KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

# Kilkenny Public Participation Network (KPPN)

Information and Registration Pack

KKCC Community & Culture Section August 2014

2014

## Table of Contents

Kilkenny County Council Community and Culture Section

As part of our role in supporting civic engagement and the establishment of the Kilkenny Public Participation Network 2014

# Kilkenny Public Participation Network Information and Registration Pack

***Why your group should join-***

- **Network** , share information,  learn from other community and voluntary groups in ***your***  area or sector
- Create a sense of **solidarity and collative action** across the county
- Elect **representatives** to policy making boards and committees.
- Avail of free or low cost support and **training** in the county
- Get **information** on funding, grants and initiatives etc which are of interest to your group

While there is no deadline for registration for **2014** it is envisioned that the PPN will be established by **November 3, 2014** where the structure and nominations to committees will commence over the month of November. You can register by filling up the form in the pack and returning it by ***October 31, 2014 to:***

**By Email to:**  community@kilkennycoco.ie

**By Post to:**  Kilkenny County Council Community and Culture Section, Johns Green House, Johns Green, Kilkenny

***Forms available at:***

http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Community_Culture/Public-Participation-Networks/

*Getting your voice heard-* **Register today for the Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN)**

The PPN is a new framework for *public engagement and participation* is currently being established within the Kilkenny Local Authority area. The PPN will be the *main link* through which the local authority *connects* with the community, social inclusion and environmental sectors

The aim of these structures is to *facilitate and enable* public organisations operating within the wider community to articulate and give voice to a *diverse* range of views, issues and interests within the local government system.

**The PPN:**

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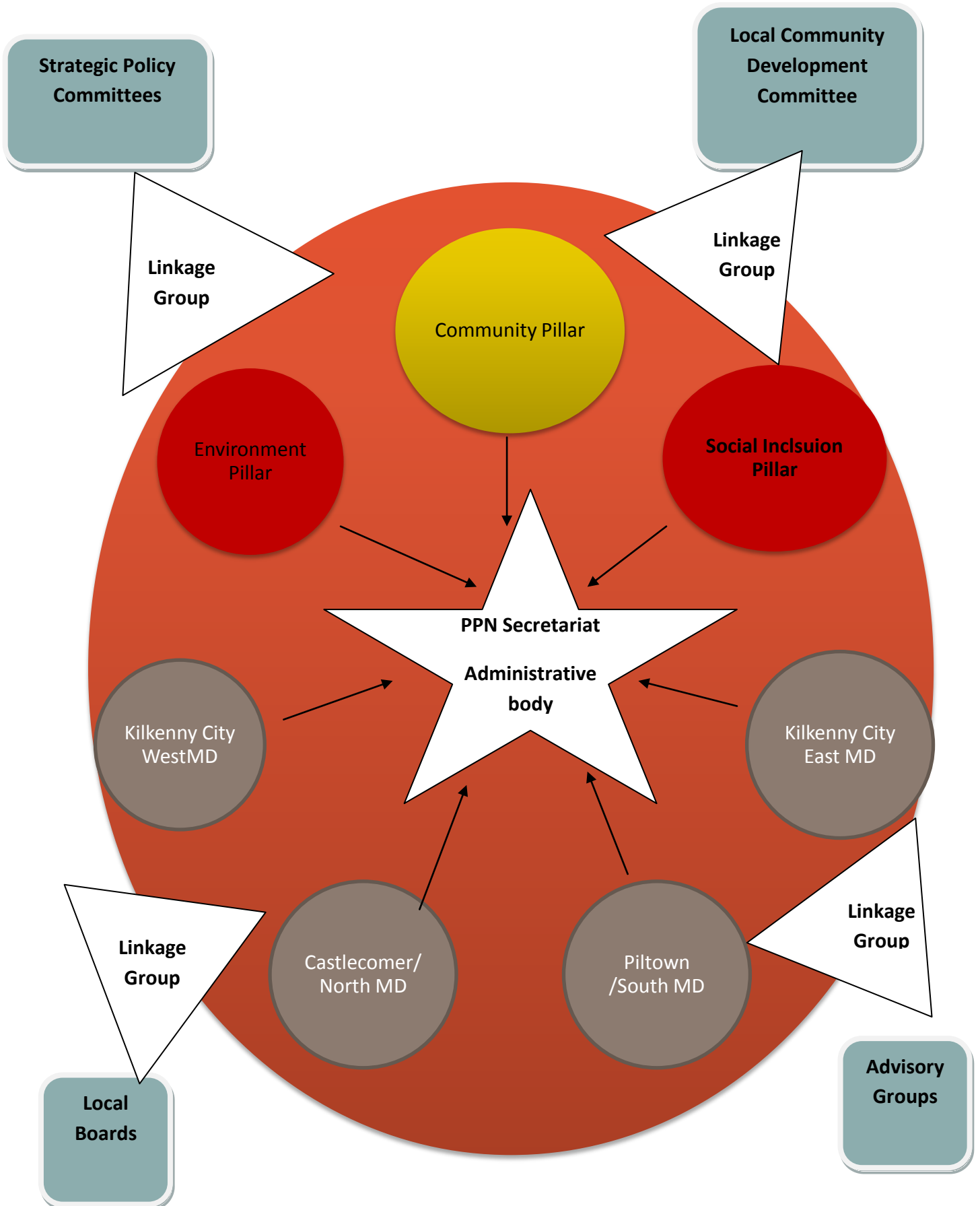
**Public Participation Network (PPN) Structures**

