**Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann**
Tipperary County Council

# TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

## Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019-2024

## Table of Contents

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

Strategic Policy Committees were introduced in 1998 as part of an ongoing process of local government reform and in keeping with the policy of broadening involvement in the local government through participation by community and sectoral interests.

Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) are local authority committees in city and county councils whose membership includes elected councillors, representatives of business, farming interests, environmental/conservation groups, trade unions and community and voluntary members. The Council is and remains the decision making Authority, and it is the task of the SPCs, as committees of the Council, to advise and assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. The remit of the SPCs is to deal only with policy matters and as such they are strategic in nature. They have no remit in relation to routine operational matters regarding the delivery of services. The SPC system is intended to give Councillors and relevant Sectoral Interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process from the early stages.

## 1.2. Corporate Policy Group (CPG's)

The statutory basis for Corporate Policy Groups (CPGs) is set out in section 133 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by section 48 of the 2014 Act. The CPG provides a forum for policy issues which transcend the remit of individual SPCs and municipal districts. The work of the different SPCs is co-ordinated through the CPG with membership comprising the

- Cathaoirleach;
- Chairpersons of each SPC; and
- Where the municipal district is not already represented, a member of such municipal district (as selected by the municipal district or failing selection, the Cathaoirleach of the municipal district or his or her nominee).

Acting as a link between the SPCs and the full council, the CPG will have an active role in the preparation of the draft budget; it will also determine whether a function will be discharged at the municipal district or authority level, where reference in relation to this question is made to it. It must also be consulted in the preparation of the corporate plan. The Chief Executive also participates and supports the work of the CPG. The role of the CPG is strategic and it links and co-ordinates the work of the different SPCs. The Cathaoirleach reports to the full

Council on work of the CPG; the Chairs of each SPC report back to their Committee similarly, as do the representative of each municipal district to their fellow municipal district members.

## 1.3. Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's)

The statutory basis for Strategic Policy Committee's (SPC's) is set out in the Local Government Act, 2001 (Section 48) as amended by Section 41 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, which provides that "*a Local Authority shall establish committees to be known as Strategic Policy Committees to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the Local Authority and advise the authority on those matters.*" Furthermore Section 48(1A) of the 2001 Act, as inserted by Section 41(a) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, requires that at least one of the SPCs that are established shall be to consider matters which relate to the functions of the local authority in relation to economic development and enterprise support. Tipperary County Council, at its Annual Meeting on 7th June, 2019, appointed 6 Chairs of Strategic Policy Committees.

In accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, there is a requirement that Strategic Policy Committees operate on the following basis:

- o Meetings should normally be held four times yearly at suitable times for all SPC Members, a calendar of meetings to be agreed
- o Have an annual work programme which should be linked to the local authority's Corporate Plan and updated regularly as necessary
- o Assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy
- o Reflect the major functions or services of a local authority within a broader context
- o Are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the local authority
- o Have a minimum one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committee's work
- o SPC Chairs should hold office for a minimum of three years which could be renewed by the Council
- o A Director of Service will attend meetings and provide support for each SPC.

A new draft scheme has been prepared, which provides for the proposed number, policy configuration, the numbers and functions of each SPC and an

outline framework for sectoral representation on the 6 SPC's which the Council propose to establish, namely:

1. Economic Development and Enterprise
2. Housing
3. Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services)
4. Planning and Emergency Services
5. Environment and Climate Action
6. Community, Culture and Library Services

The following factors have been taken into account in determining the overall framework of the SPCs for the Council:

- the total number of elected members on the council;
- the range of sectoral and other interests to be represented, including facilitating a reasonable spread of interests;
- the desirability of allowing adequate opportunity for participation by councillors and sectoral interests;
- the organisational arrangement of service groupings within the authority and the remit envisaged for each SPC;
- the need to ensure that the organisational and financial resources of the particular local authority are not over-stretched; and
- Integration with other meeting requirements and committee structures and ensuring streamlined procedures generally.

The proposed change in the configuration is also informed by a number of considerations including:

- Experience in the operation of SPC's within the last 5 years and the incompatibility of some work streams within the same SPC.
- The inclusion of an additional SPC to reflect current local and national priorities with particular reference to the need to prioritise the overall housing programme and delivery of housing objectives.
- The specific inclusion of Climate Action in the work of the SPC's reflecting the recent launch by Government of the National Climate Action Plan.
- The clustering of all infrastructure elements of our work programme within a single SPC.
- The clustering and full alignment of the work of the Councils Cultural Team with the broader community remits of the Council.

