



Health Service Executive

Climate Action Guidance for Regional Implementation Structure

HSE National Office for Climate and Sustainability

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“The HSE is committed to achieving net-zero emissions no later than 2050, delivering healthcare which is environmentally and socially sustainable.”

The purpose of this document is to outline the guidance for the regional implementation structures to support effective delivery of the HSE Climate Action Strategy at regional and local levels across the HSE.

1. Introduction

The HSE launched the Climate Action Strategy in 2023. Work has been ongoing to deliver on the 10 strategic objectives within it — please see table 1. The Strategy identified six overarching priority areas and ten strategic objectives to focus effective delivery of the HSE Sustainability vision. The programme of work to implement the Strategy comprises a portfolio of programmes to be delivered over the period, 2023-2050. As part of this commitment, an ongoing review will be incorporated to check progress.

Table 1: Climate Action Focus Areas and aligned Strategic Objectives

Focus Areas	Strategic Objectives
1. Sustainable Buildings & Green Environment	i. Sustainable buildings
	ii. Green Environments
2. Transport & Mobility	iii. Transport
	iv. Mobility
3. Sustainable Procurement	v. Green Procurement
	vi. Procurement Decarbonisation Trajectory
4. Greener Models of Healthcare	vii. Greener Models of Healthcare
5. Water Conservation & Waste Management	viii. Water Conservation
	ix. Waste Management
6. Adaptation & Resilience	x. Adaptation & Resilience
	Enabling Objectives
	a. Measurement and Assurance
	b. Collaboration, Communications, training and awareness

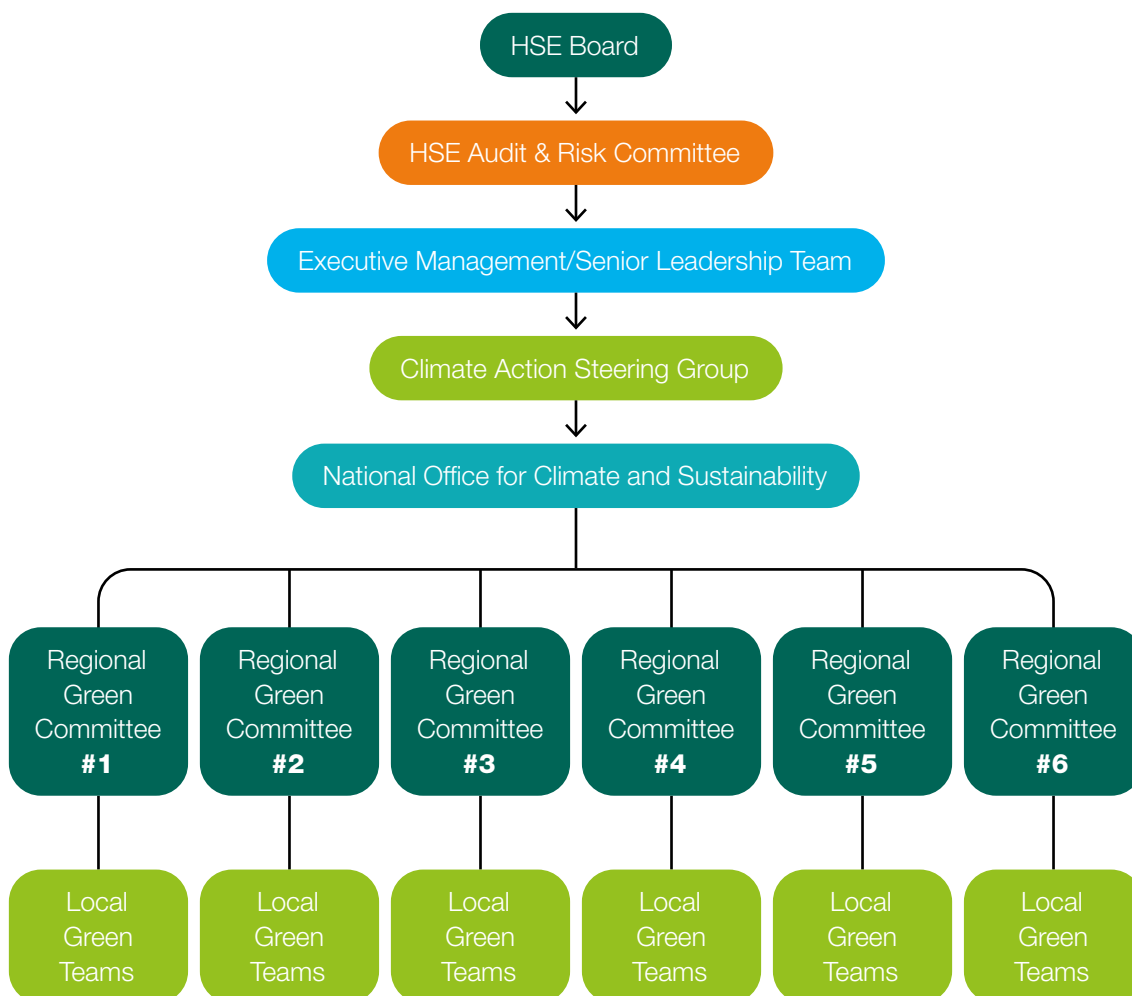
Effective implementation of the HSE Climate Action Strategy at regional and local levels will be to key to ensuring delivery of environmentally sustainable services. The approach outlined below will help to ensure that implementation of the Climate Action Strategy is aligned with the HSE National Reform initiatives outlined in Sláintecare.