- The Public Participation Network (PPN) will be organised:
- At County level with three pillars: *Environment, Social Inclusion, Community*
- At Municipal District level

**Each PPN will have:**

- A **County Plenary** at County  level which deals with County level issues
- A **Municipal District Plenary** in each Municipal District which deals with issues at a municipal level
- **Linkage Groups** which deal with specific issues ( task groups)
- A **secretariat at County** level that acts a facilitation and communication mechanism

# Public Participation Network structure



Strategic Policy Committees

Local Community Development Committee

Linkage Group

Linkage Group

Community Pillar

Environment Pillar

Social Inclsuion Pillar

PPN Secretariat

Administrative body

Kilkenny City WestMD

Kilkenny City East MD

Linkage Group

Castlecomer/ North MD

Piltown /South MD

Linkage Group

Local Boards

Advisory Groups

**Criteria for membership of the Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN)[1]**

1) Groups must be active in County Kilkenny, and have aims and objectives which are compatible with the principles of the PPN, and be not for profit.

2) Groups must be in existence at least six months prior to affiliation, and must have a minimum membership of five and be open to new membership.

3) Any groups who register can only register once. The contact person for a group cannot register for multiple groups.

4) All organisations registered for the PPN should have an agreed set of rules and a working structure that informs the appropriate workings and structures for that organisation, which may differ across organisations. In most cases, this will likely be a constitution; terms of reference, a bank or credit union account, etc.

5) Political parties will not be able to affiliate.

6) Public representatives (Councillors, TDs, Senators, MEPS etc), or those who have held such office within the past 12 months may not participate in the PPN. In addition, individuals who are declared as candidates for public representative office (Councillors, TDs, Senators, and MEPs etc) must step aside from all PPN roles for the duration of their declared candidacy.

7) Groups who have representational rights through the national pillars, local authorities, local development or other mechanisms may affiliate to and participate in the MD and county PPNs but should not participate in the election of representatives to Local Authority Committees.

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[1] Please see appendix 1 for examples of groups in each of the three pillars

**Additional Criteria for Environmental Pillar:**

- The primary objectives and activities of the organisation must be Environmental (i.e. ecological) protection and / or environmental sustainability.
- Once off protest groups are not eligible

**Groups dealing with the following are eligible:**

- Permanent protection of wildlife
- Species specific care – protection/rehabilitation/reintroduction
- Organic horticulture or education
- Environmental education or protection
- Environmental sustainability
- Resource efficiency and recycling
- Invasive alien species prevention/removal

**Additional Criteria for Social Inclusion Pillar:**

*A working definition of a Social inclusion organisation is an organisation whose main activity centres on working to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or in unemployment using community development approaches to build sustainable communities, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted and human rights are respected. See also Social Inclusion statement agreed by local social inclusion groups in appendix 2.*

