**Secretariat update for the November 2024 Plenary**

Welcome everyone to Wynn’s hotel, for this our November 2024 plenary.

The Secretariat would like to thank everyone for coming here this evening and we hope you find the night enjoyable and interesting.

The Secretariat has several updates for you tonight as we’ve been very busy since our May Plenary in the Gresham.

1. First off, tonight we ratify the nominations and elections and re-elections of PPN representatives on Dublin City Council committees, and they are

Kelley Bermingham, Scott Chiang, Rabia Tabassum, Áine Wellard, Ann Canning, Brian Greene, Sorcha Keane, Adele O’Connor, Aideen O’Dochartaigh, Cathie Hynes, Siobhán Guyrat, Mike Alan, Oisin O’Reilly, Sinead Murphy, Sebastian Vencken, Fergal Butler, Robbie Sinnott, and Emmet O’Briain.

We thank them for their commitment and wish them successful terms on the new council SPCs. Many of these people are here tonight and we look forward to getting to know them better, and working together to increase the quality of life in Dublin City for those people who live, work, study and visit the capital.

The nomination and election process was very encouraging; we thank the ongoing support from Neo-Archaic, our website management company who helped and assisted with all the technical work behind this process. They also helped with operational support and we are very grateful to them. Those of you who were here in May 2024, will remember their very excellent presentation on the PPN website with all the resources for member groups.

The way the elections work is; When one person is nominated for a role, they are deemed elected, and when more than one is nominated they stand for election. There were so many interested parties for the two SPCs in particular, that we now have a panel of “reserves” which is a wonderful place to be. Some of these “reserves” are here tonight and we really thank them for being willing to be involved, without, as it were, being in the limelight.

We are hoping to start linkage or working groups, to support the Representatives as soon as possible. Ellenora Lynch, will facilitate Representatives training next week online and in person, and we are going to set up three linkage or working groups: one for each pillar of community and voluntary, social inclusion and environment.

Linkage groups are discussion and support groups for our Reps, ensuring that they have input from the rest of the community groups, supporting them in their role, and also discussing what new motions or policies the reps can bring forward on behalf of the community. Great way to get involved in the policy creation process even if you are not sitting on one of the council committees.

We hope as many people get involved in these as possible to feed back and forward from the main PPN member groups to the SPC and other committees. Linkage groups are a link between the PPNs and the committees and allow our member groups to be involved in local authority decision making.

1. We also ratify the 2025 draft workplan and budget tonight. As you know you were invited to send comments and feedback for the workplan ahead of tonight and we are happily going to move forward with this plan. Our work plan is developed in accordance with the 5 year plan, the 2020 PPN handbook and the new roadmap implementation plan, which the department of rural and community development published in July 2024.
2. In addition, tonight we ask that you continue to support the PPN either by joining a linkage group (when they are established) or by simply sharing the information we send out every week by the weekly Bulletin.

The PPN is, at it’s core, a network of groups and organisations.

There is huge power in meeting, sharing information, collaborating on common goals, and helping each other on projects. I’ve seen first hand the difference it makes simply getting together and talking through what is wanted and needed for an area. That talking sparks action, as I’m sure you’ve all seen too.

As a network, information sharing is key, so we would ask all member groups primary contacts to share PPN information with the other people from your groups. In particular about the training opportunities, general information or updates about the core PPN work.

1. The main objectives of the PPN are to share information, and to offer capacity building training, so that member groups can be more involved in local authority decision making. Your group probably aligns with at least one SPC, and the Linkage groups can connect you to the work of the SPCs.

SPCs are the first stage for any policy being created by the council. Getting you in at ground level for policy creation. They are participatory democracy in action. They are an important aspect of de-centralising decision making. The potential for impact through SPCs is huge.

We would ask you to find out where you would like to concentrate your time in the PPN. As said, we will soon have three linkage groups and, you will see from the workplan there are also other groups: a disability thematic group and a migrant thematic group. In 2025 there will also be an Equity/Diversity and Inclusion group too – where does your member group fit best?

1. We always want to hear from you – if you want to share information in our weekly bulletin, please send your updates to Ruth and Siobhán, who are here tonight. If you have information about campaigns, fundraisers, events or your work in general, please share it with the PPN. By doing so you have access to nearly a thousand other PPN member groups in the Dublin City area.

The PPN has already signed up to two campaigns, as a network – but imagine the power of 1000 member groups, working together, across different thematic areas to make Dublin a better place.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank Ruth and Siobhan also, who keep the PPN driving forward. They do a tremendous job of keeping the PPN on target for its goals, and we’d be lost without them, so thank you both for all your work.

1. And finally, tonight is really just a snapshot of the work. We update the Bulletin and the website with as many details as we can, but we can’t do anything without the participation and support of the member groups, of the members, of you. Thank you for coming tonight and we hope you enjoy the rest of the event - please use this event to network and make new friends and allies and come back to us if you have any comments or suggestions.

Thank you.