

Notes from 10th Meeting of National Executive 2016-17

24th September 2016



Attendees at this meeting: 24 out of 30 attended

Gráinne Hickey, Carlow; Megan McIntyre, Cavan; Megan Skinnader, Donegal; Oscar Despard, Dublin City; Kayla O'Hara, South Dublin; Hubert Matuszewski, Galway City; Regan Maher, Galway Co; Barry Sugrue, Kerry; Cian McKeon, Kildare; Louis Lavelle, Kilkenny; Niamh Bakker, Laois; Aoibhinn Callaghan, Leitrim; Bethany Hanrahan, Limerick; Luke Casserly, Longford; Rebecca Kelly, Mayo; Tiernan Murray, Meath; Seán McCleary, Monaghan; Denis Holton, Offaly; Emily Conlon, Roscommon; Kate Lancaster-Ryan, Sligo; Craig Smith, Waterford; Emily Bollard, Westmeath; Sophie O'Connor, Wexford, Ellen McGrath, Wicklow

Focus of the tenth meeting:

- Report back to the group about the pilot of the survey which was carried out by Dublin City Comhairle on Saturday 10th September—Suzanne
- Guidance and tips for how to approach introducing the survey at the AGMs
- Role of the National Executive at the Comhairle Showcase 2016
- National Drugs Strategy survey
- National Executive updates for 2016-17

National Executive survey pilot with Dublin City Comhairle

No of participants: 18

Positive feedback:

- In general, the 18 participants felt that the survey is very good and has good, relevant categories.
- They wanted to congratulate Oscar and the other National Executive members for their hard work.
- They also liked the design of the survey - although some felt it could have less yellow and more pink and green on the inside pages.
- They also pointed out that they appreciated the addition of "other" under the gender question.

Constructive feedback:

- They felt it was confusing to have "other" as the last option under "I learn best..." - instead they thought it should say "any other ways you learn best?"
- On Q6 exams and assessment they noticed that the same question is asked twice: "There is too much emphasis on exams in my school" and "there is not enough emphasis on exams in my school" - they felt they were being asked the same thing twice here.
- They felt that in some questions, it would be good to have "sometimes" or a "it kind of bothers me" answer option - for example, in Q10 the answer options are either one extreme or the other.

Constructive feedback: continued

- They felt that the statement under Q10 on "Not knowing what I want to do when I finish school" was confusing for someone who does know what they want to do when they finish school.
- Under Q12 they noticed that the Q mark at end of first line needs to be removed and added to the "in the classroom" and "in school" parts.

First years:

- Half of the group piloting the survey, 9 of participants, have just started 1st year of secondary school.
- One young person raised the point that the survey doesn't relate to 1st years who have no experience of some of the areas in the survey. The other 1st years agreed with that young person.
- They highlighted Q6 on exams and assessment and the statements in relation to career guidance under Q11.
- They said that they had to answer "I don't know" for those question areas.
- However, the first years still felt that it was important to give the first years a chance to have their say.
- One suggestion to make it easier for first years was to put a note beside the Q's which might not be relevant to 1st years.

Guidance for how to approach introducing the survey at our AGMs:

The group was split into three groups and with the help from Anne, Martin and Suzanne each person got the opportunity to practice the speech.

Final text for the National Executive members' speeches is on the next page. It was agreed that each member would give the same speech at each of the 30 AGMs.

INTRODUCING THE SURVEY AT YOUR AGM

At Dáil na nÓg 2015, the 200 delegates from Comhairle na nÓg voted on the need for students to have a stronger say on what happens in the classroom in their schools.

The Comhairle na nÓg National Executive wants to discover how young people in Ireland feel about the way they are taught and the way they learn. We developed this survey with the help of researchers.

Young people at every Comhairle na nÓg AGM are being asked to fill out this survey.

The Comhairle na nÓg National Executive will write a report with the results of the survey which will be published in early 2017.

Remember:

- The survey is completely anonymous
- When filling out the survey, please respect other people's privacy
Please read the questions carefully and think about your answers
- You don't have to take part

National Drugs Strategy Survey:

Two consultants, who are working with the Department of Health to develop a survey to seek young people's opinion about drugs issues in Ireland, presented their draft survey to the executive. The young people completed the survey and had a discussion with the two consultants about the survey, giving their constructive feedback on how it can be improved.

Role of the National Executive members at Comhairle Showcase 2016

- Comhairle Showcase takes place in Croke Park on Thursday 24th November 2016.
- National Executive speaking role on the day is to give the 500 young attendees a summary of what the National Executive have achieved so far in year one of their term.
- All National Executive members will be invited through their local Comhairlí as one of the 15 delegates.
- The National Executives role on the day of the Showcase will be to mingle at the showcase part and welcome people as they arrive to Croke park. They will also be a link for the media on the day. They will all be wearing the same t-shirts so that they will be identifiable.
- The young people decided that the fairest way to choose was to let everyone who wanted to speak at the Showcase put their names forward and for people to then vote for the person they felt would be best for the role. Each person got to vote twice.
- The top two nominations were for Denis Holton and Henry Fitzgerald.
- If either of those are unavailable, the role will pass to three reserves with the next highest number of votes.

National Executive updates:

- The next big thing on the National Executive calendar is each member's local Comhairle AGM where they are tasked with introducing their survey to the group.
- All Comhairle National Executive members will be invited to the National Showcase on the 24th November where they all have a role on the day (see above) and two members will be presenting on the day.
- The next meeting will be in December - date TBC.