



# Strategic Plan

2024-2029



Public  
Participation  
Network  
Limerick

# Introduction

To plan for its next stage of growth and development, PPN Limerick (PPNL) commissioned Business Improvement Solutions (BIS) through a public procurement process to develop their 2024-29 Strategic Plan. The work to develop this strategy took place from March to July 2023, and the methodology included:

- A desk review of existing information and data to develop a deeper understanding of PPN Limerick’s work.
- Formulation of the strategic and policy context within which PPN Limerick is currently operating.
- Facilitated workshop as part of the PPN Limerick Plenary meeting on April 27th, 2023.
- 1-1 semi-structured discussions with members of the PPN Limerick Secretariat.
- Ongoing liaison with the PPN Limerick Resource Worker throughout the process.
- Analysis of an online survey completed by PPN Limerick members.
- Integration of feedback into the final version of the Strategic Plan.
- Presentation of the final Strategic Plan.
- A longer version of this plan is also available.

This strategic plan articulates where PPN Limerick is going, the actions needed to make progress and how success will be measured. A further illustration of the approach is offered below.

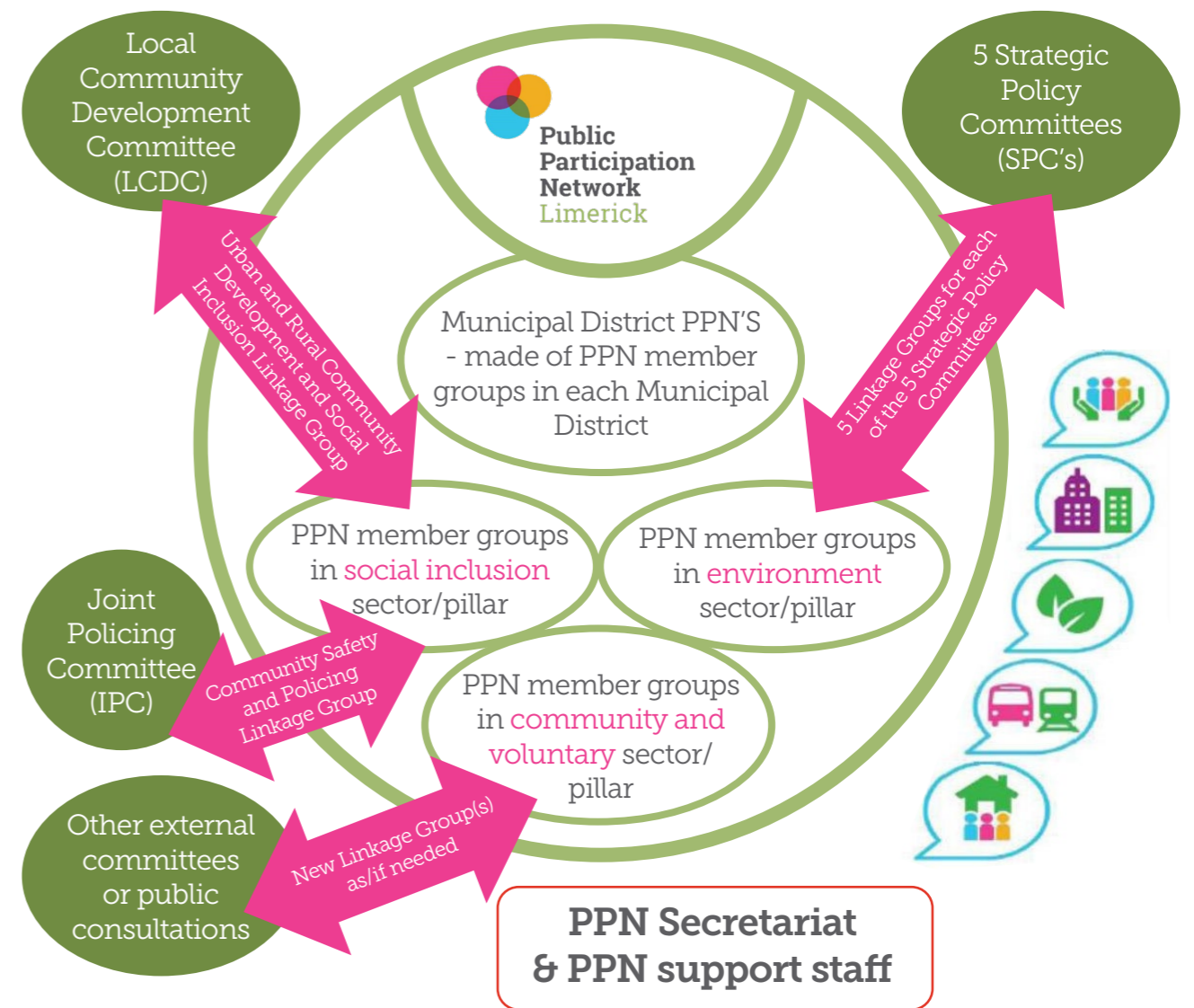


# About PPN Limerick

Public Participation Network Limerick is a countywide network that facilitates a two-way flow of information between the Local Authority and the Community and Voluntary sector. The core function of the PPN is to be an independent and formal structure to elect and support community representatives on Local Authority committees, in particular:

- 1 Strategic Policy Committees (SPC’s)
- 2 Joint Policing Committee (JPC)
- 3 Limerick Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

## Structure of Limerick PPN



The PPN is made up of several interconnecting structures.

- 1 Plenary:** The full membership of the PPN (excluding Associate Members) is referred to as the Plenary and it is the Governing Body with overall responsibility for the PPN.
- 2 Pillars:** The PPN membership is divided into three pillars or sectors namely, Environmental, Community/Voluntary and Social Inclusion.



- 3 Secretariat:** It is the key day-to-day administrative body within the PPN structure. The Secretariat is made up of 10 members: two from each of the pillars/sectors and one from each of the Municipal Districts.
- 4 Linkage Groups (LGs):** Are a collection of PPN member groups/organisations who have a particular interest or expertise in the issues being discussed by that committee.



## UN Sustainable Development Goals

PPNL are committed to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals by building awareness within member groups and representatives about how communities can work together to contribute towards realising these goals.

