

Sustainable Mobility Policy Review  
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport,  
Leeson Lane,  
Dublin 2  
D02 TR60

22 January 2020

**Re: Submission to Sustainable Mobility Policy Review – Regulation of Public Transport**

To Whom It Concerns,

Cork Chamber is the leading business organisation in Cork, proactively working to identify and progress developments that are facilitative of economic and sustainable growth. Representing an employer base of close to 1,200 businesses and over 100,000 employees across the region, Cork Chamber is the largest business representation organisation in the south of Ireland.

This submission has been guided by our commitment to delivery of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and the commitment of Cork Chamber to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Five specific goals have been identified by the Irish Chamber Network which we are actively advocating for throughout our work;



As a nation, Ireland is clearly missing out on opportunities to shift to a clean energy and tech society and the benefits that this could bring to our wider economy, society and environment.

From a purely economic perspective, the cost of inaction is far off balance with the benefits of action considering the financial penalties payable of up to €150 million per annum. As a society we need action now across the board in both private and public, with the public sector having the opportunity to lead and be exemplars of regulatory, service and technology improvements and change. Conversely, failure to meaningfully act will damage Ireland's reputation and appeal as a place to live, invest and do business.

To this end, while we acknowledge the scope of the National Transport Authority (NTA), we highlight the stark lack of statutory authority beyond the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). It is Cork Chambers' strong opinion that this is wholly unsuitable to accelerating the provision of public and sustainable transport infrastructure, enhanced network and services beyond the GDA. In the urgent context of climate change and the need for climate action, we need to be removing barriers for action to encourage more sustainable commuting and lifestyles.

Cork is Ireland's fastest growing City region with an addition of 10,000 to the city workforce expected over the next 10 years alone. By 2040 Cork will have an additional 65,000 jobs in the region. We are in a transformational phase in the development of Cork and this must be underpinned by a strong public and sustainable transport offering. It is well acknowledged through national as well as international experience, that retrofitting to allow for public and sustainable transport networks is suboptimal and defies best practice in planning for future densities, connectivity requirements and usage. Business investment demands investment in the foundations of our City regions and the Cork business community is calling consistently for support to develop our transport options.

We strongly believe that it is essential that the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), due to be published in late January/ early February 2020, is placed on a firm statutory footing to ensure delivery, supported by transparent timelines and clear funding commitments. This will ensure parity with other planning instruments and statutory plans (such as the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and City & County development plans), therefore it is essential that the statutory function of the NTA is extended beyond the GDA and aligns with the vision of Project Ireland 2040. Otherwise, and in the context of CMATS, NTA published strategies which focus on the development of regional city infrastructure will be dependent on adoption of the relevant sections within the City and County development plans, weakening the holistic nature of such strategies and which may lead to elements of such plans being undermined.

Finally, in recognition of Cork's positioning within Ireland 2040, we believe the establishment of a permanent National Transport Authority office in Cork is required to focus on the implementation of CMATS. Setting up a Cork based delivery office also sends an important signal of intent to people and business in Cork. Having viewed the technical and stakeholder-based complexity of deliveries of schemes such as Dublin Bus Connects, a dedicated Cork team will be nothing short of essential to the progress of the CMATS plan.

Finally, we emphasise the value of public consultations and welcome future opportunities to engage on this and associated topics. We highlight the opportunity to engage with private sector business representation as a partner on actions and believe there are practical benefits in this approach. We believe that this is instrumental to facilitate fully representative discussions of future pathways and actions that are informed via ground up engagement.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle O'Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

**Michelle O'Sullivan**  
**Senior Public Affairs Executive,**  
**Cork Chamber**