



# Championing Leadership

Local Authority **Climate Action**  
Training Programme

## Local Authority Climate Action Plan — Leadership and the Elected Members

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Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta don Sionainn  
Lar na Tíre Lar Thiar



LOCAL AUTHORITY  
**Climate Action**  
Training Programme



Cumann Lucht Bainistíochta Contae agus Cathrach  
County and City Management Association



Local Government  
Management Agency



An Roinn Comhshaoil,  
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide  
Department of the Environment,  
Climate and Communications



**AILG**  
Association of Irish Local Government  
Aontas Rialtas Áitiúil na hÉireann



# The Starting Point

- From a national perspective, climate action is a **whole of society** enterprise
- It must be so from the point of view of –
  - The scale of the issue
    - The nature of the changes that are needed which amount to a national culture change
  - Just transition and climate justice
  - So everyone must be brought on board through one means or another
  - Hence the importance of leadership and the elected members have a key role in that



# The role of the Local Authority

- Local Authorities have been identified as the principal agencies for facilitating the delivery of climate action at local level
  - Local Authorities have a clear mandate from the electorate
  - They are embedded in many aspects of local social and economic life
  - They are the primary bodies representing their local communities
  - They have integrative, regulatory and investment roles
  - They have a high status both within and outside the community
  - However, while responsible for delivering some climate actions and for facilitating others they **should not be responsible for all delivery** which must also be in mind



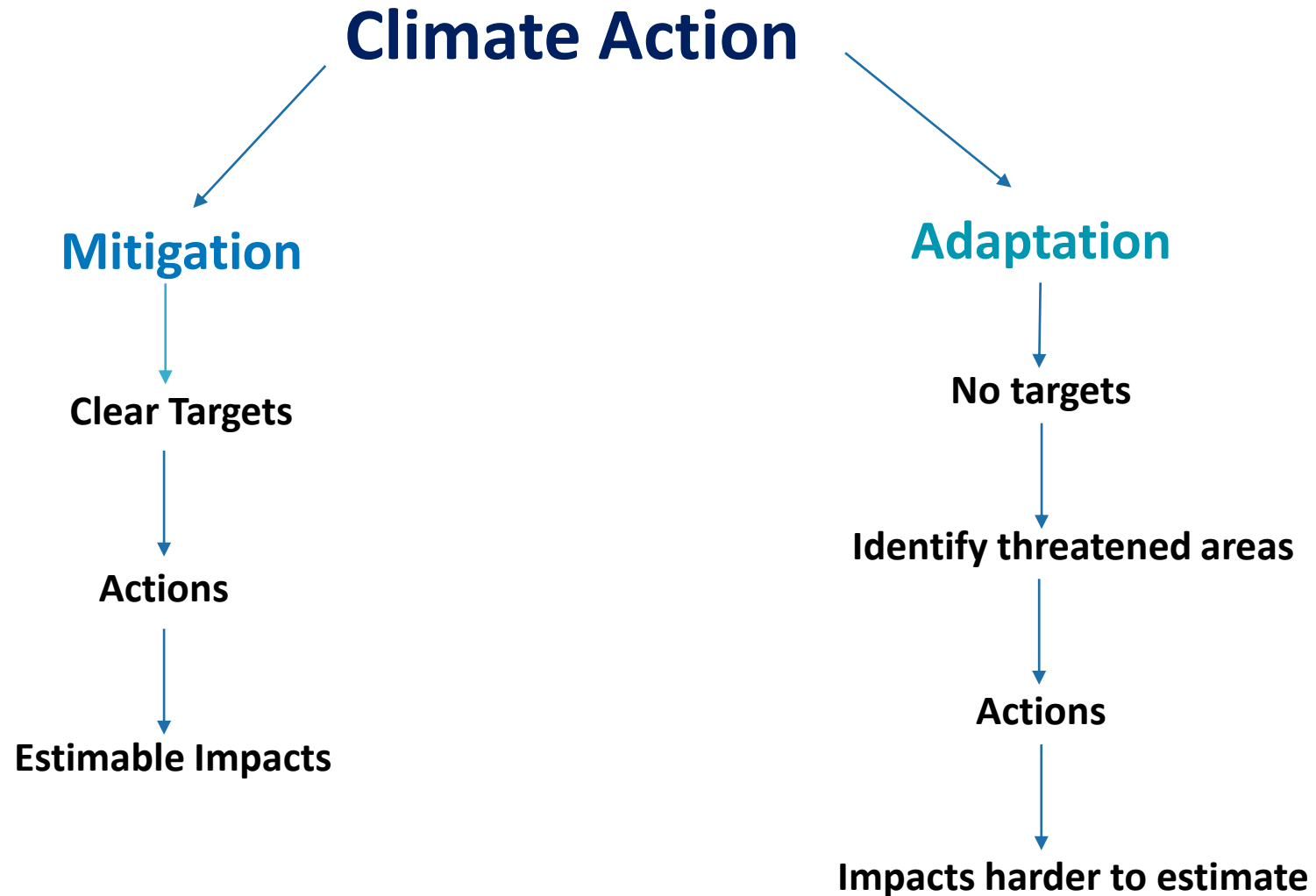
A key mechanism, though not the only one, in the delivery of this role, is the Local Authority Climate Action Plan



