



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# **Advisory Group on A ‘Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy’ Terms of Reference**

**May 2020**

# 1 Background

The current national waste policy as set out in *A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management in Ireland* is due to expire in mid- 2020. Its replacement, with a current working title of a 'Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy' will encompass many shared principles, aims and objectives of other policy initiatives including:

- Climate Action Plan;
- Project Ireland 2040;
- UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- Circular Economy Package, including the Plastics Strategy;
- Single Use Plastics Directive;
- Bio-economy; and
- DCCA Statement of Strategy

## 2 Public and Stakeholder Participation

To be effective waste policy needs to be strategic and ambitious. Effective public and stakeholder participation will go a long way to secure successful implementation. Therefore, a core objective of the policy development process will be to ensure that, as well as the wider public, all relevant stakeholders are consulted and encouraged to contribute to the process of policy preparation. Participation processes will be designed and structured to ensure meaningful, informed and timely engagement with the policy-making process.

## 3 Advisory Group

To assist in the production of the new action plan Mr. Richard Bruton, T.D., Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment proposes to establish an Advisory Group to harness the potential and capacity of a broad range of sectors- public, business, environmental, and social- to guide strategic thinking and decision-making in the preparation of the next iteration of national waste policy. The Department will chair the meetings of the

Group, which it is expected will take place monthly up to the publication of the policy which is expected in mid-2020.

## 4 Guiding principles for the Group

- Transparency and openness – all documents will be made available by WPRE (DCCAE) to the Members and meeting reports will be promptly circulated;
- Equality and respect – all Members will be afforded equal opportunity – by the Chair and by other Members – to voice their opinion and contribute to the work of the Group. While the Group is comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds, there is an overriding obligation on Members to treat each other with respect at all times;
- Efficiency – it is recognised that time and resources will be limited. Therefore the work and meetings of the Advisory Group will be managed in as efficient a manner as possible and Members are requested to respect the time investment by other Members.
- Collegiality and tolerance – the Members of the Group will work together in the spirit of collegiality and tolerance.
- Common goal – the Members of the Group will work together towards a common goal of assisting in the development of Ireland's next iteration of waste policy.

## 5 Role of Advisory Group

The role of the Group is to:

- Utilise professional and business acumen to provide advice on the strategic direction of waste policy and consider issues in a national and international context;
- Provide a platform in which to develop, test, review and refine ideas, scenarios and policy;

- Utilise expertise, resources and relationships of representatives and to provide data and material, where relevant, to inform discussions and ideas in the preparation of waste policy; and
- Assist and advise on alignment and linkages with other relevant initiatives/sectors and legislative requirements.

For the purpose of clarity, DCCAE retains the role of drafting the new waste action plan for consideration by the Minister. However, this process will be informed by consultation, including consultation and discussion with the Advisory Group.

## **6 Membership and Representation**

The Advisory Group will be chaired by Mr. Philip Nugent, Assistant Secretary, Natural Resources & Waste Policy, Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment. In addition to the Chairperson, the Group will be composed of individual representatives of various relevant sectoral interests. The Group comprises a significant number of people to ensure effective representation of a broad range of sectors who are considered to have the capacity to contribute in a significant way to the preparation of national waste policy.

The Chairperson will preside at the meetings of the Advisory Group. In the Chairperson's absence meetings will be chaired by the Vice-Chairperson from DCCAE. The Group will meet monthly until June, 2020 and may convene extra meetings as required.

The Inception Meeting of the Advisory Group will take place on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2020 and it will remain in place until a final draft of a Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy is completed. Following the development of the new national waste action plan, the role, function and requirements of the Advisory Group will be reviewed by the Minister/ Department.

## 7 Secretariat

Secretariat services for the Advisory Group will be provided by the Waste Policy and Resource Efficiency Division of the Department (DCCAЕ).

In order to conduct its business efficiently and to minimise costs, the Advisory Group will seek to operate through electronic means to the greatest extent possible.

## 8 Responsibilities of the Advisory Group

The Advisory Group will be:

- Provided with meaningful information in a timely manner in advance of meetings;
- Given reasonable time to make recommendations; and
- Expected to operate on the basis of a collective approach to the policy development process. Whilst appointment to the Group is on the basis of knowledge, interest or representation of a sector, and this may shape input to the process, individual interests shall not supersede the role of the Advisory Group.

The members of the Advisory Group will commit to:

- Attending all scheduled Advisory Group meetings and where this is not possible, to arrange for an alternate;
- Sharing relevant information and communicating with other Advisory Group members;
- Making timely recommendations and take action so as to assist with the expedient preparation and delivery of the next iteration of national waste policy;
- Working with the Department in relation to particular areas of analysis or research required;
- Keeping confidential all matters relating to the internal workings of the Advisory Group as part of policy development process, or matters identified by other members as sensitive or not to be disclosed by any member, directly or indirectly, to any person or entity outside of membership of the Advisory Group and the organisations they represent.