Focused on efforts to enable local ownership while maintaining national consistency, six Regional Executive Officers report directly to the HSE CEO and are a core part of the HSE Executive at national level. The Climate Programme is nationally and locally structured with this principle in mind and it aims to strike the right balance between national efforts for a sustainable healthcare system and regional and local ownership to drive sustainable change on the ground.

2. Governance Structure

Below is an overview of the governance structure in place for the HSE Climate Action Strategy. Delivering on the ambition of the Strategy will require appropriate leadership and governance structures coupled with continuous alignment of the Strategy with revised policies and objectives at local and national levels with due consideration of risk planning processes.

Figure 1: Governance & Regional Structure



National Climate Action Steering Group

Implementation of the Strategy is governed by an overarching Climate Action Steering Group, reporting to the Executive Management Team, the HSE Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and Board of the HSE. The Climate Action Steering Group will be responsible for providing governance, direction and support and implement the Strategy. Where effective and appropriate governance arrangements are already in place e.g., in relation to healthcare infrastructure decarbonisation as part of the wider Capital and Estates Strategy, update reports will be provided. The National Climate Action Steering Group includes regional representatives from each of the six new HSE hubs.

HSE National Office for Climate and Sustainability which coordinates delivery across the portfolio of climate action programmes. Under the remit of the National Director for Wellbeing, Equality, Climate & Global Health Strategy, Dr Philip Crowley, the central programme office comprises a small team, led by Programme Manager, Roisin Breen.

HSE Capital and Estates Sustainable Infrastructure Office works in close collaboration with the National Office for Climate and Sustainability. The Capital and Estates team focus on leading and supporting HSE and HSE funded Significant Energy Users¹ with their efforts to reduce energy use through behavioural change, supported engineering retrofit and upgrade works and a forward looking energy efficient and carbon zero design approach for all new capital works (SO 1). They also will lead on delivery of actions under SO2 Green Environments and SO8 Water Conservation

The operating model to deliver Strategic Objective 1, Sustainable Buildings, was already in place in advance of the Climate Action Strategy and is being delivered as part of the HSE Capital and Estates Strategy implementation and its Infrastructure Decarbonisation Roadmap. There are currently three Regional HSE Capital & Estates Energy Bureaus (East, West and South). These Regional Energy Bureaus will be restructured into 6 Capital & Estates Climate Action Sub-Groups aligned to the 6 new HSE Health Regions. These sub-groups will form part of the Regional Green Committee structure outlined below.



¹ To better understand energy use across the Healthcare Estate, and focus resources on the largest energy users, the Capital & Estates team have developed a Significant Energy User (SEU) which identified 150 Healthcare sites (HSE and Section 38/39 agencies) which account for 85% of total energy usage, 103 of these sites account for 80% of HSE Usage.

