

Baroness Parminter
Chair of Environment and Climate Change Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State
Department for Business, Environment and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street London
SW1H 0ET

24 March 2022

Dear Kwasi,

Thank you for your letter of 4 March in response to the Committee's letter about the indicators set out in the Net Zero Strategy. The Committee discussed your letter in combination with other evidence received from BEIS as part of our Mobilising Action on Climate Change and the Environment Inquiry.

We have some follow up questions which cover two broad themes across both of our ongoing inquiries—the development of key indicators set out in the Net Zero Strategy and cross-Government coordination of climate policy.

Development of key indicators set out in the Net Zero Strategy

In the response the Department describes the targets and ambitions set out in paragraph 30 of the *'Embedding Net Zero in Government'* chapter in the Net Zero Strategy as “a clear set of 24 indicators against which the UK's effort to achieve net zero can be publicly measured.” In the Strategy, it is not clear how these targets and ambitions will be used on a more granular level to form indicators or metrics by which the Government's progress on achieving net zero can be measured.

1. How will the targets and ambitions set out in the *'Embedding Net Zero in Government'* chapter of the Net Zero Strategy be converted into indicators or metrics which can be used to measure the Government's progress on net zero at a more granular level?

In the response, the Department also said that “The Government is considering whether there are additional indicators ... that would be helpful to track progress against”, and that you are “in dialogue” with the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) on this matter. The Committee noted that the targets and ambitions set out in the Strategy do not cover areas such as aviation activity and food and diet.

2. Will the CCC have a formal role in developing and overseeing the indicators?
3. How will the Government's progress in areas not covered by the targets and ambitions included in the Net Zero Strategy—such as aviation, food and diet—be monitored?



We understand the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee have also been scrutinising the Government's approach to metrics in the Net Zero Strategy and welcome that these important issues are receiving the necessary attention.

Cross-Government coordination of climate policy

The Committee notes that multiple groups have been established to work on various aspects of cross-Government coordination of climate policy, including but not limited to the Director-General Group you have referred to; the Net Zero Delivery Board and the Net Zero Strategy Board; the Climate Action Strategy Committee and the Climate Action Implementation Committee.

The responsibilities of and relationships between these groups remain unclear. Furthermore, it is not clear from your letter whether the Director-General Group is distinct from the Net Zero Delivery Board and the Net Zero Strategy Board. The Committee would be grateful to receive an organogram or similar such document which sets out the responsibilities of each group and the working relationships between them as well as which departments are represented within each group.

The Committee was disappointed to note that the Behaviour Change for Net Zero Working Group is no longer active.¹ The Committee was similarly disappointed at the lack of available information about the two climate-related Cabinet Committees (the Climate Action Strategy Committee and the Climate Action Implementation Committee), and about the Boards which have been set up to "bolster [the Department's] own internal governance arrangements".

The Committee is aware that several committees across our Parliament have raised concerns about the adequacy of current cross-Government coordination mechanisms, and the lack of available information surrounding them, compromising Parliament's ability to scrutinise the work of the Government.

4. What plans if any does the Government have to take actions to address the concern by various parties including ourselves about the adequacy of the current cross-government coordination mechanisms and lack of detail around them?

We would be grateful to receive a response to our questions by 11 April.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Parminter

Chair, Environment and Climate Change Committee

¹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/106763/pdf/>