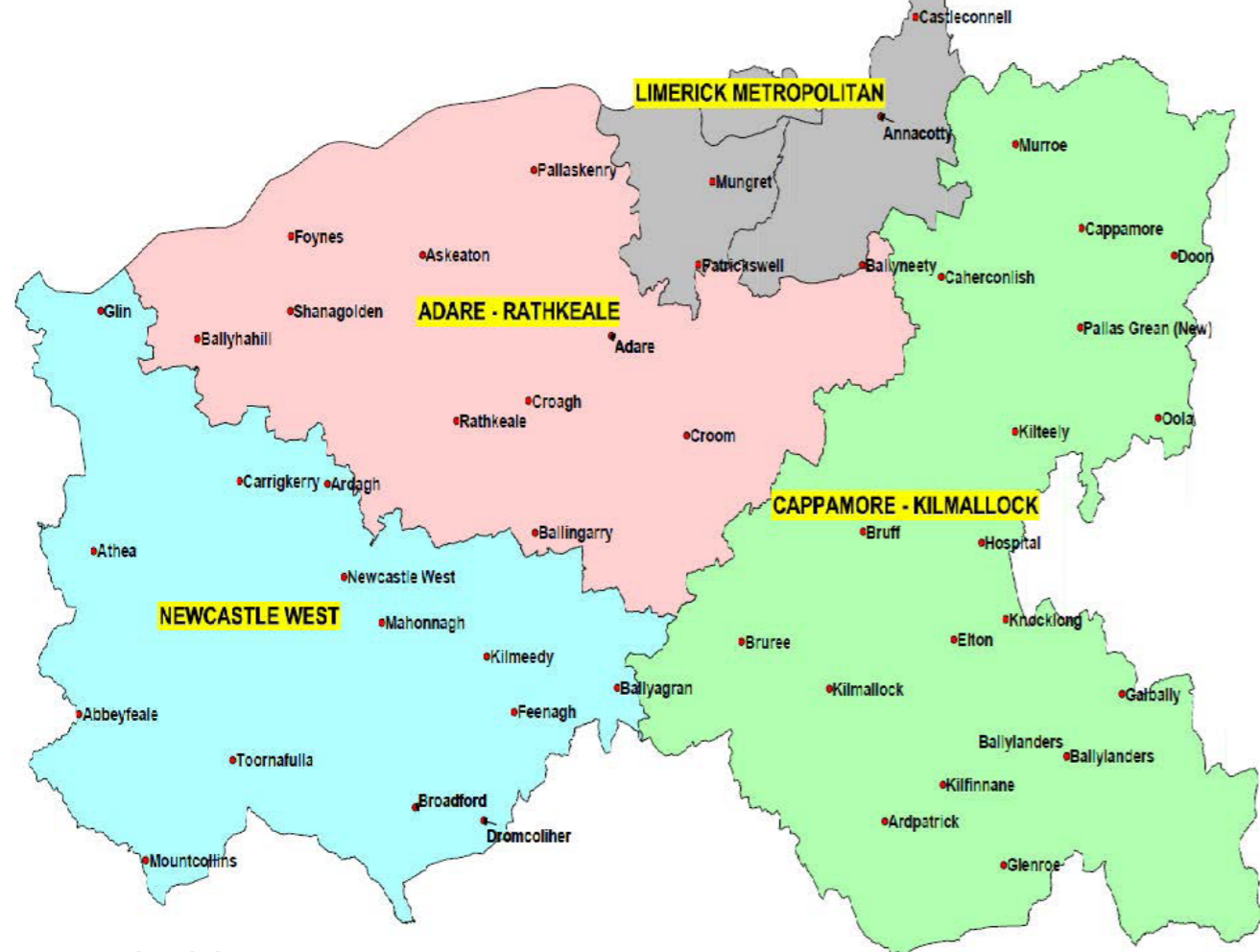


## Area Profile

Census 2022 shows that the population of County Limerick grew by 8% to 209,536, which means the number of people in the county rose by 14,637 between April 2016 and April 2022. Of Limerick's population, 105,084 were female and 104,452 were male. The average age of Limerick's population in April 2022 was 39.3 years, compared with 37.7 years in April 2016. The number of people aged 65 and over increased by 23% to 33,588.

There were 90,623 people (aged 15 and over) at work in Limerick, an increase of 13,438 people (+17%) between 2016 and 2022. There were 39,474 children aged 15 and under in Limerick in April 2022. Of these, 12,568 (32%) were in childcare, compared with 33% nationally. In 2022, 65% of households in Limerick owned their own home, with a further 27% renting.

