

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER, 2020.

"Mr. Harper asked if it was known how much the Strategy will increase carbon emissions. He also asked whether the Council had put a process in place where carbon proofing will be included in the evaluation of major decisions and projects, in accordance with the local authority Climate Charter."

In response to Mr Harper's query;

1. The draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy forecasts an annual reduction in vehicular emissions of 37,572 tonnes per annum over a 30-year strategy period. Following the recent public consultation on the LSMATS, the NTA has indicated that it will review the climate change considerations contained in the document.

2. Action 147 of the Climate Action Plan 2019 includes for, inter alia, the introduction of a local authority Climate Charter. Section 3 of the Charter provides that local authorities, with the support of Central Government, will undertake a wide range of climate action activities including a commitment to reduce CO₂ emissions by 30% and increase energy efficiency to 50% of the baseline year (2009) by 2030.

A sub-committee of the Local Government Management Agency is currently in the process of establishing Key Performance Indicators for the commitments contained in the Climate Action Charter. Once finalised all local authorities will have to report on their performance against the indicators.

3. At a national level a process is underway to develop the methodology by which public bodies will calculate their emissions reductions. We await the outcome of this process. It is likely that each local authority will have to account for its emissions and energy reduction targets as part of the climate action plans proposed under Section 12 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon (Amendment) Bill, when enacted.

4. Action 4 of the Climate Action Plan provides for the publication of legislation – the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2020, published in early October 2020 and currently progressing through the Oireachtas – which will give legal standing to the Climate Action Plan 2019.

Section 3 of the Bill – as it is currently constituted – states that “The State shall pursue the transition to a climate resilient and climate neutral economy by the end of the year 2050.”

Section 12 of the Bill - *Role of Local Authority* – provides for the insertion, after Section 14 of the parent Act, of Section 14A which provides that the Minister shall request local authorities to make a 5-year local authority climate action plan which will specify mitigation and adaptation measures to be adopted by the local authority, within 18 months of the commencement of the Section. It is anticipated that included in the climate action plan will be the mechanisms by which the local authority intends to meet the emissions and energy efficiency targets contained in the Climate Action Plan 2019. Ministerial guidance on the content and preparation of the local authority climate action plan is also provided for under Section 14A of the Bill.

5. Forthcoming guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency relating to GreenProcurement, which are due to issue in Quarter 1 2021, are likely to include for the mandatory inclusion of green criteria in all procurement using public funds, within 36 months.