



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

8 February 2022

Dear Sir Bernard,

Thank you for your letter of 20 January.

The Committee is aware of the Climate Action Strategy and the Climate Action Implementation Committees, as set out in my previous letter, and their membership and Terms of References can be found on GOV.UK and in the House of Commons library.

It is a long-standing precedent that further information about Cabinet and its Committees is not normally shared publicly. While there will always be a public interest in transparency, this needs to be balanced against the interest in good policy making. The principle of Cabinet Collective Responsibility sits at the heart of the UK's system of government and a private space for Ministers to debate and reach collective decisions is a crucial part of this. This is captured in the Ministerial Code and the Cabinet Manual.

Nonetheless, we welcome scrutiny of our policy plans for tackling climate change and have standing processes in place to ensure Government progress in this area is assessed.

Firstly, the product of these Cabinet level discussions is visible through our international climate leadership over the past year – launching the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, setting an ambitious 6th Carbon Budget leading the way for others, publishing one of the world's most comprehensive Net Zero Strategy, and showcasing UK hospitality and leadership in Glasgow at COP26 where we signalled the end of coal power.

Secondly, the Government comprehensively publishes the UK's historic emissions since 1990 and a world leading approach to projecting the UK's annual emissions, by sector. In addition to this, the Net Zero Strategy committed to providing a public update every year on progress against the delivery pathway to net zero. While it is impossible to predict every path to net zero, the indicative pathway set out in the Net Zero Strategy shows the action we know is needed and represents a plan against which progress can be measured. Each Secretary of State is accountable to Parliament for their Department's contribution to the Net Zero Strategy, with the Business Secretary continuing to hold overall responsibility for net zero. From this year, colleagues will be provided with this update that includes:

- An update on progress against the targets and ambitions set out in the Strategy.
- Commentary on contextual changes that might affect the exact pathway to meeting our decarbonisation commitments.
- A summary of key areas of progress made against the policies and proposals in this Strategy.

Thirdly, we continue to engage with the Climate Change Committee's (CCC) annual progress report which assesses UK progress in reducing emissions and conducts a biennial assessment of progress in adapting to climate change. The latest Government response to the CCC's report was published on 19 October 2021 and provided responses to the CCC's recommendations on climate mitigation and adaptation. As also set out under the Climate Change Act, the UK Government has recently undertaken its third Climate Change Risk Assessment which provides a five-year assessment of the risks of climate change on the UK. The Government is committed to developing a third National Adaptation Programme for England which will set out how we will meet that challenge, and this will be published early 2023.

You also asked about the Committee's remit following COP26. The Glasgow Climate Pact was a real step forward, as we kept 1.5C alive alongside real world action on cash, coal, cars and trees – but the work does not stop there. The COP President set out in a written Ministerial Statement in December how we will continue to build on these priorities throughout the UK's Presidency year and support Egypt to deliver a successful COP27, as well as driving progress at the Convention of Biological Diversity COP15 later this year. The Government is also developing a 2030 Strategic Framework that brings together these two themes – setting out a common vision and clear priorities to guide UK international climate and nature action over the next decade that builds on the work of the Integrated Review. The UK will continue to capitalise on our areas of strengths including finance, science, technology and innovation.

Delivering this ambitious programme will take a Whole-of-Government approach. As well as a strong team in the Cabinet Office coordinating work across Government, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's diplomatic network will remain essential to our international efforts, as will leadership from other Departments. The No10 Delivery Unit will continue to work with Departments to realise these commitments and bring the green jobs and investment that will help us level up and unite this country.

I look forward to continuing to engage with Parliament and this Committee as we move forward with the development of this most important policy agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernard Jenkin', written in a cursive style.

Sir Bernard Jenkin MP