



Resource Efficiency Action Plan 2019





Contents

Introduction	3
Overview of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs	4
Responsibilities	4
Energy Management	4
Overview	4
Activity to Date	5
Future Actions	5
Transport	6
Overview	6
Activity to Date	6
Future Actions	6
Waste Management	7
Overview	7
Activity to Date	7
Future Actions	7
Water Management	8
Overview	8
Activity to Date	8
Future Actions	8



Introduction

In 2009 the Government set a national target to Improve energy efficiency by 33% in the Public Sector. Since the baseline year for measurement, 2012, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) has improved its energy efficiency by 47%. This was achieved through changing behavior, improving energy management and the introduction of new energy efficiencies. DCYA's overall energy efficiency improved further following its relocation to new, modern office accommodation in Miesian Plaza, Baggot Street lower, Dublin 2. Miesian Plaza was the first LEED Platinum¹ v4 Certified building in Ireland and includes a broad range of environmental features.

In January 2017 the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy (the Strategy) was published by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). This strategy introduced measures to support public bodies in reaching their Energy Efficiency targets. Delivery on these targets is tasked to a Departmental Steering Group on Energy Management led by the Departmental Energy Performance Officer (at Management Board level).

DCYA is proactively working with DCCAE, the Office of Public Works, and sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to progress Energy Efficiency related works and projects as required to promote improved energy management, and share best practice.

This Department is an active participant in the OPW "*Optimising Power @ Work*" campaign and continues to promote and implement new and existing energy management initiatives on an ongoing basis.

In January 2019 the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment broadened the remit of the Strategy to include waste management and resource efficiency in conjunction with energy efficiency. The Minister received Government approval for actions to be taken by each Government Department to reduce the use of single use plastics and the production of waste, and on the initiation of green public procurement policies. This strategy also included a requirement for all Government Departments to produce a Resource Efficiency Action Plan (REAP).

In June 2019 the whole of Government National Climate Action Plan was published. The new plan puts us on a trajectory to meet our 2030 target for carbon emissions and contains comprehensive governance, performance and monitoring protocols. This includes an obligation to adopt a Mandate for Climate Action to demonstrate an exemplar role on climate action. This REAP is an important first step in that process of monitoring, reporting and accountability.

¹ LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. Please see [Irish Green Building Council](#) for further details.



Overview of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs was established on 2nd of June 2011. The Government decided to create this dedicated Department and, in doing so, to consolidate a range of functions previously discharged by various Government Ministers.

The Department brings together a number of key areas of policy and provision for children, young people and families. It is tasked with driving forward a range of commitments, as well as leading an ambitious agenda for children and family services.

Included under the aegis of the Department are the following bodies:

- the Child and Family Agency (Tusla);
- the Adoption Authority of Ireland;
- the Ombudsman for Children's Office; and
- the children detention school (Oberstown).

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Department encompass a wide range of policy and service activity, both direct and indirect, for children, young people and families in Ireland. We have a complex mandate, comprised of a number of separate, but inter-related strands:

- The direct provision of a range of universal and targeted services;
- Ensuring high-quality arrangements are in place for focused interventions dealing with child welfare and protection, family support, adoption, school attendance and reducing youth crime. Comprehensive oversight of the Child and Family Agency, established in January 2014, is an integral part of this;
- The harmonization of policy provision across Government and with a wide range of stakeholders to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Energy Management

Overview

DCYA has committed to a Public Sector Energy Programme in conjunction with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). This partnership enables DCYA to access supports from the SEAI, such as project assistance through specialist advisors. Under SEAI partnership, DCYA committed to and has followed through on developing a structured Energy Management programme. The Department reports annually on energy efficiency



initiatives and savings achieved, through the SEAI Monitoring and Reporting Portal. In 2018 DCYA had improved its energy efficiency by 47% from the baseline set in 2012.

Activity to Date

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is already well advanced in this area as a result of a number of internal Departmental initiatives such as:

- Removal of personal heaters and fans
- Automated lighting in areas of less foot fall
- Staff engagement and energy awareness workshops.