## 2. Role of Corporate Policy Group (CPG's)

### 2.1. CPG Structure

The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) comprises the Cathaoirleach of the authority as its chair together with the chairs of each of the SPCs and in the case of a municipal district without a SPC chair, a representative of the municipal district concerned. The CPG links the work of the different SPCs, act as a sort of cabinet and provide a forum where policy positions affecting the whole council can be agreed for submission to the full council. It is supported by the Chief Executive. The CPG does not act as conduit between the council and the SPCs as this could cause the CPG to act as an additional bureaucratic layer or bottleneck and lead to unnecessary delays. The Cathaoirleach represents the CPG at meetings of the County Council.

### 2.2. CPG Role

The role of the CPG is to advise and assist the Council, with full decision-making authority remaining with the Council. It is comprised of the Cathaoirleach as its chair, together with the chairs of each of the SPCs and supported by the Chief Executive. The CPG will in linking the work of the different SPCs, provide a forum where policy positions affecting the whole Council can be agreed for submission to the full Council. It should:

- play a key role in preparing the budget (see separate guidance on the Budgetary process;
- provide input to the full council on any matter of general concern to the council either on its own initiative or following a request from the council;
- determine responsibility for discharge of reserved functions as between the municipal district level (or a specific municipal district) and the local authority, where the question of consistency or avoidance of unnecessary duplication is referred to it by the Chief Executive;
- monitor the overall performance of a local authority;
- deal with overall issues in relation to service delivery plans, customer service, value for money, etc.(individual SPCs would deal with such issues in their work insofar as their particular service remit was concerned);
- co-ordinate the work of the SPCs and monitor their work programmes;
- request SPCs to consider particular policy issues where appropriate.
- provide feedback to the SPCs on council policy and views in areas relevant to the SPCs.

# 3. Role of Strategic Policy Committee's (SPC's)

## 3.1. SPC's and the Council

The Council is, and remains, the decision making authority, and the task of the SPCs is to advise and assist the Council in its work in the formulation, development and review of policy in relation to functions of a strategic nature reserved to the Elected Members of the County Council, subject to the relevant statutory framework.

While it is the task of each SPC to assist the Council in the formulation and development of policy, the final policy decisions rest ultimately with the full Council (Section 130 Local Government Act 2001 – 2014). The SPC system is intended to give Councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy-making process from the early stages, when policy options are more fluid. Therefore, much of the preliminary and background work, discussion and recommendation should be completed at SPC level for final consideration and ratification by the Council.

A key role for SPCs will be to focus on strategic issues and in taking a strategic overview of relevant policy areas in the wider context. Accordingly:

- Each SPC will agree its annual programme, linked to the strategic policies in the Council's Corporate Plan.

- SPC chairs will report to the Council on the proceedings of the Committee.

- Each SPC's work will take account of the Council's overall corporate policy and objectives, comply with statutory provisions, integrate with statutory plans where relevant, and link realistically to financial resources.

- Each SPC may decide on appropriate consultative arrangements, having regard to statutory provision, the interests already represented on the SPC and any guidelines provided by the Council.

- The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) should co-ordinate the work and monitor the work programmes of the SPCs.

The major advantage of the SPC system is that it involves the elected members and external representation in policy making from the earliest possible stage.

The SPCs policy making and strategic role is fundamental to the SPC concept. The SPCs are not involved in the day to day operation of the Council or other non-policy matters. They also have a function on other, non-statutory policy fields, such as urban, village and rural renewal plans, policy related to the development of work programmes and the establishment of priorities for particular services; consideration of the needs of people with disabilities in the formulation and implementation of relevant policies; integration of sustainability principles to particular services; in the strategic monitoring of local authority services, and must have regard to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

## 3.2. Assistance from Public Authorities

Section 48(3A) of the 2001 Act (inserted by Section 41(d) of the 2014 Act) empowers an SPC to seek the attendance of public authorities at a meeting for the purpose of assisting it in developing policy.