- The primary objectives and activities must focus on poverty reduction, community development, equality and social justice issues
- The organisation must have activities in line with a social inclusion approach to community building and have those who experience poverty and social exclusion on its management /organisational structure
- Organisations who work to influence policy with regard to social inclusion are also eligible.
- Such organisations include those who focus their work on vulnerable groups in society who experience social exclusion such as:[2]

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[2] See National Anti- Poverty Strategy 2007-2016 explanation at appendix 2

- Older people
- People who are unemployed or experiencing poverty
- Children/Youth
- Ethnic minorities including Travellers
- People with disabilities & their carers
- People living in isolation

**A local Seminar to support the Social Inclusion Sector was held on November 4, 2014 – groups in attendance were asked to define social inclusion; the statement agreed by social inclusion groups operating in Kilkenny is included in appendix 2

# Kilkenny Public Participation Network*
# Membership Registration Form 2014

## 1. Contact Details:

Name of Organisation/Group

_____

Main Contact Person

_____

Contact Address

_____

_____

Telephone: _____

Mobile Phone: _____ _____E-mail: _____

Website: _____Twitter/Face book: _____

## *2.* **Details about type of membership**

☐ Community Pillar –focussed on local development, sports, social groups, residents groups etc

☐ Social Inclusion Pillar -focussed on people experiencing disadvantage and inequality

☐ Environment Pillar- focussed on protecting the environment and sustainable development

### Municipal District

☐ East

☐ West

☐ North

☐ South

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### 3. Brief Profile of Individual/ Organisation:

What is the Organisation's main aim?

_____

No. of Members in Org.: _____ No. of staff in Org.: _____

Others: _____

- Please indicate: Paid ☐ Volunteers ☐ C.E. /Job Bridge/TUS ☐

- Is your group affiliated to any other organisation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify what organisation:

_____

*I confirm that the information supplied on this membership registration form is correct.*
Signed: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____ _____
(On behalf of the organisation / Group)

**Are you willing to be primarily contacted by email? Yes** ☐ **NO** ☐

(We need to keep postal charges to a minimum)

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*\* Under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003, Government Departments, Offices and Agencies, as data controllers, have a legal responsibility to:*

*- obtain and process personal data fairly;*
*- keep it only for one or more specified and explicit lawful purposes;*
*- process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially;*
*- keep personal data safe and secure;*
*- keep data accurate, complete and up-to-date;*
*- ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;*
*- retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes; and,*
*- provide a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on* request

**Appendix 1:**

**Examples of types of groups under each pillar:**

**Community Pillar PPN**

| | |
|---|---|
| Residents groups | Self-help groups |
| Community councils | Issue based groups |
| Youth groups | Community Associations |
| Sporting/ leisure clubs/groups | Voluntary campaign groups |
| Arts groups | Broad based Service provision groups |
| Active retirement groups | Playground Associations |
| Festival groups | |

**Social Inclusion Pillar**

| | |
|---|---|
| Disability groups | Traveller Groups |
| Ethnic minority groups | Women's Groups |
| Family Support group (FRC's) | Literacy Groups |
| Older peoples groups | Social Justice Groups |
| Groups promoting equality | LGBT Groups |
| Youth service and groups | Children services and support groups |

Mental health / suicide prevention groups
Drug and alcohol support Information groups
Rural isolation and disadvantage groups
Urban disadvantage groups

**Environment Pillar**

| | |
|---|---|
| An Taisce | Bat Conservation Ireland |
| Bee keeping Associations | Bird watch Ireland |
| Friends of the Earth | Green Schools |
| Green Campuses | Green Communities |
| Butterfly Conservation Ireland | CRANN |
| Forest Friends | ECO UNESCO Feasta |

**For the full list please see:**  http://environmentalpillar.ie/

**Appendix 2:**

**The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2016 (NAP inclusion)** - represents a wide-ranging and comprehensive programme of action to address social exclusion. It sets out a coherent and comprehensive approach for a ten year period that coincides with the timescale of Towards 2016 Partnership Agreement. The NAP Inclusion uses a lifecycle approach, as set out by National Economic and Social Council (NESC) in its report, The Developmental Welfare State. The lifecycle approach places the individual at the centre of policy development and delivery and offers a framework for implementing a streamlined, cross-cutting and visible approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion.

