

CLARE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

County Clare Wellbeing Vision Statement

Clare is a county that values, protects and restores its unique landscape, environment and biodiversity, where sustainable livelihoods are prioritised for this and future generations and where citizens, migrants, ethnic minorities and people of all abilities, age groups and genders can reach their potential in an atmosphere of support, respect and inclusion, and where Local Government is open, transparent, accountable and committed to reducing poverty and marginalisation within the County.

Our vision is for a County to be part of and a County to be proud of.

WHAT ARE PPNs?

Public Participation Networks (PPNs) came about following the report of the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government published in 2013, which recommended that communities be given more of a say in decisions taken by local government .

The recommended way to do this was through the PPNs, which were written into law in the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This law means that there should be a PPN in every Local Authority area.

PPNs are above politics with membership open to all volunteer-led/not for profit groups which are non-party political and that fulfil membership criteria. PPNs are wholly independent entities, but crucially still remain accountable for their use of public monies and the activities they undertake on behalf of their communities.

PPNs are funded jointly by the Department of Rural and Community Development and local authorities and are overseen by a National Advisory Group chaired by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Whenever the local authority needs people to participate in consultations or sit on the committees like Local Community Development Committees and Strategic Policy Committees, it is obliged to call on the PPN to select representatives from within its membership to serve on those committees.



WHO ARE WE?

Clare PPN membership is made up of community & voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups throughout County Clare. It is a flat structure. This means that all groups in the PPN have an equal voice and an equal input into decision making. There is no leader, no overall spokesperson or chairperson. It is truly a collective, accommodating a wide range of diverse views and perspectives. They elect the Secretariat and representatives (for various boards and committees) and attend the plenary meeting.

The key decision-making body is the Plenary, which is made up of all the registered member groups of the PPN.

The Secretariat's role is to:

- facilitate the implementation of Plenary decisions
- ensure the proper functioning of the PPN
- co-ordinate the activities of the PPN
- act as a point of contact for the PPN

WHERE DO WE FIT?



WHAT DO WE DO?

We hold regular meetings and online consultations with our membership to discuss current and emerging issues, to share information and to make sure that a diverse range of views are heard.

We elect representatives to sit on Local Government and other local and regional committees to represent our members' views on local matters.

We work with Clare County Council and other agencies to assist with consultations on issues that affect the local area and its people, environment and economy,

We formulate submissions and positions in response to strategic and policy matters which impact local communities when our members agree to or request this.

Through our website, social media and online newsletters we help to keep Clare Communities informed of local issues, funding opportunities, consultations and events.

Through training, outreach and networking we help to build the capacity of local community groups and organisations to participate effectively in local and national government policy making.

We may commission or participate in research which aims to strengthen democratic participation by people resident in Clare.

We work with other organisations and agencies at local regional and national level to promote participation by the diverse groups who make up the population of Clare.

OUR MISSION

Clare PPN is determined to make sure that community groups play an active role in the decisions made by Clare County Council for the county and all its people. Clare PPN will do its best to help the County Council understand and respond to the diverse needs, objectives and ways of working of community groups

Inclusive of all volunteer-led groups in their area, and actively look to include groups that might not otherwise be included or who might not often have their voice heard.

Inclusive

Participatory, open, welcoming, respectful, willing to work together and supportive of each other.

Accountable to its Member Groups by putting good governance policies and procedures in place.

Accountable

Participatory



Principles & values

Transparent

Independent

Transparent in everything that it does. It should communicate openly, regularly and clearly with all Member Groups.

Valuing of Diversity

Independent from the Local Authority and of any special interests (the PPN must account to the Local Authority for its budget, but is independent in its work).

Valuing of Diversity and recognising that the Colleges are made up of people and Member Groups that have a wide range of different views, experiences and opinions.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2015, Transforming Our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) was adopted by all 193 Member States of the United Nations (UN). The 2030 Agenda aims to deliver a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for the entire world, and sets out a framework for how to achieve this by 2030. This framework is made up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which cover the social, economic and environmental requirements for a sustainable future.

Clare PPN's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 is informed by the Strategic Development Goals:

- to raise our ambition level
- to ensure that our goals and actions are fit for purpose in a rapidly changing world
- to remind local and national governmental bodies of their social, economic and environmental obligations as signatories

THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development



Vision for Community Wellbeing

Although we often think about wellbeing in terms of good physical and mental health, it can also describe the wider conditions we need as individuals and communities to have a better quality of life, healthier environment and increased prosperity.

Considering all the aspects of community wellbeing together helps us to identify actions that can be undertaken by communities alongside local and national governments to achieve sustainable communities where people's needs are met.

These Statements are aspirational and represent what our members and participants would like for their communities. They will inform Clare PPN consultations and submissions throughout 2021. They will also inform our representatives who are mandated through their elections to speak on behalf of the PPN membership on various Clare County Council committees. They are living documents that will be revised annually.

Clare PPN's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 is also informed by the extensively consulted document 'Vision for Community Wellbeing'. For more information:

<http://clareppn.ie/wellbeing-statements/>



Clare Public Participation Network

Strategic Goals



GOAL ONE: INFLUENCING POLICY AND LOCAL DECISION MAKING

To ensure that the voice, experience, expertise and needs of community groups are taken into account in decisions that affect the County.

