



Mayo
Public Participation
Network

Constitution

Mayo Public Participation Network

Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Poiblí Chontae Mhaigh Eo

Constitution adopted: April 2021 and updated as per DRCD - March 2022

1. Introduction

The Mayo Public Participation Network was set up as part of the framework for public participation in local government and it has a statutory basis in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (Section 46).

It is the main link through which the Local Authority connects with the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups in County Mayo

Mayo County PPN aims to enable community organisations to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system, and to allow a diversity of voices and interests to be facilitated and involved in the decision-making process of Mayo County Council and other relevant bodies.

2. Objectives

Mayo PPN will work with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors to:

- A. Facilitate and contribute to opportunities for networking, communication and the sharing of information
- B. Strengthen these sectors' capacity to contribute positively to the community
- C. Identify issues of collective concern and ensure the sectors have a strong collective voice
- D. Acknowledge and promote the contribution the community, voluntary and environmental sectors make to society
- E. Actively support inclusion of socially excluded groups, communities experiencing high levels of poverty and communities experiencing discrimination
- F. Encourage and enable participation in local decision making and planning of services
- G. Take an active formal role in policy making and oversight committees of the Mayo Local authority.
Ensure clear and transparent mechanisms for the selection of members of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors to participate in policy making fora and facilitate elections onto decision making bodies.
- H. Facilitate a high level of accountability and feedback mechanisms to PPN members
Engage members in processes that will feed into policies and plans and provide a strong voice of community, voluntary and environmental sectors on local decision-making structures
- J. Support individual members of the PPN to develop their capacity to do their own work effectively and participate effectively in the activities of the PPN
- K. Act as the vehicle to gather feedback and input into policies and plans being developed by Mayo local authority, reflecting both areas of disagreement and, where there is no consensus, the range of views.
- L. Work to affect national and regional policies in collaboration with other PPNs.

3. Values and Principles

Mayo PPN will adhere to the following values and principles:

- A. Implement and abide by the principles of good governance structures, policies, and procedures Be inclusive of all volunteer led groups in the county and value diversity by actively seeking the inclusion of groups which may traditionally be marginalised. Work in a collaborative, transparent and fair way
- B. Be accountable to its member groups
- C. Be participatory in its approach
- D. Be open and transparent in its processes, procedures, dealing with member groups, representatives Local Authority etc.
- E. Act as an independent body from the local authority and of any other vested interests

4. Criteria for membership of the PPN

To qualify for membership, groups must fulfil the following criteria:

- A. Groups are not-for-profit and operate within the community, voluntary and environmental sectors.
- B. Have more than three (3) members.
- C. Have an appropriate governance structure e.g. a written constitution operating rules and procedures.
- D. Be a minimum of six months in existence. E. Be open to new members.
- F. Have a formal structure e.g. Chairperson, Secretary or Equivalent.
- G. Be active and have a postal address in County Mayo.
- H. Be broadly representative and accountable,
- I. Hold an Annual General Meeting and have regular meetings.
- J. Be non-party political, anti-sectarian and non-discriminatory.
- K. Be independent, with a committee or board (not a substructure or subcommittee).
- L. Are volunteer led [organisations can have paid staff, but must be under voluntary control].
- M. Be able to establish their bona fides as a community or voluntary organisation and provide documentation if requested to do so.
- N. Where a PPN Member intends to run for public office they must declare their interest and on formal nomination step down from the PPN for the period of the elections and can return if not elected.
- O. Renew their membership every year.
- P. Ensure to notify PPN Office of any changes in details of primary contact person for your group.

