

PPN Guidance Booklet

for Setting Up
& Running a
Community
Group



Westmeath
PPN
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK
The Voice of the Community





Welcome



Welcome to Westmeath Public Participation Network (WPPN) Community group guidance booklet which we hope will assist you in setting up a community group/association and includes information on setting up a committee, committee skills, templates of useful documents and an index of additional Information Resources.

We hope you will find this document useful and please feel free to contact us at the address below should you require any further information or assistance.

For more information Contact:

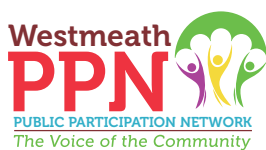
Westmeath Public Participation Network (WPPN)

Phone: **044-9332157**

Email: **info@westmeathppn.ie**

Web: **www.westmeathppn.ie**

Postal Address: **Community Development Section,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae, Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N**



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



Welcome from WPPN Secretariat

Westmeath Public Participation Network (WPPN) is an independent network of Community and Voluntary Organisations across County Westmeath. Our Vision for Community Wellbeing is an all-encompassing vision that the member groups of Westmeath PPN have for County Westmeath.

“Westmeath is a flourishing community with a thriving economy where we live and work sustainably. It is a welcoming and safe place which values and respects all people. We enjoy a beautiful and healthy natural environment and celebrate our rich heritage. Each of us has the freedom to live the life we choose and have a say in decisions that affect us. We all participate in our communities making them vibrant places where no-one is left behind. We are all supported to be the best that we can be.”

Our Community Wellbeing Vision (above) has been developed through a bottom up process with member groups and is the mandate for Westmeath PPN Representatives as they represent Westmeath PPN membership on decision making bodies across the county.

To support our 800+ WPPN member groups and to encourage other communities to become organised and set up community groups, WPPN has created this Guidance Booklet, which, we hope will assist communities to organise and run community groups in a coherent way, understanding the roles of each committee member and the importance of good governance. Too often in communities too much is left to a small number of people; we hope that this guidance booklet will be used by many to support their own communities to achieve their goals and aims, the more people in a community who come on board, the better the chances of success.

This booklet is part of a suite of supports created by WPPN including getting funding ready and grant supports, which are available on WPPN website www.westmeathppn.ie or by contacting WPPN directly via the contact details on the previous page. WPPN also regularly holds training and workshops to support community groups achieve their goals.

WPPN wishes to express its sincere gratitude to everyone who helped and contributed in any way to the creation of this Guidance Booklet, especially Brigid Geoghegan PPN Resource Worker and Ursula Harper PPN Support Worker. It is hoped that this booklet will as our Vision for Community Wellbeing for Westmeath suggests, support groups to make Westmeath to be “The best that it can be for this and future generations”

Yours sincerely WPPN Secretariat

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Hugh Farrell | Athlone/Moate Municipal District WPPN Representative |
| Maureen McCormack | Mullingar/Kinnegad Municipal District WPPN Representative |
| Anne Drury | Social Inclusion Pillar WPPN Representative |
| John Mangan | Social Inclusion Pillar WPPN Representative |
| Catherine McEntee | Community & Voluntary Pillar WPPN Representative |
| Kevin Brady | Community & Voluntary Pillar WPPN Representative |
| Dave Raftis | Environment Pillar WPPN Representative |
| Michael Kenny | Environment Pillar WPPN Representative |

To find out more about the PPN and how it works please see our website – www.westmeathppn.ie

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Westmeath PPN

*What is Westmeath Public
Participation Network
(WPPN) and what
does it do?*



The 4 Strategies of the PPN

1. Representation

Westmeath PPN facilitates the participation and representation of communities in a fair, equitable and transparent manner through the environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary sectors on decision making committees/structures.

Under the Local Government Act 2014 the setting up of PPNs in Ireland was to provide non-political representation for communities. This takes the form of electing volunteer representatives from among the over 800 community groups that are members of Westmeath PPN.

Westmeath PPN is proud to have community representatives on 18 Committees from the Joint Policing Committee to Local Community Development Committee to SPCs (Strategic Policy Committees).

Westmeath PPN is co-funded by Department of Rural & Community Development and Westmeath County Council.

2. Informing

Provide information relevant to the environmental, social inclusion, community and voluntary sector and acts as a hub around which information is distributed and received.

3. Developing

Strengthen the capacity of communities and of the environmental, social inclusion, community & voluntary groups to contribute positively to the community in which they reside/participate.

4. Networking

The final strategy of the PPN involves networking. This takes places in 3 ways:

1. Regular information exchange from the groups and to the groups through the PPN newsletters and website.
2. Annual gatherings of all community groups to liaise and work together on a variety of issues and items (Plenary & 2 Municipal District - Athlone/Moate & Mullingar/Kinnegad - meetings).
3. The development of networking groups based on themes of action called Linkage Groups.



What is the PPN made up of?

The Plenary

The Plenary is essentially all the registered community groups in the county. In 2022 there are over 800 registered PPN community groups in Westmeath.

The Plenary meets twice yearly to discuss issues, elect representatives to roles and to network to find active solutions to community challenges.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat are the actioning body of the PPN. They are 8 in number and fulfil the day to day running of the PPN working with the Resource Worker & Support Worker.

2 Secretariat Members are elected from each Pillar (Community & Voluntary; Social Inclusion & Environment) and 1 from each Municipal District (Mullingar/Kinnegad & Athlone/Moate).



How the PPN works

The Background

The PPN is jointly funded by the Department of Rural & Community Development and Westmeath County Council.

It liaises with both, and sends regular reports of work and spending, to ensure an open and accountable procedure.

However, Westmeath PPN is an independent organisation, whose Secretariat are elected from among the PPN member community groups.

The Work

At the beginning of their 5-year term of office Westmeath PPN Secretariat create a 5-year Strategic Plan; based on consultation with PPN member groups.

Each year Westmeath PPN's Secretariat develops a workplan for the following year, based on the strategic plan and in consultations with PPN member groups.

This workplan is then submitted to the member groups at a Plenary session for approval.

Throughout the year the Secretariat and Resource Worker implements the actions of its Work plan, meeting at least every month.

As volunteer representatives' vacancies come up, these are advertised to member groups and are open to election for fulfilment of the community voice.



The 3 Pillars of Westmeath PPN

Environment Pillar



The Environment Pillar of Westmeath PPN is made up of groups with a strong environmental goal in mind. These goals vary from action groups on sustainability, biodiversity, wildlife groups and community gardens.

Although this is the lowest number of community registered groups, it is one of the highest in terms of activity and engagements, reflecting the active passion of the environmentally conscious volunteers in County Westmeath.

Social Inclusion Pillar



The Social Inclusion Pillar has the second highest number of registered PPN groups. The main focus of these groups is to ensure that 'no one is left behind', and that minority groups are represented and supported.

Example of social inclusion groups include Age Friendly, Integration groups, Active Retirement, Men's Sheds, The Disability Network, Westmeath Traveller Movement and many more. This pillar is crucial to ensuring a fairer and more just society for all.

Community & Voluntary Pillar



The Community and Voluntary Pillar is vast, containing almost two thirds of all PPN groups, mainly because the aims and focus of the groups are so varied. The Community and Voluntary groups consist of any that do not fall into the other categories, including Tidy Towns, sports groups, clubs, hobby groups and many more.