- 1.1 Facilitate public participation in local decision and policy making.
- 1.2 Ensure that PPN plenaries are informed engaged and inclusive decision making structures.
- 1.3 Ensure that Clare PPN's processes are accountable and transparent.





GOAL TWO: BUILDING A STRONG MEMBERSHIP FOR CLARE PPN

To build a vibrant, inclusive membership base for Clare PPN.

2.1 Promote and market the PPN in the county and actively seek new members.

2.2 Work with member groups to pool knowledge and build capacity.

2.3 Clare PPN will act as a source of information and networking for community groups.





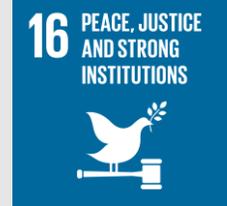
GOAL THREE: EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

To build strong effective relationships and partnerships with all stakeholders

3.1 Work in partnership with Clare County Council and other decision making bodies to encourage meaningful community engagement and participation.

3.2 Collaborate with community stakeholders, service providers, trade unions, representative organisations, businesses and educational institutions to build cohesive approaches to participation and pool knowledge and resources.

3.3 Support regional and national initiatives which promote or improve opportunities for participation.





GOAL FOUR: MAINTAIN AN EFFICIENT AND WELL RUN ORGANISATION

To work to best practice standards.

4.1 Ensure compliance with governance, legislative, and local and national budgetary requirements.

4.2 Ensure the ongoing professional development and well-being of PPN staff.

4.3 Develop procedures and practices to assist the PPN in its effectiveness for its members.



Clare Public Participation Network

Strategic Actions



GOAL ONE: INFLUENCING POLICY AND LOCAL DECISION MAKING

- Clare PPN will nominate representatives to sit on local authority and other local or regional decision making bodies in a transparent and democratic way.
- When required Clare PPN will work with Clare County Council to conduct community consultations in a meaningful way.
- Clare PPN will conduct plenary and policy meetings of its membership to consider and discuss matters which are important to them and assist the representatives in their work.
- Clare PPN's representatives will ensure that the diverse views of member groups are articulated or that policy positions agreed by the relevant members are presented.
- Clare PPN will provide training or other supports in line with available resources to our representatives to help them to fulfil their roles effectively.
- Clare PPN will hold regular meetings of the PPN secretariat to ensure the smooth running of the PPN between plenaries.



GOAL TWO: BUILDING A STRONG MEMBERSHIP FOR CLARE PPN

- Clare PPN will run an outreach programme to grow our membership. This will include participating in other organisations events or attending community events in the county
- Clare PPN will create and provide quality user friendly information about what the PPN is and does and how people can become involved.
- Clare PPN will use its social media, website and newsletter as well as local media to keep members up to date with its activities and local issues.
- Clare PPN will develop training programmes/ materials for members on Local Government as well as in relation to policy issues.



GOAL THREE: EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

- Provide training and support to local policy and decision making agencies to build understanding of Clare PPN's role.
- To engage with key personnel in local decision making and policy forming structures to foster meaningful partnerships.
- Clare PPN will seek and avail of opportunities to collaborate with agencies working in the county on any projects that fall within its remit.
- Clare PPN will continue to develop partnership projects to promote participation and community engagement.
- Clare PPN will participate in research and consultations that fall within its goals.



GOAL 4: MAINTAIN AN EFFICIENT AND WELL RUN ORGANISATION

- Maintain and if possible increase staffing levels to enable the growth and sustainability of Clare PPN
- Provide ongoing support and training to Clare PPN staff
- Produce an annual work programme and budget within the objectives of this strategic plan.
- Maintain flexibility in order to allow Clare PPN to take any opportunities to pioneer innovative approaches to the development or improvement of public participation in the County.
- Meet all financial and activity reporting requirements to the relevant government or Council departments.
- Produce an annual report which accurately reflects our progress, activities, achievements and challenges.
- Manage our budget in the best interests of our responsibilities and membership and seek to ensure the long term sustainability of the PPN.

ANNUAL PLANNING

Clare PPN develops a programme of work and a range of targets and performance indicators each year in line with its mandated responsibilities, available resources and the priorities of our member groups.

This annual plan is deeply informed by the 2021 Vision for Community Wellbeing and from the priorities decided by our plenary.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

We are committed to assessing and monitoring our progress both to measure our effectiveness and to identify areas in which we can improve.

We give a work report at our quarterly plenary meetings and publish quarterly a report to our website and social media for public perusal. This is in addition to in-depth qualitative and quantitative reporting to both Clare County Council and the Department of Community and Rural Development.

OUTCOMES

By successfully implementing this strategy we will have achieved the following:

- Clare PPN will be the recognised mechanism for participation by community groups in local government processes.
- Clare PPN will have developed a strong working relationship with all departments in Clare County Council and there will be a widespread understanding of the role and function of the PPN.
- Clare PPN's members will through their representatives have a strong and protected voice in decision making bodies and boards in the County with.
- Our members will be well informed and motivated to participate in the PPN's activities.
- There will be effective processes and structures underpinning Clare PPN.
- Engaging with Clare PPN will contribute to the well-being of communities and groups in Clare.