



PPN Limerick Submission to 2024-2029 Draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme

Date	29 th of October, 2024
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Context	<p>Setup following Local Government reform in 2014, Public Participation Network Limerick (PPNL) is an independent network of community, environment and social inclusion organisations, working to build a better county for the community of Limerick. The PPN is co-ordinated by its Resource Worker, reporting to the PPN Plenary through the Voluntary Secretariat.</p> <p>PPN Limerick has 228 member organisations. These members are based across Limerick City and County. The PPN is the prescribed body to nominate community, environment and social inclusion representation onto various Council structures, including the SPCs.</p>

Introduction

Limerick PPN welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the new Strategic Policy Scheme. The PPN is committed to providing high quality community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental representation on Limerick County Council Strategic Policy Committees.

The PPN is committed to providing on-going support to PPN Representatives who sit on Limerick County Council Structures. This includes on-going training, the servicing and development of PPN Linkage Groups, policy development, and so on.

The PPN wishes to highlight the Linkage Group structures that are in place to support PPN Representatives on Council structures. Linkage Groups are Thematic Networks of Community Groups who meet at least 3 times per year. Linkage Groups are representative of the geographical

spread and diverse community of County Limerick. Linkage Groups nominate and provide a mandate to PPN Representatives on policy issues that are relevant to the structure they sit on. The current has 5 Linkage Groups are:

1. Community, Leisure and Culture
2. Climate Action, Biodiversity and the Environment
3. Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning
4. Home and Social Development
5. Travel and Transportation

PPN Representatives will be supported by their Linkage Groups to regularly report back to the wider PPN membership through PPN Plenary meetings, e-newsletters and the PPN Secretariat.

General observations on the Scheme

4. Strategic Policy Committees 2024-2029- Structure and Membership

PPNL welcomes the inclusion of detail relating to **Ethics** and **Lobbying** in the draft Scheme. This detail mirrors PPNL's existing governance relating to the nomination of representatives.

The Nomination Process

PPNL welcomes the inclusion of further detail acknowledging the PPN's designated authority regarding nominations to the Community/ Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion Electoral Colleges.

Membership

The Draft Scheme names 24 seats for PPN Representatives, in line with the 2019-2024 Scheme.

Limerick 40 Councillors	Home and Social Development	Travel and Transportation	Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning	Community, Leisure and Culture	Climate Change and Environment				5 SPC's	205,444
Councillors	16	16	16	16	16				80	53% C&V 14
All Sectoral Interests	8	8	8	10	8				42	57% S.I. 5
PPN Reps	5	4	4	7	4				24	Env 5

We have been advised that there will be two additional Representatives on the Climate action, Biodiversity and Environment (CABE) SPC and two less on the Home and Social Development (H&SD) SPC.

PPNL welcomes the addition of two seats on CABE, nonetheless the potential loss of two seats on H&SD is concerning. Housing is one of the largest issues we face at present, affecting the lives of

people across socio-economic lines. Having the Community/ Voluntary and social inclusion sector lose representation on this committee at this time is not satisfactory.

The Makeup of the H&SD SPC, at 8 members remains the same as the previous scheme, with no additional seats for other stakeholders i.e. Development/ Construction (1), Business/ Commercial (1) or the trade union sector (1).

PPNL wishes to be advised in what manner the 2 seats will be allocated, given that the PPN has nomination rights for the remaining Community/ Voluntary (4) and Social Inclusion (1) Seats detailed in the draft Scheme.

Adoption of SPC Scheme

“With regard to the Community/ Voluntary/ Social Inclusion and Environmental/ Conservation Sectors, the Council will write to the PPN Secretariat, enclosing a copy of the Scheme and requesting selection of their representatives for the SPCs as set out in the adopted Scheme”.

PPN Limerick has a set nomination process, which takes approximately 5-6 weeks.

This comprises of a week of preparing documentation and opening nominations.

Nominations remain open for 2 weeks.

One week where nominations are processed, with elections prepared where necessary.

Elections are launched and open from Monday-Friday the following week.

Appointments to SPCs are required to be submitted to the next Full Council Meeting.

It is of the upmost importance that LCCC request these Nominations at the earliest possible time following the Draft Schemes adoption so that we may begin our process.

It must be noted that SPC Meetings should not take place until all members of the Committee are in place. This will be after the Full Council Meeting following the completion of the PPNL Nomination process.

Regarding SPC Standing Orders

PPNL requests that the PPN Administration be included in the circulation of all Arrangements for meetings and Notice of Meetings.

This will allow the Administration and Secretariat to monitor and support the engagement of their Representatives. PPN administration is ppn@limerick.ie

4. Notice of Meetings

(b) In so far as practical meeting documentation should be circulated ten days in advance of a meeting to allow sectoral representatives an opportunity to consult within their sector in relation to same. Lack of receipt of documentation by any member or members of the committee shall not affect the validity of the meeting.

Submission of items for the Agenda are required 12 days before the Meeting but the above states that documentation will be, “ as far as practical”, circulated 10 days before the Meeting.

The PPN representatives are volunteers and inconsistent communication of the Agenda and documentation inhibits meaningful engagement by our Members of the Committees.

PPNL aim to hold Linkage group meetings in advance of each SPC Meeting. In order for the Representatives to discuss the upcoming meeting appropriately and have the opportunity to submit to the SPC they require access to the agenda.

PPNL acknowledges administration issues when formalising Agendas and submit that as Members of the Committee having a draft Agenda available could be appropriate.

It would circumvent issues detailed in this item if the order of business included a standing PPNL item. We would ask that the Chairs and administration of the SPC's consider this proposal.

The Secretariat and Administration of PPN Limerick looks forward to working with the Committees in the coming years.