There is no one main purpose of this sector, however community development could not happen without the volunteerism and passion of this varied spectrum of groups. As such, though widely different, this pillar brings a richness of involvement.

Westmeath PPN Community Wellbeing Vision

"Westmeath is a flourishing community with a thriving economy where we live and work sustainably. It is a welcoming and safe place which values and respects all people. We enjoy a beautiful and healthy natural environment and celebrate our rich heritage. Each of us has the freedom to live the life we choose and have a say in decisions that affect us. We all participate in our communities making them vibrant places where no-one is left behind. We are all supported to be the best that we can be."

WPPN Linkage Groups

**Arts,
Community,
Heritage and
Sports**

**Climate
Change,
Environment
and Water**

**Community
Safety,
Crime and
Policing**

**Social
Inclusion, Rural
Development,
Youth &
Enterprise**

**Housing,
Planning
and
Transport**

Linkage Groups are the way that PPN member organisations can have a real input into policy in their area of operation. Linkage Groups bring together all PPN groups who have a relevant interest or remit in an issue, to discuss their diverse views and interests in a specific area, regardless of which Municipal District or Pillar they belong to.

WPPN representatives are all members of Linkage Groups and so can hear the voice of PPN member groups, and also feedback any updates from the committees they are on.

These Linkage groups nominate for election PPN representatives to Boards or Committees, receive feedback from those representatives and direct their activity.

They may also set policy priorities and input into consultations etc. on behalf of PPN. This in turn helps the member organisations to gain a deeper understanding of the local policy process.

It is important to note that the role of a Linkage Group is to facilitate and enable organisations to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system.

More information on Westmeath Public Participation Network –
www.westmeathppn.ie



*Setting up
and Running
a Residents Association
or Community Group*

A Guide



Introduction

The basics of setting up any community or voluntary groups is the same – for the purposes of this guidance booklet we have used the example of a Residents Association – but the same principles apply to any community group.

This guide should help you in establishing a Residents' Association/Community Group and explain the roles of the members of the committee. Remember this is only a guide to help get you started and once you meet you can establish your own rules and procedures.



Why start a Residents' Association/Community Group?

- To work together to improve facilities or services, e.g. a better repair service, improved road safety, improved local security, better community facilities etc. Basically, whatever is important to your community.
- To increase the sense of belonging to a community.
- To organise outings and other social events.
- To get involved with what other groups are doing.
- To have representatives on behalf of the Residents Association/Community to approach Westmeath County Council about issues of interest and concern.



The Benefits of a Residents' Association/Community Group

- Creating and developing your community
- Meeting your neighbours socially
- Achievement and pride in your estate/Community/Village/Town
- Gaining of new skills and knowledge
- Sharing of skills and knowledge
- Achieve more as a group for the well-being of the estate/community
- Providing services and activities for the residents/group members





How to get started?

The Steering Committee

Those who have shown interest in setting up the Association/Committee will meet. The purpose of this meeting is to decide on a date and venue for all those interested to meet and elect a committee.

The Steering Committee will decide the following in their first meeting:

- Who will chair/facilitate this particular meeting?
- Who will take the minutes of the meeting?
- Who will make a list of the attendance?
- Steering Committee agree on a venue and date for the first Residents Association/Committee meeting.

The Residents Association/Committee first meeting

For your first meeting you will need:

- A room appropriate to the holding of a meeting
- An Agenda
- Notify all members of the time and place of the meeting
- Make sure you have accommodated for special needs such as wheelchair users
- Nominate someone to take notes for this meeting only
- Nominate someone to chair/facilitate this meeting only

Agenda

- Election of Committee Members (chairperson/secretary/treasurer)
- Setting the rules and objectives of the group
- Setting a date and venue for the next meeting

What do Committee Members do?

- Take part in group decision-making
- Help out if and when they can
- Follow up on any items that you have committed to do at meetings





Committee Member Roles

The Chairperson/Facilitator at a meeting

- The chairperson/facilitator facilitates/guides the meeting through the agenda and towards achieving its aims
- To chair/facilitate the meetings (to oversee that the rules and procedures are followed)
- To ensure that each agenda is discussed, and a decision made and recorded
- To steer the discussions back to relevant topics
- In a more formal meeting, the chairperson/facilitator will outline the purpose of the meeting and remind members why they are there.
- All remarks are addressed through the chairperson/facilitator.
- Members do not interrupt each other.
- Members aim to reach a consensus.
- A vote is taken if consensus is not reached.
- The majority wins the vote.
- All members accept the majority decision.
- This is one model, but alternative models may be adopted.

When discussion is underway, it is the chairperson/facilitator's responsibility to ensure that it continues to flow smoothly by involving all members present and by not permitting one or two people to dominate the meeting. Summarising by the chairperson/facilitator during meetings can:

- Indicate progress, or lack of.
- Refocus discussion that has wandered off the point.
- Conclude one point and lead into the next.
- Highlight important points.
- Assist the secretary if necessary.
- Clarify any misunderstanding.
- The chairperson/facilitator should pace the meeting, ensuring it runs to time. If the planning has been properly executed, this should not prove to be a problem.

At the end of a meeting, the chairperson/facilitator should remind members what they have achieved and thank them for their contributions.

Finally, the time and date of the next meeting should be arranged.

Again, this is one common model for effective meetings, successful outcomes can be achieved in different ways with different strategies for different purposes, so adapt as appropriate to specific situations.





The Role of the Members at a meeting

While it is the role of the chairperson/facilitator to run the meeting, the participation of all members is also fundamental to the success of the meeting.

To ensure an effective meeting, all participants should:

- Undertake any necessary preparation prior to the meeting.
- Arrive on time.
- Keep an open mind.
- Listen to the opinions of others.
- Participate.
- Avoid dominating the proceedings.
- Avoid conflict situations.
- Avoid side conversations which distract others.
- Ask questions to clarify understanding.
- Note down any action agreed upon. (See: Note-Taking)
- After the meeting, undertake any agreed action and brief others as appropriate.

Why Meetings May be Ineffective

There are many reasons why meetings are not effective, some of these include:

- The meeting is unnecessary and revolves around discussion of trivial issues, thus wasting members' valuable time.
- The meeting lacks a clarity of purpose, i.e., the aims and objectives are not clearly defined.
- Inappropriate style of leadership, i.e., the chairperson/facilitator dominates and closes down or disregards other contributions.
- The chairperson/facilitator exercises little control and allows one or two members to dominate the proceedings.
- The meeting is too large thereby limiting the flow of discussion and preventing all members being able to contribute.
- Decisions emerge that are not truly representative.
- Problems are talked about rather than being talked through.
- Decisions are delayed or not acted upon.
- No clear-cut decisions are made.
- Minutes are inaccurate or seen as being manipulated by the chairperson/facilitator or secretary for his/her own purposes.
- The wrong people are present, thus preventing the meeting proceeding effectively, e.g., those present have to refer back to another person and are therefore unable to comment effectively.

Summary

There are many types of meetings and many reasons why meetings may be ineffective.

For meetings to be effective, participation is required from all those present. The key skills of interpersonal communication and listening are important.