## Public Participation Network

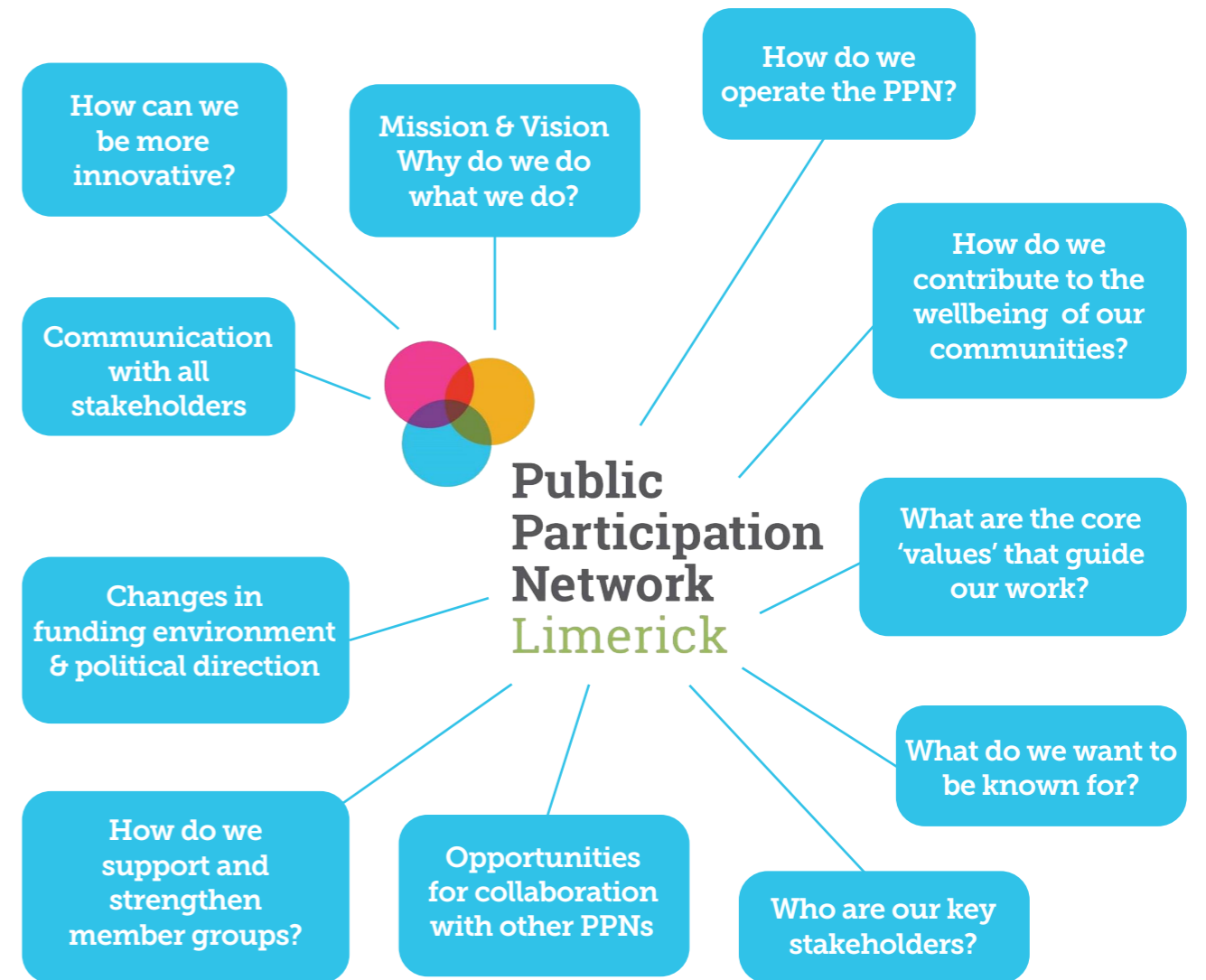


Limerick City & County Municipal Districts

The City and County of Limerick comprises of four 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.

# Stakeholder Consultation for Strategic Plan 2024-2029

The questions underpinning the consultation were.



## PPNL Effectiveness

Contributors highlighted that PPNL has built trust and credibility. There is a definite sense of confidence in PPNL and that it is doing a lot of things very well and is ambitious about what it can achieve in the future.

- PPNL governance is robust; they sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with LCCC.
- The Resource Worker is part a national network with staff from other PPNs and operates from the Community Tourism and Culture Directorate in City Hall.
- A review of existing code of conduct for members for both inside and outside PPN settings was suggested alongside policies on grievance, right to reply, integrity, respect and extreme ideology.
- Simplifying participation for groups by standardising procedure for LGs and how they should operate was proposed. A "champion" within the PPN Secretariat / Support structure should be established to support the LGs.
- Governance training and insistence on groups having verifiable governance and legitimacy based on community support would enhance effectiveness.

