

LIMERICK PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK CONSTITUTION

This Constitution is the set of rules that guide how Limerick PPN works. It is the document that brings together the [six principles of good governance](#) that Limerick PPN is committed to.

Constitution Version History

Version	Date Adopted	Notes
1.0	Feb 10 th 2020	This Constitution comes into effect on 10 th February 2020
2.0	April 15 th 2021	Limerick PPN updated its Constitution to simplify it, to reflect PPN members' learning arising from past year of activity and to reflect the requirements of the new <u>national handbook for PPNs</u> . Point 7 of Section 7.2.3 (Elections) relating to preference voting will be adopted after the annual members meeting in 2021

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1 Introduction

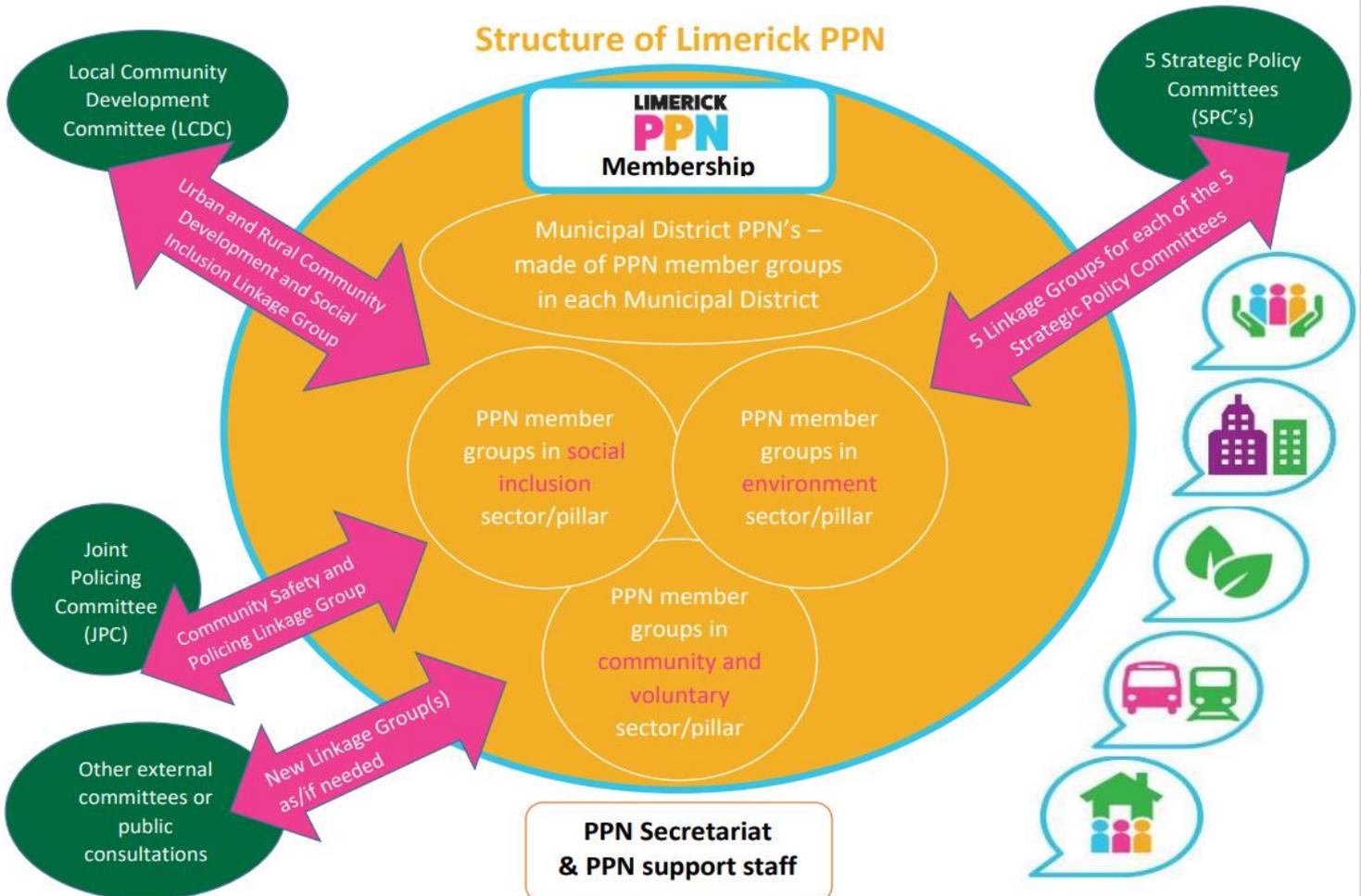
Limerick Public Participation Network is a countywide network that facilitates groups from the community, social inclusion and environmental pillars to participate in local decision-making and policy-development structures. It is part of the framework for public participation in local government and it has a statutory basis in the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended) (Section 127).

The PPN facilitates community participation and engagement in:

1. Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's)
2. Limerick Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
3. Joint Policing Committee (JPC)
4. Other Council committees
5. Other relevant committees outside of the Local Authority remit where a request for Limerick PPN representation has been requested and agreed to by the PPN

The PPN is made up of a number of interconnected structures:

1. Plenary (all registered member groups/organisations)
2. Pillars
3. Linkage Groups
4. Municipal Districts
5. Secretariat



2 Name of Network

The name of the network is Limerick Public Participation Network otherwise referred to as Limerick PPN or the PPN.