5. Mayo PPN Structure

- A. The Mayo PPN is organised at County and Municipal District Level and shall be composed of its registered member groups in the county.
- B. The PPN is made up of several interconnected structures, these are:
 - ✓ the County Plenary
 - ✓ Municipal Plenary
 - ✓ Linkage (Interest) Groups
 - ✓ and Secretariat and Resource worker

6. County Plenary

- A. The County Plenary is the ruling body and main decision-making body of the PPN and will consist of all PPN registered membership groups.
- B. Its role is to direct the operation of the PPN, setting overall PPN policy and processes and develop a wellbeing statement for current and future generations in County Mayo.
- C. It will meet a minimum of 2 times per year to review the workings of the PPN and set the agenda for the coming period.
- D. All future plenary meetings will be held virtually/online. This will enable more people to attend given the huge geographic area Mayo PPN operate in. This will also enable a more balanced, democratic and equal representation. In the event where there may be a requirement to holding a physical meeting, Mayo PPN will facilitate this option.
- E. Plenary Meetings are a forum for member groups to network and to hear about matters of interest to them.
- F. All PPN members are entitled to 21 days' notice of a Plenary meeting. G. The Plenary will adhere to the objectives set out in section 2.
- H. All Plenary members will opt to be a member of a voluntary, social inclusion or environmental college.
- I. Each member organisation may select two people to represent them on the County Plenary.
- J. Each membership organisation will have one vote at the County Plenary.
- K. A special meeting of the Plenary can be called if requested by two thirds of membership groups by petition of members.

7. Decision Making Powers of the Plenary

- A. The County Plenary hosts elections of:
 - ✓ PPN members to the LCDC through the electoral colleges
 - ✓ Other committees and decision-making structures by establishing and facilitating Linkage (Interest) Groups and electoral colleges
 - ✓ The Secretariat every 3 years, at a meeting of the County Plenary

B. The County Plenary also:

- ✓ endorses any reviews undertaken on the work of the PPN
- ✓ delegates the day to day running of the PPN to the Secretariat
- ✓ adopts and makes amendments to the PPN Constitution

Decisions made between plenary meetings, including the election of representatives, must be presented for ratification to the following meeting

8. Procedures for Plenary Meetings

- A. Plenary Meeting shall be deemed valid if at least 30 of the Member Organisations are represented. A minimum of 4 Secretariat members are present, and a minimum of 21 days' notice of the meeting have been given.
- B. A record of attendance and minutes will be kept for all meetings by the minute taker. A. Minutes of meetings will be published on the PPN website, following approval by the Secretariat.
- B. Plenary meetings will be facilitated/chaired by a person nominated by the Secretariat.
- C. If considered appropriate by the Secretariat, a non-member may be invited to attend a meeting and speak on a specific agenda item
- D. Motions for discussion should be submitted to the Secretariat 7 days before a plenary meeting A motion can be submitted by any registered member of the PPN, a Linkage (Interest) group, municipal plenary or electoral college.
- E. Decisions of the Plenary will be made by taking a vote. 30 member groups must be present to constitute a decision-making quorum for the purposes of decisions made at a Plenary. This is for in person or virtual Plenary meetings. That 30 groups present at the meeting have the authority to make the decisions on the Plenary night.
- F. A notification is sent to all the Plenary members of the decisions of that plenary. If less than 30 people are present, the people who are present will agree a position on the decision which will then be sent to all Plenary members. Plenary members then can vote for or against the decision. If no member comes back the decision of the members stands. The majority from both meeting and email responses — 50% + 1.
- G. If there is a tie in a vote, the chairperson will have the casting vote. The chairperson will act in accordance with the agreed view of the wider PPN membership.

Changes to the PPN Constitution as per the Department of Rural & Community Development:

Registration for meetings is mandatory and includes registration by members, Secretariat members and staff.

A Plenary Meeting shall be deemed a valid meeting if at least 15 per cent of the Member Organisations are represented and also only if at least four of those present are members of

the Secretariat. There must also be an automatic and guaranteed 21 days' notice of the meeting.

If a quorum is not available, those present may elect to proceed with either of the following:

Option A

- The meeting should be postponed and rescheduled for a more suitable date, no later than one calendar month after the date of the original meeting.
- In the event that a quorum is not present at the rescheduled meeting, and provided that those in attendance consist of a simple majority (that is, half plus one) of all groups registered to attend the meeting, the number of participants present will be deemed to be the quorum and the meeting will be validly held.
- No objections to proceedings, including resolutions, ratifications and decisions, of the rescheduled meeting shall be permitted on the basis that there was no valid quorum in attendance at the originally scheduled meeting.

