**Calling all Community and Voluntary groups to register with the Public Participation Network.**

Offaly County Council are setting up a new way to connect with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Offaly. This new way of linking with the community will be called the Public Participation Network (PPN).

Two important elections will take place in October and November to select people from the community in Offaly to represent the Community Voice on the Public Participation Network and the second election to elect community representative to various important committees of Offaly County Council and other bodies in the County.

To register for these elections, any recognized Community and Voluntary group in Offaly can become a member of the PPN by completing the Registration forms for the PPN that is available through Offaly County Council or can be downloaded at [www.offaly.ie/ppn](http://www.offaly.ie/ppn)

In order to vote in these two very significant and important elections for the Community & Voluntary Sector in Offaly, you must register your group with the Public Participation Network (PPN). The closing date is the 1st of October 2014.

The benefits of registering with the Public Participation Network are that you will have a vote and a say on whom the Community elects as the Community voice that links with the County Council and other decision making bodies in Offaly.

The PPN facilitates input by the public into local government through a structure that ensures public participation and representation on decision-making committees and bodies within local government. This Network will be the main link through which the County Council connects with the community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors.

The establishment of the PPN is a great opportunity for the community groups in Offaly who are so active and progressive to have greater input and support from the Local Authority. The two sets of elections will take place before the end of the Year, firstly the PPN election ; this is when a Network of 12 member executive is elected from thecommunity and voluntary sector in the 3 Municipal Districts of Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore and secondly ;

Offaly County Council in conjunction with the PPN executive, will then hold a second set of elections of all the Community and Voluntary groups registered with the PPN to elect Community & Voluntary people to the County Council Strategic Policy Committee’s, new Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and other decision making bodies in Offaly.

For more information on the Public Participation Network please log on to [www.offaly.ie/ppn](http://www.offaly.ie/ppn) or phone Offaly County Council on 057 93 57460.

ENDS

Niamh Dowler Offaly County Council 13/8/2014