



Eamon Ryan, T.D.,  
Minister for Climate Action, Transport,  
Communications & Environment  
Custom House,  
Dublin 1

18<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Via email to: [Minister.Ryan@dccae.gov.ie](mailto:Minister.Ryan@dccae.gov.ie)

Dear Minister,

RE: Dublin City Council's Role in the National Response to Climate Change

Dublin City Council recognises the critical role of local authorities in achieving Ireland's transition to a climate resilient low carbon future; it was with this goal at the fore that the Dublin City Council Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2019-2024 was developed.

The development of the CCAP began prior to formal guidance from the then Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. However, Dublin City Council acknowledging its position as a European Capital sought to lead by forming a plan that responds to the climate change impacts facing Dublin as a result the CCAP responds to the need for adaptation and mitigation action.

Under Head 15 of draft, amendment to the Act of 2015 it is proposed that local authorities develop within 18 months climate action plans that respond to adaptation and mitigation. Dublin City Council welcomes this and view this as support of our approach to the climate crisis. However, there are challenges in relation to the proposed local authority climate action plans, which I have highlighted below.

The amendments indicate that local authority climate action plans shall be consistent with the National Long Term Strategy, the National Adaptation Framework, sectoral adaptation plans, and Climate Action Plan updated. This is accepted, Dublin City Council believe it is important that the amendments recognise the need for Local Authorities to set specific policy actions, which build on the national framework and plans to allow local authorities to respond to specific challenges.

This is important given the responsibilities placed on local authorities in the current national climate action plan and Programme for Government to engage communities, namely to stimulate economic development, retrofit social housing, and embed climate action within development plans. Local authorities across Ireland face specific challenges that may be lost if local authorities are not actively building upon the national responses.

Further it is considered critical that enforcement capacity is also progressed in conjunction with the development of the actions and policies. In the absence of such capacities, implementation of

essential actions and measures may not be achieved. This capacity is needed to ensure that we respond to climate change and provide citizens with a healthy environment to live, work and play.

There is a wealth of expertise and knowledge within local authorities across Ireland that can add to the robustness of Ireland's climate response. Responding to climate change demands collaboration, coordination and cooperation across all levels of government. It is understood, that the CCMA in consultation with the CAROs and local authorities are actively assessing the resources required by local authorities to deliver action that enables Ireland to be a climate leader. It is being propose that every local authority has a climate action team responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of local climate action. The successful establishment of interdisciplinary climate action teams and the work to be undertaken by the teams will require financing from central government.

Dublin City Council acknowledges that the CCAP is focused on the existing remit of local authorities. Therefore mitigation actions focus on our operations and service delivery (3% of total emissions in Dublin), while adaptation actions are undertaken in areas in which we have been delegated responsibility, such as flooding. However, the process has shown the importance of an interdisciplinary approach and the need to engage and collaborate with other stakeholders to respond to the crisis at hand.

We are committed to meeting and exceeding our local and national targets, however we need the support of National Government to achieve this. We need National Government to adequately invest in and resource all local authority action plans.

We are determined to establish Dublin as a climate leader and as a European Capital with a high quality of life by prioritising the health and well-being of citizens.

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Claire Byrne**  
**Chair, Climate Action Subcommittee**