



Líonra  
Rannpháirtíochta  
Pobail  
Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath



Dublin City  
Public  
Participation  
Network

# Dublin City PPN

## Strategic Plan

February 2022



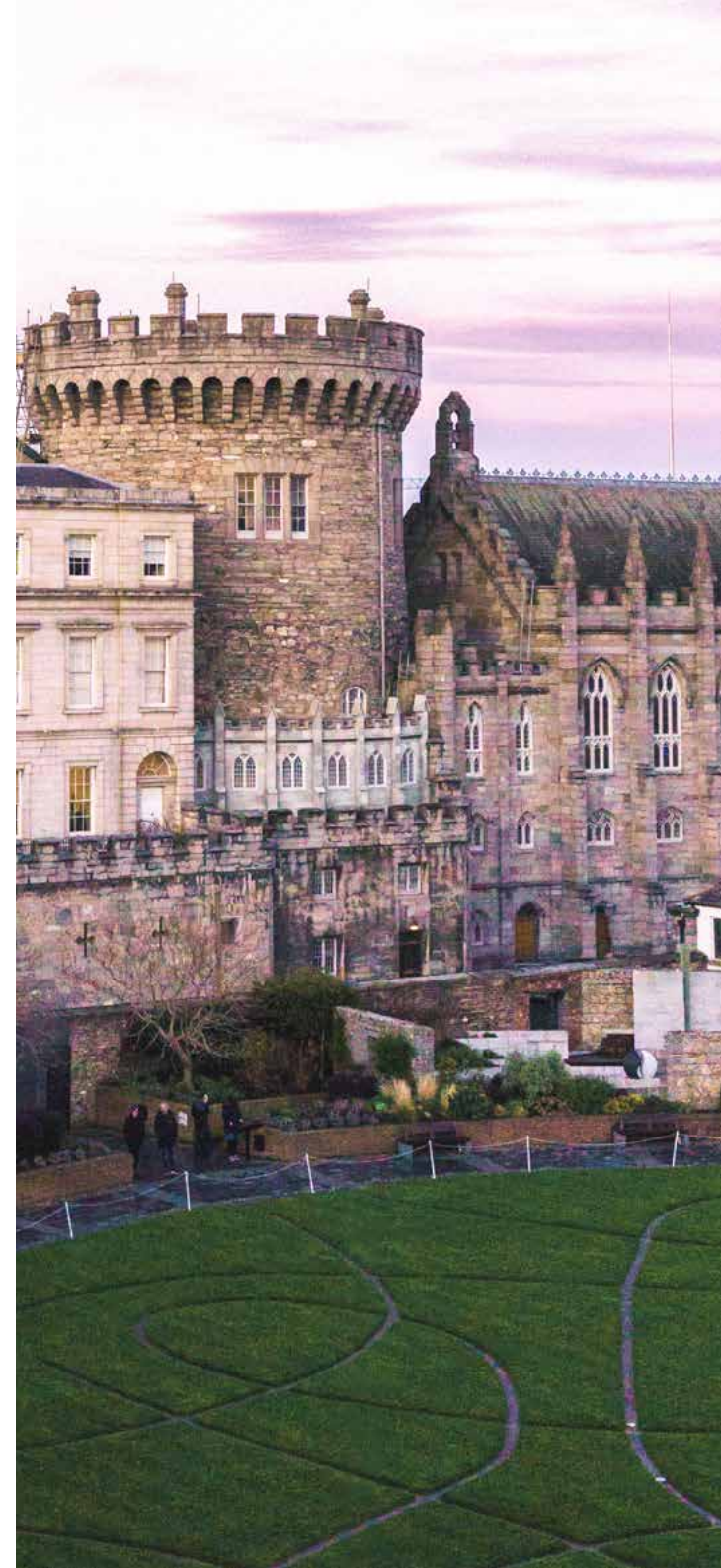
The information and views set out in this report do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of Ellenora Lynch. Neither Ellenora Lynch, nor any person acting on their behalf, may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein. Please note, maps and photos are provided for information purposes only and may not be reproduced without prior permission.

## Table of Contents

1.	<b>Executive Summary</b>	4
2.	<b>Vision, Mission &amp; Values</b>	5
3.	<b>Research &amp; Consultation Methodology</b>	6
	3.1 Dublin City PPN Strategic Plan – Project Scope	
	3.2 Key Stages of the Strategic Planning Process	
	3.3 Outline Methodology	
	3.4 Methodological Challenges	
4.	<b>Dublin City PPN</b>	8
	4.1 Area Profile of Dublin City	
	4.2 Overview of Dublin City PPN	
	4.3 Organisational Structure	
	4.4 Functions of Dublin City PPN	
	4.4.1 Representation & Local Policy	
	4.4.2 Capacity-building Role	
	4.4.3 Information and networking role	
	4.5 Key Operational Risks	
5.	<b>Membership Survey</b>	15
	5.1 About the members of Dublin City PPN	
	5.2 Distribution of Respondents	
6.	<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>	20
7.	<b>Strategic Goals of Dublin City PPN</b>	21
	7.1 Strategic Objective 1: Optimising the PPN Network	
	7.2 Strategic Objective 2: Organisational Development & Capacity Building	
	7.3 Strategic Objective 3: Governance, Administration and Operating Procedures	

# List of Figures & Tables

Figure 1: Vision, Mission & Values	5
Figure 2: Key Stages of the Strategic Planning Process	6
Figure 3: Stakeholder Categories	7
Figure 4: Dublin City PPN Area - Administrative Boundaries	8
Figure 5: Population of Dublin City (CSO 2016)	9
Figure 6: Usually resident population by place of birth (CSO 2016)	9
Figure 7: Dublin City PPN Pillar Membership	10
Figure 8: Dublin City PPN Sample Cross Section of Member Organisations	10
Figure 9: Dublin City PPN Structure / Matrix	11
Figure 10: Dublin City PPN – SPCs (Source Dublin City PPN)	11
Figure 11: Dublin City Council & Dublin City PPN organisational chart	12
Figure 12: What PPN pillar most closely represents the work of your group (n = 40)	15
Figure 13: Officers & Committee Members (n = 40)	15
Figure 14: Distribution of Respondents	16
Figure 15: Understanding of the PPN (n = 36)	17
Figure 16: Support & Funding (n = 26)	17
Figure 17: Level of Awareness of Other PPN members(n = 36)	18
Figure 18: Benefits of Membership (n = 36)	18
Figure 19: Word cloud with responses to the question “Why are you a member of Dublin City PPN?”	19



# 1.

## Executive Summary

Dublin City Public Participation Network (PPN) contains within it an extraordinary range of organisations, and dedicated community activists. By harnessing this breadth of knowledge, capacity and commitment, Dublin City PPN has exceptional potential to further the interests of its member organisations and the community at large, through effective representation and engagement on public policy issues.

Since its establishment in 2014, Dublin City PPN has grown its member base to almost 800, and moved from its initial host organisation Dublin City Council to Dublin City Volunteer Centre in early 2021. This change in scale and organisational host led organically to the development of the network's first Strategic Plan, spanning the time period 2022 – 2026.

Dublin City PPN is emerging from a period of significant change, bringing with it some challenges, and a host of opportunities. Throughout 2021, Dublin City PPN significantly increased member engagement through improved communications, activities and events. The network successfully negotiated the limitations of the Covid 19 pandemic, moving meetings, events and activities online.

Many of the challenges encountered by Dublin City PPN are shared with other PPNs across the country, and it is critical that Dublin City PPN continues to engage with

individual and collective PPN structures both regionally and nationally. The continued development of these relationships, and sharing of information will greatly assist Dublin City PPN to optimise its effectiveness.

Throughout the entire Strategic Planning process, leadership, in its many shapes and forms was a key theme. Dublin City PPN intends to focus on consolidation, rather than growth, and to do this, the network will need clear guidance and leadership. The Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in much reflection and re-evaluation across the not-for-profit sector as a whole, and Dublin City PPN has the potential to provide much needed support, guidance and strategic vision to its member base as they negotiate their way through the coming years.

The commitment, knowledge and capacity of the Secretariat, Strategic Policy Committee Representatives (SPC's) and general membership is remarkable. The key challenge lies in supporting the different elements of the PPN to link together effectively, and seamlessly. The national PPN structure is relatively new, and challenges such as this are to be expected for networks of such scope and scale. The launching of a national PPN Communications Strategy in 2022 should be a significant help in assisting Dublin City PPN with cohesive, and appropriate messaging to its membership, and the sector more generally.



The Dublin City PPN Strategic Plan is the continuation of much work that is already underway. It is critical that this plan becomes part of the management ethos of the organisation over the coming years, and is reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

## 2. Vision, Mission & Values

### Vision

Dublin City PPN: an effective and inspirational community representative network

### Mission

A community network which works to improve the city for the benefit of its people. We are connectors, a channel for a diverse range of views in the Dublin City area with a shared mission to voice opinions.