3 Purpose

Limerick PPN aims to improve quality of life and wellbeing of all citizens and communities in Limerick by working with local governance structures.

4 Goals and objectives

4.1 Goals

To ensure the PPN operates to shared set of principles (see: Appendix 1– Principles of Limerick PPN) and to:

1. Encourage and enable the participation and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner through the environmental, social inclusion and community and voluntary sectors on decision making bodies, in local policy-making and in the planning of services
2. Strengthen the capacity of the membership to participate in decision-making affecting their communities.
3. Provide information relevant to the environmental, social inclusion and community and voluntary sectors and acts as a hub around which information is distributed and received.

4.2 Objectives

In particular, the objectives of the PPN is to:

1. Contribute to Limerick's development for the local authority area with a vision for the well-being of this and future generations
2. Facilitate opportunities for the sharing of information between environmental, community and voluntary groups and between these groups and the local authority
3. Identify issues of collective concern and work to influence policy locally in relation to these issues
4. Actively support inclusion of socially excluded groups, communities experiencing high levels of poverty, communities experiencing discrimination – including Travellers and new communities – to enable them to participate at local and local authority area level
5. Encourage and enable public participation in local policy-making and planning of services
6. Facilitate the selection of participants from the environmental, social inclusion and voluntary sectors onto local authority area policy-making bodies
7. Support a process that will feed the broad range of ideas, experience, suggestions and proposals of the PPN into policies and plans being developed by agencies and decision-makers in areas that are of interest and relevant to the PPN
8. 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 local authority area
9. Support the individual members of the PPN so that they:
 - a. can develop their capacity and do their work more effectively
 - b. can participate effectively in PPN activities
 - c. are included and their voices and concerns are heard

5 Membership

5.1 Full Membership

Full membership of Limerick PPN is open to community groups and organisations who:

1. Have an address in Limerick and are volunteer led (i.e. voluntary board/committee who are directly responsible for the organisation/group).
2. Are not-for-profit and non-political.
3. Are independent (i.e. their own Constitution/set of rules) and not a subgroup/subsidiary of another group.
4. Have at least three (3) members and are open to new members.
5. Are in existence for at least six (6) months.
6. Have an appropriate governance structure (formal structure):
 - a) With a set of rules/financial procedures
 - b) Meeting regularly and at least six (6) times a year
7. Are National Organisations if they are headquartered in Limerick or through their Local Limerick Branch (the local branch will be eligible to vote and hold the representative position).

The following are not eligible for full membership:

1. State or semi-state bodies
2. Local development agencies
3. Groups who have representation through other pillars of social partnership e.g. trade unions, farming and business organisations.

5.2 Associate Membership

Associate Membership provides a link between the PPN and key community groups, organisations and services in Limerick who are not full members of Limerick PPN. Associate Members can attend PPN meetings, join Linkage Groups and receive information (such as newsletters, notices and minutes of meetings), but they do not have voting rights and they cannot represent or be elected to represent the PPN on external committees and they cannot sit on the Secretariat.

5.3 Term of Membership

Membership is renewed at least every two (2) years. It runs from initial registration to the Annual General Plenary Meeting during the second 24 months of membership (i.e. Once a group/organisation has become a member of the PPN it will need to reregister after 24 months membership, but if the Annual General Plenary Meeting in that year is before the 24 months membership is reached, reregistration needs to be done before this meeting.)

5.4 Ending membership

1. Withdrawal: Member groups/organisations can withdraw their membership at any time by written notification from their governing body to the Secretariat
2. Lapse: Membership will lapse if members do not reregister when required.
3. Expulsion: A proposal to expel a PPN member organisation may be made in the event of a member group/organisation acting in a manner contrary to the ethos and purpose of Limerick PPN or otherwise failing to comply with this Constitution.

In the event of it being necessary to expel a group/organisation from the PPN, the PPN will act in accordance with the following procedure:

- a) The proposal to expel a member group/organisation will be placed on the agenda for the next Plenary meeting, and the group/organisation concerned will be notified of the intention to raise the matter at least fourteen (14) days before the meeting at which the expulsion is to be considered
- b) The organisation will be given an opportunity to address the issue at the Plenary meeting
- c) The expulsion will be effective if passed by the majority of the members present at the Plenary meeting.
- d) While the expulsion process is being pursued, voting rights for the group/organisation will be suspended until the issue has been resolved

5.5 Registration Process

1. Prospective members register/reregister by completing and submitting the on-line Limerick PPN registration form.
2. Registration can happen at any time of the year.
3. The registration form is processed by the PPN Secretariat through its staff who, before confirming membership of a group/organisation, assess eligibility for membership and ensure the appropriate electoral college/pillar (i.e. Community, Environment and Social Inclusion) and Municipal District have been chosen.
4. Where staff have any queries in relation to a registration, they endeavour to address the queries with representative(s) of the group/organisation who submitted the registration form. Where the staff remain unclear about the eligibility of a group/organisation, they refer the matter to the Secretariat who decide at their next scheduled meeting on the what course of action should be taken. The Secretariat has the final say on eligibility to be a PPN member.
5. Because of the separation of the functions of public representatives and the PPN, Councillors, TD'S, Senators and MEPS cannot be a contact person for PPN member groups/organisations.