# A two-pronged approach is envisaged

- **Mitigation** or reduction in emissions to aim to become carbon neutral
- **Adaptation** or protection of natural and created assets from the effects of climate change
- Local Authority has substantial responsibility in both
- Mitigation a little easier to get to grips with in one respect in that there are national and sectoral targets which can be used
- Adaptation is a little more complex as there aren't and cannot really be any national targets
- On the other hand adaptation can have huge beneficial effects

# So, as a diagram





# Internal and External focus

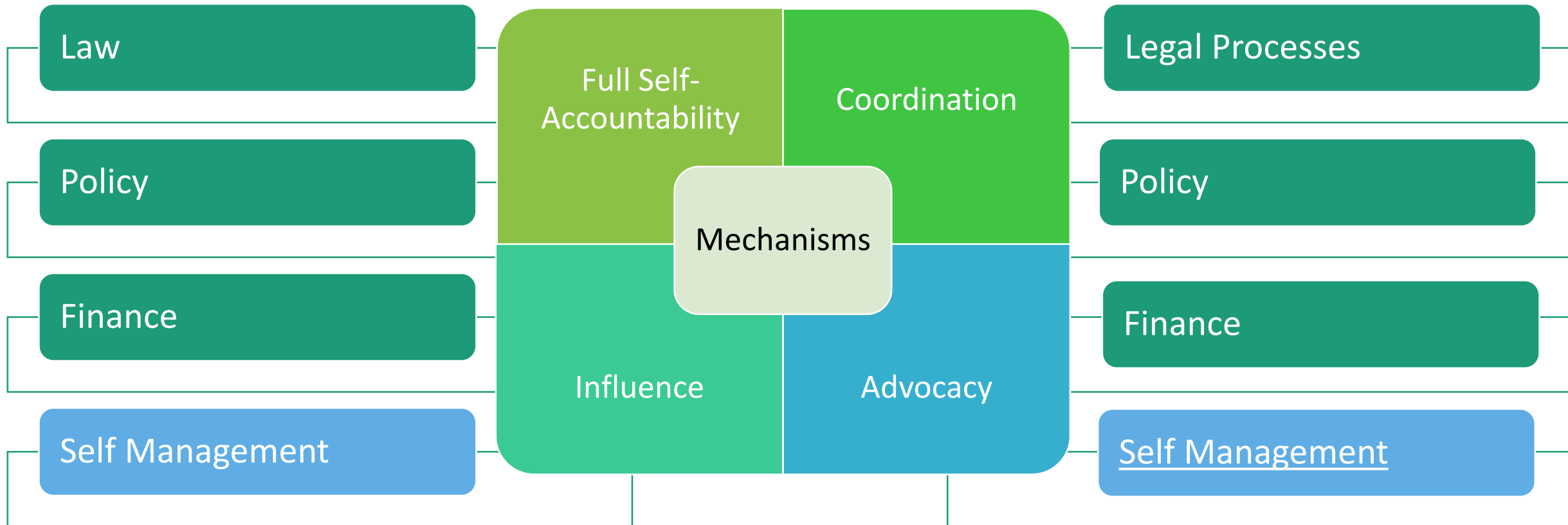
- There are two parts to the plan
  - That which is focused internally at the Local Authority's own actions and outputs and
  - That which is focused externally on actions by others either on their own or in partnership with the Local Authority
  - **It is critical that this does not become a Local Authority only exercise with all responsibility falling on your shoulders**



# An overall model of Intervention

## National

## Local







# Framework of the Plan

- An **overarching vision** that reflects the shared perspective of a climate resilient and climate neutral future.
- A **plan mission** that speaks practically to the grounded purpose of the local authority in delivering effective climate action.
- **Strategic goals** that set the context for the climate actions and establish a structured or thematic arrangement of actions.
- **High level objectives** that support the delivery of the strategic goals whilst framing the appropriate emphasis of the actions.
- **Actions** that are specific, action-focused, time-bound and measurable reflecting a scaling up of ambitious local level climate action.



