

Cavan Public Participation Network

Electoral Policy

DRAFT: March 2022



DRAFT DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Cavan PPN was established under The Local Government Act 2014. Its aim is to support the voice and development of community interests in County Cavan. The method through which the Cavan PPN elects community Representatives is via the Linkage Groups and public engagement events where registered PPN groups may put forward and elect Representatives to the various bodies upon which Cavan PPN holds representation on behalf of the community groups of County Cavan. In the absence of Linkage Groups, the section of the Plenary relevant to the position will be requested to engage and ballot on their chosen candidate where necessary e.g. requested Environment place on relevant Strategic Policy Committees will trigger calls for Expressions of Interest from the Environment groups.

REPRESENTATIVE ROLES FOR CAVAN PPN

To fulfil its representative role Cavan PPN supports a number of nominations and elections to various bodies in order to enable and empower community representation and civic participation:

- Cavan Local Community Development Committee
- Cavan County Childcare Committee
- Housing, Social & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee
- Climate, Biodiversity Action and Environment Strategic Policy Committee
- Transport, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee
- Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee
- Cultural Development, Irish Language and Sports Strategic Policy Committee
- Cavan Sports Partnership
- Regional Drugs and Alcohol Taskforce
- Local Link Transport Committee
- Connect For Life Committee
- Healthy Ireland Initiative
- Family Resource Centre

TERM AND ROTATION

Each Representative shall serve a three-year term (unless bound by the organisations own rules e.g. SPCs or LCDC may differ from this) and are eligible for re-nomination and re-appointment. However, Representatives shall serve no more than 2 consecutive 3 year terms (or as laid out by the representative body they sit upon). Representation should be from PPN organisations, and Representatives should have a clear mandate from their nominating organisations.

EQUALITY PROVISIONS

It is Cavan PPN policy that there has to be a minimum of 30% males and 30% females elected within its own structures and with regard to Representatives elected on external bodies to ensure a balanced gender representation.

It is Cavan PPN policy that there has to be a minimum of 30% under 50 year olds and 30% over 50 year olds elected within its own structures and with regard to Representatives elected on external bodies to ensure a balanced representation of age profiles.

CONDUCT AND TIMELINE OF ELECTIONS

(i) Pre-election

PPN member groups will be informed of the vacancy by email, or by post if they do not have a contact email address. This information will include:

1. The Pillar group that the vacancy is in.
2. The length of the term of office.
3. The remit of the board or committee.
4. The knowledge, skills or capabilities required.
5. The rights, role and responsibilities of PPN Representatives.
6. The time commitments of the role.
7. An invitation to join the relevant Linkage Group, if applicable.
8. A nomination form for the vacancy and the deadline for nominations.
9. Whether the vote will be held at a Linkage Group meeting or online/postal vote

(ii) Nominations

- a) Nominations must be made by the nominating group submitting a nomination form either electronically or by post by the indicated deadline.
- b) Nominations must be made by a PPN member group who are in the same Pillar as the vacancy.
- c) Nominees must be a member of the group who are nominating them and should be able to demonstrate that they are actively part of that group.
- d) A member group or organisation may only nominate one person to any vacancy.
- e) No individual may be elected to more than one committee position. However a person can be on the PPN Secretariat and be a Representative on one other committee.
- f) In the event of no nominations being received for a vacancy the Secretariat will ask the relevant PPN interest group (Linkage Group) for recommendations for a candidate to be co-opted. In the event of no nominations being received the Secretariat will co-opt a candidate by a majority vote.
- g) All nominations must be verified by the Secretariat as meeting the required criteria.
- h) Secretariat members who are running for election for an additional representative vacancy cannot be involved in the verification of nominations for the same vacancy.

(iii) Restrictions on nominations

- a) Elected representatives of Local Authorities cannot be nominated through this process.
- b) If anyone nominated through this process subsequently decides to enter electoral politics he/she must immediately resign their PPN representative role.
- c) A person who has stood for election or been co-opted or who has been an elected representative on any level of government (local, national or MEP) may not be chosen to represent the PPN on any representative role for one year after the date of the election or after completing their term of office.
- d) If a potential conflict of interest with a nominee sitting on a particular committee is identified by the Secretariat, the Secretariat will take advice from the Chief Officer or Chair of the committee and decide if the nomination can go forward.

- e) In keeping with the PPN's policy to encourage inclusion and participation of all member groups, any one PPN member group can only have Representatives on a maximum of three boards or committees.

(iv) Elections

- a) All elections, other than postal or online elections, will be by secret ballot.
- b) Postal or online elections will require voters to submit their PPN registration number with their vote to ensure one vote per PPN member group. Only the PPN Resource Worker will have access to this information.
- c) Each independent group is entitled to only one vote, and an individual can only vote on behalf of one group.
- d) Where voting is to take place at a meeting, proxy voting is allowed. The PPN Resource Worker must be notified in writing three days before the vote is to take place, with the name of the person who will be casting the vote. That person must bring identification to the meeting.
- e) Only full members of the PPN can vote in elections. Associate members do not have voting rights.
- f) The method of voting will be Proportional Representation by single transferable vote.

(v) Post-election

- a) The election of new Representatives will be ratified by the Plenary at the next available meeting, unless the election happened at a Plenary meeting.
- b) If the elected Representative needs to be replaced this will be done by holding another election rather than co-opting the second place candidate.
- c) The Secretariat will contact all nominees to inform them of the outcome and explain next steps to elected candidates.
- d) The Secretariat will notify all members of the PPN by email or letter of the name(s) of the Representatives elected and the committee for which they have been elected.
- e) The Secretariat will notify the Local Authority of the name(s) of the Representative for the relevant committee(s) and will include the contact details of the Representative(s).

(vi) Dispute resolution

- a) In the event of any dispute or conflict arising during the nomination or election process the PPN Secretariat and Resource Worker will in the first case seek to resolve it informally.
- b) If this is not successful the complainant will be asked to detail their concerns in writing to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will appoint at least two members, one of whom will be from the same Pillar group as the complainant, to meet with the complainant and address their concerns.
- c) This sub-group will report back to the full Secretariat on how the conflict can be resolved.