Option B

- Determine that the current attendance at the plenary is sufficient for the plenary to proceed. Decisions made at this plenary will be validly passed by a simple majority (that is, half plus one) of those in attendance.

In any event, if over 50% of the Secretariat Members' terms have expired by the date of the holding of the Plenary meeting, or the rescheduled Plenary meeting, whichever shall apply, the requirement that the quorum include four Secretariat Members will cease to apply.

Every PPN must amend its Constitution to provide for the above in respect of a quorum.

9. Four Municipal District Plenary

- A. Mayo County is organised into four Municipal Districts (Castlebar, Westport/Belmullet, Claremorris/Swinford & Ballina).
- B. Each Municipal District Plenary is made up of all registered members (i.e. of the Community, Environmental and Voluntary electoral colleges) in each of Mayo's Municipal Districts which deal with locally based matters.
- C. Municipal District Plenary meetings are called by the Secretariat representative for each district. Each member organisation may select two people to represent them on Plenary of the Municipal District PPN and will have one vote.
- D. The Municipal District PPN will be guided by the vision, values and objectives of the PPN and report to the Plenary annually on their activities.
- E. Member organisations of the Municipal District PPN may also be members of the County PPN.
- F. A special meeting of the Municipal District Plenary can be called if requested by two thirds of its membership by petition.

10. Decision Making Powers of the Municipal District Plenary

The Municipal District Plenary can develop and submit policy proposals as agreed by their membership and can establish their own committee to coordinate the activities of the municipal district Plenary.

11. Linkage (Interest) Groups

Linkage Groups are the way that Mayo PPN members have input into policy in their area of operation and operate by bringing together member organisations with a common interest to discuss their diverse views and interests in a specific policy area.

All PPN membership groups have the option of joining one or more Linkage (Interest) Groups (to link with a specific committee/s where the PPN is being represented) The Linkage (Interest) Group:

- ✓ Discuss and debate issues of relevance to the committee
- ✓ Informs the representative on the committee of their views
- ✓ Reports to the Plenary annually, through a report issued by the Secretariat
- ✓ Should have the opportunity to agree the contents of the report, where agreement has not been reached this should be stated
- ✓ Encourage new members participation

The Linkage (Interest) Group representative

- ✓ Feeds back to the Linkage (Interest) Group
- ✓ Engage in 2-way communication on matters and in a variety of way including face to face, electronically and remotely
- ✓ Is accountable to the linkage Group
- ✓ Must adhere to the Representatives Charter

12. Decision Making Powers of Linkage (Interest)

Groups The Linkage (Interest) Group:

- ✓ Elects representatives onto the committees seeking nominations
- ✓ Can censure or remove a rep, if two thirds of Linkage (Interest) group members agree that they are not fulfilling the terms of the representative's charter
- ✓ Can develop and submit policy proposals as agreed by their membership

13. Secretariat and Resource Worker

The Secretariat is at county level and is broad and representative of the different geographical areas and the three electoral colleges [Environment, Social Inclusion and Voluntary] within County Mayo and reflective of the diversity of the membership and shall:

- A. Be made up of 14 members, 2 from each of the 3 electoral college and two from each of the 4 municipal district and be elected by the County Plenary.
- B. Facilitate the implementation of decisions made by the Plenary.
- C. Act as the coordinating body of the PPN and facilitate the PPN's day to day business.

- D. Facilitate and monitor effective communication between member groups and PPN representatives to ensure quality input into decision-making structures.
- E. Ensure procedures for elections are adhered to.
- F. Act as a support to representatives.
- G. Develop and oversee an annual work-plan for the PPN in agreement with Mayo County Council and carry out reviews as appropriate.