# Role of the Elected Members

- We have had a look at the role of the Local Authority in general in the previous few slides. We now want to consider the role of the elected members
- The elected members have a really important role based on the following –
  - *The adoption of the plan is a reserved function*
  - *The development of the plan will have an important internal and external leadership role*
  - *The implementation of the plan will have an important internal and external leadership role*



# Reserved Function

- The fact that the adoption of this plan has been made a reserved function, shows how seriously it is taken by Government
- Only the most important functions of the Local Authority are given this status – the Development Plan, the Corporate Plan, the Annual Estimates
- Because it is a reserved function, the fact that you adopted it will, as you know, be quoted at you in the future if and when issues arise
- You need to satisfy yourselves, therefore, that the plan meets the expectations which have been identified.

# What the plan needs to be

## Ambitious

To reflect the leadership role of local government on climate action and to help realise the pivotal role the local authority plays in enabling the transformative measures required to respond to the challenges presented by climate change and deliver on the national climate objective, thereby reflecting the ambition of DECA 2030.

## Action-focused

To realise specific and deliverable actions to achieve adaptation and mitigation measures that reflect the local authority's responsibilities at organisational and community levels.

## Evidence-based

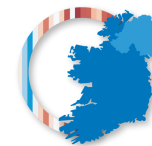
Using the most up-to date scientific information, data on emissions, grounded risk and vulnerability assessments, local knowledge and other empirical evidence to inform decision making and pursue effective mitigation and adaptation measures.

## Participative

Involving a range of stakeholders to contribute to both the development of the climate action plan and the practical delivery of actions. Inclusive, coordinated and collaborative climate action stems from cooperation of a diverse range of stakeholders from the earliest stage possible.

## Transparent

Open process with inclusive and collaborative engagement that supports decision making that can be measured and reported on.



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# Leadership by Elected Members - Plan Making



- The elected members can give leadership with regards to the plan in a number of ways –
  - Ensuring that it is ambitious enough and that, as a minimum, both internally and externally the area is taking on an appropriate share of national targets
  - Requesting information on the evidence being used and how conclusions were drawn
  - Keeping the plan on the agenda at Council and MD meetings
  - Actively participating in consultations and workshops
  - Assisting the officials in resourcing the steps needed to achieve those targets
  - Satisfying themselves that the engagement with other stakeholders was sufficient in the preparation of the plan
  - Being positive and proactive during the debates on the plan
  - Promoting the planning process externally amongst the other stakeholders who will be responsible for actions
  - Encouraging participation by relevant stakeholders in the making of the plan