### Values

Dublin City PPN firmly embraces the values of justice, inclusivity, equality, diversity and accessibility. We intend to bring these values to life through actively seeking to learn about each other, and considering how these values can be incorporated into our individual, and organisational actions.

We are an inclusive community network, independent in our views and accountable to our members. Through our actions, we will demonstrate how a participatory and transparent community representative organisation can further the aims of its members.

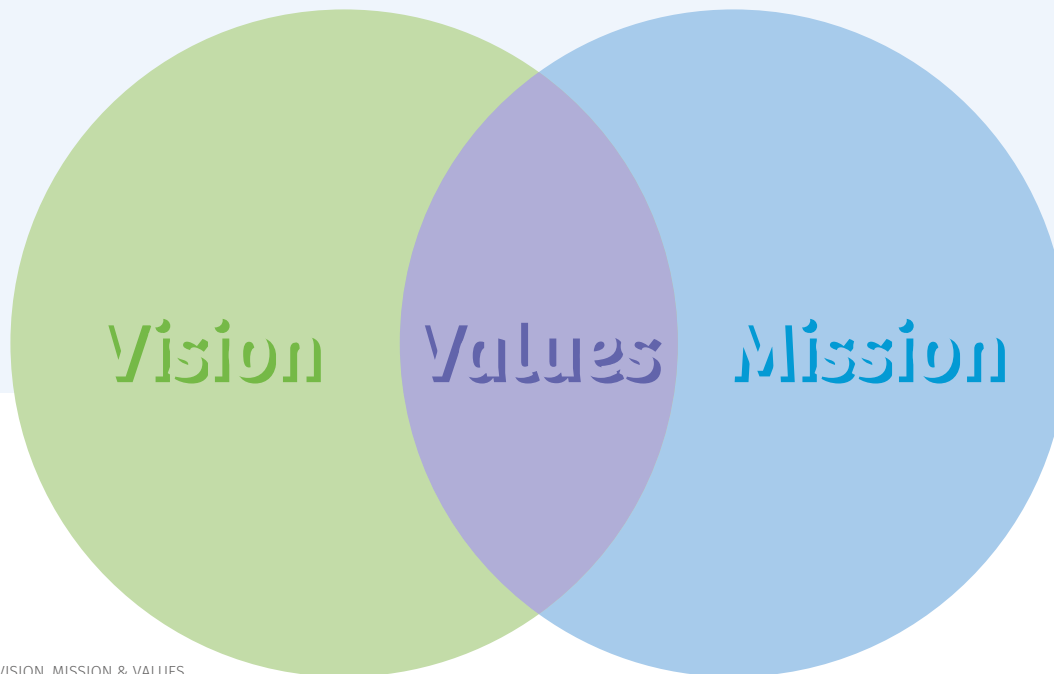


FIGURE 1: VISION, MISSION & VALUES



### 3.

## Research & Consultation Methodology

### 3.1 Dublin City PPN Strategic Plan – Project Scope

Dublin City PPN issued an Invitation to Tender for the development of a 5 year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026, during August 2021. Following completion of the procurement process, Ellenora Lynch was appointed to support Dublin PPN to undertake this work, on September 6th 2021.

The main focus areas of the Strategic Planning process identify by Dublin City PPN were as follows:

- communication between all members of the PPN
- improvement of operational skills of PPN members
- improvement of functions of the PPN (such as linkage groups and thematic groups)
- and assistance with developing a “vision for community wellbeing” statement

### 3.2 Key Stages of the Strategic Planning Process

The development of the Dublin City PPN Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 consisted of five main phases as outlined below, which were conducted between September and December 2021.



FIGURE 2: KEY STAGES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

### 3.3 Outline Methodology

**The Strategic Planning process, which utilised both qualitative and quantitative research methods, was agreed with Dublin City PPN at the outset.**

It should also be noted at this point that the Consultant is influenced by participatory / action research approaches, through which she has worked effectively with many community groups over the years and the methodology utilised is a reflection of same.

Key steps involved in the research methodology were as follows.

The initial desk research phase consisted of a literature review, and identification of the policy framework within which the Public Participation Network sits. Informed by the desk research, the next qualitative research phase was based on the analysis of semi-structured interviews conducted with the following stakeholder groups (see Appendix II):

- Dublin City PPN Staff
- Secretariat Members
- Dublin City PPN representatives on the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) and Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
- Key stakeholders – Dublin City PPN, Community Groups

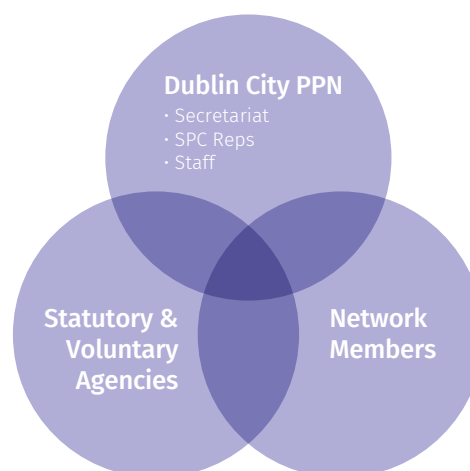


FIGURE 3: STAKEHOLDER CATEGORIES

The stakeholder consultation was carried out via semi-structured interviews, using guiding research questions. The interviews were informal and conversational in nature, and questions varied depending on the stakeholder groups to which the interviewees belonged. The purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to explore the scope and function of Dublin City PPN at a personal and organisational level, and to understand the overall context within which it was operating. Through this process, it was also possible to identify the challenges affecting the network, as well as exploring opportunities to optimise organisational effectiveness.

The next step in the Strategic Planning process was the design and distribution of a membership survey. The survey was specifically designed to further explore topics raised during the Stakeholder Consultation, and focussed primarily on the structure, organisation and function of the PPN network. Very specific questions were asked on topics such as communications in order to inform the Implementation Plan. A community consultation meeting was then held at the Dublin City Plenary<sup>1</sup> meeting during November 2021, where a draft wording of the vision, mission and values was discussed in detail.

Finally, the Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan were drawn up based on an analysis of all data collated, and presented to the Secretariat in January 2022 for review and discussion.

### 3.4 Methodological Challenges

**The public health restrictions surrounding the Covid 19 Pandemic influenced the community consultation phase of the research.**

During the initial planning phase, it was intended to run a series of consultative workshops prior to the Plenary at the end of November. Although an online consultation event was organised, insufficient numbers registered, and a decision was made to utilise the Plenary as a consultation space.



<sup>1</sup>A meeting of all the independent member groups of a PPN, which are required to be delivered two times each year.

## 4. Dublin City PPN

### 4.1 Area Profile of Dublin City

To further our understanding of Dublin City PPN, learning more about communities and people it represents is important.

With a total population of 554,554, in its administrative area the members of Dublin City PPN provide services to a very large number of people, across a broad range of areas from residents' groups to allotment associations, and sport clubs to festivals.

As illustrated in the map below, the Dublin City PPN area is also supported by five local development companies, all of whom provide direct and indirect services and supports across the area.