The PPN Resource Worker is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the PPN and for enabling the delivery of the aims and purpose of the PPN and in line with the agreed workplan.

14. Decision Making Powers of the Secretariat

The Secretariat of the PPN will:

- A. Make decisions in relation to the effective day to day running of the PPN, in adherence to the objectives set out in section 2.
- B. Establish appropriate sub-committees/task groups or other sub-structures to effectively carry out their functions. Sub-structures should have clear remits and tasks in order to avoid duplication of effort — the establishment of ad hoc groups that are task-specific and wound-up once the task is completed is encouraged.
- C. Manage and monitor the budget of the PPN.
- D. Establish financial and governance subcommittees, that will report to the Secretariat at least twice annually.
- E. Agree and oversee the implementation of the work plan with the local authority and review it regularly.
- F. Develop a communication policy.
- G. Appoint and manage staff for the PPN in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding agreed with the Mayo CC.
- H. Devise and implement an annual work-plan for the PPN.
- I. Establish processes for the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the PPN.
- J. Maintain the County Register of all membership groups, a copy of which will be maintained by the local authority in accordance with Section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001.
- K. Facilitate the establishment of Linkage (Interest) Groups by notifying all PPN members and organising meetings.
- L. Inform Linkage (Interest) groups/electoral colleges if a representative is not adhering to the Representatives charter.

15. Procedures for Meetings of the Secretariat

- A. The Secretariat shall hold a minimum of 4 meetings per year and will appoint a Convener and deputy Convener (see Secretariat Standing Orders).
- B. Attendance records shall be kept at meetings of the Secretariat and work reported to the Plenary annually.
- C. Any member from among those present may be chosen to act as convener for that specific meeting.

- D. The Convener will liaise with staff to set the agenda for Secretariat meetings.
- E. The quorum for all meetings of the Secretariat shall be one third plus 1 of all Secretariat members.
- F. Notice for meetings along with agenda should be circulated to members prior to the date of the meeting.
- G. All members can suggest items for the agenda up to 7 days before the meeting takes place.
- H. Minutes of all meetings must be adopted by the secretariat members, signed by Convenor (for that meeting) and a copy kept on file.
- I. Where possible, decisions of the Secretariat will be taken by consensus, but in the event of a vote being required, decisions will be carried by a simple majority of all members present.
- J. In the case of a tied vote the nominated Convenor for the meeting will hold the casting vote.
- K. If a Secretariat Member misses one meeting without apologies the Convenor will contact them. If two meetings are missed without apologies they will be contacted by the Convenor. If they miss a third meeting they will be asked to resign or give a letter confirming why they should stay on the Secretariat.
- L. The Secretariat of the PPN will remain in place for a period of 3 years, to establish the PPN.
- M. Elections will be held every three years, where all members of the Secretariat will retire their seats. A retiring Secretariat member shall be eligible for re-election; however, no Secretariat member will serve for period of more than 3 consecutive terms.

16. Membership and Electoral Colleges

- A. When joining the PPN, membership groups must opt to be a part of one of three electoral colleges within the PPN which represents their primary interest: Environment, Social Inclusion or Community & Voluntary.
- B. To join the Social Inclusion Electoral College an organisation's primary objectives and activities must focus on social inclusion / social justice / equality.
- C. 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 National Environmental Pillar.
- D. Organisations whose primary objectives are other than those listed above will be members of the Community & Voluntary Electoral College.
- E. Each college chooses two people to represent them on the PPN Secretariat and representation on the County's Local Community Development Committee [LCDC].
- F. Members are to be nominated to the LCDC from the PPN (two from the Community and Voluntary College, two from the Social Inclusion College and one from the Environment College).

G. All nominees who put themselves forward for election should adhere to the charter for representatives.

17. County Structures - Policy Making Bodies/Committees

Mayo County Council and other local bodies have a range of Policy Making Bodies, Committees and

Boards to support them in their work and policy development.