6 PPN Structure

The current structure is “flat” (i.e. everyone is equal) and is made up of:

1. Plenary
2. Secretariat
3. Linkage Groups

6.1 Plenary

1. The full membership (excluding Associate Members) is referred to as the Plenary and it is the Governing Body with overall responsibility for the PPN. It meets at least twice (2) a year in Plenary session. One of the sessions includes the Annual General Meeting of the membership.
2. The Plenary ratifies elections outcomes and decisions made on behalf of the PPN at the earliest opportunity, but at least at the next full Plenary meeting.
3. At least one (1) representative aged 18 years or over from each registered member group/organisation holding full membership will be entitled to attend and will have one (1) vote on behalf of their group/organisation. If an individual is a member of more than one group/organisation, they can only represent/vote on behalf of one (1) PPN member group/organisation.

4. At least one (1) representative from each registered Associate Member group/organisation will be entitled to attend and have speaking rights only. If an individual is a member of more than one group/organisation, they can only represent one (1) PPN member group/organisation.
5. Member groups/organisations must receive at least 21 days' notice of a Plenary meeting.
6. The Agenda will be set by the Secretariat.
7. Items and motions for discussion will be forwarded to the Secretariat, through the PPN staff, by members at least eighteen (18) days prior to the meeting.
8. The Agenda with motions for discussion will be circulated to all members at least seven (7) days before a Plenary meeting.
9. All Plenaries will be conducted under Standing Orders Procedures – in consultation with members. See Appendix 1 (principles of Limerick PPN) and Appendix 2 (Limerick PPN Plenary Standing Orders).
10. The Quorum for a Plenary meeting is 15% of the PPN membership. Secretariat members do not count toward the Quorum but at least six 60% of the membership must be present at a Plenary for it to be valid.

6.1.1 PPN Pillars or Electoral Colleges

The PPN membership is divided into three (3) pillars or colleges. Each organisation/group belongs to a Pillar which represents their primary interest. In some cases, a group/organisation may 'fit' more than one pillar, but one (1) pillar must be chosen. Details are on [the PPN website](#) and in the [national PPN Handbook](#). The pillars/sectors are:

1. Social Inclusion
2. Environmental
3. Community and Voluntary

6.1.2 Municipal Districts

The City and County of Limerick has four (4) Municipal Districts: Limerick Metropolitan, Adare-Rathkeale, Cappamore-Kilmallock and Newcastle West. A PPN member's Municipal District is determined by where they primarily operate or their official address.

6.2 Secretariat

1. The Secretariat is an administrative body that takes its direction from the Plenary of the PPN. Its role is explained in the [national PPN handbook](#).
2. The membership of the Secretariat is made up of ten (10) people:
 - a) 2 from each of the 3 pillars
 - b) 1 from each of the Municipal Districts
3. For membership of the Secretariat, an individual must be attached to and nominated by a PPN member group/organisation of a relevant electoral college (Pillar or Municipal District). The Electorate for that position is comprised of the members of the PPN electoral college.
4. Each year, or in advance of each Annual General Meeting – three (3) members or the number nearest to one-third of the membership will step down. Length of service in their current term on the Secretariat determines who will step down. The longest serving members step down each year. Members who have stepped down may offer themselves for re-election. In the event that all/most members have the same length of time on the Secretariat, voluntary resignations will be invited and if there are none/not enough, a lot will be drawn to select the members to step down.

5. Any vacancy arising on the Secretariat between Annual General Meetings will be filled by election from the relevant Pillar or Municipal District.
6. A member may not serve on the Secretariat for more than six (6) consecutive years and having so served will not be entitled to offer themselves for election for a further three (3) years. In total, a member will not serve more than a total of nine (9) years.
8. Any Member elected to the Secretariat who fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of the Secretariat without reasonable / provable reason or excuse will automatically remove themselves from that position and the vacancy arising will be filled by the next available member on the panel or by election.
9. The Secretariat will fill any temporary vacancy of three (3) months or more arising from a member being absent for a period (e.g. for study leave, extended travel or illness).
10. The Secretariat operates as a flat structure with no officers. Instead a Facilitator is selected by the Secretariat.
11. The role of the Facilitator is explained in the [national PPN handbook](#).
12. All Secretariat members must sign the PPN Code of Conduct.
13. The process for electing Secretariat members and holding Secretariat meetings are set out in Appendices 2 and 3.
14. The Secretariat is supported by core PPN staff (subject to local and national government funding) to deliver on the goals and objectives of the PPN.

