

Written evidence submitted by Diana Davey (PEG0095)

About Me: Now approaching the end of my working life, I have worked in industry and the Public Sector. Since taking early retirement from the Ministry of Defence in 2012, I have freelanced as a Management Accountant and been involved in various voluntary activities. I was enjoying a reasonably care free life until that morning in October 2018 when the IPCC reported that we have just 12 years to prevent catastrophic climate change. For some reason the previous reports had passed me by.

I have two sons that have both recently completed PHDs and that has influenced my comments in question 12.

Why am I submitting? Over the last 20 months I have educated myself on the issues and potential solutions and joined a local environmental group. I don't go on marches, though I admire those who do. I have focused on creating opportunities for the group to learn from each other and from other groups.

Yesterday I joined a webinar about how to campaign for **clean air**. I learned of the amazing number of pressure groups and the resources they have created to educate the public and lobby politicians on the issue of clean air. It was simultaneously both uplifting and intensely depressing. The same is true of all the individual issues that make up the climate change and nature recovery agenda. All the knowledge that we need in order to solve the issues is there. Technology exists already for the UK to achieve net zero emissions by 2030. **The barriers are political.**

In this submission I have tried to synthesise what I have learned over the last 20 months. I have wondered about whether to bother to submit: surely you know all this; other organisations will provide much harder evidence than I am in a position to do. And yet if I don't submit, what else can I do? There is a stereotype of women my age (60s) in terms of attitudes and voting patterns. I don't fit that stereotype and nor do many others. Thank you for reading.

SUBMISSION

1.0 What core/guiding principles should the Government adopt/prioritise in its recovery package, and why?

1.1 These core principles should be adopted:

- The need to **prevent** further **climate change**
- The need to **adapt to** those effects of **climate change** that are already locked in
- **Resilience to climate change and pandemics**
- Preservation and restoration of **nature**
- A **fair society** where everyone has a safe home to live, clean air to breathe, enough to eat and opportunities to contribute to society
- **International collaboration to solve the World's problems and inequalities**

1.2 The actions we need to make us resilient and reduce emissions are consistent and include:

- Self sufficiency in food supply, manufacturing and energy supply

- Reduction in consumerism
- Focusing on essentials
- Sharing wealth and work
- International cooperation

1.3 And these should bring additional benefits:

- Better work / life balance
- Improved Health and well being
- Improved sense of community

2.0 How can the Government borrow and/or invest to help the UK deliver on these principles?

2.1 Please don't dismiss tax reforms so readily. Some very rich people say they would happily pay more tax.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/jul/13/super-rich-call-for-higher-taxes-on-wealthy-to-pay-for-covid-19-recovery>

2.2 Consider other taxes: Wealth Tax and/or Land Value Tax (as recommended by Churchill)

<http://www.landvaluetax.org/current-affairs-comment/winston-churchill-said-it-all-better-then-we-can.html>

2.3 Other well-off people would moan but pay it anyway. The Government needs to **tax only people who can afford it.**

2.4 With stock markets so uncertain, Government could make it easier for individuals to invest in Government Bonds and run an 'Invest in Britain' campaign.

3.0 What measures and support will businesses need to rebuild consumer confidence and stimulate growth that is sustainable, both economically and environmentally?

3.1 If businesses and consumers crave certainty above all else, let the Government be **certain about their determination to tackle climate change.** Changing the **net zero target forward to 2040** would be very effective. Our Council has committed to a 2030 date.

3.2 Problems arise when Government prevaricates. They need to say to oil and gas companies: 'we are not going to use oil and gas soon but we could sure use your people and skills to develop renewable energy solutions.' Industries lobby against change because Government sends out mixed messages. When Government is decisive and consistent, industry adapts.

3.3 Consumer and business confidence will increase if the Government shows that it is developing a long term plan for the transition of jobs from those that cause harm to jobs which are sustainable: if it leads on on creating a complete change of mindset which puts **reducing climate**

change impacts and reducing inequality at the heart of every decision. This planning process will need to be transparent, very visible, consultative and inclusive.

