

Climate Change Committee Meeting

Present: John Deben, Keith Bell, Mike Davies, Nick Chater, Piers Forster, Paul Johnson, Corinne Le Quéré, Pete Betts (as an adviser).

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

Date: 09 July 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. Mike Thompson (Director of Analysis) declared his membership of the new Green Technical Advisory Group, set up by the Treasury to advise on the Technical Screening Criteria for green investments.

The Committee was introduced to and welcomed new members of the secretariat team.

1. Progress report 2021

In this short session, the secretariat presented metrics on the launch of the 2021 Progress Report launch, covering the launch itself and the media reach. The Committee thanked the communications team for their efforts, particularly recognising the challenge in launching twin reports on mitigation and adaptation progress the week after also launching the CCC's Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk. The Committee noted the sensitivity of some media reports around costs, home heating and impacts for motorists and requested that the secretariat continue to analyse these areas fully and communicate the findings of the analysis clearly.

2. Just Transition Commission, presentation from Prof Jim Skea CBE Professor

Jim Skea of Imperial College, a previous Member of the Committee, presented the findings, insights and recommendations of the Scottish Just Transition Commission that he chaired from 2018 to 2021. This was followed by a question and answer session.

3. Workers and Skills – early findings and emerging plans

The secretariat presented the early findings of new analysis considering the workers and skills aspects of the transition to Net Zero. The analysis sought to identify the approximate number of current UK jobs in industries that are set to grow or decline in the Net Zero transition, where the impacts are uncertain, or where impacts are likely to be minimal.

The Committee welcomed this analysis and asked that the secretariat work it up further towards an output in 2022. The Committee asked that the secretariat dig into the skills and locational dimensions of the affected sectors and in doing so seek to identify where there could be opportunities to match up sectors at risk of decline with those expected to grow – such as oil & gas with CCS. The Committee asked that the 'uncertain' category be split into those where there is

expected to be a shift in what workers would do and those with more genuine uncertainty. It will be important also to distinguish between impacts that will be spread around the country from those that are regionally concentrated.

In developing the work further, the Committee asked that the secretariat consider convening an expert advisory group, recognising the significant amount of good work already underway on the just transition. The key objective should be to identify where there are real risks, including of skills shortages or of localised job losses, and to dig into these in particular. The work programme should cover both the role of government and of business in supporting workers through the Net Zero transition. The secretariat should consider how progress can be monitored and consider undertaking a pilot deep dive in a particular sector.

4. International engagement – review

The secretariat presented analysis of the current international picture of ambition and policy action. These demonstrate that developed countries are increasingly setting targets that are aligned to the Paris Agreement goals, but that global ambition remains well short of what is needed, especially for 2030, and that policy to deliver the targets is well behind what is needed everywhere. The Committee welcomed this work and the characterisation of a theory of change involving virtuous circles of government and corporate action driving down costs, increasing the attractiveness of low-carbon solutions, and reinforcing the case for action.

The secretariat updated the Committee on the CCC programme of international engagement being run ahead of COP26. The Committee welcomed this work and reiterated their willingness to continue contributing to the engagement programme. They also requested that the secretariat consider ways to further leverage existing CCC materials, for example by using different formats like videos. On future work, the Committee would like to extend the series of CCC 'Insight Briefings', for example to cover the interaction of national and regional climate policy, stakeholder engagement while maintaining independence, developing pathways analysis, and making effective recommendations.

5. Future work plans

The Committee discussed options and priorities for the work programme over the upcoming period of 12-18 months. They encouraged the secretariat to prepare for a quick review of the Government's Net Zero Strategy once published, while being prepared to provide a deeper assessment at a later date.

The Committee re-emphasised that the coming period must focus on delivery, and that the Committee's role should be one of scrutiny and support through its analysis and communications. The 2022 progress report to Parliament should further develop the Committee's approach to progress monitoring, aiming for a standardised and transparent structure that can be repeated in future years. The secretariat should engage with department officials through the year to ensure they are familiar with plans and policy development.

Recognising the expanded ground that the CCC is now required to cover, and the greater volume and pace of policy development required by the UK's Net Zero path, the Committee supported a bid to the Government's spending review process for more resource. An increase in resource will be required for the CCC to keep up what it has been doing.

As lockdown rules are lifted, the Committee is keen that the organisation makes a success of hybrid working, including in the monthly Committee meetings. The

Committee has an important leadership position and should be demonstrating that the future of work can involve less travel than in the past.

6. AOB

The Committee noted that the Government may ask for further advice on the UK Emissions Trading Scheme as it develops, given the requirement in the Climate Change Act.

The Committee agreed to write back to the BEIS Secretary of State following the decision on the credit limit for the fourth carbon budget.

The Committee asked the secretariat to draft letters to secretaries of state across Government to highlight the recommendations from the recent progress report and to offer meetings with Ministers and senior officials to discuss them.