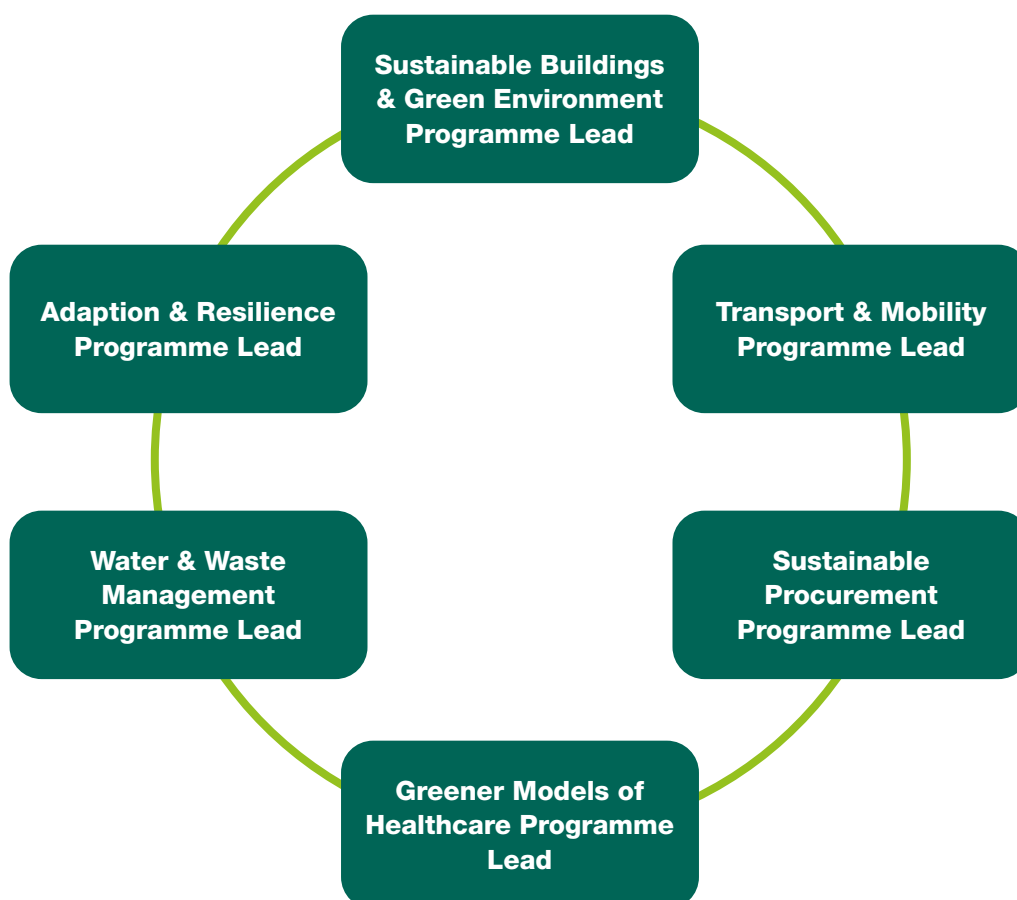
Climate Action Strategy Working Groups

At National Level, work programmes have been established to manage implementation of the strategic objectives identified under Climate Action Strategy.

A work programme lead has also been assigned to each individual work programmes. The role of the work programme lead is to ensure efficient, effective and timely delivery of the actions related to their work programmes and to report progress and risks to the relevant work programme sponsor (if different) and Steering Group, as appropriate. The work programme leads have formed a working group comprising individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and expertise to implement their work programme. Each Work programme will be comprised of suitably qualified and experienced persons with a range of applicable expertise, working with relevant internal functions such as the: HSE Energy Teams; HSE Energy Bureau; Capital and Estates Climate Action & Sustainability Office; Health, Promotion and Improvement; and the Health and Wellbeing Division.

In addition to the six strategic objectives, there are two enabling functions:

1. The **Measurement and Assurance** enabler within the strategy supports the work streams in establishing an effective approach to tracking and managing progress. In addition to this, there are also a number of KPI's that the HSE are mandated to report on within the Government's Climate Action Plan. Therefore, creating a comprehensive data, measurement, risk management and assurance system to track our actions and enable improvement overtime will be fundamental to long-term success and reporting.
2. The **Collaboration, Communications, training and awareness** enabler recognises that as a whole we will collaborate to our common goals as laid out in the strategy. In addition, the HSE must inspire and upskill their workforce to both understand and embrace sustainability.