To ensure the success of a meeting, good preparation is essential, and the role of the chairperson/facilitator is paramount. If these conditions are met, then all participants should leave the meeting feeling a sense of accomplishment, not as if their time has been wasted.



The Secretary

- Take the minutes of the meetings
- Contact people and tell them when the next meeting is being held
- Ensure the Agendas are prepared in liaison with the Chairperson/facilitator
- Deal with any correspondence for the Committee

There are a number of things that the secretary needs to know before a meeting, most of which can easily be found out by asking the person due to chair/facilitate the meeting.

The most important are:

- Who is expected to make the arrangements for the meeting, including finding a venue and arranging for suitable refreshments and any AV facilities? This is often the secretary.
- Who is responsible for preparing the agenda? Each chairperson/facilitator will have their own preference, but this is also usually a secretarial responsibility, working with the chairperson/facilitator. There may be other people who have a right to add items to the agenda. See our page: [Setting an Agenda](#) for more information.
- The secretary has a role in making sure that the agenda is not overloaded, which may include discussing with the chairperson/facilitator and others what could be postponed to a later meeting, and what could be covered in a written report.
- What type of notes or minutes are required? Do they need to be formal minutes that set out who said what, or brief notes that record the agreed actions?
- How quickly do notes or minutes need to be produced and circulated after the meeting?
- What is the process for clearing the notes for publication? Some chairperson/facilitator like to approve minutes before they are sent further, while others prefer them to be circulated to several key attendees at the same time.

If you are new to your role as secretary, it is also worth finding out who is expected to attend, the organisations that they represent, and some of the issues which have been raised at previous meetings.

- This will help you understand what's going on. You can do this by looking at past minutes of meetings, and also asking the chairperson/facilitator what is likely to be discussed.
- The secretary is responsible for sending out the paperwork for the meeting. This will include, but is not limited to, the agenda, the minutes of the last meeting, and any papers for discussion or information.

On the Day of the Meeting

On the day of the meeting, there are several things that the secretary will need to do:

- Make sure that you know who is expected to attend the meeting.
- Get to the venue early and check that everything is OK. If you're responsible for the meeting arrangements, make sure that everything is there, the room is laid out correctly, any AV equipment is working, there are enough chairs, and any refreshments have arrived.
- You may want to give some thought to who sits where, and even mark a seating plan, as this makes a huge difference to the way that the meeting runs. You should ensure that the chair/facilitator is sitting centrally and that you are seated next to them.

- Make sure you have plenty of spare copies of papers for those who haven't brought a copy. If there are a lot of papers it may be appropriate to arrange them in a folder using page/section numbers so that participants can easily find papers related to the current discussion.
- If you are using name badges, set them out in alphabetical order on a table by the door, where attendees can pick them up as they arrive.
- Taking the Minutes of a Meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

- The minutes will need to include a full list of those present, and all who sent apologies.
- To save you scribbling frantically as people introduce themselves around the table, circulate a sign-up sheet asking people to give their names, organisations and contact details. Note down any apologies for absence provided during introductions: people often introduce themselves as "So-and-so's replacement and, by the way, he/she sends their apologies".

The Main Business

- How you take notes in the meeting depends on how formal the minutes need to be.
- If you are only reporting a brief summary of the discussion, plus any action points, then you can afford to listen to the discussion and then summarise it in note form.
- If, however, you are expected to write down the main points made by individual speakers, then you will need to make a fuller set of notes, including the speakers' names or initials.
- It's a matter of choice whether you use a laptop or pen and paper to make notes, although it's as well to check with the chair/facilitate in advance.

Handy Hints for Minute Writing

- Develop your own shorthand for key words or phrases or jargon in your field so that you can just use initials for common phrases.
- Use initials to identify speakers in your notes. If you're not sure of the name, use the organisation: nobody will object to being identified as 'Representatives from x organisation', but unattributed views could get you into trouble.
- If several people make the same point, just add 'X & Y agreed'.
- See our page: Note-Taking for more information.



Supporting the Process

It is the job of the chairperson/facilitator to manage the process of the meeting, but there are several things that the secretary can do to help.

These include:

- Quietly pass a note to the chairperson/facilitator highlighting any issues with the timing of the agenda, or slippage, or when coffee is due to arrive.
- Recap and summarise the discussion. This is particularly helpful when people are starting to make the same points again.
- Ask for clarification of a particular point if you don't understand it. The chances are that if you don't, others won't either and, anyway, you need to understand it to minute it correctly.
- Once an action has been agreed, check who is going to undertake it. It is not uncommon for a meeting to agree that action is necessary, and what that action is, without assigning who is responsible for it. You, as secretary, can ensure that this does not happen.
- Depending on the type of organisation, whether you are at a fairly junior level, or the role is voluntary and you're an elected member of a committee, it's probably best to discuss these responsibilities with the chairperson/facilitator in advance to make sure that your intervention will be welcomed.

After the Meeting

Now the work really starts!

- It's best to start writing minutes as soon as possible after the meeting. However transparent your notes seemed in the meeting, they won't be nearly as clear 24 hours later, and if you leave them for two weeks you will wonder whether that was actually you in the meeting.
- Minutes should follow the order of the agenda. Even if someone revisited a particular topic later on in the meeting, you should include that discussion under the original agenda item. Make sure that you include all the key points made in discussion, any decisions made, and actions agreed, together with who is responsible for actions.
- It is a matter of style whether you use first names, titles plus surnames, or initials to refer to those speaking. Check with the chairperson/facilitator or look at past minutes to see what has been done before and use the same approach consistently.

Checking and Approving

If you're new to minute writing, it may be advisable to send the minutes to one or two trusted people to check and comment on before you circulate them more widely.

- One of these people should probably be the chairperson/facilitator, unless they themselves have asked you to send them to someone else first. Once the minutes have been approved by the chairperson/facilitator, they can be circulated more widely to the attendees and, if necessary, published on a website. Be aware that attendees may wish to correct any errors, and corrections will need to be incorporated in the next set of minutes.

Minutes should be circulated as soon as possible after a meeting.



The Treasurer

- Opens a bank account for the Residents' Association
- Collect membership fees
- Pay bills
- Keep accounts
- Prepare final statements for Annual General Meeting

What is the Role of the Treasurer?

The Treasurer has a watchdog role over all aspects of financial management, working closely with other members of the Management Committee to safeguard the organisation's finances.

It is important to note that although the Treasurer ensures that these responsibilities are met, much of the work may be delegated to a finance sub-committee and paid staff or volunteers.

In summary, the Treasurer is responsible for:

- General financial oversight
- Funding, fundraising and sales
- Financial planning and budgeting
- Financial reporting
- Banking, book keeping and record keeping
- Control of fixed assets and stock

Given these responsibilities, the Treasurer typically acts as an information and reference point for the chairperson/facilitator and other committee members: clarifying financial implications of proposals; outlining the current financial status; and retrieving relevant documentation.

Main responsibilities of the Treasurer

Each Committee will have its own way of doing things, and the way in which work is shared out can also depend on the skills, interests or amount of time that a person has to offer. Always ensure that the role description for your Treasurer matches the current dynamics of your organisation.