A request to a public authority to attend a meeting of a SPC should –
- set out the issue on which advice is being sought, including providing any policy papers of the local authority, or draft policy papers, and the linkages to the policy responsibility of the public authority and
- provide at least one month's notice, or shorter interval if mutually agreed.

The Act provides for the public authority to assist the SPC in the formulation of its policy by the SPC. The purpose of the provision is to give an additional resource in formulating policy and to strengthen linkages between local authorities and public bodies with wider responsibilities in the sectoral area in which the SPC operates. The invitation to attend at a meeting of an SPC cannot be used to query the public authority in the performance of its functions or duties.

## 3.3. Lobbying Act 2015 – Transparency Code

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (the Act) is designed to provide information to the public regarding who is lobbying whom about what. Individuals and organisations who participate in Strategic Policy Committees established by local authorities may have obligations under the Act.

A critical element of public policy formulation by the Strategic Policy Committees is the availability to the local authorities of expertise, skills and knowledge from persons outside of the public service. Where membership of the Committee comprises of at least one person who, for the purposes of the Act is a

Designated Public Official, it may be the case that communications within the group could be considered lobbying communications. The person making these communications may be required to register as a lobbyist and to submit a return of this communication to the Lobbying Register.

However, the Act provides for an exception from the requirement to register in such cases once specified transparency criteria have been put in place. A transparency code was published by the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform to address this situation. Communications between members of Strategic Policy Committee about the work of the Committee would be exempt where the group in question complies with the Transparency Code.

## 3.4. SPC Structure and Membership

Six Strategic Policy Committees are proposed as follows:

| Strategic Policy Committee's | Elected Members | Sectoral Interests | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Economic Development and Enterprise | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| Housing | 10 | 7 | 17 |
| Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services) | 10 | 7 | 17 |
| Planning and Emergency Services | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| Environment and Climate Action | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| Community, Culture and Library Services | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| | 62 | 40 | 102 |

Each SPC shall consist of at least 10 Elected Members and 8 sectoral interest nominees and 1 Councillor shall sit on at least 1 S.P.C.

The Council will appoint the Chairperson of each SPC. The Chairperson will hold office for a minimum period of 3 years and the overall spread of SPC Chairs must, in accordance with the guidelines, reflect the political representational spread on the full Council.

Membership of the SPCs (both Councillors and Sectoral Representatives) shall be for the lifetime of the Council. Casual vacancies which arise will be filled by the sector involved. Nominating bodies may also de-select their nominees.

## Sectoral Representation

The following Sectors will provide representation on SPC Committees, where appropriate:

o Agriculture / Farming;

o Environment / Conservation;

o Development / Construction;

o Business / commercial;

o Trade Union;

o Community / Voluntary;

o Social inclusion;

| TCC SPC Sectoral Representation 2019 - 2024 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strategic Policy Committee | Economic Development & Enterprise | Housing | Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services) | Planning and Emergency Services | Environment and Climate Action | Community, Culture and Library Services |
| | | | | | | |
| Agriculture / Farming | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Environment / Conservation | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Development / Construction | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Business / Commercial / | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Trade Union | | 1 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Community / Voluntary | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Social Inclusion | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **8** | **7** | **7** | **6** | **6** | **6** |

Sectors to be asked to bear in mind the objective of achieving a 40% gender balance in the making of appointments, as well as the need to foster social inclusiveness and equality when selecting their representatives.

The revised SPC configuration will be constituted on the basis as set out in **Appendix 1** to this scheme and will have as a minimum a total membership of 16 (16). Chairpersons will be appointed for a minimum period of 3 years and ordinary members will normally be appointed for a period of 5 years.

## The Nomination Process

The nomination process for the national pillar organisations (Appendix 2 refers) will be as follows –:

- The agricultural/ farming sector will be facilitated by the farming and agricultural organisations pillar,
- The business/ commercial and development/ construction sectors will be facilitated by the business and employers organisations pillar.
- The trade union sector will be facilitated by the trade union pillar.

With regard to the
- Environmental / Conservation sector
- Community / voluntary sector and
- Social inclusion sector

Nominations will be determined on the basis of the local nomination process through the Public Participation Network (PPN) – refer to Appendix 5. Member Organisations when joining the PPN at a county level must opt to be a part of one of three electoral colleges within the PPN:

- Environment
- Social Inclusion
- Community and Voluntary

To join the Environment Electoral College an organisation's primary objectives and activities must be environmental (i.e. ecological) protection and/or environmental sustainability. Membership of this Electoral College will be validated by the environmental pillar at a national level.

