



# Reflective Session

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# What are we going to cover?

- What we've covered
- What's stopping us
- Moving onwards and upwards!

# What we've covered

- What is a PPN?

- 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. The PPN is now the main way that local authorities connect with groups active in their area.

THE PPN IS THE MEMBER GROUPS!

- What is the Secretariat for?

- Helping to put **operational decisions of the Plenary** in place. Making sure that the PPN is working properly in between Plenaries on behalf of the Member Groups.
  - Organising or helping to organise the **PPN activities on behalf of the Member Groups. Communicating regularly with all PPN Members** and sharing information about all PPN activities as widely as possible.
  - **Keeping correct, up to date, records of PPN business**, including minutes of meetings and make sure agendas are circulated in good time. **Being a point of contact** for the PPN for the Local Authority, Department of Rural and Community Development, other PPNs, the National Advisory Group and other stakeholders of the PPN. **Dealing with all correspondence** on behalf of PPN, by sending out copies and writing responses. **Facilitating and enable the PPN Workers** in their day to day activities to deliver PPN objectives of the PPN.

# What we've covered

- What are Representatives for?
  - Attending and participating fully in **meetings of the Linkage Group and committee**, including any subgroups to which they may be appointed
  - **Bringing forward the issues of the Linkage group** to the committee for their consideration, including putting items on the agenda. They are not there just to represent their own group or agenda.
  - **Working collaboratively with the Linkage Group** to identify issues, research, policy proposals etc.
  - **Communicating regularly** (at least as frequently as meetings are held) with the Linkage Group.
  - **Ensuring adequate minutes are taken at Linkage Group meetings** and are shared with PPN.
  - **Networking and working strategically** with other committee members for the benefit of the Linkage group and of PPN, including being able to compromise while retaining the core objective.

# What's stopping us?

- Lack of meaningful engagement with Local Authority.
- **Nothing you can do about this, but keep doing what you're doing**
- Committees not actually discussing policy!
- **Nothing you can do about this, but keep doing what you're doing**
- Not using the Plenary effectively.
- **This, you can do something about!**
- No linkage groups or thematic networks for Representatives.
- **This, you can do something about!**

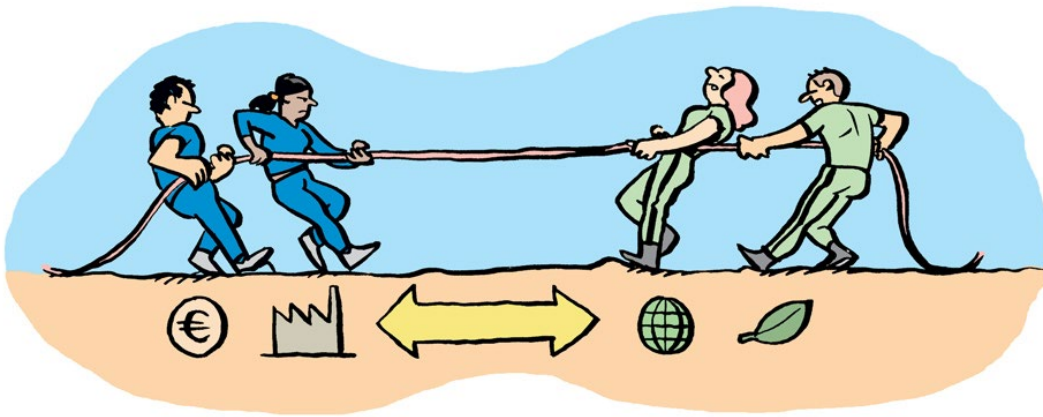
# Moving onwards and Upwards!



## Using the Plenary

- What are their policy issues / themes?
- How can you group them?
- Within those groups, what is it they want from the PPN?
- How can you AND THEY deliver?
- Get them involved!!!

# Using the Plenary – BUT WAIT!



- Can't go to the Plenary without "something"
- Can't get "something" without going to the Plenary
- Time to rethink the challenge as an opportunity for the PPN

# Moving onwards and Upwards!

## **Linkage Groups**

- Linkage Groups are tied to specific Committees.
- Expectation that there will be meaningful engagement with the Committee and issues of concern raised.
- Pressure on Representative to “deliver” with Committee.

## **Thematic Networks**

- Thematic Networks are tied to policy themes or concerns
- Expectation that the PPN will engage in these areas.
- Representative can “lead” the Network.
- Greater scope for working collaboratively.



# Thematic Networks and how to find them

1. Identify the policy areas your Member Groups are interested in.
2. Current Representatives - Reach out to the Member Groups and ask them to come together for a meeting on the topic.

*RE:       Housing in Sligo*

*Hi NAME,*

*On behalf of Sligo PPN, we're looking to get a group of interested members together to discuss Housing in Sligo – what the issues are, what we would like to see happen, and how we might achieve that. As your group is active in / concerned about this area, we think you'd be a great addition.*

*The meeting will be on [DATE] at [TIME] on Zoom. Please let us know if you can make it, it would be great to have you!*

*Signed,*

*REPRESENTATIVE*

# Thematic Networks and how to use them

1. Current Representatives - In advance of the meeting, ask for agenda items. Group them if you have too many.
2. Current Representatives – Facilitate the meetings, but nominate a note-taker from within the group, which will rotate each meeting.
3. Commit to a short report from each meeting. Not just a minute, but a policy report. What is it that your group wants to see achieved in this area?
4. Submit each report to the Local Authority requesting that the issues be considered.
5. Publish each report to your website and social media channels.
6. Bring each report to Committee meetings and ask that they be on the agenda.

# Different approach, same objective

- Engaging in policy work.
- Facilitating and empowering Member Groups to have their voices heard.
- Working within and without the Local Authority system, but in all cases working in a way that is complementary to the LA.
- Real, tangible outcomes and policy documents.

# Next Steps

- Call a Plenary
- Set out the Plan for approval
- GET GOING!



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# Thank You

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