The following points outline the typical financial responsibilities of a Treasurer:

1. General financial oversight

- Oversee and present budgets, accounts and financial statements to the management committee
- Liaise with committee about financial matters
- Ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place
- Ensure that record-keeping and accounts meet the conditions of funders or statutory bodies
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation

2. Funding, fundraising and sales

- Advise on the organisation's fundraising strategy
- Ensure use of funds complies with conditions set by funding bodies
- Ensure fundraising and sales complies with relevant legislation and is bound by effective financial systems and controls
- Ensure effective monitoring and reporting

3. Financial planning and budgeting

- Prepare and present budgets for new or ongoing work
- Advise on financial implications of strategic and operational plans
- Present revised financial forecasts based on actual spend

4. Financial reporting

- Present regular reports on the organisation's financial position
- Prepare accounts for audit and liaising with the auditor, as required
- Present accounts at the AGM
- Advise on the organisation's reserves

5. Banking, book-keeping and record-keeping

- Manage bank accounts
- Set up appropriate systems for book-keeping, payments, lodgements & petty cash
- Ensure everyone handling money keeps proper records and documentation

6. Control of fixed assets and stock

- Ensure proper records are kept
- Ensure required insurances are in place
- In all of these areas the Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that effective financial systems and procedures have been established, are being consistently followed and are in line with best practice and legal requirements





Delegating financial responsibilities

It is not good practice for all tasks associated with the finance function to be performed by one person (whether a committee member or staff) without supervision from others. For this reason, it is good practice for both small and large organisations to set up a finance sub group to manage and monitor their finances (see below).

How this happens will depend on the size and dynamics of your organisation. For example:

Even if the Treasurer and finance sub-committee carry out much of the work, final responsibility for the organisation's finances rests with the Committee as a whole. All members are accountable.

Does your committee take an active role in financial management? Use this handy checklist to find out.

In small organisations with no staff....

...the finance sub group could consist of the Treasurer and 1 or 2 other members of the committee. The Treasurer often chair/facilitate and gives leadership to the finance sub group. This provides an opportunity for those with no experience of finance matters to develop their knowledge and skills.

In larger organisations...

...the finance sub group could consist of the Treasurer and 1 or 2 other members of the committee, responsible for financial management and fund raising.

The financial duties undertaken by people/groups in the organisation should reflect levels of authority and responsibility. The committee should identify:

- which tasks need to be performed;
- who will undertake the tasks;
- how will they be monitored.

The Officers

- Other officers can be elected to spread the load of the tasks. As you can see from the descriptions of the jobs, many of the tasks can be divided up and given to other members to help out with. This can be agreed at the meeting and invite more volunteers to help out with some of the administration work or collection of fees.

How to conduct a meeting?

There must be an Agenda, which is designed to identify topics for discussion; this must be distributed to all members of the Residents' Association, at least a week before a meeting. The chairperson/facilitator controls the meeting to ensure that every topic is discussed, and every opinion is heard. The Agenda should also provide time to review and agree minutes of previous meetings, which the chairperson/facilitator signs and the Secretary will keep.

What if we can't agree on a decision?

If the meeting cannot agree on a topic, either a show of hands or a private ballot must reach a decision. The chairperson/facilitator will accept a majority decision. If the vote is equal the chairperson/facilitator has the casting vote and the Secretary will record the decision of any vote.



Facilitator vs Chairperson -

What's the difference?

The difference between facilitator and chairperson is that a facilitator is a person who helps a group to have an effective discussion without taking any side of the argument, especially in order to reach a consensus. A facilitator is a person who helps a group of people to work together better, understand their common objectives, and plan how to achieve these objectives, while a chairperson is someone who presides over a meeting, board, etc.

While, in reality, the Chair and the Facilitator are often the same person, each role has different and distinct responsibilities. The Chair is the elected (or appointed) head of the team. The Chair is responsible for the meeting's outcomes and work product. The facilitator is responsible for the process of the meeting(s). This includes making sure that the ground rules are being followed, the agenda is being followed and the participants are engaged and on-task.

When might the Chair choose to facilitate him/herself or ask another member of the group to facilitate?

- When a group is experienced in working together,
- the purpose of the meeting is clearly defined, and
- the agenda contains little chance for conflict or complicated processes.

When would it make sense to invite an outside facilitator?

- When the group is newly forming and/or trying to determine their purpose,
- there is a complicated agenda item, or
- the possibility of conflict is high.

One of the most valuable tools a person can have on a committee is the ability to facilitate effective meetings in order to make the most of the time your group/committee spends together.

Healthy committees meet frequently to discuss issues, problems, solutions and decisions that need to be taken together. Sometimes meetings can also be for the purpose of educating the members or to share information with each other.

Regardless of the type of meeting or the purpose, facilitating meetings effectively can reach conclusions, make decisions and solve problems.

Being a facilitator means that you need to do some work before the meeting in terms of sending the agenda, setting the purpose etc. You would also need to do some work after the meeting is over, such as circulating the minutes of the meeting and following up on any action items.

A meeting has three parts and you will use different techniques to facilitate each portion:





Tips to Facilitate Meetings

1. What is facilitation and why you should do it?

Facilitation is a process through which a facilitator will guide the members of a meeting to share ideas, opinions, experiences and expertise in order to achieve a common goal and agreeable action plan.

Facilitation allows the group to reach a higher level of thinking and planning, as well as focusing on commitment to the decisions made during the meeting.

- As a facilitator you must be able to:
- Make everyone in the meeting feel comfortable
- Encourage participation
- Prevent and manage conflict
- Listen, observe and guide the group
- Ensure that quality decisions are made
- Ensure that the meeting is focused on the outcome

2. What to do before the meeting?

- Clarify the purpose of the meeting
- List the desired outcomes of the meeting at the top of the agenda
- Determine how much time you have available for the meeting
- Design an agenda which will accomplish the outcomes you have written down keeping in mind the timelines you have.

3. What to do at the beginning of the meeting?

- Clarify the purpose and outcomes with the group, you can use statements like “the purpose of today’s meeting is to...”, “During this meeting we will...”
- Make sure that the group understands and agrees with the purpose
- Review the agenda
- Set any ground rules for behavior
- Assign the roles of note taker and timekeeper
- Set times for different items on the agenda
- Begin by welcoming and introducing participants if they are unknown to each other.

4. What to do during the meeting?

- Use active listening skills and summarise key points occasionally.
- Ask questions to deepen or broaden conversations.
- Ask team members to clarify their points and check for understanding by paraphrasing what they say.
- Record what action is to be taken, who will do it, by when and what support is needed.
- Remind the group of the norms if people are talking at the same time or if the group goes off track.
- Put off track items in the ‘parking lot’ for later review and discussion.



5. What to do at the end of the meeting?

- Review and check for agreement on action items.
- Debrief and review the meeting by asking people how they felt about the meeting and what they think could be done better.
- Take up any issues that are pending and decide a follow up time and date to discuss them.
- Go through the meeting action items and agree on a follow up meeting date and time to review action items.

6. After the meeting is over

- Ensure that the meeting minutes are written up and circulated
- Follow up with people and make sure they understand the next steps that need to be taken.

7. Important meeting behaviour

As a facilitator your behaviour is important as it will be the lead for those in attendance. Set the tone for appropriate meeting behaviour by keeping these tips in mind.