To join the Social Inclusion Electoral College an organisation's primary objectives and activities must focus on social inclusion/ social justice/ equality. Organisations whose primary objectives are other than those listed above will be members of the Community and Voluntary Electoral College.

The Council will provide sufficient time, information and facilities to the PPN, if required, to enable the nomination of representatives. Following the adoption of the SPC Scheme by the Council, each Sector will be given 1 month in which to provide details of their nominations to the Council.

The following principles should be respected by each sector in the selection of groups and associations for their particular sector including those being facilitated by the national pillars.

- Groups/associations should be active in the area or an area of the authority and have a county wide impact or, at a minimum, relevance in a locality or number of localities in the area.
- Groups/associations should be open to new members, hold AGMs and regular meetings, and should be broadly representative and accountable.
- Single interest groups should be eligible, e.g. campaign groups focused on the disabled or elderly. Single issue groups should not be considered for inclusion in the sectors.
- State and Local Development Agencies should not be included as nominating bodies to the sectors and should not be represented on an SPC. However, sectors may nominate persons from a local development agency to sit on an SPC.

## 3.5. SPC Meeting's and Procedures

Meetings of SPC's will normally be held on a quarterly basis; in any event, not less than 3 meetings of every SPC will take place annually. Meetings shall be conducted in an informal but efficient manner at venues and times to be decided annually in advance by the committee.

External nominees should be familiar with the subject area of their committees. Where agreement is reached on recommendations of an SPC to the full Council the Chairperson of the SPC or his/her nominee shall present the recommendation to full Council. The outcome of the Council considerations of the SPC's recommendation should likewise be reported back to the SPC and Sectoral Representatives should also report to their relevant bodies.

The ethical requirement of Section 177 of Local Government Act 2001 shall apply to all members of SPC (Disclosure by member of pecuniary or any other beneficial interests).

Each SPC shall have an annual work programme linked to the local authority Corporate Plan, which should target policy/plan developments and include for such reviews as are considered appropriate.

The SPC Chair and relevant Director of Service should meet in advance of an SPC meeting to clarify the agenda and to agree on objectives and what they

would like as expected outcomes. Documentation and agendas will be issued well in advance of scheduled meetings.

## 3.6. Expenses

The local authority will pay travel expenses to the PPN nominees to facilitate their participation in the SPC process.

## 3.7. Training

Tipperary County Council will make provision for the training of members of the SPC's, which include:-

- Briefings on the role and functions of local government and SPC's.
- Workshop's on policy to cover the various areas within the remit of the SPC's to develop their policy role.
- Skills orientated training e.g. Effective meeting skills, Policy Development / research and facilitation skills.

# 4. The Present Organisation of Tipperary County Council

A multiplicity of services is provided for a population of some 159,553 (census 2016) in an area covering 4,282 sq. km.

The functions and services of the council are classified into divisions, a broad outline of which are set out hereunder:

1. **Housing and Building**
   Assessment of housing needs; management and provision of local authority housing; facilitating the provision of voluntary housing; assistance to persons housing themselves or improving their houses; provision of traveller accommodation; enforcement of certain housing standards and controls for private rented housing and promotion of social inclusion measures;

2. **Road Transportation and Safety**
   Road upkeep and improvement to meet economic and social needs; public lighting; traffic management; safety education;

3. **Water Services**
   Provision and maintenance of quality water supply and sewerage schemes to meet economic and social needs on the basis of a service level agreement with Irish Water; assistance towards the provision of piped water supply and/or sewerage facilities;

4. **Development Management**
   Physical planning policy including County Development Plans, County Heritage Plans, County Landscape Character Assessment, County Retail Strategy; control of new development and building; promotion of industrial, commercial and community development, enterprise support, supporting partnership/joint projects;

5. **Environmental Services**
   Waste management planning, waste disposal and recycling; burial grounds; civil defence; safety of structures and places; fire protection; elimination of dereliction; pollution control, public awareness and community based initiatives;

6. **Recreation and Amenity**

Swimming pools; libraries; parks; open spaces; recreation play and sport; art activities; museums; conservation and improvement of amenities, community initiatives;

**7.   Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare**
The administration of the higher education grants, control of dogs and horses; food hygiene and other services of a social and community nature;

**8.   General**
Corporate management; local elections, register of electors, Motor Taxation;

Policies in relation to the above divisions are formulated, considered and recommended by the 6 Strategic Policy Committees.