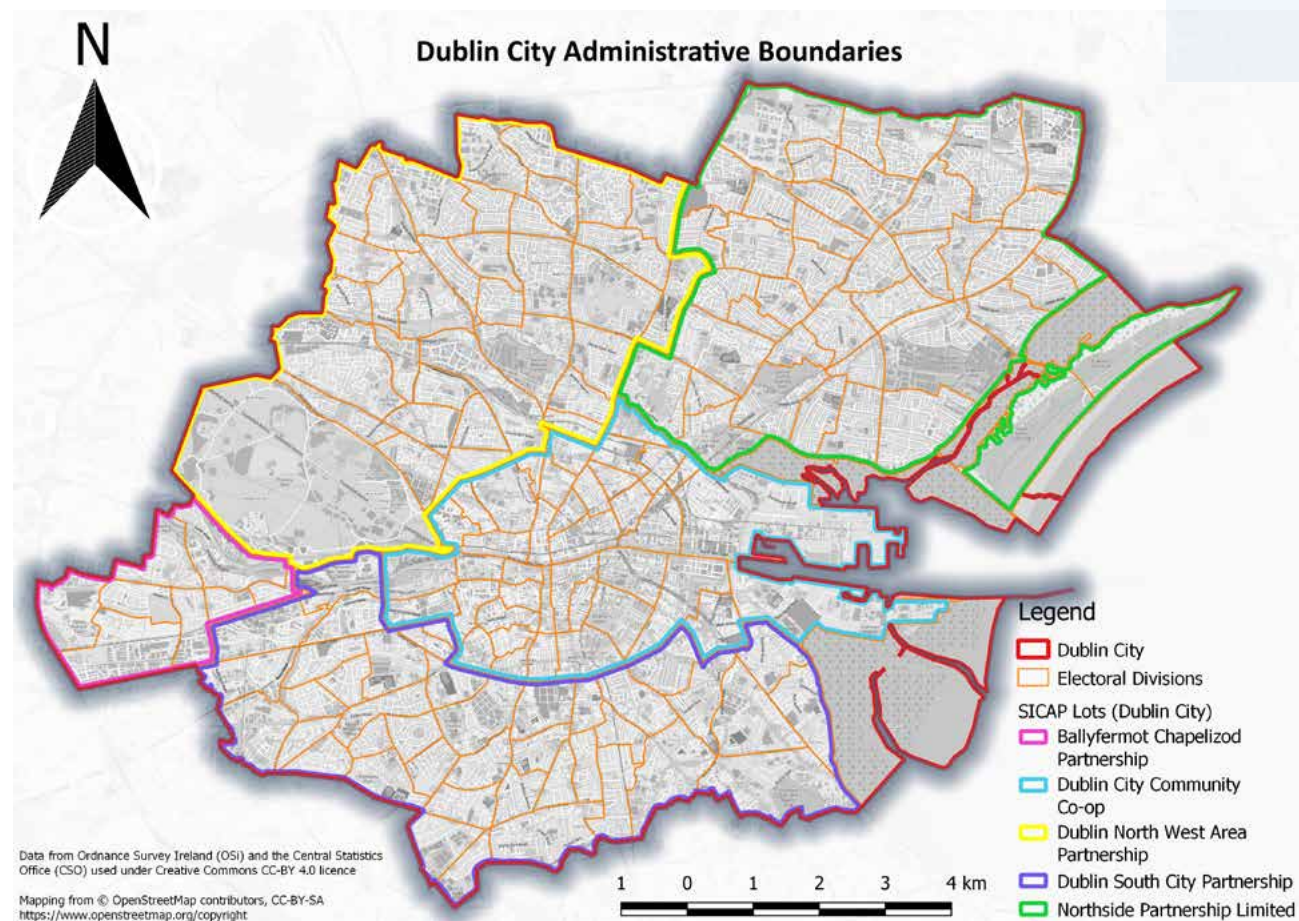


FIGURE 4: DUBLIN CITY PPN AREA - ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES



## Population of Dublin City (CSO 2016)

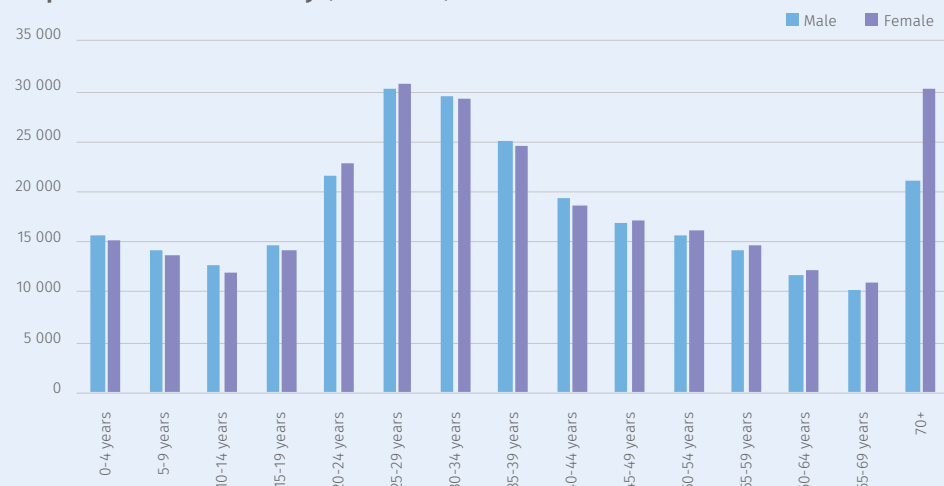
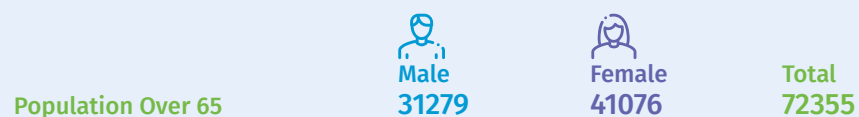


FIGURE 5: POPULATION OF DUBLIN CITY (CSO 2016)

## Population aged under 18 in Dublin City (CSO 2016)



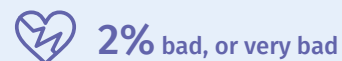
## Population aged over 65 in Dublin City (CSO 2016)



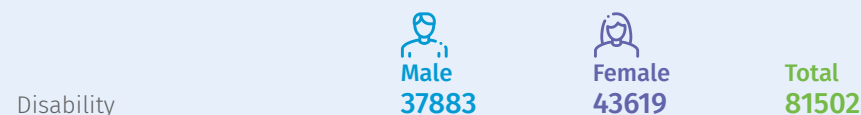
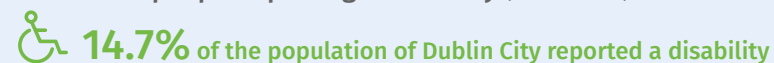
## Number of people reporting good health (CSO 2016)



## Number of people reporting poor health (CSO 2016)

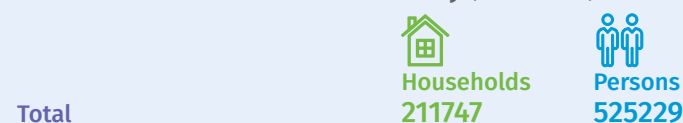


## Number of people reporting a disability (CSO 2016)



Disability

## Number of households in Dublin City (CSO 2016)



Total

## Number of people and households in rented accommodation (CSO 2016)

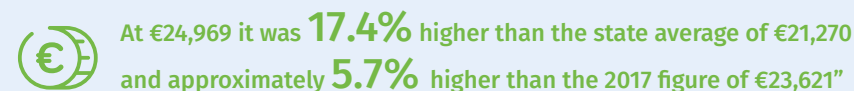


## Av no people per household (CSO 2016)



## Average disposable income

"The Dublin NUTS3 region (Dublin city and county) had the highest average disposable income per person in 2018.



(CSO, County Incomes and Regional GDP, 2021)

## Usually resident population by place of birth (Census 2016)

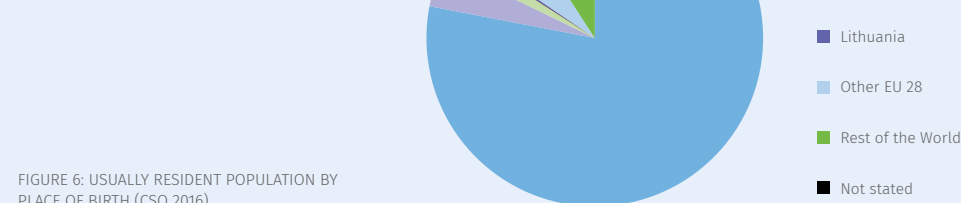


FIGURE 6: USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION BY PLACE OF BIRTH (CSO 2016)

## 4. Dublin City PPN

### 4.2 Overview of Dublin City PPN

**Established on foot on the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government published in 2014, “the primary purpose of the PPN is to enable the PPN member groups to input into and have their voices heard within the formal decision making structures of the local authority” (PPN Handbook, 2020).**

Accordingly, the functions of the PPNs are to:

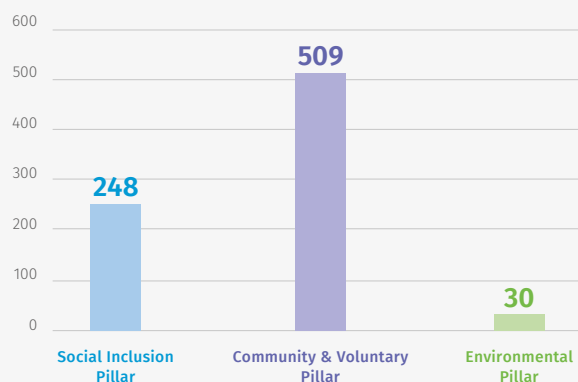
- facilitate participation and representation in policy and decision-making fora,
- build the capacity of member groups to carry out this role, and
- serve as a networking and information hub for member groups in their area.

Participation levels in Dublin City PPN stood at approximately 75% attendance at committee meetings for SPC representatives and the Secretariat throughout 2021. Attendance rates at wider PPN events such as the plenary is lower, however, this is an area of focus for the network and it is anticipated that initiatives such as the “Members Meet up” will improve these participation rates over time.

#### Dublin City PPN Membership

The membership of Dublin City PPN is as diverse as one would expect for a capital city; nonetheless, the dominance of the community and voluntary pillar is of note. From a total membership of 787 (September 2021), there are 30 environment pillar members, 248 social inclusion pillar members, and 509 community and voluntary members.

FIGURE 7: DUBLIN CITY PPN PILLAR MEMBERSHIP



As will be explored in greater detail in the Implementation Plan, the development of case studies highlighting member organisations activities should form a central plank of the communications strategy of Dublin City PPN as it seeks to consolidate its membership, and strengthen collective actions. Please see a sample cross section of members below which shows how diverse and varied the membership base is, please note a full list of members is available on the Dublin City PPN website here - <https://dublincityppn.ie/members/>.