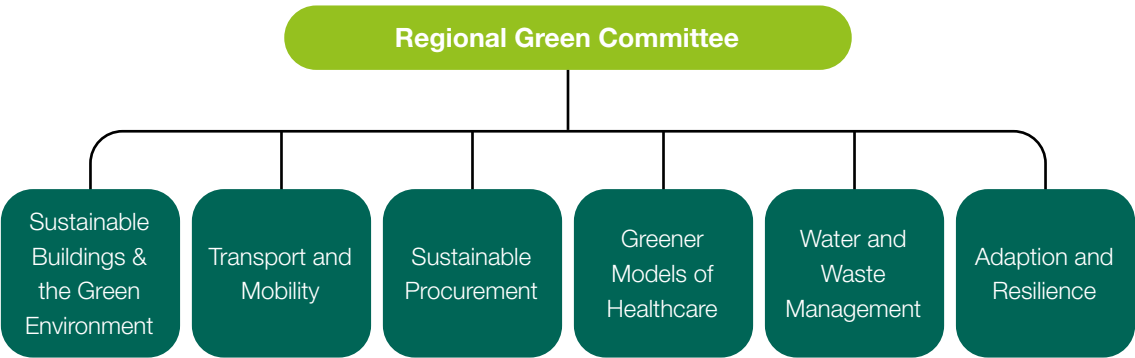


3. Regional & Local Implementation Structures

A. Regional Green Committee

At regional and local level, regional hub green committees and local green teams (including energy teams) will be established where they do not already exist. They will seek to act on each of the six focus areas identified in the strategy and ensure ownership for implementation of the twelve strategic objectives.

Figure 2: Proposed Regional Green Committee structure:



Regional Hub Green Committees

Each committee will include the already established Capital & Estates regional energy bureau to cover strategic objectives relating to sustainable buildings (SO1), green environments (SO2) and water conservation (SO8).

Appointment of 1 WTE Regional Sustainability Lead Support

Reporting directly to the Regional Green committee Lead and is essential to provide ownership and an effective channel to national office and to local green teams.

Evolution of Regional Hub Committees

in time the regional green committees should form 5 other subgroups mimicking the structure in table 1 and figure 2. Until this is in place all other 5 focus areas will be covered directly by the Regional Green Committees.

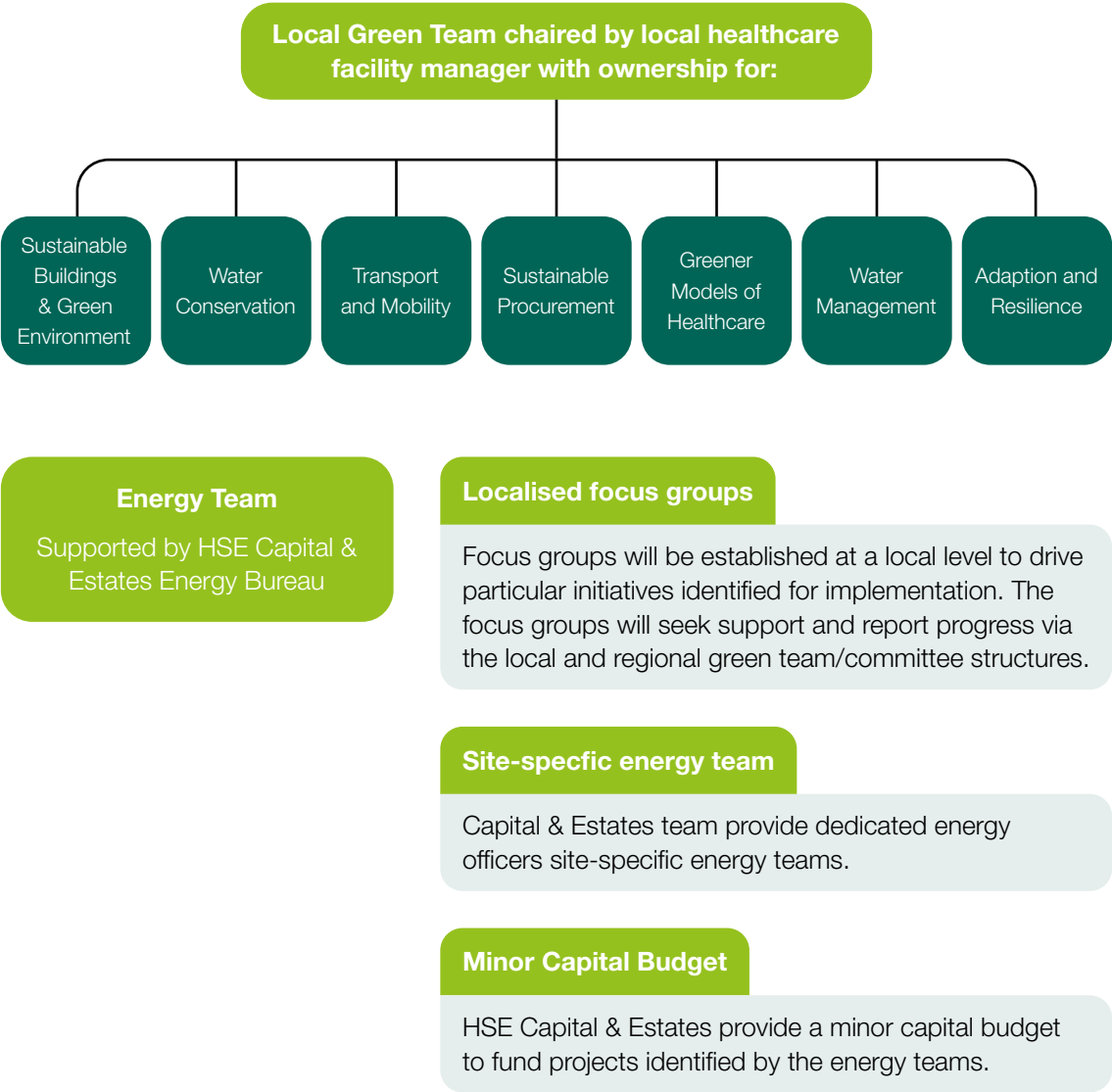
What is the Regional Green Committee governance structure?	The Regional Green Committee will appoint a Regional Sustainability Lead, who will sit on the National Climate Action Steering Group and report progress for their region to the National Steering Group.	
What does the Regional Green Committee do?	Communicate developments at national level and a forum to plan how national sustainability initiatives should be implemented across their respective regions.	
	Implement the advice, guidance and support provided by the National Steering Group and the relevant working groups coordinating implementation of the respective strategic objectives.	
	Inform the relevant National Climate Action Steering Group Working Groups on plans, progress, risks and issues arising.	
	Report on progress against agreed measures/KPIs and targets both those set by HSE Climate Action Strategy and Government Climate Action Plan requirements.	
	Manage the process to ensure that each Significant Energy User (SEU) within its region has a fully operational green team and an effective energy team in place.	
	Manage localised communications, training and any other climate related campaigns within the region.	
Who sits on the Regional Green Committee?	Chair / Regional Green Committee Lead	Local procurement representation
	Climate Regional Lead support	Local finance representation
	Front line staff representation (i.e. Clinical and non-clinical NCHD, Nursing, HSCP etc.)	Community operational representation
	AND Capital & Estates	Hospital operational representation
When does the Regional Green Committee meet?	The regional hub green committee will meet on a monthly basis in the first instance, progressing to bi-monthly, to review progress on implementation of the Climate Action Strategy across their region, with a focus on the sites where green teams have been established (the significant energy users).	

