

## Public Affairs Update

02<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

Over the past month or so, the Cork Chamber Public Affairs team have made multiple submissions to public consultations. These include the Sustainable Mobility Policy Review (covering the Climate Change Challenge, Regulation of Public Transport, Greener Buses, Active Travel, and Congestion), submission to the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy and the submission to the pedestrian and cycle route from Bury's bridge to Carrigtwohill. These submissions give a flavour of the Cork Chamber public affairs advocacy work.

Below is a brief summary with each of these submissions:

- [Sustainable Mobility Policy Review – Climate Change Challenge](#)

There is an opportunity to adopt technologies within our transport fleet to greatly enhance and safeguard air quality. In the case of Cork, with over 20% of the Cork Metropolitan area yet to be developed by 2040, now is the opportunity to have a step change in public transport technology and fuel. The future will require a mixture of technologies and fuel types. Cork Chamber firmly believe that immediate and ambitious action must be taken to meaningfully cut emissions now.

- [Sustainable Mobility Policy Review – Regulation of Public Transport](#)

In recognition of Cork's positioning within Ireland 2040, we believe the establishment of a permanent National Transport Authority office in Cork is required to focus on the implementation of CMATS. Setting up a Cork based delivery office also sends an important signal of intent to people and business in Cork. Having viewed the technical and stakeholder based complexity of delivery of Dublin Bus Connects, a dedicated Cork team will be nothing short of essential to the progress of the CMATS plan.

- [Sustainable Mobility Policy Review – Greener Buses, Alternative fuel options for the urban bus fleet](#)

We must be ambitious and adopt technologies that have a future technology pathway, and which are ambitious for climate action in the short-medium term, and long-term. Cork Chamber assert that hybrid electric diesel bus technology is not ambitious, sending a weak signal of intent nationally. The NTA must be supported to achieve an expanded network and fleet with the adoption of a technology that has a future pathway, and which is an exemplar of positive climate action. Cork Chamber advocates for the adoption of CNG to biomethane public bus fleet. Biomethane is a low-carbon, methane-based transport fuel produced from anaerobic digestion giving effect to national waste policy, driving towards an efficient circular economy in converting waste to energy, while increasing domestic energy security, diversity and resilience.

- [Active Travel \(Sustainability Mobility policy review\)](#)

To achieve a cycling culture in Cork, specific infrastructure investments are required. These include: 1) Development and completion of a coherent primary and inter-city cycling network as set out in the 2017 Cork Cycle Network Plan and the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, including the flagship 'Lee to Sea' greenway from Ballincollig to Crosshaven, 2) Completion of the Cork Walking Strategy recommendations, 3) Ensuring cycling connectivity to key educational areas and employment areas, e.g. Little Island, Cork City Centre, Ringaskiddy, Blackpool and Mahon, 4) Expanding the Cork Coke Bikes Scheme to include areas such as CIT, Cork County Hall, Blackrock, Mahon and Blackpool. Ten new Coke Bike Schemes were promised in 2019 in Cork but have not yet been delivered, 5) Developing a shared cycling scheme in Little Island connected with the train station, 6) Identifying and promoting quiet roads, where cyclists share the road space with motorists, 7) Integration of cycling and pedestrian networks in all future road investments 8) Delivery of wheel ramps and cycling parking throughout the city and suburbs 9) Closer cooperation with, and funding for An Garda Síochána, to enforce existing cycling infrastructure in urban areas.

- [Congestion \(Sustainable Mobility policy review\)](#)

Public and sustainable transport networks and infrastructure are fundamental building blocks to successfully decarbonise by 2050. Currently Ireland is drastically lagging our European counterparts in terms of availability of public transport options and sustainable (cycle) network options for commuters. We are at a pivotal point in Cork alone with development at a larger scale than ever seen before, now is the opportunity to be laying the foundations for a public and sustainable transport network that works for commuters, and that encourages commuter behaviour and patterns that do not detrimentally add to GHG emissions.

- [Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy](#)

This consultation covers a range of areas from food waste, to plastics and packaging, to construction and demolition waste and the circular economy. From a business and wider socio-economic perspective, Cork Chamber views the development of a strong circular economy as an opportunity for Ireland to reduce waste generation and to incentivise reuse. One of the key points in our submission is the development of a national platform for sharing production/material by-products for commercial repurposing. A progressive digital platform whereby businesses are encouraged through a market structure could be instrumental to accelerate a shift in consumption patterns to reuse and repurposing of materials.

- [Pedestrian and Cycle Route from Bury's Bridge, Kilcoolishal to Carrigtwohill via Glounthaune](#)

In the context of this enhanced connectivity we highlight that onward connection from Carrigtwohill to Midleton, a Youghal to Cork City cycle corridor would become a reality offering a safe cycle and pedestrian corridor that would be exemplary and without precedent in an Irish context, bringing multiple benefits from increased tourism to improved quality of life for residents, and potential for mid-distance cycle commuting. Onward connectivity to Cobh and Whitegate should also be actively planned for and implemented to maximise the value of our exceptional and unique harbour.

These submissions are guided by the commitment of Cork Chamber to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Five specific goals have been identified by the Irish Chamber Network which we are actively advocating for throughout our work;



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