**The National Anti-poverty Plan 2007-2016 lifecycle stages**
- Children;
- People of working age
- Older people
- People with disabilities

**In addition, the NAP inclusion contains a chapter on communities which targets those who experience:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Educational Disadvantage | 2. Unemployment |
| 3. Income Adequacy | 4. Disadvantaged Urban Dwellers |
| 5. Disadvantaged Rural Dwellers | 6. Housing/Accommodation issues |
| 7. Health; mental health issues | |

**Cross-Cutting Themes are also identified as:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Child Poverty | Women's Poverty |
| Older People | Ethnic Minorities including Travellers |
| People with Disabilities | |

The following statement is an agreed local social inclusion statement that participants at the *"Making Space to Take your Place"* – Social Inclusion Seminar agreed at the November 3, 2013 Social Inclusion seminar hosted by Kilkenny County Council

*Social inclusion begins with a basic respect for all people where everyone has equality of access, opportunity and to live with dignity and esteem. Being included in local decison making is a starting point for social inclusion where people are empowered to particpate, are listened to and consulted on matters that effect their lives. Service providers operate a social inclusion policy by sharing resources and opportunites with all people; it is a basic human right to be included in society and to activley particpate in the fabric of society.*

# Public Participation Networks
# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Is there a means of bringing sports groups into the PPN process?**

As voluntary organisations with a constitution the sports groups can apply to become a member of a Municipal District PPN as long as they fit the criteria of a local voluntary organisation. Please refer to section 2.6.1 of guidelines.

**2. Is there any opportunity for Electoral College representation to be guided by the Electoral College proportional make up on PPN database/plenary?**

There is no opportunity for Electoral College representation to be guided by the Electoral College proportional make up.

**3. Is there a possibility that consideration could be given to an additional representative for the PPN Secretariat from a Gaeltacht areas?**

As per guidelines issued, the PPN secretariat should consist of one representative from each Municipal District and as outlined in the guidelines in section 2.7 and 2.8 all representatives nominated should represent their nominating structure and not their organisation. In all elections of PPN representatives, care will be taken to ensure:
• Gender balance
• Geographical spread of representatives

**4. In relation to the graphic in the draft guidelines there are not any return arrows from SPCs or other Government Bodies or the LCDC indicating it is not a two way relationship – is there a reason for this or is the graphic complete?**

Please refer to section 2.8 of Guidelines and note that the two way flow of communication is crucial to the success of the PPN framework. It will be the responsibility of the PPN to support and work with their representatives to ensure that appropriate structures are in place to facilitate a two way relationship. This should take account of the most appropriate and relevant means of communicating with various groups taking account of varying impacts of geography, mobility and ICT literacy.

**5. In reference to 2.9 of the draft guidelines 'Promoting Well-being', what is the relevance of this in the context of the PPN guidelines?**

Section 2.9 is based on the recognition that sustainable development is directly linked to the well-being of communities and individuals. Therefore any framework for public participation must look at ensuring and supporting this well-being and in particular in the support of those communities and representatives who are active in the PPN. The promotion of well-being of this and future generations is a key cornerstone of the purpose of establishing PPNs and of shaping their engagement with the Local Authority.

**6. What is the proposed annual roll out cost operating the PPN given that counties /cities differ in size, diversity in language, population and wealth?**

It is a matter for each Local Authority to provide on-going funding to support the structures, following the completion of the relevant regulations and guidelines. Providing adequate support is essential. Adequate resourcing is one definite measure of the good faith of the cal Authority in implementing this structure and securing local engagement.

**7. Will the findings from the pilot PPNs be reviewed and communicated to all PPNs? How comprehensive will the evaluation of the Pilot PPNs be?**

It is proposed that a summary of feedback on implementation issues arising from the experience of the pilot PPNs will be made available to each Local Authority once final reports on the pilots have been received by the Department.

