

Environmental Information Regulations 2004 Request
Received: 23 November 2021

Published: www.theccc.org.uk/about/transparency

Date: 21 December 2021

Ref: Sent by email from communications@theccc.org.uk

Climate Change Committee

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Your request:

Request for environmental information held by the Climate Change Committee (CCC) that relates to the report by the UK Health Expert Advisory Group title 'Sustainable Health Equity: Achieving a Net Zero UK (UCL)' (the "Expert Report") (published 6 November 2020) and other matters.

I wish to understand the who, what, why, when and how of:

1. the CCC's consideration given to the Expert Report including its four recommendation on regulatory interventions (on page 16)
2. the CCC deciding not to include, adopt or support the Expert Report's recommendations in the Sixth Carbon Budget or elsewhere
3. which government departments or other organisations or people did the CCC consult before deciding not to accept the Expert Report e.g. BEIS, Defra or the DHSC?
4. The CCC's consideration given to the two other reports and the three-year modelling study referred to in this letter under 'Background to my request'
5. The CCC deciding not to publish a new glossary of terms or a statement addressing the concerns raised by CAL in correspondence since 4 May 2021
6. The CCC seemingly drawing lines somewhere between matters relating to (a) emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants, (b) impacts on global heating and public health (c) explicit policy recommendations to ban the installation and use of appliances burning fossil fuels but not wood, (d) policy recommendations to ban the use of some feedstocks but not others, (e) emissions from the transport of feedstocks within the UK but not outside it and (f) willingness to say which types of wood or biomass can be burnt rather than highlight those which should not be burnt e.g. does the CCC have internal guidelines or agreed 'lines to take' on such matters? And
7. Any decisions that have been taken by the CCC not to revisit these matters in future.

I would like to receive copies of all emails, reports, notes, memoranda, board minutes, and other information held by the CCC that relate to this request.

Our response:

This request has been treated under EIR. We have not disclosed previous correspondence between you and the CCC on this topic, which you will already hold. The CCC's response is set out below.

Questions 1-3:

The views of expert groups we commission are separate to those of the CCC, and it is the role of our Committee to form an independent view, drawing in evidence from a host of areas in making their judgement. The Terms of Reference of the Expert Advisory Group on Health and Health Equity are attached (see Annex A in accompanying documents).

The Chair of the Group, Professor Sir Michael Marmot, presented its findings to the Committee on 10 July 2020. The minutes of that meeting are available at <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CCC-Meeting-Minutes-10.07.20.pdf>.

This presentation (attached – see Annex B in accompanying documents) covered a wide range of areas. A table towards the end of the presentation included a proposed recommendation “Eliminate home installation of new woodburning stoves by 2030. All urban wood burning stove eliminated by 2050. Enforce fuel standards.” As you are aware from previous correspondence, those recommendations are consistent with the CCC's scenarios.

We refute the premise of question 3, that the CCC did not accept the report of the Expert Advisory Group.

The report from the group, authored by Sir Michael with support from colleagues, was sent to the CCC secretariat at the end of September 2020 in draft form, with the final version then published in November 2020. The report contained an updated set of recommendations compared to the July presentation. These were considered by the CCC secretariat upon receipt. We do not hold any correspondence or other record relating to these updated recommendations from the Expert Advisory Group and the CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget advice.

Prior to the Sixth Carbon Budget advice, the CCC's advice was already that Government should not support wood-burning stoves as part of climate policy, and that their use should be phased out over time. On that basis, the secretariat considered that the detailed recommendations on woodburning stoves from the Expert Advisory Group were already covered by the CCC's existing position and did not require further discussion with the Committee, during a period when a large volume of matters were being considered to define our advice on the Sixth Carbon Budget.

Question 4

The secretariat considered those two reports, and a range of other evidence including:

- modelling done by King's College on the air quality implications of the 2050 climate target that was in place before 2019, for an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK507619/>); and
- the CCC's joint work with the Government's Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG), on the air quality implications of Net Zero (available at:

https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat09/2006240802_Impacts_of_Net_Zero_pathways_on_future_air_quality_in_the_UK.pdf

This evidence contributed to the CCC's pathways in a number of aspects, including the position on wood-burning stoves set out above. The conclusions and insights from this evidence base were reflected in discussions over the range of options that should be considered in analysis to develop pathways for greenhouse gas emissions reduction towards Net Zero. As these discussions were held verbally, we hold no record of this.

The three-year modelling study in which the CCC is involved has yet to produce any substantive results. This project is modelling the air quality and wider health implications of the CCC's pathways to Net Zero produced as part of the advice on the Sixth Carbon Budget and finalised towards the end of 2020 – as a modelling study, there is a long period at the beginning during which the analytical framework is being set up and calibrated, and the scenarios represented within that framework. We look forward to receiving results and insights during 2022.

Question 5

The CCC has published positions on the matters discussed in correspondence, where they are within the remit of the organisation. We do not consider that it is necessary to publish further statements in these areas.

Question 6

The CCC has a remit to address matters on climate change, while taking account of a range of other matters set out in Section 10 of the Climate Change Act. While air quality implications are something we consider as part of this, we do not have a direct role advising Government on its statutory duties under air quality legislation.

All of the matters raised in your question have been given some consideration – and we have specifically undertaken or commissioned work to understand these inter-relations – but ultimately our remit covers greenhouse gas emissions and climate policy, and we are careful not to go beyond it.

We consider the boundaries between what is and is not within our remit on a case-by-case basis. We have no internal guidelines nor agreed 'lines to take' on these issues.

Question 7

The CCC does not, in general, take decisions on any matter that they should not be revisited. No such decision has been discussed or made on the matters relating to this request.

Stating that the CCC has no plans to revisit particular matters is clearly different from a decision not to revisit them. We return regularly to our analysis.

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Information disclosed in response to this EIR request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIR and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on the CCC website, together with any related information that will provide a key to its

wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the CCC website.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. If you are not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. In keeping with our transparency policy, the information released to you will be published on www.theccc.org.uk. Please note that this publication will not include your personal data.

Kind regards,
Climate Change Committee