3.4 The Government must be honest with those sectors with no future for their current outputs. This goes beyond the obvious sectors: oil/gas, aviation, the car industry. Every organisation within every sector needs to be budgeting for its carbon emissions as well as its finances.

3.5 We love our WW2 analogies so let us put one to good use. Every government department, every sector of industry, every part of society had one goal in mind: to win the war. Resources were made available, people were rapidly trained in new skills and mobilised all over the world, and industrial capacity was converted to the war effort. We need that mindset now. *And we are not asking people to kill or die for their country. All we are asking now is that they give up some of the things they currently enjoy and share their wealth.*

3.6 The Centre for Alternative Technology produced a report last year:

<https://www.cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/research-reports/zero-carbon-britain-rising-to-the-climate-emergency/> which shows how we could achieve net zero by 2030. The technology is available already. The Government could develop a long term plan based on that, and create certainty that there WILL BE jobs. *Different, for sure, but meaningful and rewarding jobs nevertheless.*

4.0 Whether the government should give a higher priority to environmental goals in future support?

4.1 Yes absolutely. If we do not tackle climate change there will be catastrophe. At the very least, expect to see mass migrations from countries that will become too hot to inhabit. We will need to make room for more people, make them welcome and share our resources with them. *We need to start planning for this now in case it is already too late to prevent it.*

4.2 It will be vital to put resources into restoring wildlife habitats and biodiversity and guard against poorly planned tree planting.

4.3 We must never forget that Economics is a man made concept and the rules can be changed whereas the physical laws of nature that have led to the climate emergency are immutable.

4.4 The measures that get media attention and analysis need to change

- from GDP to CO2 emissions
- from the size of the deficit to average temperature of the earth
- from productivity to goals on nature recovery

4.5 These need to be the measures on the front page of every newspaper, the headlines on the mainstream news programmes. *Ironically, if we focus on these nature objectives the economic ones are likely to improve, too.*

5.0 Whether the Government should prioritise certain sectors within its recovery package, and if so, what criteria should it use when making such decisions? What conditions, if any, should it attach to future support?

5.1 What We Need to Do Now by Chris Goodall (published Feb 2020)

<https://www.carboncommentary.com/switch> succinctly sets out how we could reallocate resources.

5.2 Criteria for support has to be based on (a) how 'essential' they are in terms of providing a need for society and (b) how helpful they are to reducing CO2 emissions and/or restoring nature.

5.3 Shoring up non-essential or environmentally damaging businesses for the sake of keeping people employed, should only be done on condition that the business reviews its business model and **plans for a transition** in consultation with Government bodies or their representatives.

5.4 Businesses will need to rethink the fundamental need behind the product or service they supply and think up better ways of fulfilling that need. Car Clubs have become popular in cities, having recognised that most people need to **'be able to occasionally travel and carry stuff' rather than 'own a car.'** *Clearly these only work in conjunction with public transport systems and where it is realistic for people to cycle and walk.*

5.5 Once that way of thinking is embedded, we can imagine how

- oil/gas companies might move into the supply of renewable energy or supplying clean hydrogen
- food suppliers can move from meat and dairy to plant based foods.

5.6 Or see <https://www.airseas.com/> about a spin-off from Airbus, trying to make maritime transport cleaner.

5.7 The car industry cannot simply transition to making electric cars. We have to reduce the numbers of cars on the road. Industry players should think of their business as one of trying to provide transport not cars. They could move into providing public transport units or ebikes.

5.8 Supply chains need to be reviewed. This e-bike company has recently onshored its manufacturing:

<https://cyclingindustry.news/volt-brings-its-manufacturing-onshore-in-uk/#:~:text=Family-run%20electric%20bike%20maker,the%20EU%2C%20among%20other%20factors.>

5.9 I welcome the recent expenditure on making it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle. Sadly we have seen that some drivers have used the emptier roads to drive more recklessly. The Government should **invest in more public information** campaigns on road safety with a view to encouraging cycling. It should **amend traffic laws away from favouring drivers.**

6.0 How can the Government best retain key skills and reskill and upskill the UK workforce to support the recovery and sustainable growth?