6.3 Linkage Groups

1. A Linkage Group is a collection of PPN member groups/organisations who have a particular interest or expertise in the issues being discussed by a given committee(s). The Secretariat will invite all PPN member groups/organisations to join a Linkage Group, and all who wish to join can do so.
2. Linkage Group members nominate, elect and support PPN representatives on external committees.
3. Linkage Group members discuss and debate the matters being discussed by the external committee(s), to inform the representative(s), and where relevant to prioritise and develop policy positions.
4. Agreed policy positions of the Linkage Group are not deemed adopted positions of the PPN unless this is agreed at a Plenary meeting. External communications on behalf of the PPN are issued through the Secretariat or the PPN staff acting on behalf of the Secretariat.
5. Linkage Groups operate to a Plenary-agreed [terms of reference](#) which is on the PPN website.
6. Generally, there is one Linkage Group created for each external committee which has seats allocated to Limerick PPN representatives. The Secretariat may ask a Linkage Group to nominate, elect and support PPN representatives on other relevant committees (whose activities align with a given Linkage Group) if this situation arises.
7. Linkage Groups are established by the Secretariat following a formal request from Limerick City and County Council or other agreed external body to the Secretariat seeking PPN representation on a specific committee(s) and the numbers of representatives required including any specific criteria attached.

6.3.1 Role of Linkage Groups

1. Nominate, elect and support representative(s) to a given committee(s)
2. Discuss and debate the matters being discussed by the committee (s), to inform the representative(s), and where relevant to prioritise and develop policy positions
3. To mandate the representative(s) to bring forward the diversity of views within the Linkage Group to the committee(s)
4. With the Secretariat and in accordance with this Limerick PPN Constitution effectively address the situation of any PPN Representative who is not fulfilling their obligations
5. To work collaboratively with other Linkage Groups and PPN representatives to support the purpose, objectives and ethos of Limerick PPN

6.3.2 Linkage Group Facilitator

A Linkage Group Facilitator is selected by consensus from and by the Linkage Group membership to support the Linkage Group. This position is rotated on at least a six-monthly basis and is not a formal PPN representational role. The Linkage Group Facilitator acts as convenor of Linkage Group meetings. The Facilitator ensures that:

1. The agenda for each meeting is prepared and followed.
2. Everyone has the chance to contribute.
3. Agreed actions are progressed between meetings.
4. A record of meetings is kept and shared with PPN members.

7 Participation and Representation

All PPN representatives on committees of Limerick City and County Council or other agreed body must come through the PPN electoral process. All elected PPN representatives must sign the Limerick PPN Code of Conduct. Members of the Secretariat are excluded from also being an elected PPN representative on one external committee.

7.1 Principles Governing PPN Representation

1. All PPN representatives on external committees will report to and take direction from their respective Linkage Group.
2. Representatives will not represent their own interests or views or those of their own group/organisation.
3. Representation should be spread widely in terms of gender, geography, and type of group/organisation.
4. An individual will only represent the PPN on one (1) external committee.
5. A representative is elected for a term of up to five (5) years to represent the PPN membership on a committee. The term of PPN representatives on Council committees will generally coincide with local elections. This is subject to a committee's standing orders.
6. Limerick PPN acknowledges that PPN representatives and committees with PPN representation have certain rights and responsibilities. These are in the given in [the national PPN handbook](#) in the sections dedicated to representatives and to local authorities.
7. In the event that the original nominating body no longer exists, or that the representative is no longer associated with that nominating body, the representative will be deemed to have stepped down from the role and an alternate will be selected in accordance with the Constitution.

7.2 Vacancies on Limerick City and County Council or other committees

1. Limerick City and County Council or other external body will formally notify the Secretariat that they are seeking representation from the PPN on a specific committee(s) and the numbers of representatives required including any specific criteria attached.
2. Where it is not a local or national government committee with duties set out in legislation, the Secretariat will review the request in light of the role and functions of the PPN.
3. Following an elections process to fill seats, Limerick PPN will establish a panel in accordance this constitution.
4. In the event of a PPN vacancy occurring during the term of a committee, a representative will be selected from the panel.
5. In the event of a PPN vacancy occurring during the term of a committee and no panel is currently in place, an election will be called by the Secretariat.

7.2.1 Criteria for candidates for election to external committees

1. Have a keen interest and awareness of general issues in the relevant Linkage Group and committee in question
2. Be willing to gather and present the views and opinions of the members the Linkage Group that elects him/her
3. Be working, on a voluntary or paid basis, in the community or voluntary group that nominated her/him
4. Have good organisational skills and a willingness to learn
5. Be willing to participate fully to ensure the PPN is effectively represented on the committee

In addition to the above, the following generic requirements must be met:

1. The group/organisation nominating the candidate must be a current member of Limerick PPN and continue to 1) meet PPN membership criteria and 2) be a member of Limerick PPN
2. A person who has put themselves forward for nomination to be elected, stood for election or who has been an elected representative at any level of government (local or national) may not be chosen to be a PPN Representative for a period of twelve (12) months:
 - a) after the date on which they were advised that their bid for nomination was unsuccessful
 - b) from the date of the Election if their nomination bid was successful
 - c) after completing their Term of Office if they are elected to office

7.2.2 Nominations

1. There will be a call for nominations with any eligibility criteria (as determined by the body requesting the representation) for PPN members to put forward a candidate at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the elections.
2. The closing date for nomination will be not less than seven (7) days prior to the date of the election.
3. The nominating group must complete a nomination form that is signed by a proposer and seconder – neither of whom are the candidate.
4. Each candidate will provide a personal profile which will be circulated to PPN members prior to the voting. Candidates may be requested to address the relevant Linkage Group for up to two minutes on their suitability for election prior to the voting.