**8. Clarification is needed on what is a linkage group and the role of the linkage group. Also what is the timeframe for linkage groups and how is it envisaged that they will evolve?**

When the Local Authority seeks representative(s) for its various County Committees, SPCs etc. they contact the PPN secretariat with the details. The PPN secretariat then contacts ALL organisations who are members of the PPN indicating the place(s) that are available and calling all interested organisations with an interest in this issue (stakeholders) to a meeting. The group of organisations that assembles is the PPN's Linkage Group on this particular topic. The Linkage Group chooses the PPN's representatives sought by the Local Authority. The linkage group will be set up when there is a new committee or structure established by the council that requires public participation. The linkage group will be in place until the committee or structure has been dissolved by the council. The linkage group will operate as a reference group for the person they have chosen to represent their group and should meet regularly to support the nominated representative to be informed and reflect the viewpoints of the linkage group.

**9. You are aware that Foras in many of the LAs under the Community Forum have built up a registrar of groups over the years. Keeping in mind data protection etc. is there any mechanism for dovetailing such an up to date register with compiling a listing for the proposed plenaries under the new PPN?**

The DECLG have no issue with using the databases held by the previous community fora, however we would recommend that you seek the advice of the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner.

**10. Is there a chance that the guidelines will be amended to more truly reflect actual sectoral participation?**

Please refer to response in Question 2 above.

**11. Can Local Authorities use the pre-existing forum that has worked well to become the PPN?**

PPNs must be set up immediately in all Local Authority areas at county level. It is imperative that the secretariat and linkage groups are put in place; this will provide the basis for two-way information flows between the Local Authority and the local community. With effect from 1 June 2014, where community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the Local Authority, such as SPCs/LCDCs etc., it must be sourced through the

PPN. It is essential that the structure that is being put in place follows all of the PPN guidelines and adheres to the complete PPN framework that should be put in place for every Local Authority in the Country.

**12. Are Groups that registered with the Community & Voluntary Forum now defunct, do they all have to register again for the PPN process?**
Groups that were previously registered with C&V forum must register with the PPN and self-select the Electoral College that is appropriate for their organisation.

**13. Are Groups that are registered for the PPN process at a given date after the public meetings to establish PPN Structures are they entitled to vote for representatives on Colleges and on the Secretariat?**
All groups registered by the agreed deadline will have one vote for the selection of representatives from their respective College to the Secretariat and one vote from the Municipal Districts PPNs that they are participating in to select a representative to the Secretariat.

**14. If vacancies arise next year on Local Authority committees, do Groups have to be registered for a twelve month period before they can have voting rights?**
If Groups are registered by the agreed deadline each year for the following year, they will have voting rights for the following year and can fully participate on all PPN structures and represent the PPN on local Authority Committees.

**15. Is the registration of groups following the establishment of PPN Structures in future years a matter for Secretariat and not Local Authority?**
Once the PPN Secretariat and all other structures have been fully established, the Secretariat will oversee the registration of organisations with support from the Chief Officer (if needed).

**16. Can the PPN be used as a consultation body for agencies other than the Local Authority e.g. other more centrally based state agencies?**
The DECLG have no issue with PPN been used as a consultation body for other agencies; however there would need to be local agreement with all stakeholders on this.

**17. What is the best way to commence the establishment of PPN's where there is no active C&V Fora and the county has a number of districts which will require perhaps holding a number of information sessions within each district to get a buy in. What is the best way to do this and how to devise a framework in tandem with all of this?**
From our oversight of progress to date, as a starting point, most local authority areas have developed an information dissemination strategy including the roll out of public information sessions in each Municipal District. As part of their support role, Pobal will be organising national and regional events to allow each area to network with one another and exchange ideas on what has worked well in the roll out of the PPN. This will give you the opportunity to network with other colleagues that are working from a similar starting point.

