

Cork City Council's submission to the  
**Draft Clean Air Strategy Public Consultation**

Submission Dated: 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022

**Consultation Questions**

**1. Do you agree with the five strategic priorities outlined in the draft strategy?**

The strategic priorities are broad ranging.

Consideration should be given to strengthening the message on the relationship between air quality and health and well-being. Perhaps it should be a standalone priority.

**2. Do you feel there are additional strategic priorities which should be included?**

Consider putting 'Air Quality, Health and Well-Being' as an additional priority.

**3. How can pollutant emissions data be better used to inform actions at local and national levels?**

Consider the delivery of local air quality annual reports (per county, per city, per town  $\geq$  5,000 population) with accompanying ease of access to data for both air quality practitioners and citizens alike.

Consider linking air quality information to the data inventory held by the Central Statistics Office on the methods of household heating in a given area.

This can further assist in targeted measures in cities and towns to reduce air pollution.

**4. What do you feel are the most important current and emerging air quality issues in Ireland that require further research?**

- Further research on the air quality – climate change nexus.
- Research on the beneficial impacts of implementing nature based solutions (NBS) and blue-green initiatives in urban areas on air quality.
  - Apply a cost benefit analysis for each NBS measure.
- Specific local air quality measurements, application of novel sensors and instrumentation in urban areas.
  - Measure the effectiveness and accuracy of indicative air quality sensors in building local scale, high density networks in urban areas.
    - Assess the usefulness of 'live' air quality sensor data (for local air quality networks as mentioned above) for use by citizens; in parallel with the

established Air Quality Index for Health and the associated averaged air quality data.

- Local, high density air quality sensing networks can assist the relevant authority to apply targeted measures to tackle air pollution hot spots.

#### **5. How can we better increase awareness of the health impacts of air pollution?**

Financing targeted high impact campaigns on the links between air pollution and health (similar to anti-smoking campaigns).

Facilitating linkages and synergies at the local scale (County and City Councils, Municipal District Council's) between Public Health, air quality scientists (Local Authority) and academia.

Similar to the recently established synergy formed between Cork City Council, Cork Healthy Cities and Air Quality researchers and instrumentation experts in University College Cork.

#### **6. What issues might a national clean air awareness campaign encompass and how could its impact be measured?**

Specific breakdown of health impacts of poor air quality per region, county, city. This will allow for targeted measures per region, county, city, linking the air quality data to the local area.

Follow this up yearly / every four years to assess the impact of targeted measures on health and well-being (reduction in death rate - attributable to improved air quality etc.).

#### **7. What particular metrics or benchmarks do you think should be considered in tracking the progress of a Clean Air Strategy?**

Participation in annual high impact awareness campaigns (numbers / figures on public engagement, schools engagement etc.).

Other metrics:

- Improvement in air quality per town / city (perhaps with a population over 5,000)
- Changes in methods of home heating – linkages to air quality improvement
  - Link with home energy retrofit schemes
- Rise / fall of deaths attributable to poor air quality (per region, county, city etc.).

#### **8. Are there any other comments you have in relation to the draft national Clean Air Strategy?**

Stronger voice for Local Government in implementation, enforcement and promotion of air quality programmes and initiatives (Clean Air Forum etc.).

Dedicated fund (innovation fund or similar) for local authorities at apply to.

Applicable to innovation, enhanced local air quality initiatives (monitoring, information campaigns etc.), developing synergies with stakeholders and key players in their specific functional areas.

### **Air Quality Impact Potential at the Local Government Level**

Place air quality in local government on an equal footing to climate change. This will require dedicated funding and commitment from central government to assist and finance the development of air quality teams at a high level within local authorities.