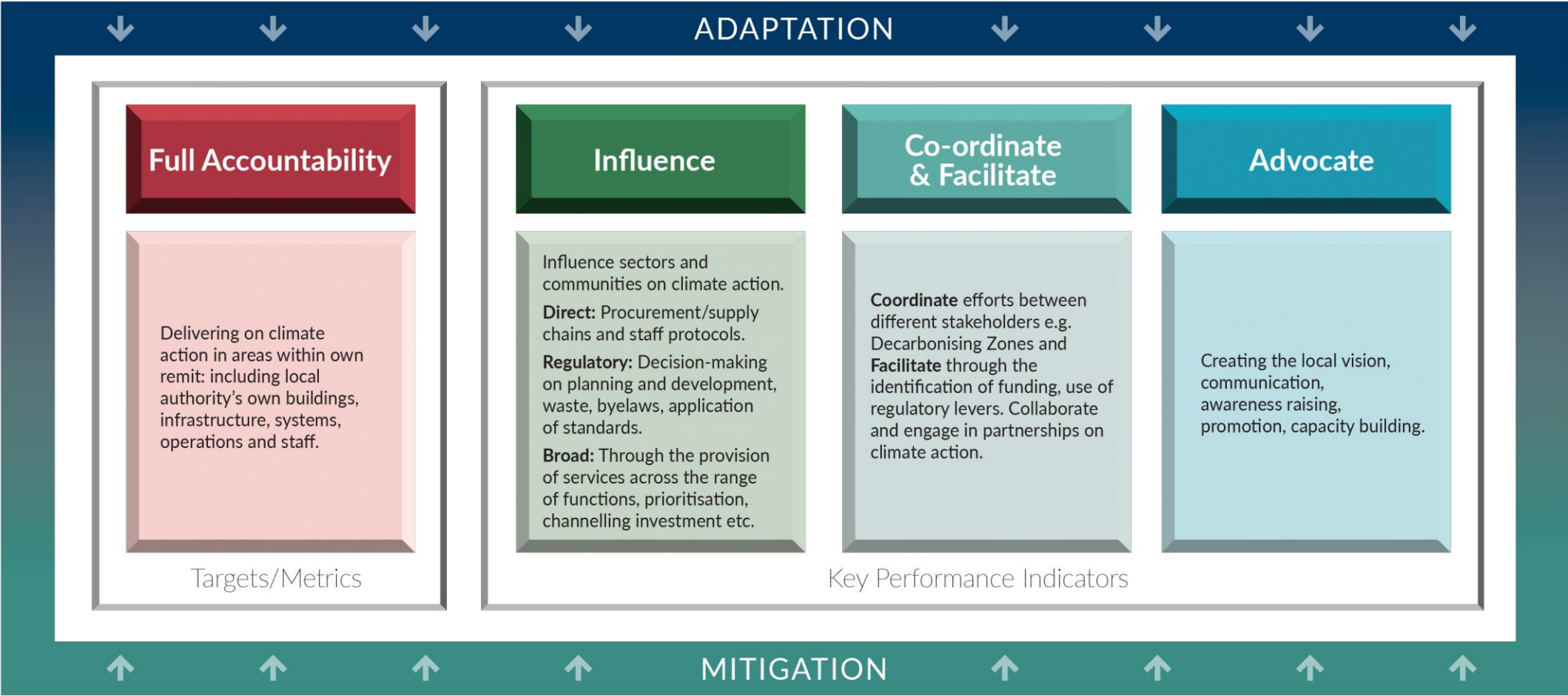
# Leadership by Elected Members - Implementation

- You may not agree but making the plan is nearly the easy bit.
- Making sure that the plan gets implemented is often more challenging
- There are a variety of leadership roles for the elected members at this phase also
- You will have a lot of opportunity
- Here is a model of the different ways in which the Local Authority as a whole can play a leadership role

# Scope of LA CAP



## Local Authority Scope on Climate Action





# Full Accountability - Internal

- This is the part that refers to the need for the Local Authority to meet its own obligations both in terms of mitigation and adaptation
- This is crucial. The Local Authority will find it hard to ask others to walk a difficult path if it is not walking its own path
- The elected members have an important role to play –
  - In regularly reviewing progress of the Local Authority's own actions
  - In making sure that the resources necessary to allow those obligations to be met are provided
  - In helping to remove barriers if progress is too slow



# Influence

- This refers to the levers that the Local Authority has available to it to persuade others to meet their obligations.
- This includes procurement, how grants are decided on, applying regulations in a climate aware way; negotiating with other organisations on property purchase and so on.
- *Elected members can contribute by supporting these approaches of the local authority and explaining them if approached*
- *Also, they can accept the change in some approaches made necessary by climate change*

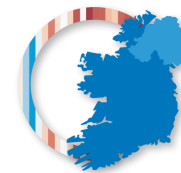


# Coordinating Role

- The Local Authority can facilitate multi-partner projects both by using its project nominating powers (RRDF for example), by contributing to a project investment fund, or by acting as the facilitator for other parties.
- *Elected members can assist in approving such projects to go forward*
- *They can also assist by ensuring the availability for collaborative projects of the Local Authority investment required*
- *They can also assist by using their personal influence (including on elected members in other Local Authorities) with other organisations to participate in joint activities*
- *Decarbonising Zones are a particular example of this. (A little more on this later)*

# Advocacy

- This is essentially spreading the good word whenever possible, raising awareness, lobbying, seeking to influence fellow politicians.
- We spoke a little about this in the Championing Leadership sessions.
  - A quick recap will show you that there are many opportunities to speak positively about climate action



And how about leadership?

Where can it be shown?