In County Mayo these decision -making bodies include;

A. Local Community & Development Committee [LCDC]

As per LCDC regulations it is prescribed that a minimum of 2 persons representing Community and Voluntary interests, a minimum of 2 persons representing Social Inclusion interests and a minimum of 1 person representing Environmental interests be included on the Committee.

B. Joint Policing Committee

C. Six Strategic Policy Committees

- 1) Tourism, Recreation, Food and Community Engagement
- 2) Corporate, Education, Culture, Heritage and Library services
- 3) Environment, Climate Action, Agriculture and Emergency Services
- 4) Roads and Transportation
- 5) Economic Development, Enterprise Support, Planning and Marine
- 6) Housing

Other committees may require community representation in the future.

Mayo County PPN have representation on these bodies/committees and when Mayo County Council and other relevant local bodies seeks representative(s) they contact the PPN secretariat with the details [See Section 19 Election of Representatives to County Structures].

Each of these committees have their own Terms of Reference/Standing Orders and PPN representatives should familiarise themselves with these.

18. Conflicts of Interest & Loyalty on Committees of the PPN

- A. Mayo PPN Members should demonstrate transparency in all dealings and act in an honest, fair and independent way.
- B. Committee members must disclose any conflict of interest or loyalty, be it personal, family, business or otherwise, in relation to a matter to be decided on by the committee.
- C. A conflict of interest arises when private interests compete with a committee members duty to act always in the best interests of the organisation.
- D. A conflict of loyalty is where a committee member is, or is perceived to be, influenced by considerations other than the best interest of the organisation.
- E. Any committee member who feels there is a potential conflict of interest or loyalty that is not being declared should raise this for discussion.
- F. If a disclosure of interest or loyalty is made at a meeting, particulars of the disclosure will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned, and or so long as the

matter to which the disclosure related is being dealt with by the meeting, the person by whom the disclosure is made shall not be counted in the quorum for the meeting.

- G. Where a conflict of interest is declared by a member, that member will leave the meeting temporarily and will not be entitled to vote on the matter in which they have an interest. Upon returning to the meeting the member will be notified of the decision by the Chair and no further discussion will take place.
- H. All registered conflicts will be recorded in meeting minutes.

19. Elections of representatives to County Structures

- A. The representation of Environmental, Social Inclusion, Community and Voluntary voices on decision making and advisory bodies is a core function of PPNs [Section 11 Linkage/Special/ Interest Groups].
- B. Having PPN representation on these committees is a huge advantage as it enables the concerns and experiences of the community to be incorporated at an early stage of policy development, leading to more positive outcomes. It also supports the monitoring and evaluation of existing policies within the county.
- C. When a position becomes available for a PPN representative on a county structure/committee, an election will be held.
- D. In all elections of PPN representatives, care will be taken to ensure gender balance and geographical spread of representatives.
- E. All nominations are made by member organisation and formally ratified at the Plenary meeting of PPN.
- F. Staff and Members of the local authority cannot be nominated through this process.
- G. If anyone nominated through this process subsequently declares as a candidate in electoral politics, he/she must immediately resign their PPN representative role and the runner up from the last election will replace them.
- H. A person who has been an elected representative of any level of Government (local or national) should not be chosen to represent PPN in any representative role for one year after completing their term of office.
- I. Individuals where there is a conflict of interest, cannot be nominated.
- J. The validity of nominations will be decided by the Secretariat.
- K. All PPN representatives should be guided by the Representatives' Charter and receive instructions through a linkage group to bring matters forward to the relevant structure he/she sits on, feeding back accordingly.
- L. A retiring representative who is required to step down will be eligible for re-election, however no representative can serve a term of more than 5 consecutive years.

20. Nomination Procedures

- A. Groups registered with the Mayo PPN will be invited to participate in nomination and election procedures, through the Plenary, Pillars, Municipal Districts or Linkage (Interest) Groups as appropriate.