1.   Economic Development and Entreprise

2.   Housing

3.   Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services)

4.   Planning and Emergency Services

5.   Environment and Climate Action

6.   Community, Culture and Library Services

## APPENDIX 1 - Framework

## The overall configuration of the Tipperary Strategic Policy System is as follows:-

| SPC | Councillors | External Sectors | Sectoral Interests | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Economic Development and Enterprise** | 12 | 8 | Agriculture/Farming | 1 | 20 |
| | | | Business/Commercial and Tourism | 2 | |
| | | | Tipperary LIT | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (2)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 4 | |
| **Housing** | 10 | 7 | Development/Construction | 1 | 17 |
| | | | Business Commercial | 1 | |
| | | | Trade Union | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (2)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 4 | |
| **Infrastructure (to include Roads, Transportation and Water Services)** | 10 | 7 | Agriculture/Farming | 1 | 17 |
| | | | Business / Commercial | 1 | |
| | | | Development/Construction | 1 | |
| | | | Trade Union | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (1)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 3 | |
| **Planning and Emergency Services** | 10 | 6 | Agriculture and Farming | 1 | 16 |
| | | | Business / Commercial | 1 | |
| | | | Development / Construction | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (1)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 3 | |
| **Environment and Climate Action** | 10 | 6 | Agricultural/Farming | 1 | 16 |
| | | | Business / Commercial | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network*<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (2)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 4 | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community, Culture and Library Services** | 10 | 6 | Agriculture/Farming | 1 | 16 |
| | | | Business Commercial | 1 | |
| | | | Public Participation Network<br>• Environmental/Conservation (1)<br>• Community/Voluntary (2)<br>• Social Inclusion (1) | 4 | |
| **Total** | 62 | 40 | | | 102 |

**Note:** * In relation to the Environment and Planning SPC's, the primary objectives/interests of at least 1 of the nominees should be environmental protection and/or environmental sustainability and said nominee do not necessarily need to be selected from the Environmental College Pillar.

## APPENDIX 2 - Nomination Process

The nomination process for the External Sectors is specified below. All the specified contact points will be invited to submit their nominee(s) to the Strategic Policy Committees by the end of September 2019. If any of the designated contact points fails to nominate their representative(s) by the deadline, Tipperary County Council will draw lots from the bodies approved for the specific external sector to decide on the nominee from that sector. Tipperary County Council will approve the new members of the Strategic Policy Committees at its October meeting at the latest.

## Nomination Process by Local Bodies

The Public Partnership Network (PPN) is to be developed in each local authority area (engaging in and within municipal districts and at the County/City level) to enable the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees of the Local Authority.

The PPN will be the main link through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors without prejudice to other consultation processes. The aim of the structures **(Appendix 5)** and processes is to facilitate and enable the public and the organisations to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system, not to reduce or homogenise this diversity. The forum is open to membership to groups in the county who are dealing with local needs in a range of areas – economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc. For the purpose of this structured public participation within local government, individuals may join an existing group or organisation or they can establish an interest group or organisation and register it with the PPN. Member organisations when joining the PPN at a county level must opt to be a part of one of three electoral colleges within the PPN:

- Environment
- Social Inclusion
- Community and Voluntary

The Public Participation Networks must operate in a manner that recognises that the sectors are broad and made up of people with many different opinions. It is not expected that the Public Participation Networks will come up with a 'one voice response' but that it will feed back the issues and suggestions raised by a broad range of environmental, community and & voluntary groups. It is recognised that where contradictory responses are presented to the local

authority, the ultimate responsibility for resolving these in the finalisation of policies will rest with the elected members.

To join the Environment Electoral College, an organisation's primary objectives and activities must be environmental (i.e. ecological) protection and/or environmental sustainability.

To join the Social Inclusion Electoral College an organisation's primary objectives and activities must focus on social inclusion/social justice/equality.