7.2.3 Elections

1. Elections in each Linkage Group will be for the seats on the corresponding committee as defined in the formal request from the external body.
2. All elections are by secret ballot and take place within the Linkage Group on a designated date and time deemed suitable by the Secretariat.
3. Elections will be conducted online using a secure online voting platform deemed suitable by the Secretariat.
4. Each Linkage Group full member group/organisation is entitled to one (1) vote and one (1) individual will vote on behalf of the member group/organisation. The primary or named contact for the Linkage Group member receives sole access to the voting platform to vote on behalf of their group/organisation.
5. Where there are specific seats for one or more PPN pillars (i.e. social inclusion, community, environment), all the Linkage Group members have a vote for each seat available. In this instance, the ballot paper will list the candidates under their respective pillar and one candidate only from each of the listed pillars is to be selected by each Linkage Group member group/organisation.
6. Where there is only one (1) candidate, this person is automatically elected.
7. Preference voting is used to select PPN representatives. Voters put all the candidates in order of preference. Candidate(s) who have the highest preference score(s) are elected.¹

7.2.4 Panels

1. Where an election takes place, candidates who do not attain a high enough number of preference scores to attain a seat are transferred to a panel/list in order of the number of points they received in the election.
2. Any vacancy arising on a committee between normal elections will be filled by the next highest candidate on the panel willing to serve that particular vacancy.
3. Panels will last for up to the next Annual Members Meeting.

7.3 When PPN Representatives do not fulfil their obligations

If a PPN representative on any of the committees fails or otherwise omits to:

1. Undertake his/her role, as laid down by this Constitution, in an appropriate manner.
2. Attend the relevant meetings without reasonable verifiable excuse/cause.
3. Report back to the membership/Linkage Group without reasonable cause.
4. Represent the relevant Linkage Group members in accordance with this Constitution.
5. Comply with any written instruction.

or

6. where a PPN Representative represents their own interests or views or those of their own group/organisation

The Secretariat will:

- 1) Meet with the individual or group concerned and explain what actions are believed to be in contravention with the Constitution and why

¹ As a voter ranks each option, their most preferred candidate gets more points based on the amount of options ranked. If there are 5 options and the user ranks all 5, then their top candidate gets 5 points. All points for all candidates are added, and the candidate with the most points is the winning candidate.

- 2) Request that the actions cease and if necessary provide alternative actions (for example, where a member says they are acting on behalf of PPN is directly contacting Limerick City and County Council to advocate for a particular policy or action, this member could be invited to join the most relevant Linkage Group related to the matter of concern or where a PPN representative is not meeting their obligations, they may be offered mentoring or guidance)
- 3) If the individual or group continues to breach the Constitution, the Secretariat will issue a formal written request for the actions to cease
- 4) If the formal request does not result in the actions ceasing, the Secretariat may decide to bring the issue to the next Plenary with the proposal that PPN representative no longer hold their position
- 5) PPN representatives will be provided with a fair hearing through all of the above stages and individuals may ask for another representative of their group to attend any meetings as a support.

8 Financial Governance

1. PPN finances are managed in accordance with directions of funders and in compliance with accounting standards and processes.
2. The financial income and expenditure report will be presented to members at the annual members meeting.
3. Expenses of PPN Representatives in the carrying out of their duties are covered as laid out in the PPN Expenses policy. See Appendix 6 – Limerick PPN Travel and Subsistence Policy

9 Service of Notices

1. A notice may be given to any member group/organisation by sending it by electronic means to the email address(es) of the contact people for that member group/organisation as per the Limerick PPN membership database.
2. The failure of any member group/organisation to receive notice of meeting will not invalidate the proceedings at or of the meeting.

10 Amendments to Constitution

A proposal in writing to amend the Constitution may be made:

- 1) By the Secretariat.
- 2) By not less than 10 full members (of Limerick PPN) not less than eighteen (18) days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

The proposal will be circulated to the membership and placed on the Agenda for the next Plenary meeting.

11 Appendix 1 – Principles of Limerick PPN

1. **Good governance:** implementing the Charities Governance Code as far as possible and applicable to Limerick PPN, including compliance with all relevant legislation.
2. **Inclusive:** of volunteer-led organisations in Limerick, and actively seeking the inclusion of groups which may traditionally be marginalised. The Limerick PPN recognises that it relies on volunteers and seeks to accommodate this diverse and active population in how it organises its business and activities.
3. **Participatory,** open, welcoming, respectful and collaborative. Some of the ways this is actioned are:
 - a) The PPN encourages participation by members in all aspects of its operations and is a flat structure.
 - b) Using methods in meetings which encourage everyone to participate equally and equitably.
 - c) Clear and agreed communications to and from members using a variety of traditional and new mechanisms.
 - d) The PPN supports new or inexperienced representatives of PPN member groups/organisations to develop their skills and capacity
 - e) The PPN is committed to having its meetings and events as accessible as possible for its membership (including: accessible meeting venues with suitable facilities for people with disabilities; option of large-print written materials; presentations sent out in advance to people with visual impairment; option of ISL interpretation services (subject to availability); location(s) to suit city and county membership; online meetings).
 - f) Holding meetings at different times and in rotating or central locations so that a variety of people can attend.
4. **Independence:** from the Local Authority and of any vested interests. Open, flat and participatory working structures support this.
5. **Valuing of Diversity:** and recognising that the pillars are broad and made up of people with many different opinions. It is not expected that the PPN will come up with a 'one voice response' but that it will feedback the issues and suggestions raised by a broad range of environmental, social inclusion and community and voluntary groups.
6. **Accountable and transparent:** in its processes, procedures and in its dealings with member groups, PPN representatives, Limerick City and County Council, the Department of Rural and Community Development and other stakeholders.
7. **Clarity of purpose:** Limerick PPN is focused on its core functions and does not duplicate the work of other organisations in Limerick. Limerick PPN, however, encourages and signposts members to engage with relevant opportunities delivered by members, Associate Members and other organisations whose ethos is compatible with that of Limerick PPN.
8. **Committed to the Sustainable Development Goals:** Limerick PPN is committed in its practices to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