Community & Voluntary	Environmental	Social Inclusion
Age & Opportunity	Ballyfermot Garden Club	Muslin Sisters of Eire
North Great George's Street Residents Association	Extinction Rebellion	Dublin Inner City Community Alliance
The Cloisters and Maple Drive Residents Association	Springvale Allotment Group	Youth for Human Rights Ireland
Artane School of Music	Rediscovery Centre	Ballyfermot Taekwondo School
Mary Aikenhead Day Centre	Drimnagh Community Environmental Group	Exchange House Ireland
Alone	An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland	TARGET Ltd

FIGURE 8: DUBLIN CITY PPN SAMPLE CROSS SECTION OF MEMBER ORGANISATIONS



### 4.3 Organisational Structure

**Dublin City PPN is a flat structure, the exact meaning of which lacks a clear definition, but in practice means “no single individual, group or sector controls the PPN.”**

The key issue which appears to arise from this flat structure is leadership, particularly with regards to the requirement for a Rotating Facilitator for each Secretariat (suggested six months), rather than a Chairperson. This structure is unusual in the not-for-profit sector in Ireland, and although Dublin City PPN has negotiated the requirement well, it has most likely contributed to challenges addressing certain issues in a timely manner, and as such is referenced in the Implementation Plan.

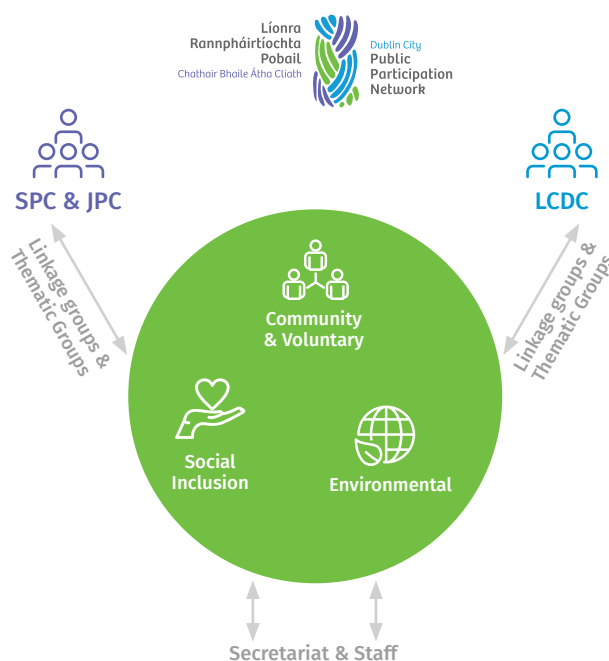


FIGURE 9: DUBLIN CITY PPN STRUCTURE / MATRIX

### 4.4 Functions of Dublin City PPN

#### 4.4.1 Representation & Local Policy

Community representatives from Dublin City PPN have an agreed number of seats on seven Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) of the Local Authority, the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Joint Policing Committee. Please see full details below in Figure 10.

Within these committees are where the representative power of Dublin City PPN lies, and where the Secretariat must focus its energies. To have guaranteed places at these committee meetings is a significant asset for the not for profit sector in Dublin City, and must remain front and centre at all times.

According to Dublin City Council, the purpose of Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) is to formulate, develop, monitor and review policies which relate to the functions of Dublin City Council and to advise the Council accordingly.

SPCs membership includes elected councillors, in addition to representatives from “outside bodies”, including the PPN. The structure of each SPC is outlined in the Dublin City Strategic Policy Scheme 2019 – 2024, within which it is made clear that Community/Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental/Conservation representatives are selected from Dublin City PPN.

SPC's	Areas Covered
Arts, Culture, Leisure And Recreation SPC	Events & Festivals; Libraries; Archives; Museums; Galleries; Arts; Parks and Open Spaces; Casual trading; Control of Horses & Dogs; School Meals; Sports and Recreation Centres; Sports Development
Climate Action, Environment And Energy SPC	Property Management; Strategic Projects; Planning Services; Development Management; International Relations; Regional Planning Guidelines; Urban Renewal; Heritage; Conservation; Archaeology; Building Control; Tourism
Economic, Development And Enterprise SPC	Economic Development & Enterprise affairs
Finance SPC	Budget – Capital and Revenue; Local Property Tax; Procurement; Motor Tax; Rates; Risk Management; Audit Committee (minutes only); Corporate Governance
Housing SPC	Housing
Planning And Urban Form SPC	Heritage; Property Management; Building Control; Strategic Projects; Planning Services; Regional Planning Guidelines; Development Management; International Relations; Urban Renewal; Conservation; Tourism
Traffic And Transport SPC	Cycling; Public Transport; Taxi Ranks; School Wardens; Roads; Road Safety; Environmental Traffic Planning; Parking Control and Enforcement; Pedestrian Facilities; Traffic Control and Management; Public Lighting; Fleet Management; Commercial / Goods Movement
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)	The LCDC is tasked with bringing a more joined-up approach to local and community development activity in Dublin City, with specific responsibility for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare &amp; implement the community element of the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021;</li> <li>• Coordinate and monitoring the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP);</li> <li>• Approval and funding of the Community Enhancement Programme</li> </ul>
Joint Policing Committee (JPC)	The JPC provides “a forum where the Local Authority and Senior Garda Officers responsible for policing and safety in the City, with the participation of Oireachtas Members and community interests, can consult, discuss, influence and make recommendations affecting policing and safety in the City.”

FIGURE 10: DUBLIN CITY PPN – SPCS (SOURCE DUBLIN CITY PPN)

## 4. Dublin City PPN

### Linkage & Thematic Groups

Defined in the PPN Handbook as a “group of PPN Member Groups with an interest in a particular issue who meet to make policy recommendations and work closely with PPN Representatives on relevant Boards or Committees”, Linkage Groups are considered an integral part of the PPN structure. They are intended to act as a two way link between the membership, Secretariat and SPC Representative, seeking to ensure that the issues raised at public policy level are informed by the grass roots of the organisation, with a feedback loop informing the membership of any actions, progress or challenges.

Thematic Groups meanwhile are “a group of PPN groups working on a cross-cutting policy theme” e.g. environment or sustainability. In particular, the Disability Thematic Group and the Planning and Urban Form Linkage group are working well within Dublin City PPN. A number of other Thematic Groups are supported by Dublin City PPN, including a Migrant Thematic Group which is at an early stage of development.

The management of Linkage and Thematic Groups appears to be a common challenge in many individual PPN's. Furthermore, it would also appear that significant support is required from the resource worker, and administrators in order to support these functions. It is proposed that a number of actions are taken to foster these groups within Dublin City PPN, in order to support the development of their capacity and efficacy:

- Develop a page on the Dublin City PPN website where SPC representatives are encouraged (or required) to input brief details of events attended on behalf of the PPN. This information would be delivered to the Resource Worker via email, who can then include relevant extracts within the

PPN Newsletter, and provide collated updates at Secretariat meetings. Although it is acknowledged that this may be labour intensive at the outset, it is anticipated that time input will reduce as practices become established.

- Regular formal and informal meetings, or phone calls, between the Resource Worker and members of Linkage and Thematic group members. In addition, there is a role here for the Secretariat to engage in a meaningful way with the Linkage and Thematic Groups to explore how they can all work together to maximise impact, however, this approach could be both time consuming and challenging, and may need to be explored further by the Secretariat.
- Proactive approach to informing the membership of Dublin City PPN about topical issues at SPC, and JPC meetings, asking for their input and encouraging engagement. For example, informing the wider membership about upcoming agenda items well in advance, and asking if they have any views on the subject. It must however be recognised that this

approach may work better with some SPC's and that this approach may be limited by circumstances outside the control of Dublin City PPN.

- Careful selection of topics or issues is essential, as is an understanding that the activity levels of these groups will likely change as issues emerge and evolve.

### Organisational Structure

The organisational chart outlined below is in draft format, and should be discussed with Dublin City Council in order to determine their understanding of how the various organisations, agencies and committees interact.

Understanding the relationships between Dublin City PPN, Dublin City Council and the LCDC is a critical action for the Secretariat and will assist greatly in furthering an understanding of its place within local representative structures.