- Use appropriate body language
- Use positive language through the meeting
- Make eye contact with everyone in the room
- Be polite yet firm when the group strays off topic or does not adhere to group norms
- Watch the time and keep the group on track
- Encourage people to talk by asking for their opinions or by asking questions

What is the difference between a Chairperson and a Facilitator

| The Chairperson | The Facilitator |
|---|---|
| Chairperson often has a direct and personal stake | Is impartial, looking only for a successful outcome |
| Relies on rules and procedures | Is rooted in common sense and courtesy |
| Identifies each idea with it's owner | Uses Teams & group dynamics |
| Calls for immediate valuation of input | Requires deferred judgement |
| Controls the flow of ideas and inputs | Ensures a free and equal voice for all |
| Is commonly rooted in mistrust | Is transparent and no hidden agendas |
| Frequently 'win-lose' | Aims for 'win-win' and consensus |
| Is open to manipulation | Ensures good behaviour, protects individuals |
| Underpins the 'sage-on-the-stage' | Offers a 'guide-by-your-side' |

Adapted from The difference between chairing and facilitating a meeting (from McCaffrey, 2004: 113)



Committee Skills



Committee Members - Responsibilities (and rights)

Committee members should ideally be trained on their roles, responsibilities and rights – this is often referred to as induction training.

It is a very useful teambuilding exercise to do regular training with all committee members to ensure that they continue to understand their roles, responsibilities and rights.

Every committee should be respectful to all its members and work in a spirit of collaboration for the greater good of the organisation.

As a Committee Member You are expected to:

- Find out if the committee has rules/ regulations - are these written down?
- Read and understand the rules and regulations
- Attend any training provided
- Attend meetings regularly - send an apology if you can't
- Read any material sent out in advance of a meeting
- Participate in decisions – ask questions
- Carry out any tasks you agree to take on - say beforehand if you are unable or unwilling
- Offer to lead if you have special skills
- Be loyal to the committee – respect confidentiality.
- Be respectful to all members of the committee and work in a spirit of collaboration for the greater good of the organisation

Understand your legal responsibilities as a committee member:

- Comply with all relevant legislation (charity, company, employment, children and vulnerable adults, health and safety regulations).
- Make sure organisation has correct and adequate insurance
- Make it your business to monitor budget/finances – ask questions, seek clarification (if insolvency results you may be personally liable)
- Remember you are accountable to the membership as a whole

As a committee member You have rights to match your responsibilities:

- The right to be respected
- The right to correct timely information
- The right to be heard
- The right to be consulted
- The right to respect and loyalty from colleagues





Roles of Committee Honorary Officers

Honorary Committee Officers

Honorary Committee Officers (or office-holders) are committee members with a specific role, acting in a voluntary capacity (they are not paid; although they may receive out of pocket expenses).

The key officers of a committee are:

- Chairperson or Facilitator (sometimes called the Chair/facilitator)
- Honorary Secretary (or just the Secretary)
- Honorary Treasurer (or just the Treasurer)

It is strongly recommended that these key officer roles also have deputies e.g. Vice or Assistant Treasurer/Secretary/ chairperson/facilitator. In order to spread the workload, be inclusive and share the responsibility and decision making. Some committees may also have additional officer roles, such as Minutes Secretary; Membership officer; Press and Public Relations Officer, Equality Officer, Development Officer etc.

Election of Officers

The groups/organisations constitution/governing document should detail how committee officer positions are filled. Usually they are nominated and elected at the annual general meeting by the members present or at the first committee meeting after the AGM by the elected committee.

Planning a meeting

Having in place an agreed procedure for meetings will make meetings more efficient and effective. Similarly, in addition to the agenda, committees may draw up a set of standing orders in line with group constitution/governing document to outline procedures at meetings. When standing orders or procedures are decided upon, they should not be changed from meeting to meeting.

Meetings will be more efficient and effective when members:

- Have received the minutes in a timely manner
- Have added any key item to the agenda in advance
- Have studied the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for the forthcoming meeting before, and not at, the meeting
- Arrive in good time for the meeting
- One voice at a time – be respectful and discuss business at the meeting through the chairperson/facilitator
- Follow the guidance and abide by the rulings of the chairperson/facilitator





Constitution





Constitution – Group/Committee Rules

this is its governing document

A group's Constitution is its main governing document; it is a set of rules of how it does its business. This is the document which keeps everything on track and the document referred to if there is any issue in relation to how things are being done. The constitution is a key document which should be approved at the group's Annual General Meeting. The constitution document is where the committee's powers are described and from where they understand their role and function.

Not every group may have a detailed constitution from the beginning; but it is strongly advised to create one and to review it at regular intervals to ensure it still fits the operations/work of the group.

It should be noted that depending on legal structure, this key governance document may be either a constitution, trust deed, memorandum and articles of association, rules or another document.

Regardless of its name the key group governance document of an organisation usually includes:

- The objects of the group/organisation – that is, its reason for being – why was it set up or established. This is also sometimes called its aims or purposes.
- Member - Who is eligible to apply to become a member of the organisation.
- The rights of the members in the organisation. (Voting at AGMs for example).
- How is the committee elected/appointed or constituted?
- What is the term of office of the committee – how long can they stay on the committee. Can they do more than one term? Do they have to be reelected each time?
- How and when general meetings of the whole membership are called, and what business is to be conducted at annual general meetings.
- How the finances/budgets are to be controlled
- How the Constitution/governing document can be altered or how often it is reviewed and that any changes must be approved by all members.
- How conflicts of interest are handled.
- How grievances are handled.
- How the organisation may be wound up or dissolved.

A Group Constitution/governing document normally recognises that:

- It is usually not practical for all the members of a group to run it (except perhaps in a very small group) – Although members should have a say in its running!
- The members' powers are, therefore, delegated to a committee made up of some members, and the committee acts in the name of (on behalf of) all the members. – The committee should be nominated and elected by members.
- Importantly in terms of good governance; some powers are not delegated to a committee, but are held onto by the whole membership, e.g. election of a committee, altering the constitution, deciding to dissolve the organisation.
- Equally importantly - The committee is answerable to the members meeting together at an annual general meeting (AGM) or a special or emergency general meeting (EGM).





Sample Group Constitution

A constitution is a set of rules governing how the association and its officers behave. Whether or not you decide to be a formally recognised group, we advise you to agree a constitution so that you can be clear about what your members can expect from your group and its officers. Below is a sample constitution based on a Residents Association – it can be adapted to suit any community or voluntary group. A constitution can include the following:

Name of Association

Aims of the Community/Voluntary Group

To promote the interests of the members of Residents Association

To promote social..... activities for the members of estate

Membership

The Residents' Association shall represent more than 50% of the residents of the estate; membership is limited to residents of the estate

Equal opportunities

Membership shall be open to all residents, irrespective of their race, appearance, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief.

Membership Fees

All members shall pay an annual fee of €... per year or €... per month

Committee

- The committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the Association
- The committee will be made up of the following: chairperson/facilitator, vice chairperson/facilitator, Secretary, Treasurer
- The committee shall meet times per year
- The minutes of Committee meetings shall be made available to all members of the association
- Vacancies on the Committee which arise during the year shall be filled by elections at General Meetings

Annual General Meeting

- The annual General Meeting shall be held everyat which time the committee will report its work, present a statement of accounts and then resign
- The AGM will elect a new Committee and vote on any amendments to the constitution.
- Nominations for the committee will be given to the Secretary not less than 14 days before the AGM
- The Secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than 14 days before the AGM.