## Community Wellbeing

Notable positive impacts made by the PPN on important issues were highlighted namely, air quality, strategy for inclusion of underrepresented groups, elected mayor, M20 motorway, autism friendly initiatives, and community response to drugs. Representatives also made positive contributions to the various Statutory Committees.

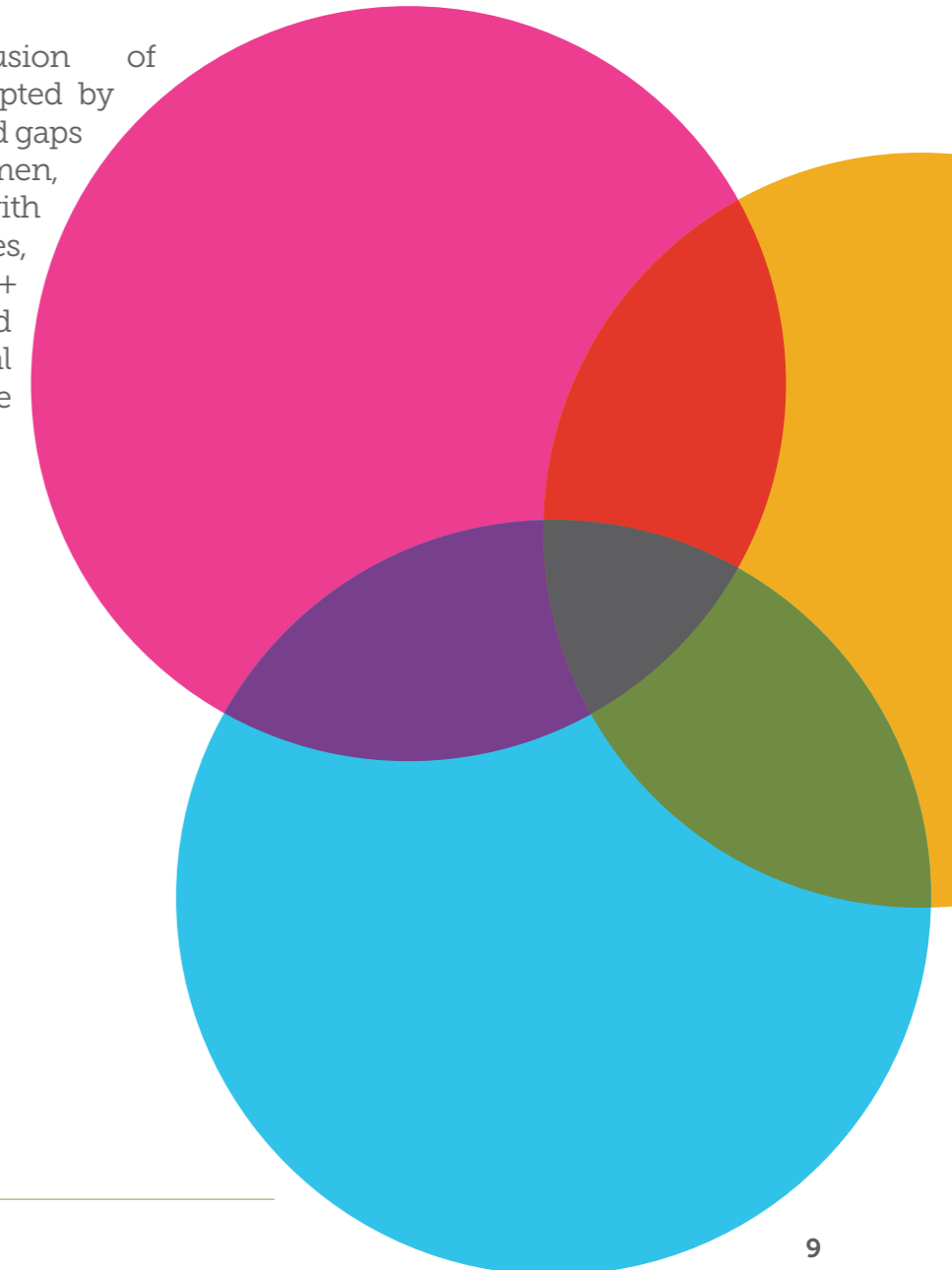
- It was highlighted that mapping the work of each member group against the 17 UN Sustainable Goals would showcase the impact and reach of PPN Limerick's membership.
- The impact of the PPN for the County Council is not adequately captured or recognised. They should be the 'go to' for local authorities to tap into the knowledge and expertise of groups.
- PPN representation on Council committees provides an insight into the thoughts and views of people across the County

