



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Dear Carolyn -

Lord Duncan of Springbank PhD FGS
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
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Thank you for your letter dated 16th September 2019, regarding climate change. I welcome Oldham Council's interest in tackling climate change. There is no doubt that climate change is one of the most profound global challenges we face. The decisions we make today will affect the future of our planet for generations to come, and the Government fully recognises that action is urgently needed in the UK and across the world. We should be proud of the UK's leadership in tackling climate change - we have already shown the world that, with our world-leading scientists, business leaders and innovators, it is possible to cut emissions whilst growing the economy. Between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its emissions by 42% while growing the economy by more than two thirds.

We do, however, recognise the need to go further which is why on 27th June 2019 the UK Government set a legally binding target to achieve net zero emissions from across the UK economy by 2050. We are the first major economy in the world to legislate for a net zero target; this world-leading target will bring to an end the UK's contribution to climate change. Our independent expert advisors - the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) - make clear in their report that they do not currently consider it credible for the UK to aim to reach net zero emissions earlier than 2050. We have considered their advice and have set our net zero target accordingly. We have set out strong frameworks to achieve net zero under the Clean Growth Strategy and Industrial Strategy and will continue to build on the strengths we have already developed in areas such as offshore wind, smart systems and green finance. The Clean Growth Strategy can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy.

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (25 YEP) sets out how, over a generation, we will replenish depleted soils, rid seas and rivers of the rubbish affecting our planet, cut greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse our air of toxic pollutants and develop cleaner, more sustainable energy sources. We will also manage pressures on the environment by mitigating and adapting to climate change, minimising waste, managing our exposure to chemicals and enhancing biosecurity.

These measures are only part of a broader intended Environment Bill, which will include ambitious legislative measures to take direct action to address the biggest environmental priorities of our age: air quality, nature recovery, waste and resource efficiency and water resource management. The Environment Bill will be introduced early in the second Session of this Parliament.

On a local level, we enable greenhouse gas emission reductions through the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. The capital pot for England is currently £262 million and is planned to increase each year to a total of £385 million by 2020/21. This funding, managed by Salix Finance, has delivered over 17,000 projects, significantly improving energy performance in the public sector. It has generated estimated bill savings in the wider public sector of around £55 million in 2017/18, with projected bill savings of £72 million in 2018/19.

More broadly, there is almost £20 million allocated to the Local Energy Programme which is designed to maximise the local contribution to clean growth. The programme works with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Local Authorities and communities in England to drive the development of clean growth as a core plank of local industrial strategies and, critically, to support local clean growth investment. The key focus is the mobilisation of green finance to support projects at the local level that would not otherwise happen. The Local Energy Programme aims to start to address local barriers to clean growth activity, and to equip local areas to drive private sector investment into clean growth across a pipeline of local projects.

Alongside this, we have also established five regional Local Energy Hubs which aim to increase capacity amongst local authorities and LEPs and support the development of low carbon projects in local areas, by providing commercial, technical and project management support. This includes a Hub in the North West which is managed by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The Government provides a range of other programmes which Local Authorities can access to support our net zero target, for example on Heat Networks, the Energy Company Obligation and Electric Vehicle charging. For more information officials in the Local Energy Team can be contacted at: localenergy@beis.gov.uk.

Tackling climate change has to be a shared endeavour between the Government, devolved nations, Local Authorities, business, civil society and the British people – as well as the rest of the world. That is why we held the first Green GB & NI Week last year - an incredible example of us coming together to raise awareness of clean growth and the pressing challenges we face in addressing climate change, while demonstrating the opportunities that action on these issues would bring. I would be delighted if Oldham Council could participate in the next Green GB & NI Week, which is now scheduled to take place in the first quarter of next year. Further information is available on our website at: greengb.campaign.gov.uk/.

Thank you once again for your letter. I hope this information is helpful.



Lord Duncan of Springbank