



## PPN User Guide Review

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### Queries

Please contact [ppnuserguidereview@dracd.gov.ie](mailto:ppnuserguidereview@dracd.gov.ie) or Alan Monks at (076) 100 6907.

## Your Details

**Are you making this submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?**

On behalf of an Organisation

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**Was is the title of your role within the Organisation named above**

Resource Worker



## PPN User Guide Review

### Your Submission

#### **STRUCTURE OF THE PPN (County/City, Plenary, Secretariat, Municipal Districts PPNs, Linkage Groups, Membership)**

Structure - Monaghan PPN are of the view that Municipal District meetings should be optional. It can be difficult to get members to attend County plenaries so if members are attending Municipal District meetings then they may be less likely to attend County plenary. We have to be mindful of how much we are asking of our members. User Guide needs to clarify this.

Linkage Groups - These do not seem to be working effectively for most PPN's. Monaghan operate through thematic networks and we believe this is the most appropriate structure.

Flat Structure - A chairperson means a bit more leadership for consistency. Monaghan are currently rotating the role of facilitator but as some members do not want to facilitate it is left to one or two to carry out the task.

Secretariat - Monaghan requires clearer guidelines outlining term of office for Secretariat. Some members have completed their five year term and wish to remain. The term of office is referred to in Monaghan Constitution but Monaghan wants clarification on when that term is completed can that Rep be nominated back on. There are no clear guidelines on this to be able to refer to.

Environmental Pillar: The restrictions on membership needs to be sorted as a matter of urgency. There is a clear disconnect with this pillar amongst our membership. Tidy Towns groups need to be eligible to be included in this Pillar. Environmental positions are difficult to fill and with the cap on the number of decision making bodies a Rep can serve on, some positions will remain vacant.

**ACTIVITIES OF THE PPN  
(Participation and Representation on  
Decision/Policy Making Bodies,  
Capacity Building and Training,  
Information Sharing and  
Communication)**

Representation: Monaghan is finding it increasingly difficult to fill some positions. The reason for this is the already onerous time asked of volunteers.

Capacity Building and Training: Induction training is provided to Reps by the PPN, however, the User Guide could recommend that the Local Authority should also provide training. This training should cover functions of local government, decision making, policy development and how to place items on agendas. Training would provide opportunity for Reps to build a relationship with Local Authority personnel they will be working with.

Feedback: PPN Reps should be reporting back to the PPN. This should be made mandatory and that travel expenses will not be paid for attendance at a meeting until feedback forms are received. Resource Workers should be included in the email distribution lists for meeting agendas and minutes.

Consultation: More time needs to be given to the PPN to facilitate meaningful engagement when carrying out consultations.

Participation: Hard to engage with the Environmental Pillar. There seems to be a disconnect to it compared to the other colleges. The Environmental Pillar needs to be strengthened. This will only be done with strong Environmental Reps coming forward for positions and with the current limits to membership this will not happen until these restrictions are lifted.

Templates: All of the PPN's are working under different conditions. Each PPN develops its own templates for their operational documents. There should be a one size fits all approach to this. DRCD should develop templates that each PPN would adopt, in particular, Representatives Charter.

Re-registration: There is no need for an annual reregistration process. This is a very onerous process for the Resource Worker.

**OPERATION OF PPNs (Budget and  
Work plan, Resource Worker, Support  
Worker)**

Support Worker: This is very much welcomed in Monaghan but the employment of same will incur extra costs which will have to come out of the PPN core budget such as purchase of computer, phone, travel costs etc. This needs to be considered for future budget allocations.

Workplan: PPN;s need to make more time to develop their annual work plans in collaboration with the wider membership.

**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PPN AND THE RESPECTIVE LOCAL AUTHORITY (Budget, Resource Worker, Support Worker)**

Resource Worker: Guidance is needed in relation to Resource Worker Terms and Conditions. All of the Resource Workers are working under different conditions. Some workers have no security which is not beneficial to any PPN. User Guides needs to set clear instructions to the Local Authorities/Secretariats on work conditions for Resource Workers.

LA: Success of a PPN depends on the relationship with the local authority. PPN needs to be supported by the Local Authority.

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION (Budget, Workplan, Resource Worker)**

The only real monitoring at this stage is through Key Performance Indicators submitted annually to National Oversight Audit Commission. Monaghan also provides information to the Department Rural Community Development in the Annual Report. The Secretariat review progress of the work plan at the November AGM.

Resource Worker reports to the Secretariat on progress of work plan objectives. Resource Worker also reports to the Council through monitoring of Personal Development Plan meetings with Senior Management.

**What Templates would you regard as being helpful to include in a revised PPN User Guide (Constitution, Grievance Procedure, Representatives Charter, Expense Policy, Memorandum of Understanding, etc.)**

Terms of Reference  
Representatives Charter  
Finance Policy  
Travel Expenses Policy  
Memorandum of Understanding  
Conflict and Disciplinary Procedure

**Any other Recommendations in relation to the review of the User Guide?**

Clarification on the Data Protection Guidelines.  
Consider time required on volunteers eg LCDC Rep has 11 meetings a year. Add on 3/4 plenary meetings plus 3 thematic networking meetings and possible training also.



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### Supporting Documentation

#### Freedom of Information

All materials received by the Department will be subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. This means that all materials submitted during this consultation period could be released to a wider audience on request.