## Representation

There was a broad consensus that the public are motivated by change rather than joining committees.

- Establishing Linkage Groups on an issue basis could tap into the latent activism of existing and prospective members.
- Capacity building and engagement initiatives for environmental activists was suggested to motivate like-minded individuals to come together and form LGs.
- PPN membership and participation is lower in rural areas where the costs associated with travel and transport are significant.
- Limerick covers a large urban and rural area within a single PPN while in comparison Dublin has three PPNs and Cork two, each with their own funding, budget, and Staff Resources.

The strategy for inclusion of underrepresented groups adopted by Limerick PPN in 2022 identified gaps in representation among, women, youth groups, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, travellers and LGBTQIA+ community groups and geographically in the municipal districts of, Adare-Rathkeale and Newcastle West.



# SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis is based on the findings from desk research and the stakeholder engagement.

## Strengths

- Long established in Limerick
- Is trusted
- Professional staff, hosted by the Local Authority
- Committed and competent Secretariat
- Range of membership
- PPN Limerick Website
- Governance
- Benefits of PPN membership

## Weaknesses

- Staff capacity
- Potential staff burnout
- PPN membership reliance on volunteers
- Too dependent on online platforms to engage with members
- No process in place to capture the community outcomes attributable to PPN Limerick

## Opportunities

- To build solidarity among PPN groups
- To promote the PPN through PR, Marketing & Digital platforms
- For greater collaboration with and among member groups
- To work more closely with the three Local Development Companies
- For real and meaningful engagement at local government level, including elected officials

## Threats

- Non engagement of marginalized groups may compromise diversity
- No national PPN structure for facilitator
- Insufficient capacity to deliver the Strategic Plan 2024-29
- Dominance of urban over rural issues due to concentration of members
- Inertia and apathy
- Maverick Groups
- Not developing positive working relationships with elected officials

# Section 4: Strategic Plan 2024-29

## Vision

The Vision of the Limerick Public Participation Network is that it will be an effective:

- 1 Link through which Limerick City and County Council connects with the community and voluntary sector and vice versa
- 2 Link through which key stakeholders of the Limerick Local Economic Plan (LECP) may be able to engage with the community and voluntary sector in Limerick and vice versa.
- 3 Route for member groups to receive information regarding capacity building, funding, and consultation opportunities.

## Principles

Limerick Public Participation Network is underpinned by the following principles:

- Good governance
- Inclusive
- Participatory
- Independence
- Valuing of Diversity
- Accountable and transparent
- Clarity of purpose
- Committed to the Sustainable Development Goals

# Strategic Objective 1

## Ensure effective operations for PPN Limerick

### Success Indicators

- Compliance with National PPN Handbook and Mandatory Checklist.
- Competent, motivated, and trained staff.
- High performing Secretariat.
- Robust policies and procedures.
- Annual workplan targets achieved.
- Memorandum of Understanding with LCCC agreed annually.
- Outcomes achieved for the communities of Limerick.
- Number of public consultations participated in.