- You are all leaders already
- You have the gift - or you wouldn't be where you are
- But what are the areas in which you can show climate change leadership?
- Remember that leadership can be informal as well as formal
- Let's talk about leadership for a bit



Leadership  
opportunities  
come in all  
shapes and  
sizes



**Many ways of  
getting Climate  
Action going**

**Targeted  
Climate Actions**

**Climate Action  
Thinking in  
Everything**



# Attitudes and Behaviour

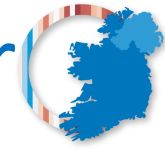
- Darren showed you some very interesting data from the EPA survey of attitudes to climate change.
- The data would suggest that almost everyone is on board with this project
- However, no one knows better than yourselves that, while people might be very accepting of the need for something to be done – ***they are often very unwilling to do anything themselves which interrupts the smooth passage of their lives.***
- This is also a well-known sociological phenomenon demonstrated many times over throughout the world.
- That is a key reason why leadership is needed.
- ***People are*** being asked to make substantial change so acknowledging that, still urging that what has to be done is crucial.



# The positives and the negatives

- And, of course, in doing this it is important that the positive as well as the negative is emphasised
- People are being asked to do some difficult things, there is no doubt
- But there will be some very positive outcomes as well
  - More comfortable homes that are cheaper to run
  - A whole range of new and rewarding jobs
  - Cities and towns that are easier to get around
  - More opportunities for not having to travel to work all the time for many
  - Better air quality and fewer respiratory illnesses
  - Nicer open spaces with better quality plants and more animals
- So the positive outcomes need to be spoke of as well and positive actions included in the plan – without denying the challenges involved

# Ways of Engaging with different types of stakeholder



Target	Ways of engaging
Adjacent Local Authorities	Peer to peer and looking for shared approaches and joint projects, Negotiation may be involved
Public Agencies	Senior level peer to peer – CEO, DoSs and Cathaoirleach. Reminder of targets and expectation that they will be met. Reporting mechanism. Shared Charter. Capacity to meet obligations available within these organisations.
Large Organisations and Enterprises	Same principles as Public Agencies
Small Organisations and Enterprises	Specific advice and support. Ideas and examples of what can be done. Workshops and seminars. Pointers to sources of funding. Include category in enterprise awards. Include in all grants.
Voluntary and Community Bodies	Specific advice and support. Ideas and examples of what can be done. Workshops and seminars. Pointers to sources of funding. Include category in community awards. Include in all grants.
Marginalised Groups and Communities	Very specific as to the areas where they can contribute. Work through trusted intermediaries and build relationships. Support good practice and prevent unreasonable cost.
Representative Bodies	Cooperative working; piggy-back on events; help with information and pointing to funding; ideas and examples of real possibilities.
General public	Social Media and other media. Ideas and examples. Include in all funding. Competitions and Awards; piggy-back on events.



# Collaboration or working together – what does it mean?



- Ways of working
  - Individual – implemented totally by one organisation
  - Consultative – implemented by one organisation but with some input from others
  - Cooperative - individual actions by more than one organisation but with a joint purpose, some joint meetings, shared documents
  - Coordinated – More significant level of cooperation where individual organisations implement different parts of an integrated action
  - Collaborative – Highest level of sharing with joint vehicle with authority, shared resources, clear purpose, written agreement

# Implications for Decarbonising Zones – and elsewhere



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- Require coordinated action by a variety of actors
- But real danger that it will be left to the Local Authority
- Consider making it a real collaboration
  - Separate vehicle not dominated by LA; similar to Limerick 2030 and Ennis 2040 DACs.
  - Resource contribution by all
  - Agreed plan prepared which will lead to desired outcome
  - Implementation as a shared exercise
  - Funding applications by shared vehicle
- Doesn't mean there can't be individual or co-operative actions within the overall framework
- But overall, actions are taken on behalf of the shared entity.
- Takes effort at the start but might be better than frustrating foot-dragging later

# Conclusion



- The LACAP is an important tool in the climate action toolkit.
- There are various stages and activities in the process and the elected members have an important leadership role in all.
  - Adoption is a reserved function so that has implications
  - There is a need for elected members to provide internal and external leadership at the plan preparation stage
  - There is a definite need for elected members to provide leadership internally and externally at the, more difficult, implementation stage.
- We are at the point where we generally know and agree that something big must be done about climate change
- But we have not got to the point where we are actually willing to do it.
- The LACAP will provide a mechanism to assist with this and the elected members have a core leadership role in that