



Galway City Community Network
Líonra Pobail Chathair na Gaillimhe

GALWAY CITY COMMUNITY NETWORK CONSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Reform of Local Government Act 2014, local authorities were required to establish Public Participation Networks in each local authority area. Galway City Council designated Galway City Galway City Community Network as the Public Participation Network for Galway City. Following a series of public meetings and an information campaign, which included advertisements in the local papers and extensive coverage on local radio, a new registration process was initiated and groups/organisations wishing to become members of the PPN were required to register using this process. The Public Participation Network for Galway City was established in September 2014, hereafter to be known as the Galway City Community Network.

Galway City Community Network will act as the representative, collective voice of community, voluntary and environmental organisations in Galway City. Galway City Community Network will engage as an equal and independent partner and will assert the rights of the sector to organise and structure its own participation in arenas of social partnership.

1 TITLE

The Public Participation Network for Galway City will be known as Galway City Community Network.

2 AIM

The aim of Galway City Community Network is to co-ordinate and support the representation of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City.

3 ROLE

The role of Galway City Community Network is:

- 3.1** To act as a platform for the groups/organisations engaged in the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City;
- 3.2** To develop policy and positions on issues of common concern to the sectors and to communities and to advocate for these policies and positions to be implemented.
- 3.3** To facilitate the representation of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors on the Local Community Development Committee, the Strategic Policy Committees, the Joint Policing Committee, other local government and local development bodies and any local, regional, national or international body deemed appropriate by the Galway City Community Network.
- 3.4** To contribute to the development and achievement of a vision for the well-being of this and future generations.

4 VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Galway City Community Network is:

- Non-sectarian and non-party political and does not discriminate on the grounds of:
 - ❖ Gender
 - ❖ Civil status
 - ❖ Family status
 - ❖ Sexual orientation
 - ❖ Religion
 - ❖ Age
 - ❖ Disability
 - ❖ Race - including skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin
 - ❖ Membership of the Traveller community.
 - ❖ Socio-economic status
- Committed to models of development that promote equality, social inclusion, achievement of human rights and the protection of the environment.
- Committed to the development, promotion and implementation of strategies that promote equality of opportunity, participation and outcome.
- Committed to the promotion of equality for all, including those experiencing social exclusion, discrimination and poverty.
- Committed to working together on the basis of principles of partnership and mutual respect between members.
- Recognises the environmental and social responsibilities of Galway as a major urban centre on its rural hinterland and recognises that the well-being of the city is best served by having sustainable communities in the county served by county towns with a broad mix of local services.
- Committed to openness and accountability and promotes openness and transparency in its activities and deliberations

5 OBJECTIVES

Galway City Community Network will:

- Encourage greater participation in public decision-making which leads to more effective and better targeted policies and programmes at local level and where necessary at a regional and national level.
- Develop alternative methods and models of working which seek to directly involve and empower groups and individuals within the community



- Support Galway City Community Network elected representatives to achieve the policy objective of the Galway City Community Network
- Act as a catalyst to influence the sustainable development of Galway City.
- To develop the Galway City Community Network as a resource for the community, voluntary and environmental sectors and communities in Galway City.

6 MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Membership

Membership of Galway City Community Network is open to all groups and organisations active in Galway City that fulfil the criteria outlined below.

To be eligible for membership, groups/organisations must be able to establish their bona fides as a community, voluntary or environmental organisation.

They must register with the Galway City Community Network.

The must elect to be a member of one of the three Electoral Colleges:

- Social Inclusion Electoral College;
- Environment Electoral College;
- Voluntary Electoral College.

They must:

- Be active in Galway City.
- Have more than five (5) members;
- Have a written Constitution or Memorandum & Articles of Association
- If a company limited by guarantee, the organisation must be not for profit.
- Be open to new members;
- Be non-party political and non-sectarian;
- Be broadly representative and accountable;
- Hold an AGM and regular meetings;
- Be independent, with a committee or board (not a substructure or subcommittee);
- Be a minimum of six months in existence.

Groups/organisations registering under the Environment Electoral College must be validated by the Environmental Pillar at a national level.

Please note groups formed around specific local issues are not eligible for Galway City Community Network

membership. For example, groups formed around opposition to a particular local planning application.

In the event of a dispute regarding eligibility, Galway City Community Network Secretariat will determine eligibility for affiliation.

6.2 Expulsion of Member Organisation

A proposal to expel a group may be made in the event of a group:

- Acting in a manner contrary to the values, aims or objectives of the Galway City Community Network as outlined in Parts 4 and 5 of the Constitution;
- Failing to comply with the criteria for membership as outlined in Part 6.1 of the Constitution.

In the event of it being necessary to expel an organisation or group from membership of the Galway City Community Network, Galway City Community Network itself must decide, in accordance with the following procedure:

A proposal to expel a group/organisation may be made by:

- the Secretariat, or
- a simple majority of delegates present at a Plenary Meeting of the Galway City Community Network.

The proposal to expel will be placed on the agenda for the next Plenary Meeting of the Galway City Community Network, and the group concerned will be notified of the intention to raise the matter at least one month before the meeting at which the expulsion is to be considered. The group will be given an opportunity to address the issue at the Galway City Community Network meeting.

The expulsion will be effective if passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the Plenary meeting.

7 STRUCTURES

7.1 Membership

The Galway City Community Network membership is the ultimate decision-making authority.

Membership of Galway City Community Network will comprise all registered groups/organisations that fulfil the criteria outlined above.

Each Galway City Community Network member may elect two people to represent them on the Plenary. One of these people will be the Main Representative and the other the Alternate.