- B. PPN membership groups will be given 10 working days' notice of a nomination and 10 working days for the election process.
- C. For the purposes of the election to the Secretariat, each PPN membership group is entitled to nominate one person for their municipal district and one person for their electoral college.
- D. For the purpose of elections to County Structures each PPN membership group is entitled to nominate one person from their municipal district and/or from their Pillar as specified on the request form from the County Structure.
- E. Nomination forms will be developed by Mayo PPN and approved by the Secretariat Committee. Nomination forms will be sent to each membership group, to the email address indicated on the PPN registration form via Microsoft Forms or e voting system used.
- F. Nomination papers will be sent to each membership group, to the email or address indicated on the PPN registration form via Salesforce.
- G. The Secretariat will decide on the validity of the nomination form and their decision is final. The Secretariat will notify groups who submit nominations they deem invalid.
- H. Nomination forms must be fully completed, by an officer of the nominating group, to be eligible for inclusion in the election. Officer is the chairperson or Secretary of a group. Email must include electronic signature.
- I. Nominations forms must be returned by the E voting system or post. Nomination forms must be fully completed and returned by the time and date as stated on the PPN nomination form. No late nominations will be accepted. All nominations are checked for eligibility. All eligible nominations go forward for vote.
- J. Where the same person is nominated for an Electoral College and a Municipal District, they will be asked to identify which position they prefer. No candidate can contest two seats.
- K. When the number of nominations received exceeds the number of seats available a ballot will take place.

All nominations are made by member organisation and formally ratified at the Secretariat.

21. Voting Procedures

- A. Nomination and election procedures will be issued by the Secretariat before each election. Members will have a mechanism to appeal procedures.
- B. All fully completed nominations received by the closing date, which are deemed eligible, will be put forward for the election.
- C. Link to the voting form will be sent to the primary contact person of all eligible groups as indicated on the groups PPN registration form. The ballot paper will feature details of the candidates as well as the formal voting process.
- D. If the named representative cannot vote, they can name an alternate. They must inform the PPN office of the name of the alternate.
- E. Each eligible individual can only vote on behalf of one organisation only. An eligible individual is the primary contact of the member organisation registered with Mayo PPN. If an individual is nominated to vote on behalf of another organisation, they must nominate an alternate to vote on behalf of the organisation to whom they are the primary contact. No individual can receive two votes.

- F. All fully completed nominations received by closing date, which are deemed eligible, will be put forward for the election. Postal votes must be requested 10 days prior to closing date of receipt of Ballot papers. The postal vote must be returned by 2pm on the closing date as stated in the ballot paper and in the pre-paid envelope supplied. If a postal vote arrives after the closing date of ballot, proof of postage is not sufficient to have the vote counted.
- G. Nominees will be notified of the outcome via email. The nominating group will also be notified of outcome via email. Officers will be appointed by Mayo PPN Secretariat and support staff from the Community Engagement Section of Mayo County Council to oversee the election and count the e-votes.
- H. Where the number of candidates nominated equals the number of seats, these candidates will be automatically deemed elected. (No ballot required for that Pillar/MD).
- I. Casting of votes/election will take place at via e voting: postal vote, survey monkey or salesforce.

A first-past-the-post electoral system is one in which voters indicate on a ballot, the candidate of their choice, and the candidate who receives the most votes wins. Where the number of candidates exceeds the number of seats, the person(s) who receives the highest number of first preference votes will be deemed elected, taking into consideration measures to ensure gender balance and a geographic spread of candidates, as appropriate. J. To ensure this, the allocation of seats will be as follows:

- 1) The first seat in each Pillar (Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion, Environment) will be allocated to the candidate with the highest number of votes.
 - 2) The second seat in each Pillar (Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion, Environment) will be allocated to the next highest polling candidate of the opposite gender. If there are no candidates that meet this criterion the seat will be filled by the next highest polling candidate.
 - 3) The first seat in each Municipal District (Ballina MD, Castlebar MD, Claremorris/Swinford MD, Westport/Belmullet MD) will be allocated to the candidate with the highest number of votes.
 - 4) The second seat in each Municipal District (Ballina MD, Castlebar MD, Claremorris/Swinford MD, Westport/Belmullet MD) will be allocated to the next highest polling candidate of the opposite gender. If there are no candidates that meet this criterion the seat will be filled by the next highest polling candidate.
- K. If a clear preference is not indicated on a ballot sheet, it will be deemed a spoilt vote and will not be counted.
 - L. In the event of a tie, the successful candidate will be determined by lot. The names of the tied candidates will be put in a hat. The first name drawn out will be deemed to be elected. If there are two seats the draw will continue until the next candidate of the opposite gender is drawn who will then be deemed elected.
 - M. Nominated delegates who are unsuccessful will be deemed 'substitute members' if the successful nominee resigns her or his seat over the lifetime of the Secretariat/County Structures. The unsuccessful nominee with the highest number

of votes will be the first substitute, the second highest number of votes will be second substitute and so on, regard will be had in selection to gender & geographical spread subject to availability.

N. After the election all candidates will be notified of results via email.

Appeals on the nomination and or election process should be made in writing to the PPN Secretariat.

22. Appeals Process

- A. There shall exist an Appeals Committee to deal with appeals against decisions as appropriate
e.g. suspension/expulsion of members/election & procedures/decision making.
- B. An appeal should be initiated in writing and done so within 10 working days of the decision.
- C. The Appeals Committee shall consist of a panel of ten members who have been members for more than one year.
- D. To hear an appeal three members of the Appeals Committee shall be drawn by lot to form an Appeals Tribunal.
- E. The members of an Appeals Tribunal shall have no direct organisational involvement in the decision appealed against, nor any other conflict of interest
- F. Appeals will be heard as quickly as possible but not later than 4 months of notification where practical.
- G. An Appeals Tribunal may nominate one of their members to act as mediator, to explore the possibility of resolving the dispute without resort to the Appeals procedure.
- H. When considering appeals, an Appeals Tribunal shall hear all relevant evidence and shall have power to lift or confirm the suspension or expulsion of a group or suspension or expulsion of a member, or deprivation of office of an officer. Its decisions shall be announced within seven days of being reached and shall be final.
- I. An Appeals Tribunal shall hear cases relating to other issues as provided for in this Constitution. J. Appeals should be made in writing to the PPN Secretariat.

23. Protecting the Integrity of the PPN

To protect the integrity of the PPN, a disciplinary procedures document will outline the process to be undertaken when an allegation is made that a group is:

- Acting in a manner contrary to the values, aims or objectives of the PPN.
- Failing to comply with the criteria for membership set out in section 4 of this Constitution.

While the disciplinary process is being pursued, voting rights for groups will be suspended until the issue has been resolved. In line with due process and the disciplinary procedures document, a membership group may be exonerated or removed from the PPN. An appeals process is available to groups as outlined at section 22.

Mayo PPN logos/branding cannot be used without the written consent of the PPN. It shall be considered gross misconduct leading to immediate suspension to do so without permission.

24. Amendments to the Constitution

A proposal to make an amendment to a Constitution can be made by the Secretariat or by a collective of three registered groups.

Proposed changes to the constitution must be notified in writing to the Resource worker 14 days after the receipt of the constitution. No changes will be accepted after this time.

This would then be made available to Plenary members at least 7 days in advance of a Plenary meeting.

25. Complaints

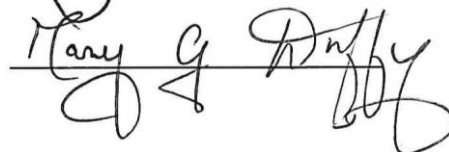
Complaints can only be dealt with in writing to the Resource worker, using the online 'Complaints

Document' on the PPN website. Complaints must be signed by an individual on behalf of a Community Group. The PPN reserve the right to check with the full group members that they are aware of the complaint/query.

SIGNED PPN RESOURCE WORKER:



SIGNED PPN SECRETARIAT
MEMBER:



DATE: 1st/4/2021