12 Appendix 2 – Limerick PPN Plenary Standing Orders

The purpose of these standing orders is to ensure efficient and effective LPPN Plenary meetings which are aligned with the ethos and purpose of Limerick PPN.

1. Frequency of Meetings

The Plenary will meet twice a year or as requested in accordance with the Constitution.

2. Voting Rights and Decisions

- 1) Only matters on the Agenda will be the business of the meeting in accordance with the Constitution.
- 2) All decisions taken will be in accordance with procedures set out in Constitution.
- 3) Each named Limerick PPN member group/organisation will have one vote.
- 4) Decisions will be by simple majority.

3. Attendance at Plenaries

- 1) All named Limerick PPN member group/organisations – both Full Members and Associate Members – are entitled to be represented at the Plenary.
- 2) Only Full Members have voting rights.
- 3) Limerick PPN member group/organisations can send up to three (3) representatives to the Plenary. Only one of those representatives will have voting and speaking rights. Other representatives will have speaking rights only.
- 4) The Secretariat may invite guest speakers to attend the Plenary.
- 5) The Quorum for a Plenary meeting is 15% of the PPN membership.

4. Agenda

- 1) The Agenda will be prepared by the Secretariat. The order of business will be:
 - a) Welcome address by Facilitator
 - b) Housekeeping Duties, Health and Safety
 - c) Approval of minutes of last Plenary and matters arising
 - d) PPN Progress Report by Secretariat Member
 - e) Finance/Budget Update
 - f) Ratification of Linkage Group and Secretariat elections since last meeting
 - g) Items and Motions submitted for discussion and decision.
 - h) Workshop / Information Session / Guest Speaker as requested by previous Plenary and / or as organised by the Secretariat.
 - i) Date of Next Meeting
- 2) Items that member group/organisations want included on the Agenda will be presented to the Secretariat at least eighteen (18) days prior to the date of the meeting. Similar items will be taken as a combined item or motion as directed by Secretariat.

5. Minutes of the Plenary

- 1) The minutes of the Plenary will be taken by a member of the Secretariat or Limerick PPN staff.
- 2) The minutes will include a record of those attending, actions arising, and decisions made.

13 Appendix 3 – Electing Secretariat members

Making a nomination

1. Each PPN member organisation may nominate one individual from its Municipal District and also nominate one individual from the Pillar to which its aligned depending on what seats are vacant. Nominations must be agreed by a member group/organisation's committee. Evidence of this may be requested (e.g. minutes of committee meeting).
2. A PPN member organisation may nominate the same individual from both its Municipal District and its Pillar if there are two such seats available. In the event that the individual is successfully elected in one voting process, his/her nomination will be withdrawn from the second voting process. There is no requirement on member groups/organisations to nominate an individual from both a Municipal District and a Pillar
3. Individuals may receive a maximum of two nominations, i.e.: one Municipal District nomination and one Sectoral nomination.
4. Please be mindful of gender representation when making your nomination(s).
5. Nominations will only be accepted before the given deadline on the official Limerick PPN nomination form. To be valid, all sections of the form must be completed in **type** or in CAPITAL LETTERS (except for signatures) and scanned/clearly photographed and returned to the PPN staff. An email from a person's own email account in lieu of signature may be accepted – this is subject to verification.
6. A member group/organisation can also submit the nomination by post.
7. It is the responsibility of the nominating group to ensure their nomination(s) are submitted by the deadline. The PPN, its Secretariat, its staff or Limerick City and County Council will not be responsible for lost or delayed nominations.

Election process

1. The election of Secretariat members will take place at a Plenary meeting. Each candidate will have a maximum of 2 minutes on the night to speak to Plenary outlining their suitability for membership of the Secretariat.
2. There may be two election processes required in order to establish the Secretariat:
 - 1) An election to fill any of the 4 seats allocated to the PPN Geographic Areas (Municipal Districts)
 - 2) An election to fill any of the 6 seats allocated to the PPN Pillars
3. The Geographic Area election has four districts:
 - 1) Adare / Rathkeale
 - 2) Cappamore / Kilmallock
 - 3) Limerick Metropolitan
 - 4) Newcastle West
4. Member organisations are permitted to vote only in the geographic area to which they are aligned with the PPN.
5. The Geographic Area elections will be held on a first-past-the-post system, i.e. the candidate with the most votes will be deemed successful
6. The Pillar election has three categories:
 - 1) Community and Voluntary
 - 2) Environment
 - 3) Social Inclusion