The Galway City Community Network membership will meet in plenary at least four times per year, one of these meetings will be the AGM.

The Galway City Community Network membership will elect a Secretariat annually at the Annual General Meeting.

7.2 Secretariat

Membership of the Secretariat will comprise up to 16 members.

At least 40% of the Secretariat will be women and 40% men.

It will strive to ensure an equal number of representatives from each of the Electoral Colleges and have a minimum of two from each.

Consideration will be given to the geographical spread of Secretariat members.

The role of the Secretariat is to:

- Ensure the efficient implementation of the Galway City Community Network decision.
- Co-ordinate the activities of Galway City Community Network
- Manage and direct the work of the Co-ordinator.

The Secretariat will elect a Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons and a Treasurer, as well as other officers as it deems appropriate at the first meeting of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat will open and maintain a bank account in the name of Galway City Community Network.

The Secretariat may establish working-groups, subcommittees or task-groups if necessary.

7.3 Linkage Groups

Linkage Groups will be established to support the work of Galway City Community Network.

All the Linkage Groups are open to any member of organisations/groups registered with Galway City Community Network regardless of the sectoral interest of the member's group or the Linkage Group.

Linkage Groups may invite non-members to participate in an advisory role.

Galway City Community Network representatives will be required to be members of and attend Linkage Group meetings appropriate to their representation;

At the first meeting, the Linkage Group members will select a Convenor. The Convenor will then be responsible for convening meetings of the Linkage Groups. This position may rotate;

The Linkage Group Convenor will be a member of the Galway City Community Network Secretariat if possible;

Linkage Groups will issue a report of meetings to the Galway City Community Network Co-ordinator.

The role of the Linkage Groups will be to:

- Act as a reference point for Galway City Community Network representatives in the thematic areas.
- Facilitate communication between the Galway City Community Network representatives and membership;
- Develop policy and positions on relevant areas;

8 MEETINGS

8.1 The Galway City Community Network membership will meet in plenary at least four times per year. One of these meetings will be the Annual General Meeting.

Notice of each Galway City Community Network Meeting will be given to all Galway City Community Network registered members at least one month before the date of the meeting.

The Agenda for the meeting will, having been agreed by the Secretariat, be circulated to all registered groups 7 days before the meeting.

The attendance list and minutes from the previous Galway City Community Network Meeting will accompany the agenda.

Member organisations can have items tabled for discussion and included in the agenda for the Galway City Community Network meeting, subject to screening by the Galway City Community Network Secretariat in a transparent process. Items for inclusion in the agenda must be received at least two weeks before the meeting.

It will be the aim of the Galway City Community Network to arrive at decisions by consensus. However, in the event of this not being possible, a decision will require the support of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting. Voting will be on the basis of one organisation one vote, with one delegate entitled to vote on behalf of each member.

Galway City Community Network may invite guests to attend meetings.

The quorum for the Plenary Meetings shall be 15% of the registered members, with 4 of those present members of the Secretariat.

The Chairperson, or in his/her absence, one of the two Vice-Chairpersons, will chair meetings of the Plenary.

8.2 Extraordinary General Meeting – An extraordinary general meeting of the Galway City Community Network may be called:

- by the Secretariat, or
- Following a request to the Secretariat signed by 20% of affiliated groups.



8.3 The Galway City Community Network Secretariat will meet at least 8 times per year.

8.4 The Linkage Groups will meet as often as they determine but at least 5 times per year.

9 DECISION-MAKING

9.1 Voting

Each registered group/organisation shall have one vote and must nominate a delegate to vote on their behalf.

Where appropriate, voting may be streamed according to Electoral College.

10 REPRESENTATIVES

10.1 Election of representatives

Nominations for vacant positions on structures on which Galway City Community Network is represented will be sought from Galway City Community Network membership.

In the event that the vacancy is streamed according to Electoral College, nominations will be restricted to Galway City Community Network members in that Electoral College.

Elections to the Local Community Development Committee will be streamed according to electoral colleges.

Where the number of nominees equals the number of available places then the nominees in question will be deemed automatically elected, without the need for a vote.

Where the number of nominees exceeds the number of available places then an election will follow.

Where there are insufficient numbers of nominees for the number of places available then nominations can be made when dealing with the agenda item.

Galway City Community Network may not be represented on any body or committee by anyone who is currently, or has been in the previous two years, an elected representative.

1.2 Deselection of Representatives

In the event of the a representative selected to represent the Galway City Community Network on the Local Community Development Committee, Strategic Policy Committees or other agencies, failing to carry out his/her duties in an appropriate manner, as outlined in this Constitution, the Galway City Community Network may de-select the representative in the following manner:

A proposal to deselect a representative may be made by:

- a. the Secretariat of the Galway City Community Network or
- b. a simple majority of delegates at an ordinary meeting of the Galway City Community Network.

The proposal to deselect will be placed on the agenda for the next Plenary Meeting of the Galway City Community Network, and the representative concerned will be notified of the intention to raise the matter at least one month before the meeting at which the deselection is to be considered. The representative will be given an opportunity to address the issue at the Galway City Community Network meeting.

The expulsion will be effective if passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the Plenary meeting.

11 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A proposal to amend the constitution may be made:

- a) by the Secretariat;
- b) by a simple majority at an ordinary meeting of the Galway City Community Network;
- c) By notice in writing to the Secretariat prior to the meeting and included on the agenda of the meeting.

The proposal will be placed on the agenda for the next plenary meeting.

The amendment will be effective if passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the Plenary meeting.



Galway City Community Network
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