General Meetings

- There will be a General meeting open to all members every times a year
- A Special General Meeting open to all members will be held if 25% of members submit in writing to the Secretary a request for such a meeting. The Secretary will then endeavour to arrange the meeting to take place within 14 days
- The Secretary will notify the date of all General Meetings not less than 5 days before the meeting

Quorum

- No General Meeting or Annual Meeting shall be valid if less than 25% of members present
- No Committee Meeting shall be valid if less than one third of the Committee are present

Voting

- Voting at Committee Meetings shall be by a show of hands, unless otherwise resolved
- Voting at General Meetings shall be by secret ballot
- A simple majority of votes shall prevail
- It must be decided if there will be one vote per household or each member of the association has voting rights
- In the events of equality of votes the chairperson/facilitator has the casting vote

Financial Records

- The Treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the Association. The account should have two signatories. (One must be the Treasurer and another member nominated by the Committee)
- The Treasurer shall keep proper financial records and produce annual accounts, which will be presented at the AGM
- The Treasurer shall submit accounts for audit at the end of the financial year

Changes to the Constitution

- The Constitution may be altered at an AGM or at a Special Meeting
- Suggested changes should be submitted to the Secretary at least 14 days before the AGM
- Changes must be agreed by 75% of the members whether present or not

Dissolution

- The Residents' Association may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- A proposal to dissolve the Association only if 75% of members agree
- Funds and possessions will be disposed of according to the wishes of the members or contained in the rules.



Jargon Busters – Committee speak

Here are some of the words which are used regularly by committees:

Governing Documents The documents by which the organisation is managed; include:

- **Constitution** - set out the aims and objectives of the organisation and the framework within which the organisation is managed.
- **Code of Conduct** - sets out the behaviour expected of members, particularly committee members, of the organisation
- **Equal Opportunity and/or Diversity Policy** - sets out how the association will involve all members of the community it represents.
- **Financial Policy** - sets out how the association will manage its finances in detail (some of this is contained within the constitution)
- **Agenda** - A list of topics to be discussed or noted at the meeting
- **Chairperson/facilitator** - The person responsible for making sure the meeting runs smoothly and keeps to topic.
- **Minutes** - A written record of the meeting; minutes become 'approved' documents once they have been agreed as accurate at the next appropriate meeting: i.e. next committee meeting for committee; next general meeting for open meeting (including AGM)
- **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** - Annual open meeting of a group to:
 - Report back to members on the previous years' work.
 - Present the accounts (verified or audited).
 - Accept resignations of committee.
 - Elect new committee.
 - Get members views on priorities for the coming year.
- **Proposer** - A person who puts forward a clear suggestion (sometimes called a motion) for a decision which is binding on the committee.
- **Secunder** - A person who supports the proposer's suggestion, thereby making a vote a requirement for the meeting.
- **Vote** - A count of opinions.
 - People can vote for or against a suggestion put forward or they can choose to abstain (not vote). If more people vote for the suggestion, then the point is carried (won) and vice versa.
 - If the vote is successful then it is binding on the whole committee to make sure it is completed, even those who have voted against it.
- **Quorum/Quorate** - This is the number of people required to make a decision on behalf of the members. It is usually stated in the governing documents (constitution). If a quorum is not reached then no decisions can be made.
- **Resolutions** - These are planned suggestions or motions – they should be separate agenda items and are usually important enough to expect all member to have a say, for example changes to the constitution; dissolution of the group.
- **Constituents** - The people that the committee are elected to represent; all those eligible to vote for committee members. Usually identified in the governing documents



Finance/ Revenue

You will have to raise funds to run the Residents Association/ Community Group. Initially these funds may come from membership Fees or donations. You should also outline the costs of running the Association/Group for the year. This will help you create a budget of income and expenditure for the coming year

Group Bank Account

You will need a bank account in the name of the group and the bank will usually ask for two signatories for withdrawing cash or signing cheques. These details will need to be updated and amended with the bank each time the committee changes.

The Treasurer must maintain a record of the accounting transactions in an accounts book and appropriate back-up arrangements should be made to avoid irretrievable loss of data. This can be easily done using monthly bank statements.

All monies and cheques received should be paid into the groups bank account and recorded in the account book. Receipts should be issued for any cash received. The accounts may have to be audited each year.

Registration with Revenue

There is a scheme of tax relief on income for certain eligible charities and other approved bodies, including sporting bodies. All Community & Voluntary groups will be required to register with revenue if they are going to be applying for grant funding from Government departments or local authorities. This is just a matter of filling in the required revenue form and forwarding to your local Revenue office. You will then be issued a tax number for the Group.

Tax Registration for Voluntary Non-Profit Making Organisations

This form should only be used where a voluntary non-profit making organisation wishes to register for tax. It should not be used by profit making groups, partnerships, companies, etc. who must register using either a form TR1 or TR2.

Complete all parts of this form as required in BLOCK LETTERS. * denotes a required field, where given options insert (X) in the boxes as appropriate. When completed sign the declaration at the end of the form and return it to:

Business Registrations
Office of the Revenue Commissioners
P.O. Box 1
Westford
eMail: businessregistrations@revenue.ie
Tel: 01 738 3630 or from outside Ireland + 353 1 738 3630

Note: Without accurate information the registration will be delayed and / or you may experience delays with regard to the documentation you require.

A 1 Name and Address

1. Name of group *
2. Address of group * (incl. Eircode)

A 2 Reason for seeking tax registration

Indicate the reason why the group is seeking tax registration at this stage - tick (X) relevant box

3. If previously registered state tax reference number used *
4. Application for tax clearance certificate * (if already registered for tax do not submit this form - complete form TC1)
5. Application for Section 980 certificate *
6. Other, specify *
7. Date of Commencement *

A 3 Responsible Person

8. Name of responsible person of group *
9. Address of Responsible person * (incl. Eircode)
10. Phone Number *
11. eMail *

A 4 Group Details

12. What is (are) the objective(s) of the group? *
13. How is the group funded? *
14. If any individual will benefit from the activities or finances of the group / organisation give details *
15. How are any surplus funds to be utilised?
16. Will the group / organisation apply for Charity / Sports exemption? * Yes (tick (X) box)
17. If you want your tax affairs to be dealt with in Irish, tick (X) the box

A 5 Declaration

I declare that the particulars supplied by me in this application are true in every respect.

