

Public Participation Network (PPN) Structure

The PPN is made up of 4 areas:



1. Municipal District PPN

In Co. Donegal there are 5 Municipal Districts:



Each Municipal District has its own PPN. When registering, organisations select which municipal district they are located in (there is also an option for organisations who are engaged countywide). The ruling body of the Municipal District PPN is called the Plenary and is made up of all registered community, environmental and voluntary organisations in the District.

The Municipal District PPN has the freedom to engage as it sees fit in whatever way it wishes to promote local development and in this way it can harness local capacity and strengthen local development in a very real manner. The Municipal District PPN also elects members to the Secretariat (description to follow).

2. County PPN

Every organisation that registers, regardless of their municipal district, also becomes part of the County PPN. This is a countywide body encompassing all registered environmental, social inclusion, voluntary and community groups in Co. Donegal. Groups are organised at this level according to the type of activity they engage in, i.e., their sector (officially known as their electoral college).

There are 3 electoral colleges:



- **Environmental** – Organisations whose primary activities are environmental protection and/or environmental sustainability.
- **Social Inclusion** – Organisations whose activities focus on social inclusion, social justice and/or equality. Examples include organisations which aim to support people with a disability, refugees and asylum seekers, older people, women, young people and those living in poverty.
- **Community & Voluntary** - Any organisation whose primary activities are other than those listed above belong in this category.

Therefore, when an organisation joins the PPN, they select their municipal district and their electoral college (sector they operate in).

The County Plenary is the ruling body of the County PPN and is composed of all the organisations from each of the 3 electoral colleges. The electoral colleges of the County PPN also elect members to the Secretariat. The County Plenary meets on an annual basis and had its inaugural meeting in November 2014.

3. The Secretariat

The PPN secretariat is an elected body whose role is to:

- Facilitate the implementation of the decisions of the Plenary
- Ensure the proper functioning of the PPN
- Co-ordinate activities of the PPN
- Communicate extensively and regularly with all PPN members and in this process disseminate information concerning all PPN activities as widely as possible

There are 19 members in the Donegal PPN Secretariat. The Plenary of each of the 5 Municipal District PPNs elects 2 members to the Secretariat. This means that 10 members of the Secretariat are drawn from the Municipal District PPNs. The other 9 members are elected by the 3 electoral colleges of the County PPN who each nominate 3 members to the Secretariat. The Secretariat meets on a bi-monthly basis.

Municipal District Representation

Glenties	Inishowen	Letterkenny	Stranorlar	Donegal
2	2	2	2	2

Electoral College Representation

Environment	Social Inclusion	Community & Voluntary
3	3	3

4. Linkage Groups

Linkage Groups are the main drivers of participation in the PPN. These are specific interest sub groups who contain organisations that are involved or interested in a particular theme.

The Donegal PPN currently consists of 8 Linkage Groups:

1. Social Inclusion
2. Heritage
3. Community Safety & Joint Policing
4. Environment
5. Tourism
6. Older Persons Forum
7. Fishing and Aquaculture
8. Community & Voluntary

When the Council has public participant seats to fill on any of its committees/structures it will notify the PPN Secretariat and ask that the representatives to fill these seats be chosen by the PPN. The Secretariat will then decide which Linkage Group the representatives should be chosen from.

This Linkage Group will meet and elect its representative to the committee/structure in question. This representative will then represent the interests of the Linkage Group and not their own individual organisation. They will meet their Linkage Group regularly and report back after every meeting. The Linkage Group should operate as their reference group on the issues arising. They will receive direction from the Linkage Group on the positions they are to take on particular issues.

Each Linkage Group has a Convenor selected from the Secretariat who acts as the link person between the two structures. The Convenor also chairs meetings of their Linkage Group.

All PPN members who have an interest/involvement in any of the 8 areas listed above can apply to join that particular Linkage Group. There is no limit to the amount of Linkage Groups an organisation can join. Organisations can leave or join a Linkage Group at any time.

After an organisation joins the PPN they will be emailed a link to join the Linkage Groups.

Linkage Group Convenors

1. Social Inclusion – Paul Kernan
2. Heritage - Máirin Ui Fhearraigh
3. Community Safety & Joint Policing – James Trearty
4. Environment – Trish Murphy
5. Tourism – Martin McBride
6. Older Persons Forum – Andrew McNulty
7. Fishing & Aquaculture – Joseph McNulty
8. Community & Voluntary - TBD

*organisation and contact details for these Secretariat members can be found at:

<http://www.donegalcoco.ie/media/donegalcountyc/community/pdfs/PPN%20Secretariat%20Members%20hip.pdf>