6.1 The first step is to educate **everyone** about the climate emergency and what needs to change but that actually **this can for the better in a lot of ways.** *The Government could start this by arranging for everybody who becomes unemployed to undergo such training. It might help if the Government trains itself first. ALL politicians should undergo such training as a condition of being allowed to stand for election.*

6.2 The second step is to work out what work needs to be done to meet our Net Zero target and targets for wildlife restoration. There are many organisations who can advise the Government on this. I have provided links at 3.7 and 5.1 and there are many others.

6.3 The third step is to look at all the work is currently going on in the not for profit sector. In Bristol we have the Cold Homes Energy Efficiency Survey Experts (C.H.E.E.S.E.) Project <https://cheeseproject.co.uk/>, the Centre for Sustainable Energy <https://www.cse.org.uk/> and many others (including community energy projects.) While some staff are paid, most are volunteers. Much of the work is driven by retired engineers and the like who are incredibly knowledgeable. This work needs to be scaled up, financially rewarded and turned into an industry which

- provides advice, education and practical advice to householders
- helps Government provide training to builders and tradespeople
- provides training to DIY enthusiasts
- helps with accreditation

so that schemes like the new Green Homes Grant can achieve value for money.

6.4 This reliance on volunteers has to stop. When people get paid, they pay tax. Volunteering should be for nice to have things like Britain in Bloom, **not for essentials like saving the planet.**

6.4 The fourth step is to address the gap that still remains and decide what skills people need to be trained in to carry them out. Decisions need to be made

- eg from various technical options for changing over people's heating systems en masse
- the share of the costs of conversion between Government and householders

6.5 Lastly **everybody** needs to be trained in better decision making and critical thinking so they are less prone to the lies of climate deniers, anti vaxxers and those that would have you believe that covid19 is all a hoax.

7.0 Is the Industrial Strategy still a relevant and appropriate vehicle through which to deliver post pandemic growth?

7.1 Yes, as long as it is visible and progress is constantly reviewed. I question how many people know that we have one.

7.2 Key to any strategy is the Risk Management section, which should be where plans are developed which can be put in place when crises such as a pandemic occur. To what extent did the current industrial strategy inform the Chancellor as he developed the rescue packages?

7.3 An Industrial Strategy should be a communication tool and enable Government to state very clearly where it wants all industrial effort to be focused (with measures including the Net Zero CO2 Emissions target.)

8.0 How should regional and local government in England, (including the role of powerhouses, LEAs and growth hubs, mayoralities, and councils) be reformed and better equipped to deliver growth locally?

8.1 I honestly don't know how many people in the area I live knows that there is a West Of England Combined Authority. Having said that, I am not sure Reform is the answer. Perhaps it simply needs better resources and guidance on how to bed in. Or a better mayor.

8.2 The role of local government should be to make decisions within a framework set for them in agreement with national government. As long as they are within that framework they should make the key decisions based on local conditions. The role of National Government should be to

- ensure each area has the resources it needs
- ensure standards and best practice are maintained across all parts of the country
- ensure that resources are spread out fairly

8.3 With the framework in place (clear targets and a clear set of strategies,) Local Government, should be free to

- raise revenues as they see fit
- decide how to implement national policies
- decide which businesses to support in the area
- decide how to meet the needs of their population (housing, care etc)

8.4 In return for this trust, Local Government needs to share learning and experience with National Government and other Local Authorities. Politicians need to learn to be honest about failure to meet targets and be willing to understand the causes of that under achievement and learn and share those lessons.