Signed *
Name * (in BLOCK CAPITALS)
Capacity *
Date *

Additional Information

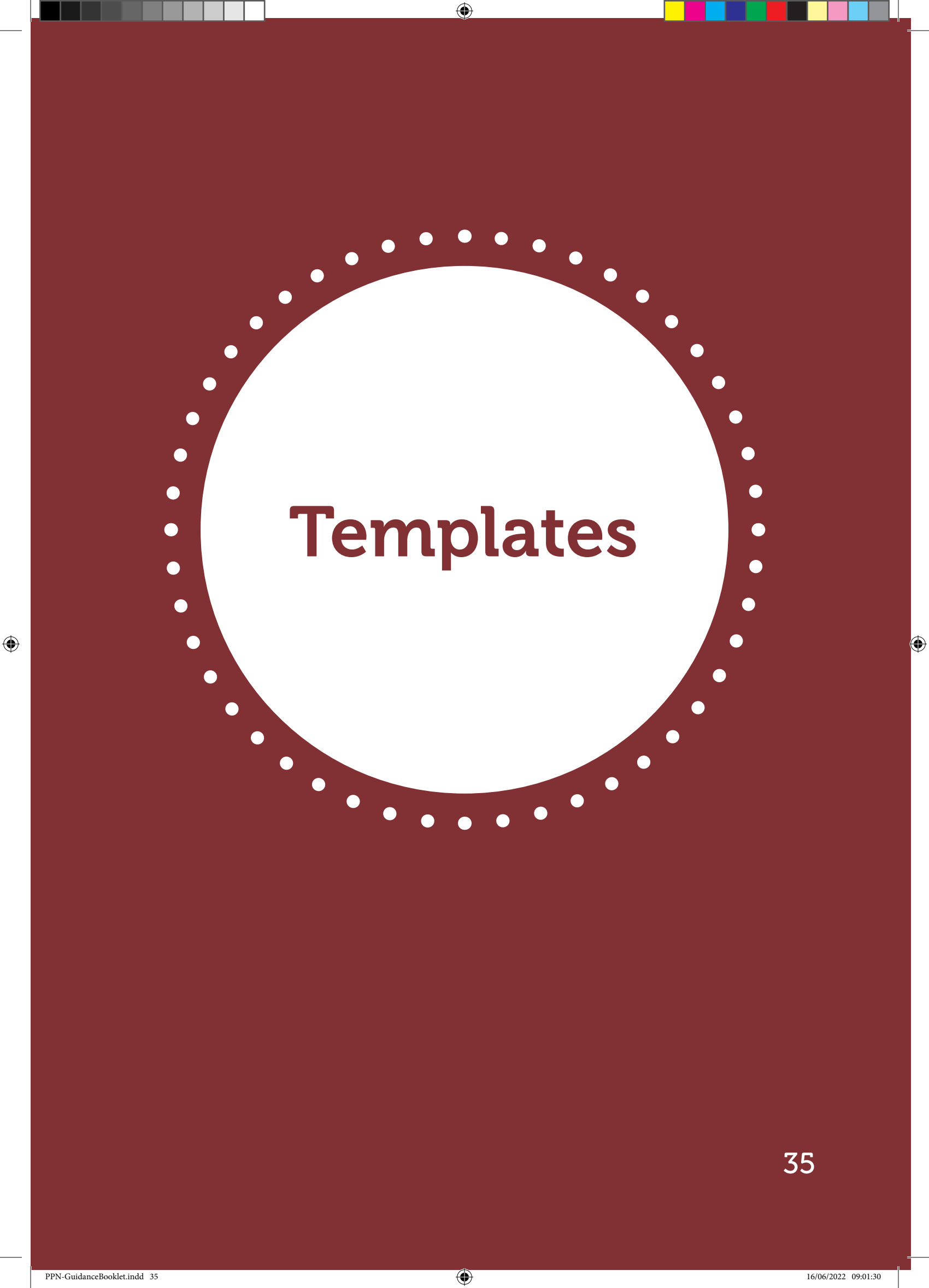
If you require further information on taxation in Ireland, please visit www.revenue.ie. Save time by filing on-line using our **Revenue Online Service (ROS)**. This is a self-service, internet facility which provides customers with a quick and secure facility to manage their tax affairs online 24/7, 365 days a year. Please note that certain categories of taxpayers in Ireland are required to pay and file their tax returns on line. See more on **Mandatory e-filing** on our website.

The Revenue Commissioners collect taxes and duties and implement customs controls. Revenue requires customers to provide certain personal data for these purposes and certain other statutory functions as assigned by the Oireachtas. Your personal data may be exchanged with other Government Departments and agencies in certain circumstances where this is provided for by law. Full details of Revenue's data protection policy setting out how we will use your personal data as well as information regarding your rights as a data subject are available on our **Privacy** page on www.revenue.ie. Details of this policy are also available in hard copy upon request.

Designed by the Revenue Printing Centre

By the way...
...Register with Revenue for Tax Number **ONLY** - does not require returns to Revenue.

Tax Registration for Voluntary Non-Profit Making Organisations can be found at <https://www.revenue.ie/en/starting-a-business/documents/reg-form-voluntary-non-profit-org.pdf>



Templates



Agenda

Sample Meeting Agenda:

1. Meeting Details:
2. Attendance:
3. Minutes of last meeting:
4. Matters arising
5. Treasurers Report
6. Agenda item (most important item)
7. Agenda item (second most important item) and so on
8. AOB (Any other business)
9. Date & time next meeting

Meeting Details:

- Group/Organisation Name
- Name(type) of the meeting (Weekly/Monthly/Quarterly/AGM/EGM etc)
- Date and time of the meeting.
- Venue:

Attendance:

- Record of Attendance: (Who is at the meeting)
- Apologies: (Those unable to attend)

Minutes of last meeting:

- Minutes of Last meeting (ideally circulated in advance)
- Acceptance or corrections/amendments to previous meeting minutes.
- Matters arising from minutes (not already on agenda)
- Sign and date previous meeting minutes

For each Agenda Item – (record decisions/action)

- Minutes should give brief overview each agenda item
- Decisions made
- Actions and who responsible for actions
- Next steps

AOB (Any other business)

Should be no need as should be already included on Agenda - AOB should not include weighty item, which require long discussion

Date & time next meeting





Sample Meeting Agenda

| No | Agenda item | Person presenting | Time allocated | Confidential item Y/N |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Apologies /Attendance | | | |
| 2 | Introductions if required | | | |
| 3 | Previous minutes | | | |
| 4 | Matters arising (not on agenda) | | | |
| 5 | Correspondence | | | |
| Items for Decision | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| Items for Discussion | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |
| Items for Information | | | | |
| 13 | | | | |
| 14 | | | | |
| 15 | | | | |
| Items for Next Meeting | | | | |
| 16 | | | | |
| Date/Time/Venue of Next Meeting | | | | |
| | | | | |





Minutes

Minutes are the record of a meetings attendances and decisions made – these are the key records of any organisation.

