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28 July 2026

Dear Stuart,

Thank you for your letter of 29 June 2026 and congratulations on your appointment as Convener of the Climate Action Committee.

I would be pleased to accept your invitation to give evidence to the Committee on 17 September 2026.

As you note, the Climate Change Plan (CCP) has now been published, in accordance with the statutory timeframe. In finalising the Plan, we carefully and fully considered each recommendation and comment received on the draft CCP, including by your predecessor committee. However, it is important to note that the scrutiny period and public consultation built upon our ongoing dialogue with Parliament, the public, academia, the third-sector and industry. This wider engagement also informed the Government's responses to recommendations made ahead of finalising the Plan.

With regard to the timing of the Plan's development, as you are aware, the Plan could not be developed before the new carbon budgets system was set in legislation, and the timing of this had consequential effects on the delivery timetable for the Plan. The CCP also could not be finalised without advice from our statutory advisers, the Climate Change Committee. We legislated for carbon budgets in line with their advice as an indication of credible achievability, and we used their sector-by-sector analysis to test and inform the development of our policies and proposals.

We are conscious of the challenges that the Committee has raised, including the time available within the unavoidably condensed consultation process for the most recent Plan. While all recommendations and comments received were carefully considered during the finalisation process, I recognise the Committee's concerns regarding the compressed timetable.

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The next Climate Change Plan is required under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to be laid, at the latest, by 24 March 2031; with a draft version laid prior to this to allow time for Parliamentary scrutiny and public consultation. My officials are in the process of reviewing the publication timeline for the next Plan. We will continue to review this timetable, including with regard to feedback received from the Committee.

In developing the Plan, my officials and I also engaged extensively with local authorities, including through my role as co-chair of the Climate Delivery Oversight Group, whose contributions were invaluable in shaping the final Plan.

Representatives from local government and COSLA have also routinely contributed to the Climate Change Plan Advisory Group (CCPAG) for several years, and my officials met with COSLA on policy-specific issues during the development of the final Plan. CCPAG also includes environmental NGOs, academics and other interested parties who have been invaluable sources of information and feedback on wider climate policy, including prior to the finalisation process for the current Plan.

During the consultation period on the draft Plan, we held a place-based workshop series with local authority representatives on the impact of the Climate Change Plan on urban, rural, and islands communities in Scotland. These discussions included consideration of partnership working for the delivery of the finalised Plan.

The Scottish Government is now focused on CCP delivery. As key delivery partners – and in line with the Verity House Agreement setting out our vision for a more collaborative approach to delivering our shared priorities for the people of Scotland – we will maintain our close working relationship with local authorities and their representative bodies, including through the Climate Delivery Framework, CCPAG and other policy-specific forums.

I look forward to updating the Committee further on these and other matters in September.

Yours sincerely,



**GILLIAN MARTIN**