Organisations whose primary objectives are other than those listed above will be members of the Community and Voluntary Electoral College.

In the interests of equity and transparency, the selected members should be representative of local organisations active in the county, because it is the local perspective of the representative pillars that the members would be expected to bring to the SPC's.

## Nomination Process by National Pillars

As laid down in the Strategic Policy Committee Guidelines, representation from the National Pillars will be arranged as follows:

- Farming Pillar – Agricultural/Farming
- Business and Employers Pillar – Development, Construction, Business, Commercial
- Trade Union Pillar – Trade Union.

**APPENDIX 3 - National Key Stakeholders**

**Contact Details**

| Pillar | Name and Address | Telephone and e-mail |
|---|---|---|
| **Farming** | **Gerry Gunning** | **01-4500266** |
| | Irish Farmers Association (IFA)<br>Irish Farm Centre<br>Bluebell<br>Dublin 12 | gerrygunning@ifa.ie |
| **Business** | **James Kiernan** | **01-4004327** |
| | Chambers Ireland<br>11 St. Stephen's Green<br>Dublin 2<br>D02FY84 | James.kiernan@chambers.ie |
| **Trade Unions** | **Fiona Dunne** | **01-8171500** |
| | Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)<br>Head Office<br>31-32 Parnell Square<br>Dublin 1 | fionadunne@onemovement.ie |

## APPENDIX 4 - Principles

The following principles apply to:

### (a) Appointment of Tipperary County Council Members

i. Each Member of Tipperary County Council shall, as a matter of equity and good practice, have the opportunity to serve on an SPC.

ii. Council Members may not be nominated to represent sectoral interests.

iii. SPC Membership for Council Members shall be for the lifetime of the Council. A person ceasing to be a Member shall automatically cease membership of the SPC.

iv. Council Members shall not serve on more than two SPCs insofar as possible, again for reasons of equity and good practice and workload.

v. SPC Council membership shall reflect the proportionality and the local distribution of elected representation on the County Council.

vi. The Chairs of the SPCs shall be appointed by the County Council from the Council Member appointees to the SPC for a minimum period of 3 years.

vii. The allocation of the SPC chairs shall also reflect equitably the spread of elected representation on the County Council.

### b) Appointment of Sectoral Interests

i. Nominees shall be active within the area of the local authority and have a County-wide impact or, at minimum, relevance in a locality or number of localities in the area.

ii. Where appropriate nominating groups/associations must be open to new members, hold AGMs and regular meetings, and should be broadly representative and accountable.

iii. Nominating groups should also consider nominees from single interest groups where appropriate.

iv. Local Development Agencies represented at Strategy Group/LCDC level shall not be represented on an SPC.

v. Each sector shall select its own nominee(s). The nomination of sectoral representatives is the sole responsibility of each particular sector.

vi. It is desirable that sectoral nominees would retain membership of the SPC for the life of the Council. It is open to each nominating sector to deselect its nominee, if felt necessary, and to notify the Council accordingly whereupon the person would cease to be a member. In such cases the relevant sector shall nominate a new representative.

## APPENDIX 5 - Public Participation Network (PPN) Structures

## Outline of structure

The Public Participation Network (PPN) will be organised:

- At County/City level

- At Municipal District level

Each PPN will have:

- A County/City Plenary at County/City level which deals with county/city level issues

- A Municipal District Plenary in each Municipal District which deals with issues at a municipal level

- Linkage Groups which deal with specific issues

- A secretariat at county/City level that is a facilitation and communication mechanism.

Details on these structures are provided below.

## Municipal District Public Participation Network (PPN)

Under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, each county is divided into Municipal Districts. Each Municipal District will have a Public Participation Network (PPN).  This is made up of community, voluntary and environmental organisations within the Municipal District. These organisations work together on agreed objectives based on promoting the well-being of this and future generations. Where the local authority would find operation of the Network as sub-Municipal District level advantageous, this can be provided for.

## Municipal District Plenary

The Plenary is the ruling body of the Municipal District PPN and is made up of all registered community, environmental and voluntary organisations in the District.

Each Member Organisation will have one vote. They may select two people to represent them on Plenary of the Municipal District PPN. One of these people will be the main *Representative* and the other the *Alternate*.

