



# **Cavan Public Participation Network**

Draft

## CPPN Linkage Group Terms of Reference

Draft 1

### Abstract

Linkage Groups membership is representative of CPPN member organisations that have either a remit or an interest in these services or functions.

CPPN Resource Worker

# Draft CPPN Linkage Group Terms of Reference

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## Background

Linkage Groups are thematic sub-groups of Cavan PPN. Cavan has 5 Linkage Groups, each of which relate to the services or functions of Cavan County Council or other specific agencies in Cavan which CPPN has representation on. Linkage Groups membership is representative of CPPN member organisations that have either a remit or an interest in these services or functions.

Linkage Groups can nominate representatives from amongst their membership to go forward for election at CPPN Plenary to fill any vacancies on Cavan County Council committees and other fora on behalf of CPPN. These representatives are accountable to the wider membership of CPPN via Linkage Groups. Through these representatives, CPPN participates in shaping policies that affect Cavan communities, and is kept informed of developments within the relevant fora.

## Role of Linkage Groups

The role of the Linkage Group is to:

- The Linkage Group members will be expected to work in a spirit of collaboration, showing due respect to other opinions and views and will be facilitated to come to decisions through consensus where possible.
- Put forward nominees for election at CPPN Plenary to elect representative(s) to the Board(s)/Committee(s).
- Discuss and debate the matters being discussed by the Board or Committee or other strategic / policy matters as identified and, where relevant, to prioritise and develop policy positions on these.
- Mandate CPPN representative(s) to bring forward the views of the Linkage Group through a variety of mechanisms (such as at consultation processes, at decision-making committee meetings, in policy papers)
- Put in place an effective and realistic communication system with representative(s) and with each other.
- Censure/remove representative(s) if they are not fulfilling their role effectively in line with the PPN Handbook. In a situation where the Linkage Group wishes to remove or censure a representative, they will do so in close co-operation with CPPN, Secretariat & Resource Worker in line with any Codes of Conduct and disciplinary procedures.
- Coordinate with the Secretariat and in line with CPPN Exit Policy, disciplinary procedures and any other relevant procedure(s).
- Work with and report to CPPN Secretariat and report back to the Plenary, as relevant.
- Work collaboratively with other Linkage Groups and representatives to further the aims of CPPN.
- Sub-groups of the Linkage Group are established, as required, to oversee agreed areas of business. Terms of Reference for sub-groups are developed, as appropriate, by each subgroup.
- Sub-groups are required to report to the Linkage Group on all matters.

## Structure of Linkage Groups

All members on a Linkage Group have equal status. In line with the flat structure of CPPN; the Linkage Group has no Chairperson. Instead, a Facilitator is elected quarterly by the Linkage Group to conduct meetings. The Facilitator must be one of CPPN Representatives. At least one member of CPPN Secretariat and Resource or Support Worker must be a member of the Linkage Group.

## Role of the Facilitator

The role of the Facilitator is an administrative one and includes:

- actively facilitating meetings
- signing relevant documentation on behalf of Linkage Group
- ensuring effective communication
- adoption of the Agenda

The role of the Facilitator rotates quarterly, as agreed by consensus, and is alternated to ensure that a gender balance is maintained within the role. In line with flat structure of CPPN, the Facilitator is not the sole / main representative of the Linkage Group, as all Linkage Group members have equal representative status.

## Meeting Agenda

- In advance of all meetings, the Resource Worker/Facilitator issues a draft agenda to all Linkage Group members for their input.
- Linkage Group members are entitled to request an agenda item by contacting the Resource Worker /Facilitator.
- Requests must be made a minimum of 7 working days in advance of Linkage Group meetings.
- Agendas are set by the Linkage Group and Facilitator/Resource Worker.

The agenda and minutes are distributed by the Resource Worker/ Facilitator; 5 days prior to meetings.

The standard agenda items are:

1. Attendance/Apologies
2. Election of Facilitator
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Minutes and Matters Arising
5. Date of Next meeting

## Minutes

- Minutes are taken by a designated person, using a standard template.
- Minutes are proposed and seconded at meetings.
- Minutes reflect decisions taken, actions agreed, and a synopsis of the discussion.
- Minutes of Linkage Groups are circulated in draft format to Secretariat.

- Minutes are published on CPPN website once adopted and approved by the Linkage Group.

## Meetings

### Location and Timing

- Meeting venues will be decided based on accessibility and cost factors.
- Meetings will be held at dates/times suitable for the majority of members.
- Meeting venues will be rotated if agreed by majority.

### Frequency of Meetings

- Linkage Groups will meet, ideally, 4 times per year (or more frequently as required), but at least twice annually.

### Meeting Attendance

- Members are requested to attend as many meetings as possible of the Linkage Groups.

### Quorum

- A Linkage Group meeting is deemed to have a quorum when attendance is a minimum of 5 representatives.
- In the event of Linkage Group meetings being held together, a minimum of 5 members per linkage group should be present.

### Planning Meeting

One Linkage Group meeting a year will be a planning meeting, where Linkage Groups' priority actions for the coming year are agreed and direction provided to representatives on key matters of importance to the Linkage Group.

### Decision-Making

In line with the flat structure of PPNs - the ruling body of CPPN is the Plenary. As such, the Linkage Group's decision-making functions are limited to issues relevant to the Boards and Committees they relate to. In this regard, the following applies:

- Decisions are made by consensus where possible, or otherwise by majority vote
- Only groups in attendance can vote (one group=one vote).
- Agreed decisions of the Linkage Group will be forwarded to Secretariat for consideration.
- The Linkage Group members will be expected to work in a spirit of collaboration, showing due respect to other opinions and views and will be facilitated to come to decisions through consensus where possible.
- Where joint meetings of Linkage Groups take place; voting is one linkage group/one vote system.

## Membership

### Joining a Linkage Group

- At least one member of the Secretariat will sit on each Linkage Group.

- CPPN Member organisations self-select the Linkage Group(s) they wish to join and can join as many as they wish, or none.
- Member organisations may nominate a maximum of two individuals to attend each Linkage Group on their behalf.
- Each PPN member organisation has one vote.
- In the event of the nominated members being unable to attend a meeting, an alternative member may attend in their place. The group must notify the PPN Resource Worker/Facilitator in advance.
- Membership of the Linkage Group is for the term of the Council (5 years-current term 2019-2024).
- If a member organisation wishes to leave a Linkage Group, they should inform the PPN Resource worker in writing (by letter or email).

### Equality

- Members are requested to commit to equality, non-discrimination and to strive for gender balance in terms of Linkage Group membership.
- The Linkage Group members will be expected to work in a spirit of collaboration, showing due respect to other opinions and views and will be facilitated to come to decisions through consensus where possible.

### Code of Conduct

- CPPN Linkage Group members are required to comply with the PPN Handbook.
- If a member brings the Linkage Group or CPPN into disrepute or undermines it, a process is put in place to address the issue in line with agreed disciplinary procedures and in line with National Guidelines.
- All members of CPPN are expected to act in accordance with the principles of CPPN. Any failure to do so may result in the member being asked to step down from the Linkage Group.
- Linkage Group members are required to work in the best interest of Cavan PPN, rather than in the interest of their Municipal District, Sector or Nominating Group, individual or self-interests.

### Duration of Linkage Group

- Duration of Linkage Group is in line with Council term (currently 2019-2024).