**18. We are progressing with the establishment of the PPN. In this regard we note that the establishment of the PPN is a formal process requiring preparation of a draft framework, advertisement, consultation, and approval as a reserved function of the Council. Is it in order to commence this formal process in advance of issue of Regulations covering same?**

Section 46 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (substituting a new section 127 of the Local Government Act 2001) to give effect to the Framework for Public Participation) was commenced on 1 June 2014, along with a number of other sections of the Act. The PPNs must be set up immediately in all Local Authority areas at county level. It is imperative that the secretariat and linkage groups are put in place; this will provide the basis for two-way information flows between the Local Authority and the local community. With effect from 1 June 2014, where community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the Local Authority, such as SPCs/LCDCs etc., it must be sourced through the PPN. As outlined in Circular Letters CVSP1/2014 and CVSP2/2014 to Chief Executives, the processes required under the current guidelines to set up the PPNs at the county level should be implemented immediately. These circulars indicate that regulations will be made by December 2014. Section 127(6) provides an option for the Minister to make regulations in relation to the adoption and establishment of a Framework, but such regulations are not a requirement before a Framework is adopted. Section 127(7) provides that the Minister may issue general policy guidelines for the purposes of any provision of section 127 (including any regulations made under subsection (6)), and each local authority shall comply with any such guidelines that relate to it. Circular Letters CVSP1/2014 and CVSP2/2014 constitute such guidelines.

**19. For an organisation to be registered under the Voluntary Electoral College with a PPN, is it requirement that voluntary organisations have a constitution, an officer structure, e.g. Chairperson, Secretary etc., a Bank Account, Garda Vetting etc? Or are any of these elements optional?**

All organisations registered for the PPN should have an agreed set of rules and a working structure that informs the appropriate workings and structures for that organisation, which may differ across organisations. In most cases, this will likely be a constitution.

**20. Groups are asking whether or not they will have to be registered with PPNs to access funding, e.g. funding from Local Development Companies?**

The DECLG would recommend that all organisations that fit into the 3 electoral colleges should register for the PPN so that they can ensure input into decision making within the Local Authority system. However the criteria for funding programmes is a matter for the relevant funding agency.

**21. a) In relation to the Voluntary Electoral College and the Social Inclusion Electoral College, Groups are looking for more guidance as to the definition of each college and for more clarity as to which college organisations should register under, e.g. where an active retirement group represents both social inclusion and is a voluntary group?**

**b) Groups are also asking who validates the Social Inclusion and Voluntary Groups. If these groups are to be validated by the Local Authority upon application for registration with the PPN under either college, what validation process should be followed? c) Can the DECLG draft a generic Eligibility Criteria for Membership of the Social Inclusion Electoral**

**College and the Voluntary Electoral College in the interest of clarity and countrywide continuity?**

The DECLG will be liaising with the PPN National Reference Group to agree national criteria for membership of the Social Inclusion and Voluntary Electoral Colleges. As part of this, the DECLG will also be looking at an appropriate validation process. Once this has been agreed, it will disseminated to each Local Authority. In the meantime, a working definition of a Social inclusion organisation is an organisation whose main activity centres on working to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or in unemployment using community development approaches to build sustainable communities, where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted and human rights are respected.

**22. a) Does the Municipal District Plenary have a Committee structure, e.g. Chairperson, Secretary etc.?**
**b) Does the County Plenary have a Committee structure, e.g. Chairperson, Secretary etc.?**
**c) Does the Secretariat have a Committee structure, e.g. Chairperson, Secretary etc.?**
**d) Do Linkage Groups have a Committee structure, e.g. Chairperson, Secretary etc.?**

It is recommended by the Citizen Engagement Working Group that the structures within the PPN should be flat. Therefore DECLG recommend that a contact person is identified for each structure and that this role is rotated on an agreed periodic basis. People filling this role may be called 'convenors' or 'facilitators' or some such title.

**23. When the LCDC is seeking nominations from each of the Electoral Colleges, i.e. Environment, Social Inclusion and Community, should 1 Linkage Group be established to fill all vacancies or should 3 separate Linkage Groups be established for the nomination from each college?**

Community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sector representation on the LCDC is elected through the "electoral college" system. Groups within an electoral college, who have an interest in the LCDC, will form the linkage group (i.e. for the LCDC the linkage social inclusion group will be a sub set of the social inclusion college). For all other elections onto LA committees (unless specified otherwise), a linkage group will be formed across all colleges to elect the appropriate person.