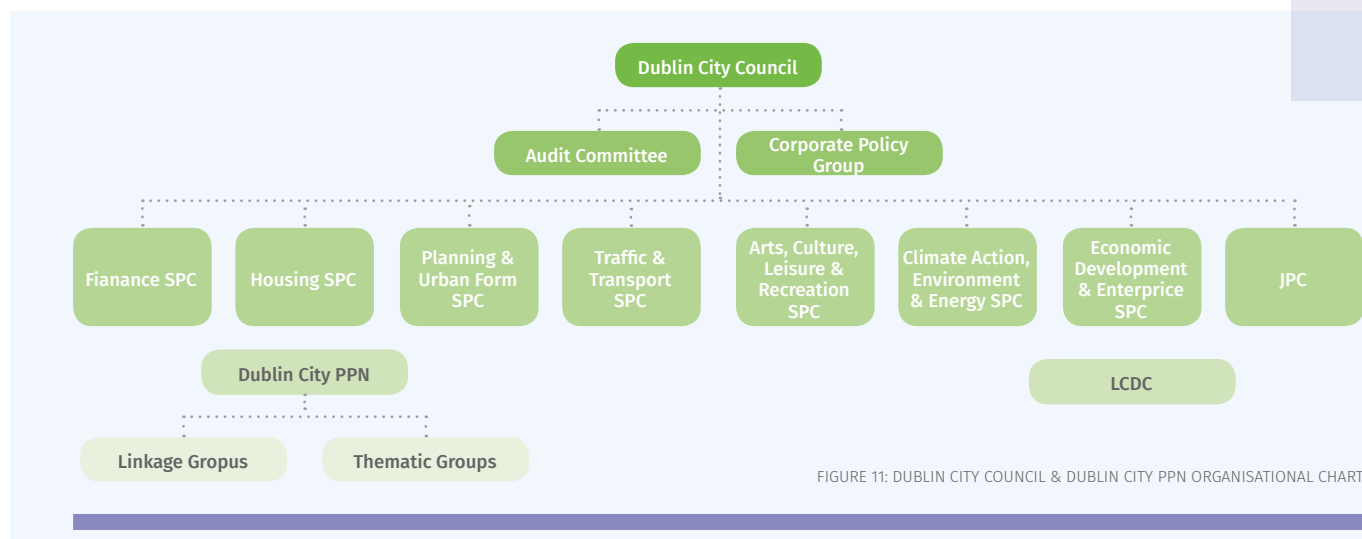


FIGURE 11: DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL & DUBLIN CITY PPN ORGANISATIONAL CHART

### 4.4.2 Capacity-building Role

A PPN's capacity building role should focus specifically on the building of capacity within its membership in order to support participation in public policy and decision making fora. During 2021, Dublin City PPN delivered a wide range of training and capacity building events, such as the Festival of Fundraising, which sought to improve the skills and knowledge base of its member groups. Dublin City PPN has used the weekly newsletter and social media updates as a very effective tool in sign-posting its membership to capacity building opportunities delivered both by the PPN, and other organisations.

Capacity building requirements within the not for profit sector in Ireland are often broad in nature, and it is therefore important that Dublin City PPN focuses on this core functions. It is for this reason that the membership survey sought to learn more about the committee structure of its members groups, such

as number and type of officers. Supporting these structures will assist the PPN as a whole over time, whilst also improving the effectiveness of individual organisations.

Avoiding duplication of capacity building and training opportunities through the development of good working relationships with other support organisations, including local partnerships is critical, particularly in light of the budget available to the PPN. There may also be an opportunity here to engage proactively with these service providers in order to influence the type of training programmes delivered, to mutual benefit.

It must also be acknowledged that much of the capacity building supports are delivered on an informal and ongoing basis by the PPN Resource Worker and Support Worker, as well as through interaction between the Secretariat and SPC representatives, and whilst less tangible than the formal events, is an inherently valuable resource to the network.

of training and networking events online. Events such as the Plenary were delivered with technical support, which ensured the smooth running of events with large numbers of participants.

Attendance and engagement at training and networking events is an ongoing challenge for most PPN's across the country, however, it must also be acknowledged that the PPN structure is still relatively new in Ireland, and could be considered to still be in the process of becoming established. Building the reputation and relevance of the PPN through organisational action and the sharing of successes will help to maintain and improve engagement with member groups. Nonetheless, it must also be recognised that for a certain cohort of members their key interest is access to information, underscoring the importance of this function.



PHOTO: MEETING BETWEEN RUTH POWEL, DUBLIN CITY PPN RESOURCE WORKER, ADEKUNLE GOMEZ & CIARÁN TAYLOR

### 4.4.3 Information and networking role

Coinciding with the move of host organisation and recruitment of a new support team, Dublin City PPN has invested much time and energy in the development of its information and networking role, through the regular dissemination of a newsletter, local media campaign - particularly on radio, and an improved social media presence.

The Dublin City PPN website acts as a central information portal, and a major redevelopment of the website in 2022 will increase its effectiveness particularly through the addition of new interactive sections for Linkage Groups.

Although significantly affected by the public health restrictions associated with the Covid 19 Pandemic, the PPN made a successful transition to the delivering



PHOTO: TEA WITH THE MAYOR, MAY 2021



## 4. Dublin City PPN

### 4.5 Key Operational Risks

**The PPN representative structure on SPCs could unintentionally bring forward candidates who are unsuitable to represent the PPN at SPC level or may participate in the PPN for motives other than those promoted through the PPN structure.**

By their nature, these 'problematic' PPN representatives have the capacity to damage the reputation of the entire PPN network.

Additionally, the existing structures around the election of SPC representatives is exposed to being exploited by a single or collective number of member groups for their own ends, possibly not for the betterment of the wider membership, either by accident or design. As Dublin City PPN strengthens, this risk will lessen, as increased capacity and competition for seats on the SPC's increase.

Like many community sector organisations dealing with increased legal responsibility for directors and staff, the Secretariat and staff of Dublin City PPN require immediate and on-going training to ensure ongoing compliance with the relevant.



## 5. Membership Survey

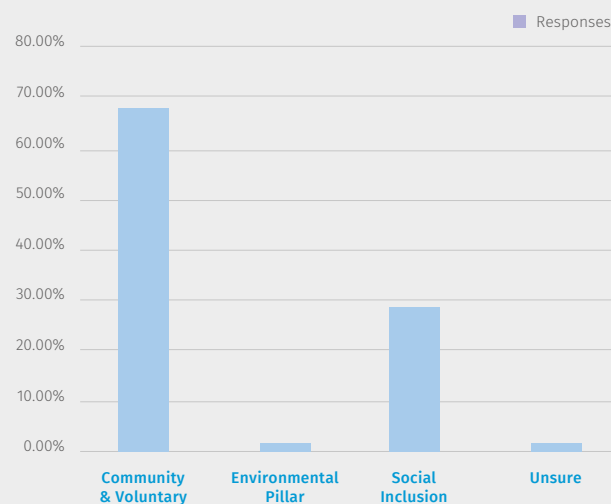
### 5.1 About the members of Dublin City PPN

The membership survey was open between November 4th and 25th, issued to the membership via the newsletter, and supported by posts on social media.

A total of 40 responses were gathered, and a summary of findings is outlined below.

This response rate of approximately 5% of the membership is very low, and it is possible that the data below is inherently biased, because it was not possible to determine whether those who responded are more or less likely to interact with Dublin City PPN.

In reality, it would appear that a significant proportion of PPN members are not interested in policy matters and join a PPN because it is a requirement in order to apply for grants. Consideration should be given to a two-tier approach with full members being those interested in policy and associate members focussing more on information, networking, training etc. However, this is a structural issue and may not be within the remit of an individual PPN to address.



What PPN pillar most closely represents the work of your group?

FIGURE 12: WHAT PPN PILLAR MOST CLOSELY REPRESENTS THE WORK OF YOUR GROUP (N = 40)

### Officers & Committee Members

This question was asked for the specific purpose of further understanding the roles staff and volunteers hold in member organisations. In order to optimise the effectiveness of Dublin City PPN, targeted capacity building training to support these roles should be provided.

Chairperson	95.00%	38
Treasurer	87.50%	35
Secretary	82.50%	33
Public Relations Officer (PRO)	55.00%	22
Child Safety Officer	57.50%	23
Communications Officer (e.g. social media)	70.00%	28
Sports Coaches	42.50%	17
Committee members	72.50%	29
Fundraising Officer	50.00%	20
Activity & Events Facilitator e.g. Mother & Toddler Group, Scout Leaders	42.50%	17

FIGURE 13: OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS (N = 40)

## 5. Membership Survey

### 5.2 Distribution of Respondents

Mapping the location of respondents was undertaken in order to understand their distribution across the city. More work could be undertaken here by the Secretariat in understanding the profile of the different areas, and the service provision there in.