7. Member organisations are permitted to vote only in the Pillar to which they are aligned with the PPN.
8. The Pillar elections will be held on a first-past-the-post system, i.e. the candidate(s) with the most votes will be deemed successful
9. The Geographic Area election will take place first.
10. If a candidate is elected in the Geographic Area election, they will be removed from the Pillar election if they are also a candidate in this.
11. Each member organisation will have one non-transferable vote per election it is eligible to vote in.
12. If the number of candidates nominated in any election process is less than or equal to the number of seats available, the candidate(s) will be deemed to be elected without a ballot.
13. In the event of a tie, a subsequent run-off election will take place between the tied candidates
14. A report on the results of the election will be available after the election to PPN member groups/organisations.

Criteria for Secretariat Membership

Persons being nominated to the Secretariat should have some or all of the following skills and attributes:

1. Have a keen interest and awareness of general issues in the pillar s/he represents and be willing to gather and present the views and opinions of the members the pillar/Municipal District that s/he represents
2. Be working, on a voluntary or paid basis, in the community or voluntary group that nominated her/him
3. Have good organisational skills and a willingness to learn
4. Be willing to participate fully to ensure the Secretariat fulfils its role and functions

In addition to the above, the following generic requirements must be met:

1. The group or organisation nominating a candidate must be a current member of Limerick PPN and continue to:
 - 1) meet PPN membership criteria and
 - 2) be a PPN member

AND

2. A person who has put themselves forward for nomination to be elected, stood for election or who has been an elected representative on any level of government (local or national) may not be chosen to be a member of the Secretariat for a period of twelve (12) months:
 - 1) after the date on which they were advised that their bid for nomination was unsuccessful
 - 2) from the date of the Election if their nomination bid was successful
 - 3) after completing their Term of Office if they are elected to office

14 Appendix 4 – Secretariat meetings

1. The quorum for Secretariat meetings will be one half plus one (1)
2. The Secretariat meets at least nine (9) times per year with no meetings in July and August
3. Secretariat members attend the two (2) Plenary Sessions in the year.
4. The Secretariat will hold ordinary meetings at location (including on-line) and at a time to be decided by the Secretariat.
5. For all Secretariat meetings, the PPN staff invite agenda items from the Secretariat members and PPN member groups/organisations up to seven (7) working days before Secretariat meetings.
6. The Facilitator and Resource Worker finalise the agenda at least four (4) days in advance of Secretariat meetings.
7. The agenda, minutes of previous meeting and any supporting documentation is distributed via email to the Secretariat members at least three (3) days in advance of Secretariat meetings.
8. Agenda items are for:
 - 1) Discussion
 - 2) Information
 - 3) Decision/ratification
9. The standard Secretariat meeting agenda is:
 - 1) Apologies
 - 2) Conflicts of interest
 - 3) Minutes of last meeting
 - 4) Matters arising
 - 5) Correspondence
 - 6) Governance
 - 7) Finance
 - 8) Participation in decision-making and representation (includes Linkage Groups update)
 - 9) Information sharing and communications
 - 10) Membership/registrations
 - 11) AOB
10. Within five (5) working days after a Secretariat meeting, the PPN staff circulate to the Secretariat the draft minutes of the meeting for noting/comment/amendment. This is particularly useful where there are agreed actions to be progressed between meetings and people are responsible for these actions.
11. Minutes of a Secretariat meeting are proposed and seconded at the next scheduled meeting and signed by the Facilitator.
12. Minutes are published on the PPN website within ten (10) working days of being adopted by the Secretariat.

15 Appendix 5 – Code of Conduct

Introduction

1. All PPN representatives who are elected to represent the PPN have a duty of care and responsibility to act in the best interests of the PPN complying with the Code of Conduct and the provisions of the PPN Constitution or other updated PPN governance document(s) agreed by the Plenary.
2. The Code of Conduct must be signed by every PPN representative elected to a representative position on the various committees where the PPN has such representation and by the members of the Secretariat.
3. Failure or refusal to sign this Code of Conduct will result in automatic removal from any representative role a person may hold. It is the responsibility of the PPN member to ensure that they sign this Code of Conduct.
4. This Code of Conduct details what each PPN representative will commit to in their role as a PPN representative and in all areas relating to their interaction with, and on behalf of, the PPN.
5. This Code of Conduct is available to all relevant stakeholders and is available on the Limerick PPN website – so as to ensure that all PPN members, partners and stakeholders are aware of what conduct they can expect from Limerick PPN representatives and Secretariat.

1. Organisational Values

As a PPN representative, I commit to and agree to comply with the fundamental values that underpin all the activities of PPN.

2. Accountability

- 1 As a PPN representative, everything I do and every interaction I am involved in will be able to stand the test of scrutiny by members of the public, the media, members, beneficiaries, stakeholders and the regulatory authorities.
- 2 I agree that any breach of this code may result in my removal from the PPN or any of its constituent levels – Linkage Groups, Secretariat or any other representative role.

3. Integrity, Respect and Honesty

I will act with integrity, respect and honesty in my conduct within and on behalf of the PPN particularly when dealing with other PPN representatives, PPN staff, the PPN membership and external individuals and agencies.