The plenary of each Municipal District PPN will meet formally at least twice a year. The initial meeting in year one will be convened by the County/City Council after which the Municipal District PPN makes its own arrangements.

Each Municipal District PPN will commence its work by going through a process to set out what it considers necessary to promote well-being for present and future generations.

The PPN in each Municipal District has the freedom to engage as it sees fit in whatever way it wishes to promote local development and in this way it can harness local capacity and strengthen local development in a very real manner.

The Plenary of each Municipal District PPN nominates one person to the Secretariat for the County/City PPN.

Member organisations of the Municipal District PPN may also be members of the City/County PPN.

In order for the Network to work effectively, it is recommended that there is one County Register for all environmental, voluntary and social inclusion groups, a copy of which will be maintained by the local authority in accordance with Section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001.

All groups must be registered by an agreed date in any given year, in order to have voting rights in the following year.

Network registration forms should be completed annually by organisations in the Public Participation Networks (PPN).

## County/City PPN:

All registered organisations in the County/City are members of the County/City PPN. The PPN will be the main channel through which people will be selected to participate in various processes of the County/City Councils and their Boards/Committees.

Participants will be chosen by the PPN and should not be rejected by the County Council or any of its structures. Likewise, the Council or its structures should not bypass the PPN in choosing representatives from the social inclusion, environmental or voluntary sectors to sit on any of its Boards/Committees.

## County/City Plenary

At a county level the Plenary is the ruling body of the PPN

Member organisations are represented on the Plenary of the County/City PPN.

The County/City PPN Plenary will meet formally at least twice a year. The first meeting in year 1 will be organised by the Local Authority after which the County/City PPN Plenary will make its own arrangements.

Each Member Organisation will have one vote. They may select two people to represent them on the Plenary. One of these people will be the main *Representative* and the other the *Alternate*.

A Plenary Meeting shall be deemed a valid meeting if at least 15% of the Member Organisations are represented and also only if at least 4 of those present are members of the Secretariat. There must also be an automatic and guaranteed 21 days' notice of the meeting.

## Secretariat

Each City/County PPN will have a Secretariat whose role is to
- Facilitate the implementation of the decisions of the Plenary
- Ensure the proper functioning of the PPN in between Plenaries
- Coordinate activities of PPN
- Communicate extensively and regularly with all PPN members and in this process disseminate information concerning all PPN activities as widely as possible
- Manage the resource worker who will be provided to PPN at a county level to enable them in delivering their objectives

The Secretariat will meet at least four times a year.

The Secretariat will be made up of:
- one representative nominated from each of the Municipal District PPNs
- An equal number of representatives from each of the electoral colleges of the PPN, i.e. Community, Social Inclusion, and Environment. The minimum should be two from each.

The Secretariat should be provided with an office and have a resource worker. There should be provision for agenda-setting, including of matters of importance to the local authority.

## Linkage Groups

The Linkage Group mechanism is central to ensuring that:
- All member organisations are enabled to participate in shaping the decisions that affect them that are being developed by any structure of the County/City Council.
- All member organisations play a direct role in choosing their participants in County/City Council structures addressing particular issues.
- The views of all those involved will be communicated within the relevant County/City structure.
- All member organisations will be fully up to date with developments in all of these County/City structures.

This is how the Linkage Groups work.

1. When the County/City Council has public participant seats to fill on any of its committees/structures it will notify the PPN Secretariat and ask that the representatives to fill these seats be chosen by the PPN.