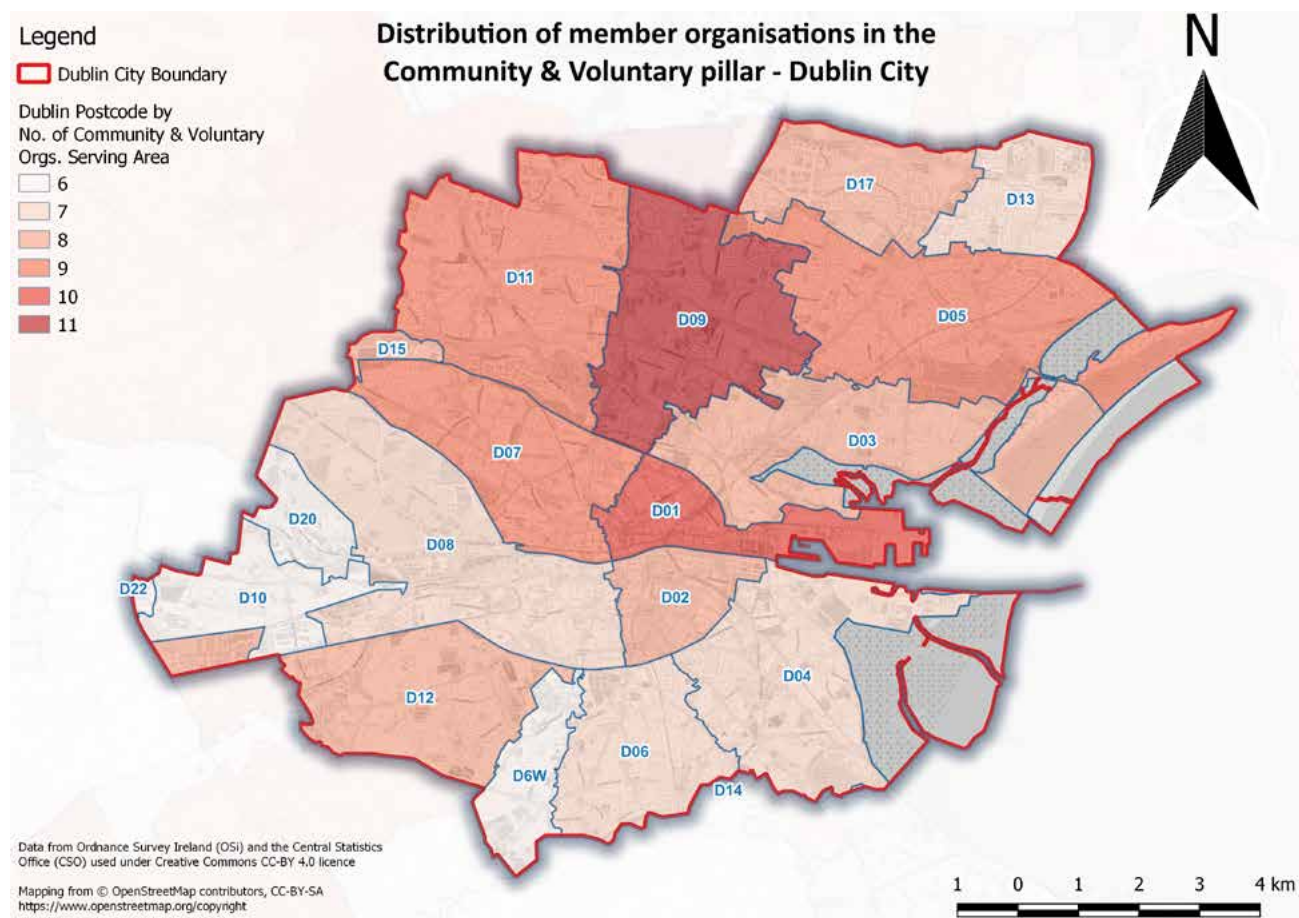


FIGURE 14: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

### Understanding of Dublin City PPN

Throughout the stakeholder consultation, the researchers were consistently hearing that people found the PPN “complex”. This does not appear to be unique to Dublin City PPN, and is a challenge shared across the national network. The development of a national communications strategy, due to be published in 2022 will greatly assist in supporting PPN to create appropriate messaging, clearly explaining what the PPN does, and why it is relevant.

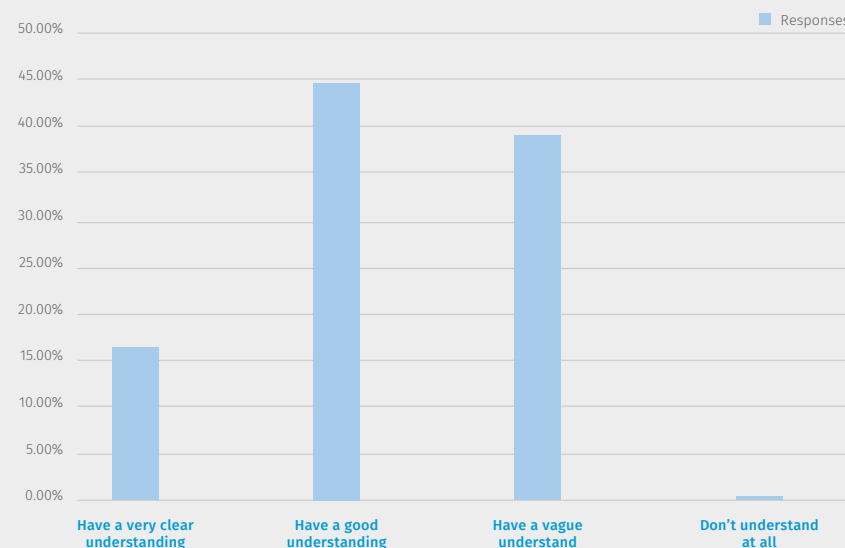


FIGURE 15: UNDERSTANDING OF THE PPN (N = 36)

### Support Organisations & Networks

Survey respondents were well networked, and familiar with accessing supports from key support organisations.

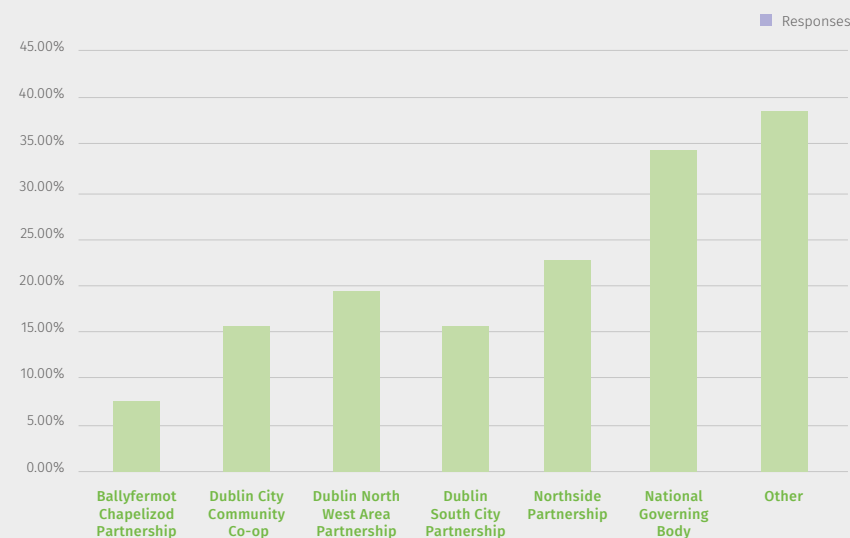


FIGURE 16: SUPPORT &amp; FUNDING (N = 26)



5. Membership Survey

A good awareness of other member organisations was apparent, as was a willingness to learn more about the work of other members with the aim of developing shared ambitions, with 89% of respondents answering yes to this question. This is a strength which the Secretariat can draw upon as it seeks to consolidate the network.

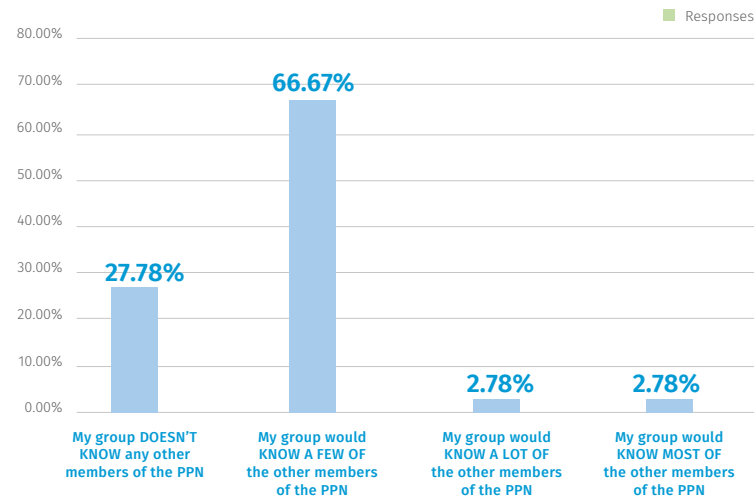


FIGURE 17: LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF OTHER PPN MEMBERS(N = 36)

Survey respondents saw the potential of Dublin City PPN, demonstrating an understanding that the Secretariat can build upon into the future.

