

Minutes

Retail Forum Working Group Future of Retail – Green Transition Meeting 1 – 11 April 2022

CHATHAM HOUSE RULES APPLY

Attendees: Appendix A

Next meeting: 10am, Wednesday 4 May 2022

Minutes: The minutes from this meeting are to be agreed under Silence Procedure and will be available on www.enterprise.gov.ie

Objective: The **Future of Retail – Green Transition** working group is tasked with identifying a set of achievable actions to feed into a Retail Action Plan that will be presented to the Minister for Retail, Damian English T.D. at the Retail Forum meeting on 08 June 2022.

1. Agenda Items and minutes

The Chair welcomed the members of the working group and thanked them for their participation. Three meetings of the working group will be held in advance of the 8 June meeting and this meeting focused on:

- Role of mentoring programmes between large and multinational retailers and smaller and independent retailers to share learnings
- Improve awareness of supports available e.g., Green for Micro Scheme (Local Enterprise Offices), Climate Toolkit 4 business
- Actions for the retail sector to consider in the transition to a low carbon economy and the implementation of the Climate Action Plan

A tour de table followed where each member outlined their ideas and suggestions and issues that they believed were important priorities for the group to work through.

Following the tour de table the Chair asked for feedback from attendees and if any other organisation should be in attendance. It was proposed that the EPA be included in particular in relation to food waste. The Chair advised that they have been contacted about presenting on the Green Enterprise Innovation for a Circular Economy 2022 Webinar.

2. Issues/Challenges

Role of mentoring programmes between large and multinational retailers and smaller and independent retailers to share learnings

- Concerns raised about the type of mentoring and ensure that any mentor selected understood the retail sector.
- Mentoring programme could be about knowledge sharing with retailers, of all sizes, sharing their experiences and expertise.

- Primark spoke about starting a pilot programme in the UK and working at a local level. They spoke about a new organisation in the UK called [Green Street](#). Primark are asking retailers what they want and are considering initiatives such as recycling supports and repair workshops.
- A local approach at town level to mentoring was raised where retailers were working together and not on a one-to-one basis. Chair mentioned that this could be considered under the TCF/NTE Working Group

Improve awareness of supports available e.g., Green for Micro Scheme (Local Enterprise Offices), Climate Toolkit 4 business

Schemes/Supports

- Schemes need to be tailored for retailers and retailers should be involved in the development of initiatives.
- In relation to the [Green for Micro Scheme](#), one participant who had used the scheme said that it included free mentoring and options for energy savings which they implemented.
- The Chair asked representative bodies if they were aware of the uptake of the Green for Micro Scheme with their members and no data was available.
- SEAI supports ([SEAI Energy Academy](#), [Energy Audits for SMEs](#)) were mentioned and the current work being carried out on retail dedicated SEAI supports including a guide and video case studies.
- One participant asked about 'green related lending'.
- Concerns were raised about the upcoming Deposit Return Scheme, which is in the early stages of implementation (service provider to be put in place). It is due to be cost neutral for retailers but there may be other issues for retailers.

Awareness/Education

- Retailers need to be made aware why the green transition is important and why it is applicable to them i.e., savings, competitiveness, reputation.
- Case studies are useful.
- Language needs to be plain and simple (jargon buster mentioned). The Chair suggested that an infographic (pathway to net zero emissions) could be included in the upcoming SEAI Retail guide to simplify the pathway for retailers.
- Reporting was another point raised as becoming more important for all businesses.

Actions for the retail sector to consider in the transition to a low carbon economy and the implementation of the Climate Action Plan

- No further actions raised in relation to the Climate Action Plan.

Other issues raised

- Who is measuring activities undertaken by retailers?
- Survey carried out on behalf of Retail Forum member and results will be available to the Group by the end of April. The Survey is part of the *Sustainable Irish Retail Action* (SIRA) Initiative being developed by Think Plan Do Consulting and BehaviourWise in partnership with Retail Excellence and Champion Green. The initiative will result in a Guide for the Retail Sector which will focus on 10 retail sustainability pillars (build & retrofit, heating & cooling, lighting, appliances & systems, product & merchandise, signage & comms, supply chain, and waste & recycling, with case studies under each pillar and top tips).
- It was agreed by Working Group members that DETE would set the agenda for the next meeting and the name of the Group is to remain as '*Green Transition*'.

3. DRAFT Actions

	Lead	Action	Detail	Timeline
1.	DETE Working Group Members	Promote the <i>Sustainable Irish Retail Action Survey</i>	Copy of the 10 retail sustainability pillars from the <i>Sustainable Irish Retail Action Survey</i> to be circulated to the Working Group along with a request for relevant case studies from Working Group members.	Short-Term
2.	DETE SEAI Working Group members	Provide stakeholder input to the SEAI Retail Sector Energy Guide	Working Group to be consulted on the content/design/development of the forthcoming SEAI Guide for Retailers.	Short-Term
3.	DETE SEAI Chambers Ireland Retail Representative bodies Working Group Members	Map existing supports available to the retail sector in relation to the Green Transition.	Map existing financial supports available from SEAI, LEOs, EPA and any soft supports from Chambers Ireland and representative bodies.	Short-Term
4.	DETE SEAI Working Group members	Consider and identify how to best communicate supports via existing Government and business channels.	Potential for inclusion on a dedicated retail page on enterprise.gov.ie or Gov.ie	Medium-Term
5.	DETE All members	Assess and identify how best to gather data on engagement of the sector in the sustainability agenda	Liaise with retail representative bodies, Working Group members, Local Enterprise Office's <i>Green for Micro</i> programme and DETEs <i>Climate toolkit 4 business</i> on available data	Medium-Term
6.	Working Group members DETE	Monitor the roll out of the Deposit Return Scheme	Working Group members to monitor the implementation of the Scheme and update the Working Group and the Retail Forum	Medium-Term
7.	Retail Representative bodies, Chambers Ireland DETE	Explore the feasibility of a pilot mentoring programme	Identify suitable retailers who are willing to engage in a pilot mentoring programme supported through the sector.	Long-Term

Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment
April 2022

Appendix A

Green Transition Working Group

Attendance List:

Organisation	First Name	Surname
Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment (Chair)	Deborah	Dignam
Chambers Ireland	James	Kiernan
Cork Flower Studio	Justine	Looney
CSNA	Vincent	Jennings
Primark	Emma	Ormond
Retail Excellence	Sharon	Yourell
RGDATA	Tara	Buckley
SEAI	Sara	Norris
Tesco	Grace	Milton

DETE Officials	Helen	Keane MacDonough
	Sandra	Mullen