

## Climate Change Advisory Council Meeting - DRAFT MINUTES

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Start time:** 9:00am

**Venue:** Video Conference Meeting

**Present:** Professor John FitzGerald, Professor Gerry Boyle, Laura Burke, Professor Frank Convery, Dr Joseph Curtin, Professor Anna Davies, Professor Ottmar Edenhofer, Professor Alan Matthews, William Walsh.

**Apologies:** Professor Alan Barrett, Professor Peter Clinch.

**Presenters:** Geraldine Tallon, Sharon Turner, Halldór Thorgjersson, Minister Eamon Ryan TD

**Secretariat:** Dr Margaret Desmond, Phillip O'Brien, Gemma O'Reilly, Seán O'Leary, Claire Camilleri.

### 1. Opening of Meeting

#### 1.1 Minutes for the Climate Change Advisory Council Meeting 17.09.2020

The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were signed electronically by the Chair.

#### 1.2 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted by the Council.

#### 1.3 Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of interests to report.

#### 1.4 Chair's Report of Activities

Prof. Anna Davies chaired and spoke at the EEAC Annual Conference spotlight session on 'Advising on a Just Transition' on the 28<sup>th</sup> October. The session provided a useful exchange on international experience from the Danish Climate Change Committee and the UKCCC and their approaches on advising on a Just Transition.

The chair also met with Ervia and ICTU among other meetings. The Chair also presented at Energy Ireland, the Construction Industry Federation, the Irish Farmer's

Journal Webinar series. The Chair also participated at the EEA/Ecologic session examining the policy evaluation role of national climate advisory bodies. The Chair also appeared at the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Climate Action regarding the Pre-Legislative scrutiny of Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2015.

## **2. Adaptation Committee**

An update from the Adaptation Committee meeting on the 8th October was provided. The Committee met with Justina Corcoran, Principal Officer in the Aarhus, Climate Adaptation and Citizen Engagement division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and discussed developments in adaptation. The Committee also received a presentation from Ciarán Hayes providing an update on relevant local authority initiatives. The Climate Action Regional offices also updated the Committee on their activities. The Committee will also be preparing a 'look back' document to assist a new Committee.

The next meeting will be on the 17th December with presentations from Chris Stark, Chief Executive of the UK Committee on Climate Change (UKCCC) and Kathryn Brown, Head of Adaptation with the UKCCC. The Committee were also engaging with the UK Climate Resilience Champions and will discuss health and Climate Change with Prof. Patrick Goodman, TUDublin and Prof. John Wenger from UCC.

## **3. Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2020**

The Council discussed the proposed Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2020 and the implications for the Council. During his presentation at the pre-legislative scrutiny, the Chair highlighted that the Council had yet to consider the amendments before his appearance and that following this Council meeting, the Council would provide feedback to the Committee. The Council discussed the Amendment Bill and highlighted the role of the Council regarding carbon budgets, the treatment of biogenic methane, adaptation and operational impacts and resources of the Council. It was agreed to incorporate the comments from the meeting into a draft letter and circulate to Council for agreement. It was agreed the final letter would be issued to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Climate Action and copy the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications and Minister for Transport.

## **4. EU Climate Plan**

The Council discussed the EU Climate Plan and its implications for Ireland. The Council discussed the EU's increased ambition and potential revisions to legislation, the strategy

to reduce methane emissions, LULUCF emissions, the potential role of negative emissions technologies and the transport sector in the EU Climate Plans. The Council will continue to monitor the EU developments in this area and the impacts on climate action in Ireland.

## **5. Budget 2020**

The Council discussed provisions within the recent national budget announcement that have direct or potential indirect impacts on climate action. They also discussed the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's separate document that outlines plans for the use of Carbon Tax funds in 2021. The Council acknowledged this as a positive step regarding green budgeting efforts and how to track climate finance. The Council discussed areas for improvement and identified the need for investment in research for disruptive technologies.

## **6. Council Work Programme**

The Council were updated on the approximate underspend of €80,000 from the overall budget due to impacts from COVID-19 in relation to cancelled in-person meetings, unrequired travel and subsistence, changing priorities and research projects that have not been able to proceed due to unavailability of researchers and limited resources in the Secretariat to administer the programme.

The Council were informed that the call for research fellowships resulted in three fellowships proceeding to negotiation of award. It was originally expected that just one fellowship would be awarded under each of the three topics; adaptation, mitigation and carbon budgeting. However no proposals were received under the mitigation topic while two carbon budget proposals passed the scientific evaluation. The two carbon budget proposals, having very different approaches to the topic, would both add value and insights to Council deliberations. The Chair approved this approach to proceed. The projects were in the process of negotiation and proceeding to award status.

The Council were also informed that the Assessment of Mitigation and Adaptation in Heat Sector research call had closed and was in the process of being evaluated.

## **7. Internal Review**

The panel of the independent evaluation of the Climate Change Advisory Council, Geraldine Tallon (Chair), Sharon Turner and Halldór Thorgeirsson presented preliminary findings of the review process around the themes of mandate and composition, administrative and financial and vision and ambition. A discussion on the preliminary

findings followed. The Council acknowledged the importance of this document to help inform the next Council term. The panel thanked the Council for their contributions to assist in the evaluation. A final report will be tabled at the next meeting in January.

#### **8. Council Administration**

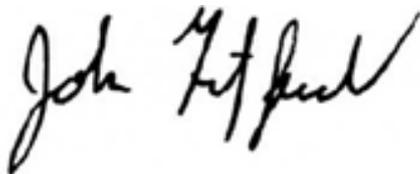
The Council were provided with an overview of the media coverage following the publication of the Annual Review and received website statistics following the launch.

#### **9. Minister for Climate Action, Communication Networks and Transport**

The Council spoke with Minister Eamon Ryan TD, Climate Action, Communication Networks and Transport. The Minister thanked the Council for their ongoing work. The Council informed the Minister that they would be issuing a letter of advice on the proposed Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill 2020 the following week. The Council discussed access to data and the work that is underway to develop of a Memorandum of Understanding with relevant departments to provide access to data to help inform the Council's work. The Council and Minister discussed national, European and international climate issues. The Council thanked the Minister for his time.

#### **10. Agreed Outcomes, plans for next meeting and AOB**

The next meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Council will be held on the 14th January 2021. The Council acknowledged that their term of office expires on the 17th January 2021 and have not received guidance on a transition to a new Council. The Chair will follow up with the Department to raise this issue.



Signed 14.01.2021