

Secretariat Code of Conduct

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

This Secretariat Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and accountability expected of members of the Secretariat of South Dublin County Public Participation Network (SDC PPN).

This Code applies **in addition to** the general SDC PPN Code of Conduct and reflects the additional responsibilities and authority held by Secretariat members.

The purpose of this Code is to:

- Promote high standards of integrity, transparency and accountability
- Support effective and collective governance
- Protect the credibility and reputation of SDC PPN
- Provide clarity on expected conduct and consequences

2. Scope

This Code applies to all members of the SDC PPN Secretariat while acting in their role on behalf of the PPN.

Secretariat members remain bound by:

- The general Code of Conduct
- The Constitution and Standing Orders
- All relevant SDC PPN policies and procedures

3. Core Standards of Behavior

Secretariat members are expected to:

- Act at all times in the best interests of SDC PPN
- Uphold the values, principles and objectives of the PPN
- Act with integrity, honesty and impartiality
- Exercise good judgement and responsibility in decision-making
- Be accountable for their actions and decisions

4. Collective Responsibility

The Secretariat operates on the basis of collective responsibility.

This means that:

- Secretariat members engage in open, respectful and constructive discussion
- Decisions are made collectively
- Once a decision is agreed, it is treated as a collective decision of the Secretariat
- Members support and uphold agreed decisions when acting on behalf of the PPN

Internal debate is encouraged. Public undermining of agreed decisions is not acceptable.

5. Conflicts of Interest and Loyalty

Secretariat members must:

- Declare all actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest
- Declare conflicts of loyalty arising from other roles, memberships or affiliations
- Comply fully with the SDC PPN Conflict of Interest Policy
- Act in the best interests of SDC PPN where a conflict arises

Where a conflict exists, the Secretariat member must step back from discussion and/or decision-making, in line with agreed procedures.

6. Confidentiality and Use of Information

Secretariat members are entrusted with access to sensitive and confidential information.

Members must:

- Respect confidentiality where required
- Use information solely for legitimate PPN purposes
- Not misuse, disclose or benefit from confidential or sensitive information
- Balance confidentiality with transparency, accountability and data protection obligations

Confidentiality does not mean secrecy. Decisions and agreed actions should be communicated appropriately to members.

7. Public Representation and Communication

Secretariat members must:

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- Represent SDC PPN honestly, accurately and responsibly
- Support and uphold agreed PPN positions when speaking publicly
- Only speak on behalf of SDC PPN where authorised to do so
- Make clear when they are speaking in a personal capacity

Public statements or actions that undermine agreed positions or damage the reputation of the PPN are not acceptable.

8. Respect, Dignity and Conduct Towards Others

Secretariat members are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect
- Foster an inclusive, safe and supportive environment
- Avoid bullying, harassment, discrimination or undermining behaviour
- Conduct themselves professionally in meetings and interactions

Behaviour must align with SDC PPN's Dignity at Work and Equality commitments.

9. Compliance with Governance and Policies

Secretariat members must:

- Comply with the Constitution and Standing Orders
- Adhere to agreed policies, procedures and decisions
- Participate in relevant induction, training or development where required

10. Breaches of this Code

Failure to comply with this Code may be treated as a breach of governance standards.

Breaches may be addressed in line with:

- The Grievance Policy
- The Complaints Policy
- The general Code of Conduct
- The Constitution and Standing Orders

Serious or repeated breaches may result in removal from the Secretariat role, following fair procedures and the principles of natural justice.

11. Review of the Code

This Secretariat Code of Conduct has been approved by the Secretariat of SDC PPN.

It will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains appropriate, effective and aligned with best practice and the evolving needs of the PPN.

12. Acknowledgement and Acceptance

All members of the Secretariat of South Dublin County Public Participation Network are required to confirm that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Secretariat Code of Conduct.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of holding a Secretariat role and applies for the duration of the term of office.

Failure to comply with this Code may be addressed in line with the Constitution, Standing Orders and relevant governance policies.

Declaration

Secretariat Code of Conduct – Declaration South Dublin County Public Participation Network

I confirm that I have received, read and understood the Secretariat Code of Conduct of South Dublin County Public Participation Network (SDC PPN).

I agree to comply with the standards, responsibilities and obligations set out in this Code while acting in my role as a PPN Secretariat.

I understand that failure to comply with this Code may be addressed in line with the Constitution, Standing Orders and relevant governance policies of SDC PPN.

Name: _____

Organisation : _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____