### Key Actions

- Review policies and procedures annually against the National PPN Handbook and Mandatory Checklist and develop a proforma template to record same.
- In 2024, explore gender and diversity mainstreaming of all policies and practice.
- Develop a risk register.
- Hold two plenary and nine Secretariat meetings per year.
- Support National advocacy to increase staffing resources for PPN's.
- Produce and disseminate the PPN Limerick annual report.
- Develop an annual workplan framed around the strategic objectives and report on it at the Secretariat meetings.
- Map the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that PPN Limerick are progressing through their strategic and workplans.
- Review community wellbeing statements in 2024.
- In 2024, develop a community wellbeing outcomes framework and in subsequent years, collect the information and data required to populate same.
- Continue to use the Resources section on the PPN Limerick website as the medium to share, minutes of Secretariat and Plenary meetings, Statements of Outcomes, from PPN representatives, protocols, agreements, and funding information.

- Coordinate and participate in public consultations.
- Create a code of conduct for members.
- Ensure all budget management targets are achieved.

### Outcomes

- A more effective PPN Limerick.
- PPN Limerick has compliant and robust governance.
- PPN Limerick is making a difference to the lives of people in Limerick City & County.

# Strategic Objective 2

## Strengthen participation and influence of PPN Limerick in local decision-making structures

### Success Indicators

- Full PPN representation for Secretariat, SPC's and Committees.
- Increase membership.
- Number of themed Linkage Groups.
- Number of cross Linkage Groups.
- Number and type of training programmes delivered.
- New policy issues brought forward for discussion.
- Numbers of training participants.
- Youth (18–25-year-old) representation on the Secretariat.

### Key Actions

- Designate champion" within the PPN Secretariat to support the Linkage Groups.
- Develop more theme based Linkage Groups (environment, social inclusion, disability, gender mainstreaming)
- In 2024, pilot Cross Linkage Group/ pillar meetings to build the collective voice of the PPN in Limerick.
- Investigate the potential for thematic sub committees.

- Facilitate Linkage Groups to develop policy issues for discussion.
- Seek to attract new members through open days and promotional campaigns.
- Customise awareness raising campaigns to attract underrepresented groups.
- Disseminate an annual survey to groups to identify training and capacity needs and the outcomes they wish to achieve through membership.
- Explore the possibility of a reps' network as a vehicle to strengthen peer support.
- Provide training and support which build the capacity of member groups to influence policy and to engage effectively in public participation.
- Engage directly with youth organisations to ensure representation on PPN Limerick structures.
- Encourage communication initiatives between member groups.

### Outcomes

- PPN Limerick is at the cutting edge of local decision making.
- PPN Limerick is more engaged with its members.
- PPN Limerick is more diverse and innovative.
- PPN Limerick in a position to share their best practice policies with colleague PPN's.

## Strategic Objective 3

### Establish PPN Limerick as a leading voice of the Community Sector in Limerick

#### Success Indicators

- Website traffic.
- Social Media traffic.
- No. of staff/reps/members who are social media trained and competent.
- Google Analytics data.
- PPN Limerick articles in external publications.
- No. of presentations/talks delivered by PPN Limerick staff/reps/members.
- Impact of communications strategy in terms of increased awareness, footfall, and number of service users.

- Reach across 18-25 age profiles.
- Representation on forums and structures.
- Number of new collaborations.

#### Key Actions

- Develop a communications strategy in alignment with that of the National PPN.
- Build presence on social media platforms.
- Conduct an annual review of the website content and effectiveness.
- Revitalise the brand and identity of PPN Limerick.
- Ongoing publication and sharing of Fundingpoint (in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council and The Wheel)
- Continue to publish the monthly newsletter.
- Consider the creation of Ambassador roles as a mechanism to increase influence and awareness of PPN Limerick.
- Invite communities across Limerick to the launch of the PPN Limerick 2024-2029 strategic plan.
- Map the forums/structures that PPN Limerick are represented on and if representation gaps are evident and seek to address these.
- Undertake a stakeholder analysis and from this, identify collaborations and partnerships to be pursued.

#### Outcomes

- Increased awareness of PPN Limerick.
- Greater presence on social media platforms.
- PPN Limerick exert a greater influence in local policy and strategy development.
- More vibrant PPN Limerick.
- Improved inter agency and collaborative working.





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