

Outline of Decarbonising Zone Community application, March 2021

The definition of a Decarbonising Zone is:

A **Decarbonising Zone** is an area in which a range of climate mitigation measures can co-exist to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs.

Under Action 165 of the Climate Action Plan 2019 each Local Authority is required to identify a Decarbonisation Zone (DZ). The DZ will at a minimum **reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 7% per annum** from 2021 to 2030 (a 51% reduction over the decade) and will become a demonstrator area, either urban or rural, for other areas in the county.

Mayo County Council understands that for a DZ to be successful a whole of community approach is required and for this reason we would like to invite communities to apply to become Mayo's first DZ.

Benefits of becoming a DZ

Mayo County Councils vision for the DZ is that by 2030 it will be a resilient, vibrant and sustainable community that by 2030 will be on a pathway to zero carbon emissions. The DZ will become an exemplar site for the rest of the county to develop pathways and learnings for other communities to decarbonize.

Mayo County Council will work with the community to reach this target through;

- providing guidance and leadership
- helping identify and apply for funding eg. Climate Action Fund, Ireland 2040, Community energy grants
- developing partnerships with relevant bodies eg. Academia, Government bodies, SEAI etc.
- developing the 2030 implementation plan with the community (to be submitted to Department of Local Government, Housing and Heritage by Q4 2021)
- assisting with implementing plan over timeframe to 2030

How to become Mayo's first Decarbonising Zone:

Step 1: Expression of interest - Deadline March 22nd

Communities that are interested are requested to submit an expression of interest by March 22nd with name, contact details and whether your community meets the urban or rural requirements:

- (i) urban areas and agglomerations with a population not less than 5000 persons, (Castlebar, Ballina and Westport)

or

- (ii) rural areas with an area of not less than 4km² (can include towns/villages)

Please submit **expression of interest** with the information above by email to:

Laura Dixon, Climate Action Officer, Mayo County Council ldixon@mayococo.ie

Step 2: Preparing DZ application form

A webinar will then be held with interested communities on March 25th giving more information on DZs and outlining how to apply.

Further webinars will be given on potential DZ community projects during the application period.

Criteria that will be required in the application form include:

Pass/Fail:

- (iii) urban areas and agglomerations with a population not less than 5000 persons,
or
- (iv) rural areas with an area of not less than 4km²

Additional requirements:

To meet the ambitious targets of reducing emissions by over 50% by 2030 will require a whole of community approach. In acknowledging this Mayo County Council have put together a scoring sheet focused on

1. community track record,
2. an ambitious vision for 2030 and
3. proof of community structure and engagement to meet the 2030 vision.

For further information on application see scoring sheet below.

Step 3: Deadline for receipt of submissions – 4pm, April 16th

Application forms to be submitted to:

Laura Dixon, Climate Action Officer, Mayo County Council ldixon@mayococo.ie

Step 4: Announcement of Mayo DZ May 11th

The applications will be scored against the criteria outlined in the scoring sheet and the chosen community will be announced after ratification at the Mayo County Council meeting.

Application Scoring sheet

Pass/Fail:

- (i) urban areas and agglomerations with a population not less than 5000 persons,
- or
- (ii) rural areas with an area of not less than 4km²

To meet the ambitious targets of reducing emissions by over 50% by 2030 will require a whole of community approach. In acknowledging this Mayo County Council have put together a scoring sheet focused on

1. community track record,
2. an ambitious vision for 2030 and
3. proof of community structure and engagement to meet the 2030 vision.

1. Community track record (40 marks)

Please answer with information from 2015 on only.

Points will be allotted for the following:

a) Proof of previous successful community projects (10 marks)

1. Community awards eg. Pride of Place, other community awards.
2. Community assets eg. Community centre, playground, community walks etc.
3. Participation in previous Mayo County Council environmental and/or biodiversity campaigns eg. Cleaner communities, Community Action Fund, LAWPro.
4. Public Participation Network (PPN) registration.

b) Existing relevant environmental community plans (10 marks)

1. Are you Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC), Renewable Energy Communities (REC), Energy Cooperatives or the Renewable Electrical Support Scheme (RESS).
2. Do you have a SEC Energy Masterplan or other renewable energy plan.
3. Do you have a Biodiversity Plan?
4. Other relevant plans eg. Flood alleviation plan, climate action plan, carbon sequestration.

c) Previous climate action (adaptation and mitigation) projects (20 marks)

Please expand on all previous climate action projects. Highlight if the project was a success and give metrics to prove success. If project was not as successful as envisaged please provide details as to why.

Examples of projects to include:

- Better Energy Community Projects

- Community Energy
- Carbon sequestration
- Undertaken climate adaptation measures eg. Flood alleviation/prevention
- Smarter Travel projects
- Biodiversity
- Other

2. Vision (30 marks)

Each applicant will be required to set out a high level vision setting out how they imagine their low carbon community will look in 2030.

10 marks will be allotted for a standard vision, 20 for an ambitious vision and 30 ambitious and innovative visions.

Please begin with

In 2030

(max 500 words)

Tip: Use the expanded definition of a DZ below for ideas for your 2030 future

A **Decarbonising Zone** is an area spatially identified by the local authority, in which a range of climate mitigation measures can co-exist to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs.

The range of policies and projects developed are specific to the energy and climate characteristics of the spatial area covered by the DZ. This can include a range of technologies and measures addressing electricity, heat, transport, building energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, energy storage, grid frequency/inertia etc.

A Decarbonising Zone should also address the wider co-benefits of air quality, improved health, biodiversity, embodied carbon, agricultural practices, sustainable land management, lower noise levels, waste, water, circular economy etc., and should integrate with smart data and 'smart cities' initiatives (as relevant).

A Decarbonising Zone can also explore the co-benefits of climate adaptation, and examine a range of local measures such as climate proofing, afforestation, green and blue infrastructure, reducing heat island effects, citizen awareness and behavioural change.

3. DZ team Structure (30 marks)

- Collaboration of 3 or more established community groups.
- Proof of community support through Letters/emails of support eg. From local school, church, sporting groups, businesses etc.

c) DZ Committee – min of 5 people.

The committee should represent your community eg. Youth, business, community groups, large energy users, etc.

Please also highlight any community Expertise that will be assisting you with your DZ journey eg. Ecologists, energy engineers, project mgmt., climate champions, etc.

Additional information required (not scored)

DZ intro webinar (March 25th) will provide guidance on information required and MCC will assist with details where necessary.

- Name of community
- Urban/rural
- Population
- Size – km sq
- Townlands included:
- Number of schools and are they registered with Green-Schools (if so, which theme)
 - o Primary
 - o secondary
 - o third level
- Significant/High Energy Users in Zone – recommend letters of support
- Main employment in area

Does your community have (please expand where relevant):

- Public Transport
- Natural Gas connection
- Fibre broadband connection
- Wastewater Treatment Plant connection or Septic Tanks
- Green Spaces eg. Woodlands, rivers, parks etc.
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Wetlands/bogs
- Cycle/walk ways
- EV charging points
- Remote working hubs
- Public buildings in Zone
- Protected Areas eg. SACs, SPAs
- Local area Plans
- Brownfield and former commercial / industrial sites
- Social Housing and/or fuel poor homes (provide no.)
- Air quality issues (EPA guidance)

What is the Median BER of community ([ArcGIS Web Application](#))

For further information please contact:

Laura Dixon,

Climate Action Officer,

Mayo County Council,

☎: +353 (0)94 906 4029 / 087 9745984

✉: ldixon@mayococo.ie

Aras an Chontae | Castlebar | County Mayo



DRAFT