

Climate Change Committee Meeting

Present: John Deben, Keith Bell, Nick Chater, Pier Forster, Rebecca Heaton, Corinne Le Quéré, Paul Johnson, Pete Betts, Chris Stark.

Member interests: www.theccc.org.uk/about/transparency

Date: 19th February 2021, 09:30 – 15:00

Held: Virtual meeting by Zoom

Climate Change Committee

1 Victoria Street,
Westminster, London,
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Committee members were reminded of the need to declare any conflicts of interest.

1. Transport work for 2021

The secretariat set out a proposed work plan for surface transport, focussed on EV infrastructure (on-street charging) and demand reduction/modal shift. Core themes include the EV transition (monitoring the extent to which the EV supply chain is scaling up including network capacity and the ability to provide smart charging), consumer impacts and fairness, public transport and HGVs (including impacts of Covid on demand) and international work to support the ZEVs Transition Council. The Committee endorsed the proposals, and raised points around potential models for EV charging, fairness (in terms of access to charging, who pays and impacts on rural communities), air quality impacts of fire wear, sustainability of materials/lifecycle emissions, battery manufacture standards, and car manufacturer standards. The discussion also covered modal shift and behaviour change - shaping preferences after Covid, different car use and ownership models, differential taxation rates, and the role of local authorities.

2. UK Climate Diplomacy

John Murton, UK COP26 Envoy, gave an update to the Committee about UK Climate Diplomacy.

3. Agriculture and Land Use work for 2021

The secretariat covered expected government policy announcements including the imminent England Peat Strategy (including a ban on uplands peat burning) and the England Tree Strategy, along with different policy in the Devolved Administrations. The Committee raised concerns around a lack of ambition in England on peat (including horticultural peat). Key information on ELMs payments is expected next month.

The Committee considered plans for an expanded indicator framework for the progress report – stressing afforestation supply chains. It discussed three proposed outputs - a briefing note on land management practices for soil carbon sequestration, to review emerging evidence in this area; research to assess economic impacts of meeting the balanced pathway for farmers and a briefing paper or blog on agro-ecological farming. A suggestion was made to convene

a joint mitigation-adaptation expert advisory group on land use practices, and to look at data on the origins of meat imports.

4. Progress report and longer-term work

The secretariat covered the updated team structure, including a new small projects team alongside the sectoral teams and international team. This structure will be working on three core strands: a) progress monitoring (and 6CB follow up; b) international engagement and c) thematic workstreams. The latter provisionally includes Covid, Governance & Place, People/Public engagement, Just transition- who pays; Just Transition – workers and skills, and Business Action.

The secretariat covered plans for the Progress Report this year, which is a joint Mitigation-Adaption release (probably a joint summary and two reports). Plans are for a partial update of the indicator framework (recognising that important milestones will need to reflect key strategies due this year), a Government scorecard, recommendations by Department, work on consumption emissions, Covid and an international chapter. As last year, the proposal is not to include sectoral chapters. Tom covered a proposal for scoring the abatement actions (rather than the Policy Gap chart) – producing outputs on ambition/direction, delivery/policy and current deployment/run-rate. Finally, the Committee agreed to establish 5-15 priority actions for Government, as a joint mitigation/adaptation output.

5. Onshore Petroleum 2021 update

The Committee is required to provide advice on onshore petroleum every five years. The Committee agreed to publish a letter providing our advice. This will set out an updated position on fossil fuel consumption in line with the proposed 6th carbon budget. The secretariat will circulate an updated draft of the letter to take into account Committee feedback.

6. AOB

The Committee considered a request for advice from Northern Ireland for more detailed information on the costs of meeting the 82% GHG emission reduction target by 2050 and a Net Zero emissions reduction target by 2050. It also briefly discussed advice on the credit limit for the Fourth Carbon Budget, an update on international engagement and marked the end of Baroness Brown's time on the mitigation committee.