

Risk Management Policy

Version history

Version	Date Adopted	Facilitator	Note
1.0			

Document controls

Action	Responsibility
Approval of document	Secretariat and Plenary
Implementation	Secretariat, Plenary, Staff and Supervisory Working Group, Members
Review	Secretariat
Date of next review	

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Risk Management Policy is to support the effective identification, assessment and management of risks that may affect the work, governance and reputation of South Dublin County Public Participation Network (SDC PPN).

This policy aims to ensure that risks are managed in a proportionate and practical way, supporting good governance, accountability and the effective delivery of the PPN's role.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of SDC PPN activity, including:

- governance and decision-making
- financial management and controls
- staff, volunteers and facilitators
- events, meetings and activities
- data protection and information management
- PPN representatives and external engagement
- reputation and public confidence

This policy is to be read alongside other SDC PPN governance and operational policies.

2. Principles of Risk Management

Risk management within SDC PPN is guided by principles of good governance and public accountability.

In managing risk, SDC PPN aims to:

- identify and address risks early, where possible
- take a proportionate approach, recognising the scale and nature of the PPN
- focus on prevention rather than reaction
- balance risk management with enabling participation and innovation
- ensure transparency and shared responsibility
- support informed decision-making

Not all risk can or should be eliminated. This policy supports the effective management of risk, rather than risk avoidance.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Risk management within SDC PPN is a shared responsibility, with clear roles as follows.

3.1 Plenary

The Plenary:

- provides the overall governance context for the PPN
- approves key policies and governance arrangements
- supports a culture of good governance and accountability

3.2 Secretariat

The Secretariat:

- has oversight of risk management within the PPN
- reviews significant or emerging risks
- monitors the effectiveness of controls and actions
- ensures that risk management is considered as part of governance and planning

3.3 Staff

PPN staff:

- identify and manage risks arising in day-to-day operations
- maintain and update the Risk Register
- implement agreed controls and actions
- escalate significant or emerging risks to the Secretariat promptly

3.4 Host Organisation

The host organisation is responsible for:

- employment-related risks in relation to PPN staff
- financial processing and related controls carried out on behalf of the PPN

The host organisation does not have responsibility for PPN governance or operational decision-making.

4. Identifying Risks

Risks are identified on an ongoing basis as part of normal PPN operations and governance.

Formal consideration of risks takes place:

- at least annually, and
- when significant changes occur, such as new activities, projects, structures or external requirements

Risks may be identified by staff, the Secretariat, or through experience, feedback or review.

5. Assessing and Managing Risks

Risks are assessed using a simple and proportionate approach, considering:

- the likelihood of the risk occurring, and
- the potential impact if it does occur

For each risk, appropriate controls or actions are identified to:

- reduce the likelihood of the risk, and/or
- reduce its potential impact

Risk management measures are proportionate to the level of risk and the capacity of the PPN.

6. Risk Register

SDC PPN maintains an internal Risk Register as a practical tool to support risk management.

The Risk Register:

- records key identified risks
- notes existing controls and actions
- identifies any further actions required
- is reviewed at least annually
- is updated as required when risks change

The Risk Register is an internal working document.

7. Managing Specific Risk Areas

While risks may arise in many areas, key risk categories for SDC PPN typically include:

7.1 Governance Risks

Risks relating to governance structures, roles, decision-making processes and compliance with agreed procedures.

7.2 Financial Risks

Risks relating to budgeting, expenditure, procurement, financial controls and reporting, managed in line with the Financial Controls Policy.

7.3 Data Protection and Information Risks

Risks relating to the handling, storage and protection of personal and organisational data, managed in line with data protection policies.

7.4 Operational and Activity Risks

Risks arising from events, meetings, training, consultations and other PPN activities.

7.5 Representative and External Engagement Risks

Risks associated with PPN representation on external bodies, including conduct, communication and reputational considerations.

7.6 Health and Safety Risks

Risks relating to the safety of participants, staff and volunteers at PPN activities.

7.7 Reputational Risks

Risks that may affect public confidence in the PPN, including communication, conduct or misunderstanding of the PPN's role.

8. Escalation and Reporting of Risks

Routine risks are managed by staff as part of day-to-day operations.

Significant or emerging risks are:

- escalated promptly to the Secretariat
- recorded and monitored through the Risk Register
- addressed through agreed actions or controls

This ensures that the Secretariat has appropriate oversight without unnecessary reporting of low-level risks.

9. Review and Monitoring

Risks are monitored on an ongoing basis by staff.

A formal review of the Risk Register is carried out at least annually by the Secretariat, and:

- where significant changes occur
- where new risks emerge
- where existing risks change in nature or impact

This ensures that risk management remains relevant and effective.

10. Review and Amendments

This policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it remains appropriate and aligned with good governance practice.

The policy may be reviewed or updated:

- following changes in legislation or guidance
- following significant organisational change
- where experience indicates a need for improvement

Any amendments are approved in line with SDC PPN governance procedures