

## Minutes of Secretariat Meeting 14.3.23

Hotel Kilmore 6.30 – 8.30pm

Chair: Rafaela Radulescu Secretary: Gabrielle Evans

**Present:** Rafaela Radulescu, Fintan McCabe, Gabrielle Evans, Aisling Blackburn, Jet Calders, Finian McNamra (Staff), Seamus McGrath, Sridevi Balan, Deborah Leahy (Council observer), Daniel Downey (staff), Adrian Drought (Tus worker).

**Apols:** Clare Willis, Fiachra Keogh, Stephen Rourke and Terry Hyland.

### Welcome & Introductions

Chair Rafaela Radulescu welcomed everyone and introduced Deborah Leahy, attending as a guest from Cavan County Council. Deborah is the PPN Liaison in the Council.

### Minutes & Matters Arising

No matters arising. Minutes proposed by Seamus McGrath, seconded by Aisling Blackburn.

### Finance Report

Finian McNamara gave the finance report, highlighting that the old account is closed and PPN is working off the new one. All outstanding finances cleared from 2022 & insurance covered for the year. The 10k secretariat's discretion fund to the PPN was raised but no ideas forthcoming from secretariat on this. The reviewed 2023 budget was also proposed and passed by members. Finance Report proposed by Sridevi Balan, seconded by Aisling Blackburn.

### Staff Report

Daniel Downey updated the secretariat on the work of the staff with an enclosed report in the packs. He went through the forthcoming electoral posts and requested the secretariat trigger these calls for expressions of interest at this meeting to be completed by the July Plenary. The staff highlighted that existing PPN staff are on 1.6 workers but most PPNs operate 2 workers and suggested 2024 be an allocation of funds to increase this to the standard staffing times, with a potential for our Tus Worker, Adrian, to be employed part time from the end of his term in September to the end of the year using the 10k funding tranche. No decision was made on this. It was reported that Leanne Coyle concludes her 3 year cycle as Comm & Vol secretariat and this now triggers elections in this category. One last point was the adoption of a statement of inclusivity and anti-discrimination by the secretariat in light of the rising sentiment of racial and ethnic tension in recent months. This was adopted. Proposed by Rafaela Radulescu, seconded by Seamus McGrath.

### 2023 Workplan

As it's still early in the year the workplan is not well progressed. Daniel reported that he has provided meetings along with administrative documents for the establishment of the Cavan Environmental Network. Regular communications are ongoing and the PPN roadshows were discussed with 3 venues identified for June; Templeport, Arva and Shercock. Staff to organize and secretariat to help on the night. Aisling emphasized that representatives needed to attend the Plenary to meet with members.

### Peace Application

Fintan McCabe outlined the Peace Plus program and a potential project for the PPN to apply for in 2024 to draw down finance to support groups in their projects with capacity building and supports. Fintan emphasized that this would involve taking on staff so the project would not impact on the PPN staff's

times. All secretariat members endorsed Fintan's suggestion and the staff invited the secretariat to make applications to Jane Crudden of Peace Plus, with the potential of asking her to the next meeting.

### **Communications**

Aisling Blackburn wanted to raise the item of communications internally in the PPN and the use of Workplace. She felt some are being left out by its use. A general discussion was had and the secretariat decided to continue the use of Workplace but that meetings would try to be hybrid or in person to ensure the inclusion of all capacities to have input and involvement. Seamus emphasized that there is free training available for Workplace for anyone finding it difficult and the staff confirmed that this was useful in the early stages and now they find the tool invaluable for efficient and user-friendly networking. A potential was flagged for secretariat members to organize among themselves to meet to have a Workplace Workshop to help each other better understand and use it. Staff did say that the DRCD require that Secretariat members have a basic digital ability in order to put themselves forward as community leaders and representatives.

### **AOB**

Cavan Arts potentially need PPN representation but the secretariat asked for more information. Daniel raised the point of absentee secretariat members and that those who aren't attending should step back. Rafaela is stepping down as chair at the next meeting and asked members to consider if they would like to go forward for the position from the end of the next meeting onward.

**Meeting Closed at 8pm**