4. Transparency

I will promote an atmosphere of openness throughout the PPN in order to foster confidence in the PPN of members of the public, Local Authority Elected Members and staff, members, funders and wider community and to promote strategic and operational effectiveness of Limerick PPN.

5. Governance

As a PPN representative, I will actively support the ethos of the PPN and ensure compliance with good governance.

6. Conflicts of Interest

I commit to:

1. Act in the best interests of the PPN
2. Declare any Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Loyalty, or any such circumstance as may be viewed by others as conflicting as soon as it arises
3. Comply with any requirements the Secretariat or a Linkage Group may have regarding potential conflicts of interest/loyalty

7. Communications and PR relating to Limerick PPN

As a PPN representative, I will:

1. Not communicate as an elected PPN representative or a representative of a PPN member to external organisations, to the media, on social media or in any public forum without the prior agreement of the Secretariat.
2. Ensure that any comments made reflect current policy.
3. Give due consideration for the reputation of the PPN and avoid any possible risks to the PPN's reputation whether communicating through either official and personal communications platforms.
4. Respect individual confidentiality.
5. Take an active interest in the PPN'S public image and reputation.

8. Personal Gain

As a PPN representative, I will:

1. Not personally gain from my role as a PPN representative nor permit others to do so as a result of actions or negligence.
2. Document expenses and seek reimbursement according to agreed procedures.
3. Not accept gifts or hospitality.
4. Use PPN resources responsibly, when authorised in accordance with procedure.

9. In addition to the foregoing I will:

1. Not break the law or act against any regulation in force.
2. Support the PPN'S aims, objectives and principles and actively promote these.
3. Always comply with and support compliance with Limerick PPN'S Constitution.
4. Seek to maintain and promote integrity, good governance, effectiveness and efficiency for the delivery of the aims of Limerick PPN.

10. Secretariat

If, as a PPN representative, I am a member of the Secretariat, I will also:

1. Embody the principles of good governance and proper procedure in all actions and live up to the trust placed on me by my election to the Secretariat.
2. Comply and abide by the PPN governance procedures and practice.
3. Commit to attend all Secretariat Meetings, and in the event of unavoidable inability to attend, will comply with provisions of the Constitution.
4. Strive to be familiar with all agenda items I receive and be prepared to contribute to discussion and decision making at meetings.
5. Maintain a respectful attitude to the opinions of others.
6. Understand that decisions will ideally be made by consensus but may be by vote, and I will consider any majority vote as the final decision and I will accept and support it.
7. Maintain confidentiality unless authorised to speak on matters outside Secretariat meetings.
8. Agree that any breach of this code may result in my removal from the PPN or any of its constituent levels – Linkage Groups, Secretariat or any other representative role.
9. If I resign, inform the Facilitator of the Secretariat in writing, stating reasons for resigning from the Secretariat.

Signed by PPN representative: _____

Date: _____

Representative role: _____

16 Appendix 6 – Limerick PPN Travel and Subsistence Policy

Limerick PPN Travel & Subsistence Policy

In general, any reasonable expenses and fully-vouched expenses arising for a Limerick PPN representative on a committee will be met by the that committee.

In general, any reasonable and fully-vouched expenses arising for a PPN representative on the Secretariat who is undertaking agreed activities as part of their representative role will be met by the PPN. Where is a conflict between this policy and Limerick City and County Council policy, the decision of Limerick City and County Council shall be regarded as final.

The following key principles underpin this policy

1. The process of claiming for the reimbursement of expenses should be as straightforward as possible while following procedures that allow the PPN to properly account for payments made.
2. The PPN staff will provide support to PPN representatives who require help in submitting claims for the reimbursement of expenses
3. Reimbursing PPN representatives for expenses whilst contributing their expertise and time to meetings, committees, training or other activities organised by the PPN is best practice.
4. Where the PPN is covering expenses for PPN representatives on external committees, payment will only be approved for meetings for which a statement of outcomes has been received by the PPN representative(s) on a committee. In cases where there are multiple PPN representatives on one committee / at one event, one statement of outcomes on behalf of all will suffice.

Expenses for Travelling to and from meetings

1. A mileage allowance in line with Local Authority rates will be paid for travelling to and from approved meetings.
2. Claims to be made within three months of being accrued.
3. All claims will be reimbursed by electronic transfer – all PPN representatives being reimbursed expenses by the PPN are required to submit bank and contact details to be set up on the financial system. Claims to be made on the official Limerick PPN Travel and Subsistence Claims Form. This form must be signed by the claimant and signed by two (2) members of the Secretariat (neither of whom should be the claimant).

Subsistence

1. PPN representatives can claim back the reasonable cost of food or drink that was bought on the day of the meeting/ training etc., but only:
 2. When the total time involved has been five hours or more.
 3. If no food or drink was provided at the meeting/training etc.
4. Subsistence claims will be paid on production of appropriate receipts and should be claimed on the Travel and Subsistence Claim Form.

Other Costs

Any additional and reasonable cost on a PPN representative's private car insurance will be reimbursed by the PPN, subject to approval by the Secretariat. All other costs to the PPN Representative will be dealt with as they arise and according to available budgets.