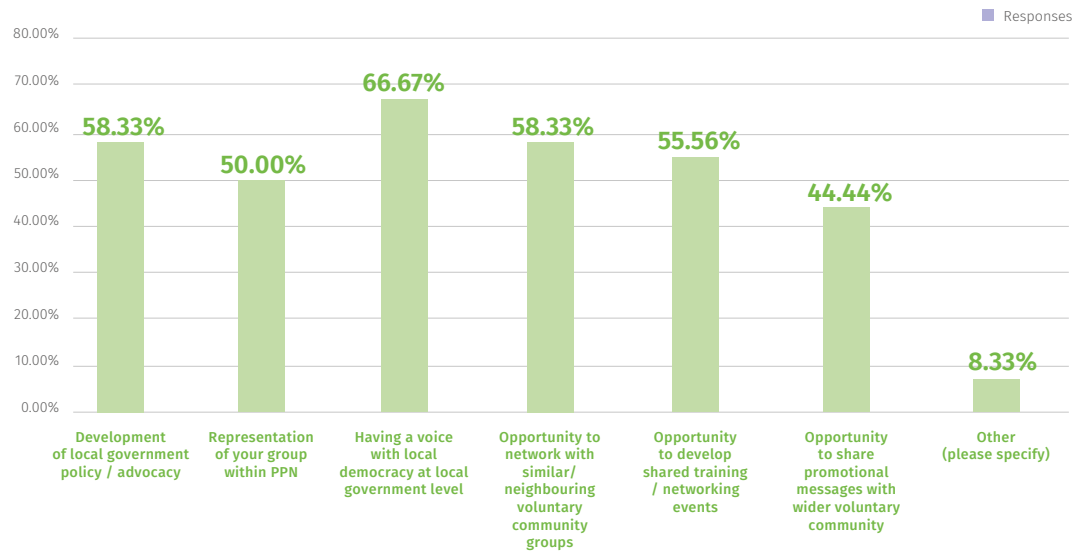


FIGURE 18: BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP (N = 36)



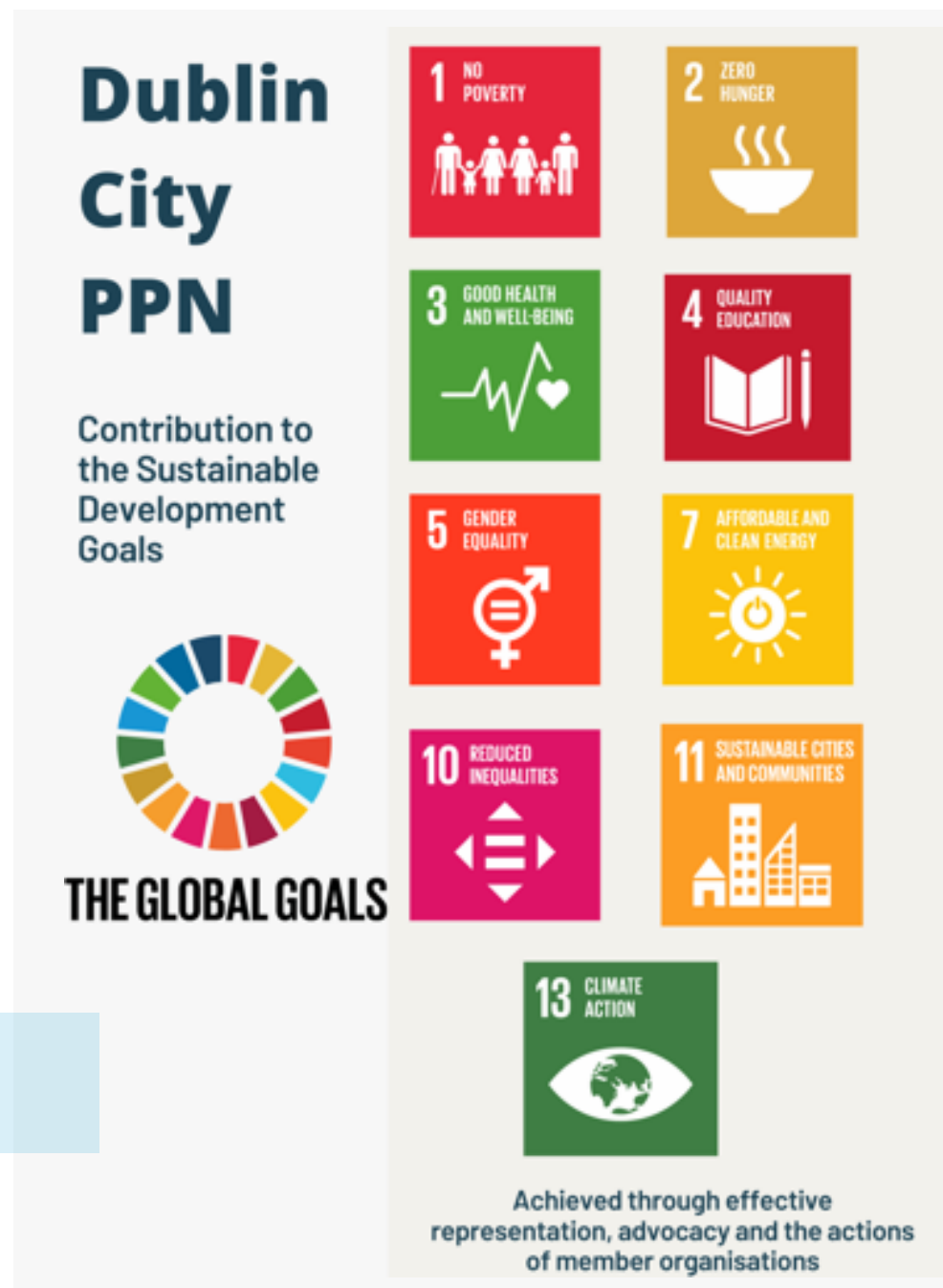




## 6. Sustainable Development Goals

“The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests (United Nations, the 17 Goals)”

As identified in the National Implementation Plan 2018-2020, PPN's can play an important role in furthering a wider understanding of the SDG's, and help to demonstrate how the actions of many small groups can have a significant impact. Following an activity mapping exercise, the contribution of Dublin City PPN to the SDG's is illustrated below.



## 7. Strategic Goals of Dublin City PPN

### 7.1 Strategic Objective 1: Optimising the PPN Network

#### Focus Areas

**Dublin City PPN has tremendous potential, but the network must be strengthened in order to achieve this. The relevance, importance and impact of the actions of Dublin City PPN must be highlighted on a regular basis – members must value the PPN, choosing to invest their valuable time in the network on the basis that it is supporting the work of the not for profit sector.**

Dublin City PPN has the potential to lead the not-for-profit sector in Dublin City. Identifying relevant issues and campaigns is key to this, as is the development of key strategic relationships. Dublin City PPN must believe in itself and consider embracing substantial subjects where it has the potential to effect change.

Huge strides have been made in the quality, and regularity of communications material provided to the membership of Dublin City PPN; nonetheless it is recommended that a Communications Strategy and Action Plan is developed in 2022. The purpose of this strategy is to conduct a complete review of communications materials, and to support the staff and Secretariat to provide the right information to the membership in the right way.

The development of a suite of case studies is also a key recommendation of this report. Carefully selected case studies outlining the challenge, the solution and the impact of a particular project or initiative has the potential to be an extremely powerful tool in explaining what Dublin City PPN does to support its membership. The curation of a library of images would also be an asset to the PPN, ensuring strong visual messaging.

#### Goals

**7.1.1** Through the continued development of Dublin PPN, facilitate the effective participation and representation of the members of Dublin City PPN in policy and decision-making fora.

**7.1.2** Consolidate and strengthen the membership base of Dublin City PPN, and continue the development of Dublin City PPN as a networking and information hub for member organisations.

**7.1.3** Optimise the effectiveness of training, networking and information hub functions through the development of a targeted and concise Communications Strategy and Action Plan.

#### Actions

- Encourage members to get to know each other – plenary, networking events etc
- Run monthly, or quarterly welcome meetings to introduce new members to each other & Dublin City PPN, rotating facilitator / Secretariat / SPC representatives
- Participate in PPN Networking meetings and events at a national level
- Dublin PPN to actively promote itself as a linkage tool or representative voice - for media / news organisations, universities, etc. seeking access to Dublin City's community and voluntary groups.
- Regular acknowledgement of the contribution made by PPN members in social media, newsletter etc.
- Develop and agree Communications Strategy, to include actions such as:
  - > Review of content, design (including software) and delivery of the PPN newsletter
  - > Communication materials clearly branded as Dublin City PPN and pre-approved by nominated staff member
  - > PPN members actively encouraged to use the Dublin City PPN logo on their websites etc.
  - > Develop portfolio of brief Case Studies to demonstrate actions and impact of Dublin City PPN
  - > Profile / showcasing a cross section of member groups on a rotating basis
  - > Development of accessible communications material, with a focus on the use of Plain English

## 7. Strategic Goals of Dublin City PPN

### 7.2 Strategic Objective 2: Organisational Development & Capacity Building

#### Focus Areas

**Structured training about Dublin PPN, its function and how it is operated has the potential to greatly enhance the operation and impact of the organisation.**

Whilst the delivery of capacity building supports is a key function of Dublin City PPN, it is essential to note that the operational budget for Dublin City PPN is limited and it is therefore critical that the Secretariat and staff utilise financial resources in a strategic way, maximising budgets through links with other organisations and funding streams.