2. The Secretariat will then

- Notify ALL member organisations in the County/City of this situation, and
- Arrange a time and place for a meeting of all those organisations with an interest/involvement in the issue(s) being addressed by the particular body or, in the case of places representing particular interests of communities, those organisations which fit the relevant criteria. **This group will constitute a PPN 'Linkage Group' for this particular body and the topic(s) being addressed.**
- The Linkage Group will choose their representative(s) for the body.
- The person(s) chosen to represent the PPN in such bodies will meet their Linkage Group regularly.
- The Linkage Group should operate as their reference group on the issues arising.
- They will report back to the Linkage Group after every meeting.
- They will take direction from the Linkage Group on the positions they are to take on particular issues.
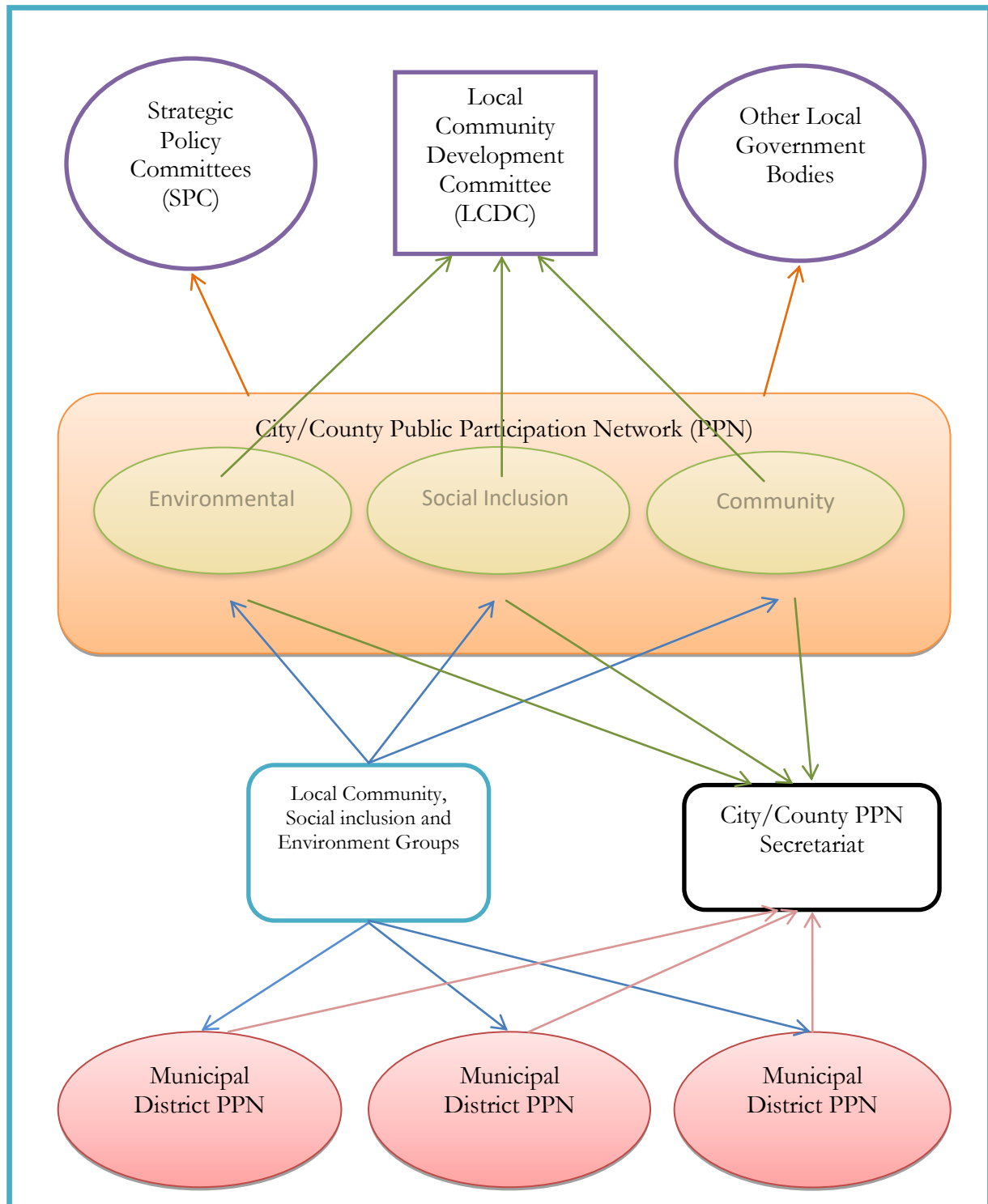
Each representative taking up such a position for the PPN must

- Represent the views of all the members of the Linkage Group and not just those of their own organisation.
- Abide by the communications protocols set out above.


The Diagram overleaf shows the relationship between the Public Participation Network Structures and Local Government Bodies - The arrows indicate nominating rights of the different bodies.  This is just an example as there are five Municipal Districts in Tipperary:
- Carrick-on-Suir MD
- Clonmel Borough District
- Nenagh MD
- Thurles MD
- Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel MD