Minutes:

- Are normally taken by the Secretary
- Minutes should be an accurate record:
 - Attendance at meetings
 - Decisions made at meetings
 - Actions agreed at the meeting
 - Who is responsible for carrying out the agreed action(s)
 - Timebound – when is the action to be completed
 - Who reports back, to whom and when
- Minutes should be approved by Chairperson/Facilitator before being issued to all who had attended the meeting seeking errors/omissions
- Draft Minutes should be issued in a timely manner to all in attendance at the meeting – in advance of the next meeting
- Minutes of previous meeting should be an agenda item at every meeting; to be:
 - Agreed as a true record of last meeting
 - Proposed & seconded by people who had attended the meeting
 - Signed by the Chairperson/Facilitator
 - Filed safely by the Secretary

Below are the details which would be recorded in Minutes:

Meeting Details:

- Group/Organisation Name
- Name(type) of the meeting (Weekly/Monthly/Quarterly/AGM/EGM etc)
- Date and time of the meeting.
- Venue

Attendance:

- Record of Attendance: (Who is at the meeting)
- Apologies: (Those unable to attend)

Minutes of last meeting:

- Minutes of Last meeting (ideally circulated in advance)
- Acceptance or corrections/amendments to previous meeting minutes.
- Matters arising from minutes (not already on agenda)

For each Agenda Item – (record decisions/action)

- Minutes should give brief overview of each agenda item
- Decisions made
- Actions and who is responsible for actions
- Next steps

AOB (Any other business)

Should be no need as should be already included on Agenda - AOB should not include weighty item, which require long discussion

Date, time & Venue for next meeting

Minutes once approved should be signed, dated and safely stored as record of meeting and decisions made.





Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of

Location

Date

Time:

Present

Chairperson/Facilitator

Secretary

Treasurer

Members

Members

Member

Apologies

Absent

Minutes of the previous meeting held on the

Proposed by

Seconded by

Matters arising from the minutes:

1.

2.





3.

Correspondence:

New Business (as per agenda):

1.

2.

3.

Any other business (AOB):

Date, time and location of next meeting:

Signed by Chairperson/Facilitator:

Date:





Treasurers Report

Simple Treasurers Report

If you've been newly elected as treasurer for your Parent Group, Residents Association, Sports Team or any other volunteer-based non-profit organization, one of the first tasks you will want to master is the act of giving a treasurer's report at a meeting.

What to Prepare:

Create a simple printout of four points:

1. The balance at the beginning of the period
2. The income for the period
3. The expenses for the period
4. The balance at the end of the period
5. Any planned upcoming expenses

This is the digital age and you may want to save the expense and wastefulness of a print out.

However, we do find it beneficial to somehow distribute a copy of the report to all members. This could be as simple as an email or a running document in a shared drive.

How To Deliver Your Report:

- There should be designated time on the meeting's agenda for you to give your report. If there isn't, speak up!
- It is important for the treasurer to keep the board or stakeholders updated. Even if nothing major has changed since the last meeting, everyone should know what's going on.
- One reason for this is to provide transparency into the treasurer's activities to ensure honesty and prevent fraud.
- Once you've finished providing the information, ask if anyone has questions or concerns.
- The job of the treasurer is arguably one of the most important. Without someone carefully watching finances and budgets, the organization wouldn't be functional.





Sample Treasurers Report

Name of Group: _____

Month end (Monthly/Yearly): _____

Date: _____

A. Opening Balance:

Bank € _____

Credit Union: € _____

Petty Cash: € _____ Total: € _____ (a)

B. Sources of Income (since last Report) – (Grants/Membership fees etc)

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____ Total: € _____ (b)

C. Expenditure/Spending since last Report) – (ESB/Insurance/Rent/Equipment etc etc)

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____

_____ € _____ Total: € _____ (c)

Funds remaining = (A+B-C) Total: € _____

Treasurer: _____ Date: _____

Assistant Treasurer: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson/Facilitator: _____ Date: _____



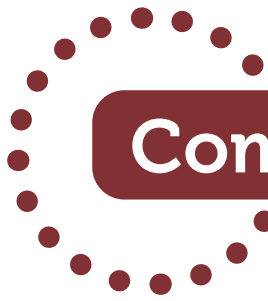


Action Plan

(Things We Need/Want to do) Template

| Our chosen actions are: | When will it be done? Now/Soon/Later | What are the things we need to do to make this happen? | Who is going to be responsible for making sure these things happen? |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Action 1: | | | |
| Action 2: | | | |
| Action 3: | | | |
| Action 4: | | | |
| Action 5: | | | |
| Action 6: | | | |
| Action 8: | | | |
| Action 9: | | | |
| Action 10: | | | |





Committee Self-Assessment

The following self-assessment is designed for you to reflect on your role, as a Committee member, and consider any areas that you would like further support or information

| AREA | YES/ NO | ACTION REQUIRED (how to improve in this area) |
|--|------------|---|
| Vision and Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Are the goals/aims, vision and mission of the organisation clear?•Are the values of the organisation clear?•Are you aware of the key issues & challenges? | | |
| Roles and Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Are the Committee role descriptions and expectations clear?•Do you receive the information you need prior to meetings?•Do you understand the group's financial position?•Do you feel you have an equal input into committee business and decision-making?•Is decision-making always in the best interests of the group?•Are conflicts of interest dealt with effectively?•If you are on a sub-committee, are you clear about your role, delegated authority and lines of reporting back to the Committee? | | |
| Legal Structure / Charitable Status <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Is your organisation's legal structure clear?•Is the purpose of your governing document clear?•Do you feel fully aware of your responsibility?•If a charity, do you understand what this means?•Is your charity meeting the public benefit requirement?•Does the committee source professional advice when needed? | | |





Additional Information Resources





Contacts/Directory

Westmeath Public Participation Network (WPPN)

Email: info@westmeathppn.ie

Phone: 044-9332157

Web: www.westmeathppn.ie

Postal Address:

Community Development Section,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Community Development Section Westmeath County Council

Email: dce@WestMeathCoCo.ie

Phone: 044 9332219/ 9332051

Web: www.westmeathcoco.ie

Postal Address:

Community Development Section,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Westmeath Heritage Officer

Email: heritage@westmeathcoco.ie

Phone: 044 9332098

Web: www.westmeathcoco.ie

Postal Address:

Heritage Officer,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Westmeath Arts Officer

Email: arts@westmeathcoco.ie

Phone: 044-9332260

Web: www.westmeathcoco.ie

Postal Address:

Arts Officer,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Westmeath Environment Awareness Officer

Email: environment@westmeathcoco.ie

Phone: 044 93 32166

Web: www.westmeathcoco.ie

Postal Address:

Environment Section,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Westmeath Sports Partnership

Email: info@westmeathsports.ie

Phone: 044-9390208

Web: www.westmeathsports.ie

Postal Address:

Westmeath Sports Partnership,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N

Westmeath Community Development

Email: info@westcd.ie

Phone: (044) 934 8571

Web: www.westcd.ie

Postal Address:

Mullingar ETI Centre,
Mullingar Business Park,
Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath, N91 X012



Useful websites

Westmeath PPN

www.westmeathppn.ie

- Information
- Funding
- Events
- Training

Westmeath County Council

www.westmeathcoco.ie

- Information
- Funding
- Community Supports
- Environment supports
- Heritage Supports
- Arts/Events Supports

Westmeath Community Development www.westcd.ie

- Information
- Training
- Community Supports
- Westmeath Volunteer Center

Charities Regulator www.charitiesregulator.ie

Creative Ireland www.creativeireland.gov.ie

Sport Ireland www.sportireland.ie

Volunteer Ireland www.volunteer.ie

Government Departments www.gov.ie

Revenue Commissioners www.revenue.ie



If you need any further assistance please contact us at:



www.westmeathppn.ie



044-9332157



info@westmeathppn.ie



**Community Development Section,
Westmeath County Council,
Áras an Chontae, Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath, N91 FH4N**

Westmeath
PPN



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

The Voice of the Community