Training content already being provided by the Department could potentially be utilised by Dublin City PPN. In particular, the handbook should be selectively modified to provide targeted training for the groups noted below. Other networks, such as Waterford PPN have also developed materials, which could support Dublin City PPN. When surveying the membership to identify specific training needs, the core functions of the PPN must inform the options provided to members.

The development of high level, strategic relationships with key stakeholders in the not for profit sector in Dublin City is key. The Secretariat members, SPC representatives and member groups already hold much social and political capital; building upon these strengths will support the PPN in delivering upon its organisational goals.

#### Goals

**7.2.1** Through the provision of targeted training programmes and networking opportunities, build the capacity of member organisations to improve their effectiveness, and to contribute to and participate in local democratic structures.

**7.2.2** Develop strategic relationships with key actors in the not for profit sector across Dublin City to further the goals of the PPN, and overall sector.

#### Actions

- Delivery of ongoing structured training regarding Dublin City PPN, its function and how it operated has the potential to greatly enhance the operation of the organisation, please see summary of possible approaches below:
  - > New members - Induction pack about Dublin City PPN and short introductory training session.
  - > Existing and new Secretariat members - Induction and annual refresh of message and information on any changes / updates
  - > Existing and new SPC representatives - Induction training specifically about SPC meetings - responsibilities, pre meeting preparation and post meeting reporting
  - > Relevant DCC staff and all DCC councillors – regular formal and informal opportunities to meet facilitated by Dublin City PPN outlining role. Proactive approach taken to invite councillors to events.
  - > Other community development partnerships - facilitate regular formal and informal opportunity to interact.
- Review training content and materials already developed by the Department and other PPNs, to be tailored for Dublin City PPN with appropriate permissions. In person training and Zoom options could be made available
- Delivery of role specific training e.g., Chairing Skills, Communications, Impact Measurement or Fundraising
- Continued focus on the development of Linkage Groups and Thematic Groups, in particular the Migrant Thematic Group
- Regular meetings of PPN with relevant Local Authority and Department staff to support key external relationships
- Alliances developed and nurtured with local community development organisations, including partnerships
- Engagement with all existing, and newly elected Dublin City Councillors in order to outline the PPN role, and identify synergies, as well as possible co-ordination of actions

## 7. Strategic Goals of Dublin City PPN

### 7.3 Strategic Objective 3: Governance, Administration and Operating Procedures

#### Focus Areas

**Absolute clarity is required as to the legal status of Dublin City PPN, so that relevant protections can be put in place to support Secretariat members, SPC representatives and others. In particular the provision of Directors, or equivalent insurance should be considered.**

This is noted in the Implementation Plan as urgent, and should be completed by the end of Quarter 1 2022, at the latest.

Much of the time and energy of the Dublin City PPN Secretariat over recent years appears to have been occupied by unresolved minor conflicts. This must be addressed in order to allow the organisation to move on to a more productive, creative and productive place. Governance structures, including a Code of Conduct for all Secretariat members and SPC representatives will support this process, as will the development and adoption of a Dispute Resolution Process. Excellent resources are in place which will assist with this process, such as the Carmichael Board Handbook.

The stakeholder consultation highlighted a perceived disconnect between the Secretariat and other PPN representatives. This is a communications issue which can be resolved through increased interaction, and more opportunities to engage.

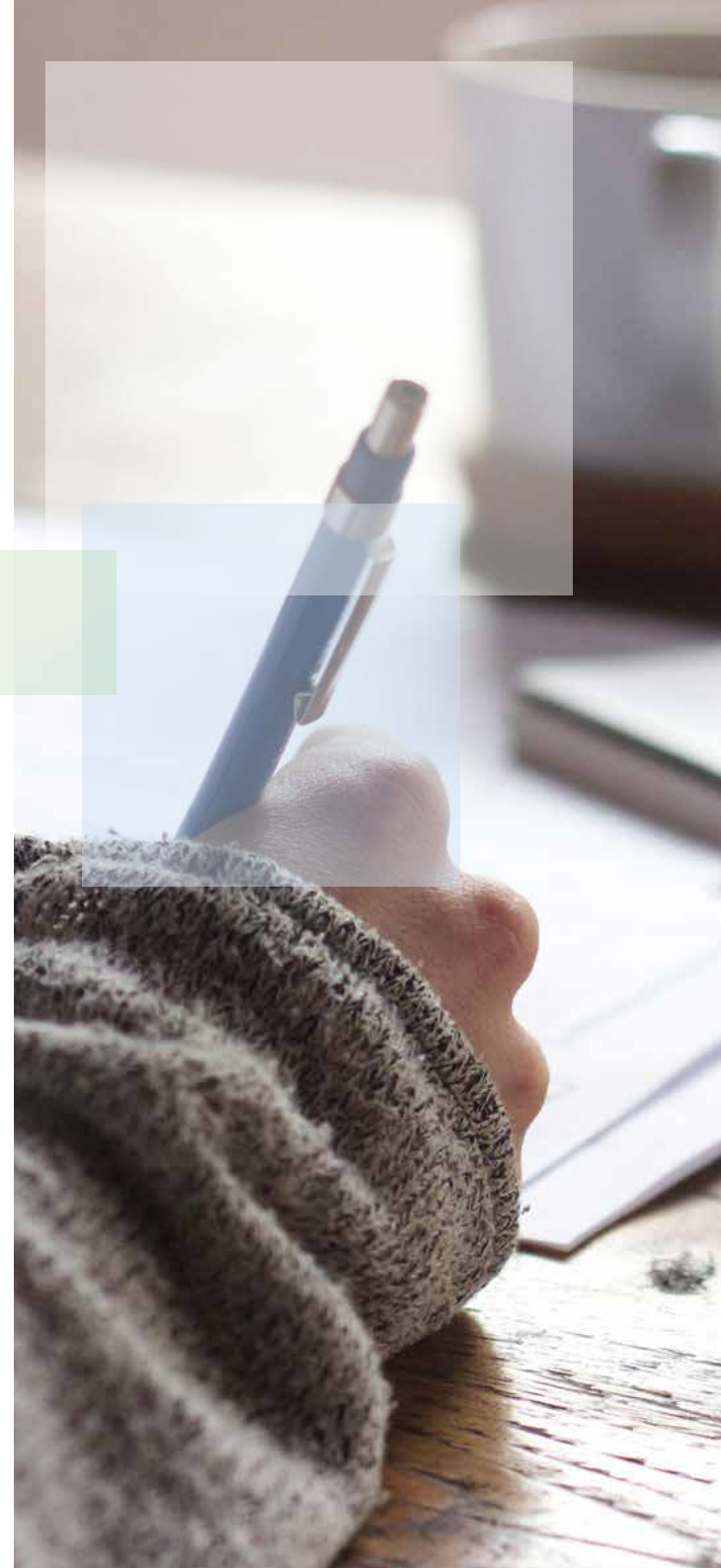
As part of any induction training for members, the operation of the Secretariat should be clearly explained, and to further assist this, members of the Secretariat, should be careful to ensure that they are seen to operate in an open and transparent fashion and in accordance with governance best practice.

#### Goals

- 7.3.1** To support and empower Dublin City PPN to deliver upon its vision of being an effective and inspirational community representative network, through the establishment of robust operating procedures and demonstration of sectoral best practice.

#### Actions

- Adoption of Strategic Plan and incorporation of Implementation Plan into ongoing management practices.
- Complete Constitutional Review
- Clarify legal status of Dublin City PPN
- Secure relevant insurances for Secretariat and other committee / group members
- Consider extending the term of rotating facilitator to support organisational leadership
- Development of policies and procedures, to include, but not limited to:
  - > Board Handbook
  - > Conflict Management & Dispute Resolution Policy
  - > Complaints Policy
  - > Code of Conduct
- Develop Wellbeing Statement
- Future consideration as to the development of an Organisational Reserves Policy





**Notes:**



# Thank you

*Dublin City Public Participation Network would like to thank the Edwina and all the staff at Dublin City Volunteer Centre, for hosting the PPN since late 2020.*

*We would also like to thank Dublin City Council for their assistance and cooperation.*

*We would very much like to thank the Department of Rural and Community Development for all their advice and support and guidance.*

*However, mostly the PPN thanks its 900 + member organisations and volunteer representatives and Secretariat for tirelessly working for the improvement of the PPN all through out the years.*



Report prepared by:

**Ellenora Lynch**

Photographs:

**Unsplash.com**



Tea with the Mayor



Beatriz at the farm



< Reps









[www.dublincityppn.ie](http://www.dublincityppn.ie)



@DublinCityPPN

Líonra  
Rannpháirtíochta  
Pobail  
Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath



Dublin City  
Public  
Participation  
Network



Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

