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Resource efficiency action plan October 2019

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Roinn an Taoisigh
Department of the Taoiseach

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY ACTION PLAN

October 2019

Department of the Taoiseach Resource Efficiency Action Plan

The Department is committed to participating in the Green Government initiative led by Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment.

Among the key ambitions were for each Department to end use of single use plastics by March 2019 and to develop a Resource Efficiency Action Plan by end June 2019. This Department will be required to report to the Taoiseach on measures being taken to minimise waste generation and maximise recycling.

This Department has recently established a Green Team to contribute to the development of proposed actions and to help implement those actions and drive awareness and support across the whole Department. The Department is mindful that Government Buildings is a protected structure. While heritage considerations will restrict certain actions, this Department will make every effort to achieve maximum objectives within these boundaries.

Building on the experience of other Departments and discussions to date a number of possible actions have been drafted for further discussion under a number of main headings – Energy, Waste Management, Water, Recycling, Travel and Materials.

Energy & Lighting

- Acknowledge work to date – confirming upgrading to energy saving lighting in all areas of the building.
- Investigate other lighting resource efficiencies such as the installation of sensor lighting in bathrooms.
- Undertake Usage Audit including out-of-hours audit to identify usage levels and areas for possible improvement.
- Continue to build awareness of our energy use and our commitment to the “Optimising Power at Work” campaign including marking Earth Day 22 April 2020.

- Drive compliance among staff to power-down in the evenings and particularly at weekends – engagement with army and all service staff to minimise lights left on in the building.
- Consult with other Departments on Govt Buildings Campus (Bills are divided on pro-rata based on physical size) to determine possible collective measures to lower collective energy usage e.g. thermostats on radiators, draft-proofing windows, solar power, bio-energy.
- Explore options for tracking our own energy usage within the campus and installation of our own meters with a view to tracking progress and keeping staff updated on improvements made.

Waste Management

- Provide dedicated bin for compostable food waste and measures to eliminate food waste in office bins.
- Roll-out segregated bin system to each floor level.
- Engage with cleaning staff on potential for removal of individual office bins by introducing it on a trial basis in sections of the building.
- The Department has ceased use of disposable cups - continue provision of keep-cups to staff and promote proper recycling of any disposable cups brought into the building.
- Build awareness among staff.

Water

- Measure and track water consumption in the Department.
- Explore with OPW options for reducing water usage in bathrooms e.g. flush volume, reduced flow on taps, sensors on taps etc.
- Explore feasibility of collecting and reusing rain water.
- Promote awareness of water conservation among staff.

Recycling

- Improve signage and information on recycling waste including collection of plastics, glass and cardboard.
- Provide clear recycling bins convenient locations across the building.
- Enhance and optimise system for recycling of newspapers.

- Explore creative options with staff to recycle soft plastics.
- Schedule recycling workshops to keep people informed and interested.

Materials

- Ensure the Department is resource efficiency aware when procuring equipment or services in the Department.
- Underscore commitment to end use of single use plastic – cessation of purchasing and ensure continued adherence in catering services procured.
- Provision of glasses and water at meetings to reduce requirement for recyclable water cones.
- Review usage of cleaning products to ensure environmentally friendly products and eliminate use of aerosols.
- Reduce use of printed paper – monitor and circulate usage.
- Trial installation of new model hand dryers to target reduction in paper hand towel use.

Transport

- Renewed promotion of Cycling to Work scheme and Travel Pass scheme.
- Explore option for provision of covered bike parking within the campus.
- Promote use of Dublin Bikes for staff attending meetings across the city.

Other

- Explore Green Teams National Programme – training and support programme for the Department’s green team.
- Develop, train and support champions at work to drive continued action across the Department.
- Build awareness on Climate Action through events and information.
- Explore creative options to encourage bee and butterfly population on the campus.