



Advisory Group on a ‘Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy’

**Seventh Meeting, 14:30, Thursday 7 May 2020 –
Construction and Demolition Waste (C&D)**

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1. Welcome and Introduction

Philip Nugent opened the meeting and welcomed all those who were available to join in. The topic for discussion at the meeting, which took place on-line using the Zoom application, was on Construction and Demolition Waste (C&D).

The construction sector has a huge role to play in Ireland’s transition to a more circular economy and to Ireland’s economic recovery, post Covid-19 in a way that decouples economic activity from waste generation. There is also a need to ensure the focus is shifted towards waste prevention in the sector rather than the conversation focusing solely on managing waste.

The Government and State sector does not have sole responsibility for driving this change; therefore each member must consider how they can proactively contribute to the solutions needed.

2. Presentation

James Benson, Director Housing, Planning and Development Services, Construction Industry Federation, gave a presentation on the C&D sector in Ireland and the contribution it can make to the transition to a circular economy model.

3. Discussion highlights and comments

- The progress arising from the Construction Waste Resource Group and its sub-groups and also the good work done by a number of members of this in advancing various End-of-Waste decisions over last 12 months was welcomed. It was noted that utilising the expertise developed through these successful End-of-Waste will be vital if we are to successfully bring forward national End-of-Waste decisions.
- Achieving End-of-Waste status for crushed concrete has been identified as a priority. However the cement industry noted the potential for their industry re-using the pasty material which arises from the crushing process in cement manufacture. This would create a closed loop with aggregates being re-used in concrete industry and the paste being used in cement manufacture. However for this to be possible there is a need for End-of-Waste to be clarified and the industry as a whole to work together to ensure standards and proper segregation of material.
- It was felt there is a need to ensure the End-of-Waste process becomes less cumbersome and decisions more timely with suggestions being made that the EPA should be allowed to charge a fee for such applications which could potentially improve the quality of applications received.
- The issue of adequate resources being made available within the EPA to manage both the End-of-Waste and By-Product systems was stressed.
- There is a need to introduce a greater level of incentivisation into the market to disincentivise the used of skips for mixed C&D material and to encourage greater source segregation.
- To ensure proper practices are followed there is a need to ensure there is more active enforcement of C&D waste management plans as part of the planning process and more active enforcement of waste management practices in the industry as a whole while there is also a need to consider the introduction of a requirement for an identified suitably qualified designated person on sites to properly manage C&D waste management.
- It was noted that the current C&D waste management guidelines which date from 2006 are currently being updated by the EPA with consultation with industry expected to take place over next few months.

- Consideration needs to be given to the introduction of mandatory recycled content in construction materials and projects. To assist in this there will be a need to help create a market for secondary raw materials and to incentivise their use over virgin raw materials while professionally accepted standards will also be required to ensure engineers, planners etc. are happy to utilise these materials.
- Where possible renovation should be favoured over new construction.
- There is merit in establishing a group to progress national End-of-Waste decisions for certain identified priority material streams.

4. Next Meeting

The final meeting in this phase, focusing on the Circular Economy, will take place at 11 am on Thursday 21 July again via the Zoom application with a discussion note to issue in advance.