The decommissioning of our previous premises in Mespil Road resulted in our energy consumption being reduced and our energy efficiency improving in excess of the Government target of 30%.

DCYA relocated in May 2018 to our new LEED Platinum v4 rated building in Baggot Street. Miesian Plaza is equipped with a wide range of energy efficient technologies and features that help to minimise its energy footprint. For example, reduced electricity consumption through the use of energy-efficient category 2 lighting and fixtures with automated controls used throughout the building. These measures significantly reduce the buildings' energy consumption.

The building is a sealed ventilated space which uses high efficiency air-conditioning cooling systems including thermal storage and low energy fan coil units.

A responsive Building Management System tracks the sun and responds accordingly. Motorised internal blinds control solar gain and glare to provide maximum occupant comfort.

Future Actions

- We will continue to seek new and innovative ways to improve our energy efficiency through participation in initiatives such as the SEAI Public Sector Energy Programme, the OPW Optimising Power @ Work campaign and through engagement with the DCCAE.
- We are currently in the process of establishing a Green Team together with the other tenants at Block 1, Miesian Plaza. The objective of this group will be to effect positive change in support of sustainability efforts within our respective Departments and as part of a wider Government Initiative.



Transport

Overview

DCYA is committed to offsetting the greenhouse gas emissions associated with official air travel in accordance with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 01/2020. Limited car parking is available at Miesian Plaza and staff are encouraged to walk, cycle or take public transport where possible.

Activity to Date

- DCYA have developed a policy and procedures for offsetting the emissions associated with official air travel.
- New Video Conferencing system launched in December 2019. This allows staff to join meetings from remote locations, thereby reducing the need to travel for meetings.
- DCYA staff are provided with access to the travel pass scheme and to the cycle to work scheme through HR Shared Services (PeoplePoint).
- In-house bike hall and shower facilities provided at Miesian Plaza.

Future Actions

- We will continue to record, monitor and value the emissions associated with official air travel usage since 1st January 2020 and, we will make payments to the Climate Action Fund, with the first such payment due to be made by 28th February 2021 in respect of these emissions.
- We will continue to encourage and support the adoption of new technologies, for example, for web conferencing, that reduce the need for travel.
- We will continue to encourage staff to walk, cycle or to take public transport where possible.



Waste Management

Overview

In DCYA we are now implementing the recent Government Decision (S180/20/10/0434C of 3 January 2019) which required Actions by Departments and Agencies on Single Use Plastics, Prevention of Waste and Green Public Procurement.

Activity to Date

In the planning stage of DCYA's move to Miesian Plaza it was decided to remove all desk bins from individual desks. Centralised recycling bin facilities were introduced at the tea stations on each floor. This led to a reduction in the volume of general waste and an increase in recycling and composting.

Staff notices on recycling and composting above the recycling bins and at the print stations has raised awareness and behavioral change within the Department.

DCYA are also conscious of waste and energy usage as a result of printing. Upon relocation to Miesian Plaza, we consolidated our printer infrastructure to 8 A rated multi-function machines. This meant the removal of 80 devices including personal printers and older multi-function devices. All printers are set for monochrome and duplex printing as a default. This has led to a significant reduction in our paper and ink consumption while also being more energy efficient.

Future Actions

- We will continue to seek new and innovative ways to minimize waste generation and maximize recycling through initiatives such as Green Public Procurement in accordance with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 20/2019: Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement.
- We are currently in the process of rolling out the new "eDocs" Document and Records Management System which will help to promote the use of electronic records and the reduction of paper files and printing.



Water Management

Overview

In Miesian Plaza, water usage is managed through the Building Management System. Water sustainability and Water Conservation are promoted through the use of a Rainwater Harvesting System (RWHS). Rain water collection tanks are located in the basement and variable speed booster pumps distribute filtered rainwater for WC flushing and irrigation.

Activity to Date

All toilets are low-flush and use between 3-4 litres per flush, and as with all handbasins, are sensor operated which further reduces waste and usage.

Future Actions

- With the assistance on the Green Team, we will promote water conservation through staff awareness campaigns.