

Minutes
Retail Forum Working Group
Future of Retail – Green Transition
Meeting 3
25 MAY 2022
CHATHAM HOUSE RULES APPLY

Attendees: Appendix A

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.

The chair advised that this is the final meeting of the Green Transition Working Group for this stage and thanked attendees for their feedback. She said that due to the importance of sustainability to the Retail Sector she will recommend that this Group continue to meet after the next Retail Forum meeting on 8 June.

The immediate next step is that a draft of all actions from the three working groups will be circulated by next Monday to both Working Group and Retail Forum members for their final observations. The Chair encouraged members to review the actions and revert with any feedback.

1. Agenda Items

i. DETE Updates

Textile Industry Action Group

The short-term Textile Industry Action Group is an action in the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy and was due to be established in 2021. According to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) they are now seeking to establish it. DECC also advised that there are several initiatives on the horizon including the EU Sustainable Products Initiative and the Textiles Strategy which will require extensive engagement with a variety of stakeholders. The Department agreed to forward information from DECC to the Working Group.

Comments Arising:

- Proposed new Action to seek continuous update from DECC on matters affecting the Retail sector

Greenstreet

At a previous Working Group meeting a member indicated that [Greenstreet](#), is a very good UK initiative and introduced the Department to one of the team. Greenstreet give high street businesses the knowledge, tools and skills to help them become more sustainable and communicate the changes to their customers. Greenstreet is an initiative under the Circular Economy Workstream of the [Retail Sector Council](#), who provide a single source of strategic liaison between the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on behalf of all other Government Departments, and the retail sector. The Retail Sector Council is co-chaired by the UK's Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets and the Chairman of Howdens Joinery, On the Beach and Two Sister's Food Group/Boporan Holdings.

The Department will recommend inviting Greenstreet to present to the Retail Forum.

Skillnet Ireland Climate Ready Academy

The Department have been in touch with Skillnet Ireland about their [Climate Ready](#) initiative and will update the Group on information received.

ii. Actions

Action 1 – Provide stakeholder input into the SEAI Retail Sector Energy Guide

The Group was provided with an update on the SEAI Retail Sector Energy Guide which was originally due to be completed by early June 2022 and is now deferred to the end of July 2022. Members were advised that they will be given an opportunity to review the draft guide. The Chair proposed that the draft could also be sent to Retail Forum members.

Action Ongoing

Action 2- Map existing supports available to the retail sector in relation to the Green Transition

The current list of supports (excel format) was forwarded to members on 23 May. Members were asked to revert with updates. The three supports listed under 'Starting Point' were highlighted.

Comments Arising:

- Gap analysis to be added to this action
- One Gap highlighted was that 'Green for Micro' is only for business with up to 10 employees. Questions asked included - What is available to retailers with 50 employees? Is 'Green for Micro' available per shop or per company?

Action Ongoing

Action 3 – Consider and identify how to best communicate supports via existing Government and business channels

The chair advised that a dedicated Retail online information resource is being explored on the enterprise.gov.ie website. She asked members if they could identify retailers who could act as exemplars and influencers of sustainability who will encourage other retailers to make the necessary changes.

Comments Arising:

- Any information would need to be tailored for retailers and designed with their needs in mind
- Radio is a good channel to reach retailers on – is there an opportunity to raise awareness of sustainability through radio? retailers
- Retailers struggle to get started – case studies can assist in helping retailers to overcome perceived barriers.
- DETE needs to lead on sustainability for retailers.
- Not all retailers are members of representative organisations – important to identify how to target these retailers- could the local councils help – all retailers are rate payers
- Webinar/workshop to be considered as a way of communicating available supports.
- Two members agreed to work together to draft an action in relation to a retail website

Action Ongoing

Action 4 – Assess and identify how best to gather data on engagement of the sector in the sustainability agenda

Comments Arising:

- Data gathering ongoing – not all data available is sector specific, too difficult to gauge level of retail engagement.
- How can retailers prepare for reporting?
- Corporate Sustainable Reporting directive raised

Action Ongoing

Action 5 – Monitor the roll out of the Deposit Return Scheme

Comments Arising:

- Update from member: Licence application has been approved. Next step is stakeholder engagement to fine tune the details. This will be a significant sustainable initiative by the retail sector and will involve additional training and investment over the next 12 months.

Action Ongoing

Action 6 – Explore the feasibility of a pilot mentoring programme

Comments Arising:

- Large retailer interested in discussing how a programme might work. They want to identify areas of collaboration with smaller retailers to ensure that it is of practical benefit.
- DETE agreed to put them in touch with LEOs. One member agreed to send on case studies and another agreed to collaborate in identifying relevant SMEs in their network.

Action Ongoing

AOB

- Economic, Social and Governance (ESG) to be included in Actions.
- ClimateToolkit4business – member asked if supports can be highlighted on the homepage of the website?
- PSO Levy – the Department advised that they are awaiting an update from DECC on the query raised.

Appendix A

**Retail Forum Working Group
Future of Retail – Green Transition**

Attendance List:

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

Apologies:

Organisation	First Name	Surname
DETE	Mary	Cullen

DETE Officials:

First Name	Surname
Helen	Keane MacDonough
Niamh	Martin
Sandra	Mullen
Sinead	O'Brien
Susan	McNamee