B. Local Green Teams

As outlined in the Government Climate Action Mandate Section 2, there is a requirement to establish green teams. In line with this, Local Green Teams will be responsible for coordinating implementation of national initiatives and for identifying and implementing sustainability initiatives that reduce environmental impacts of day-to-day operations of the facility. Local Green Teams, chaired by a local healthcare facility manager, would incorporate existing Energy Teams (established and supported by the HSE Capital & Estates Energy Bureau).

Initial focus will be on establishing Green Teams in SEU Sites. Where an SEU currently has an active Energy Team² a wider Green Team should be established with the Energy Team being an integral (and initially the most active) component of the Green Team. Where no Energy or Green Teams exist, a Green Team (with an incorporated Energy Team) should be established.

Figure 3: Proposed Local Green Committee structure:



² There were XXX Energy Teams in place and supported by Capital & Estates at the end of Q2 2024.

What is the Local Green Teams governance structure?	The local Green Committee will appoint a chair, who will act as the focal point for communications for the local green committee and link as required with the Regional Green committee.	
What does the Local Green Teams do?	Recruit green team members and assign roles and responsibilities.	Report on performance, measures and risks to regional green committee.
	Set goals in line with national guidance for the green team to deliver in the short, medium and long term.	Provide a point of contact for queries arising.
	Manage and track progress against the goals set.	Communicate success to demonstrate impact.
	Identify and coordinate implementation of opportunities.	Maintain and build momentum relating to the sustainable healthcare agenda.
	Manage and mitigate any risks and challenges identified.	
Who sits on the Local Green Teams?	Healthcare management (Line Manager and budget holder).	Healthcare staff who can potentially influence other colleagues in the workplace.
	Healthcare staff who volunteered as “green” champions with an interest in climate action and sustainability.	Healthcare staff from a representative sample of departments/services i.e., management, nurse, doctor, finance, procurement, maintenance, catering, HR, health and safety, wellbeing etc.
	Representation from HSE Capital & Estates Energy & Sustainability Officers.	
When does the Local Green Teams meet?	Local green teams will meet on a monthly basis to review progress on implementation of the Climate Action Strategy on their site.	

4. Getting your team set up and running its organisation