9.0 What opportunities does this provide to reset the economy to drive forward progress on broader Government priorities, including (but not limited to) Net Zero, the UK outside of the EU and the 'levelling up' agenda? What should the Government do to ensure that delivering on these priorities does not exacerbate the vulnerability of businesses, consumers and communities/workers that have been impacted by COVID-19?

9.1 The worst thing the Government could do right now is to prevaricate. The sooner it starts to train and redeploy workers to the battle against climate change, the better. In many cases the work will be more fulfilling. The best the Government can do is get on with it.

9.2 The impacts of the climate emergency and the pandemic on resources make the achievement of Value for Money more important than ever. VFM will be achieved only if grants made available are underpinned by guidance for the householder, specific training for builders and capacity of builders to carry out the work. A second condition to achieve value for money is for grants to be made in the context of a clear and long term plan for the green economy. A clear unambiguous strategy for retrofitting homes and changing heating systems is desperately needed.

9.3 Deadlines for spending money has to be realistic. Money was made available for a traffic scheme in my town. The shortness of the implementation deadline meant there was no time for consultation and the scheme may not survive because of it. Another scheme within the authority

was so rushed, it created traffic chaos and a huge backlash and had to be abandoned. And so a chance to protect cyclists and pedestrians (mostly schoolchildren) on a busy road was lost, possibly for ever.

10.0 What lessons should the Government learn from the pandemic about actions required to improve the UK's resilience to future external shocks (including – but not limited to – health, financial, domestic and global supply chains and climate crises)?

10.1 The Government should learn that people will change their lifestyles if they believe they must. They should also learn that many people don't want life to return to how it was. The Government should understand what lessons its people have learned about what they value and what they don't.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/12/only-12-want-a-return-to-the-old-normal-britain-after-covid-19>

10.2 The Government needs to take its own risk management processes seriously and act on the results of risk scenario exercises (such as the 2016 one about a pandemic.) When they run these exercises they should be more open with the public about what has been learned.

10.3 The Government should be aware that few people trust it and that they really need to learn some humility before doing anything else. Arrogance is not the same as leadership.

11.0 What opportunities exist for the UK economy post Brexit and the pandemic for export growth?

11.1 I believe that we need to be more self sufficient before we focus on export growth.

11.2 I believe export opportunities would arise if firstly we could excel in research in many areas including:

- Battery technology
- Hydrogen
- How to make public transport safe so that people don't catch or spread disease by using it
- Building techniques

11.3 I believe we could have a really strong research base if we ensured

- independence from companies with vested interests
- job security and fair reward for researchers
- coordination and cooperation (including across international borders)

11.4 If the country could move **away from** reliance on Financial Services, Gambling, Arms Exports and **into** self sufficiency in food and manufacture and research into solving the world's problems, **then I could be proud to be British again.**

12.0 What role might Government play as a shareholder or investor in businesses post-pandemic and how this should be governed, actioned and held to account?

12.1 I leave it to others to comment on the general principle of Government taking part ownership of companies, which I support, and focus on Universities.

12.1 We should review the role and status of our universities. Many have business models which depend on attracting overseas students who pay much higher fees. Will they pay around £20K for a course consisting of Zoom meetings? Many Chinese students may now be barred by their own government. There will be rationalisation within the sector with Government having to take an ownership role to keep the sector going.

12.2 This would provide opportunities to ensure that universities play a much greater role in their communities

- training people to acquire new skills needed for a green economy
- measuring the results of what communities are doing and pick up unintended consequences
- researching into climate change solutions
- making their facilities available to the wider community
- sharing resources among each other

12.3 Many research based commercial arrangements between universities and businesses result in the university coming off worst in terms of protection of intellectual property, financial gains and so on. Could Government help negotiate better arrangements for the benefit of general society rather than business?

12.4 Finally, Government could support the higher education sector so that universities have much fairer working conditions. For institutions that are supposed to be enlightened, many have poor pay and poor job security with ancillary staff on zero hours contracts. Job security for post-doc researchers is non-existent (which may explain why so many clever people go into financial services when what society really needs them to do is problem solve and create a better society.)

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