

CCMA CHARTER TAKES STEPS ON CLIMATE ACTION

A new Local Government Climate Charter, developed by the County and City Management Association (CCMA) in consultation with the local government sector, contains a range of objectives to address the climate challenge.

The Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Richard Bruton TD, and the Minister of State Sean Canney TD, recently signed the Charter with all 31 local authorities, committing local government to drive forward meaningful climate action in their communities, as set out in the Government's Climate Action Plan.

Minister Bruton said: "The government's plan aims to ensure we meet our 2030 climate commitments, putting us on a trajectory for net-zero emissions by 2050. The Charter will

According to Minister of State Canney "Local authorities are a focal point for our communities, villages, towns and cities and their support for this Charter reflects the whole of society approach we need to take to transform our economy from brown to green."

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

The new Charter reflects the extensive work already undertaken by councils and their plans in the area of climate action.

The Councils also published climate adaptation strategies in September setting out the measures taken by each one to respond effectively to climate change and to enhance resilience to its impact.

They stand ready to lead on climate action and have huge ambition for what the local authority sector can achieve with government support, according to Michael Walsh, Chairperson of CCMA.

"Climate change requires a serious and urgent response. Councils recognise that we have a duty to capitalise on our unique position to lead lasting change for the country. They have positioned the sector over the last number of years to build on our expertise and competencies to work with all sectors of the community in providing the local leadership necessary to bring about real and meaningful change."

Walsh added: "We're thinking ambitiously and creatively



Local authorities are reducing the carbon footprint of their internal operations, according to Paddy Mahon, Chair of the CCMA Environment and Climate Action Committee.

ensure every local authority embeds decarbonisation, sustainable development and climate resilience into every aspect of their work.

"Given their pivotal role across the key sectors of planning, housing, transport and waste and a close relationship with the community, local authorities have a crucial role in implementing change that's needed and influencing many more to address this challenge."



Ministers Sean Canney and Richard Bruton with Paddy Mahon (centre), Chair of CCMA Climate Action Committee, pictured at the signing of a new charter for local authorities.

CLIMATE ACTION CHARTER



Pictured (l-r): Paddy Mahon, Longford County Council Chief Executive; Alan Dunne, Regional Co-ordinator of Eastern and Midlands CARO (Climate Action Regional Office); Celine Reilly, Dublin City Council; Paul Dunne, LGMA's Chief Executive; Michael Walsh, CCMA Chair and Waterford City and County Council Chief Executive; Ministers Richard Bruton and Sean Canney; John Mulholland, Laois County Council Chief Executive; Joan Martin, Louth County Council Chief Executive; and Paula Butler, LGMA Assistant Chief Executive.

about what we can do to have real impact. For example, we plan to train all 29,000 local government employees to lead and animate climate change issues at a local level.

And with support from central government we can do even more and provide the on-the-ground leadership needed to make Ireland a global leader in climate action."

TACKLING CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

The Climate Charter is one of the measures included in the Government's 'Climate Action Plan to Tackle Climate Breakdown', which names local authorities as lead partners in seven actions and as key stakeholders in a further 22 measures. The Government Action Plan will measure the level of involvement by councils in addressing the climate challenge.

"We're already making significant progress by reducing the carbon footprint of our internal operations, increasing

CLIMATE CHARTER MAPS OUT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the Local Government Climate Charter, local authorities must undertake a number of measures in order to play a key leadership role locally and nationally in delivering effective climate action:

- Put in place a process for carbon proofing major decisions, programmes and projects on a systematic basis, including investments in transport and energy infrastructure;
- Deliver a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030;
- Ensure suppliers provide information on their carbon footprint and steps to reduce its impact;
- Build local citizen engagement, particularly with young people;
- Partner and collaborate on climate action initiatives with local community groups, local businesses, local schools and higher level institutions;
- Monitor, evaluate and report annually on the implementation of activities under the Charter.

Under the Climate Action Plan, local authorities will be required to:

- Undertake deep retrofits of local authority buildings and social housing stock;
- Develop and implement cycle network plans for all major cities;
- Develop a sustainable transport plan for all cities with a population exceeding 75,000;
- Deliver climate-proof development plans and National Planning Framework objectives for compact growth;
- Deliver technical and behavioural change training to local authority staff;
- Support the development of one-stop-shops for residential and commercial energy efficiency;
- Develop an online checklist for companies to measure their sustainability;
- Manage low emission zones including through pricing policies and restricted access;
- Roll out electric vehicle charging network and deploy electric vehicles within council fleets;
- Develop plans for 'decarbonising zones';
- Implement a new National Waste Prevention Programme and Regional Waste Management Plans.

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the energy efficiency of our housing stock, prioritising climate considerations in development planning and actively engaging our communities on climate issues. We're ready to build on what we have achieved," noted Paddy Mahon, Chair of the CCMA Environment and Climate Action Committee.

Mahon emphasised that councils are now undertaking significant climate mitigation and adaptation measures from within existing resources. He added that they will implement their Climate Adaptation Strategies, while the four Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs) will support capacity within the sector and act as a catalyst for wider change.

"Climate and environmental sustainability are key considerations for councils in their strategic planning and day-to-day actions across all service areas, most significantly in planning, transport, housing, lighting, waste management, and economic development.

"They are leading the way on electric vehicle charging points, walking and cycling routes, waste management, biodiversity and other key areas. They're to the forefront in responding to extreme weather events caused by climate change such as the flooding, storms and drought of recent years," Mahon stated.

Minister Canney also noted; "Through their various roles, including spatial

planning, forward planning and engagement with communities through the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and the Public Participation Networks (PPNs), local authorities are ideally placed to help deliver effective Climate Action in our communities."



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