ring fence the "own council" approved local funding for the PPN. Pay over approved funds to PPN in a timely way to enable them to discharge their responsibilities where the level of progress on the work plan has been approved.
- Participate in evaluation and monitoring of its performance in relation to PPN.
- Carry out internal audit review on the process and oversight and work in collaboration with PPN to ensure compliance with requirements

Conflict resolution

Every effort should be made to avoid serious conflict between the parties, by providing good communication protocols which will enable any issues to be dealt 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. This may include mediation, arbitration, or any other procedures upon which the parties agree. In the first instance, such mediation should involve the Director of Services for Community and Economic Development, and subsequently the PPN designated person within the Department.

Review

This MOU will be reviewed annually. Any recommended changes must be agreed by both parties.

Period of agreement:

This memorandum of understanding refers to 2020.

..... Date ____ February 2020
Signed on behalf of Tipperary PPN

..... Date ____ February 2020
Signed on Behalf of Tipperary PPN Operations CLG

..... Date ____ February 2020
Signed on Behalf of Tipperary County Council

This will be presented by PPN at the next Plenary on /..... /.....