EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

THE RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT (EXTENSION OF PERIOD) ORDER 2026

2026 No. 998

1. Introduction

1.1 This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and is laid before Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

2. Declaration

2.1 The Minister of State, Katie White, at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, responsible for Net Zero strategy and carbon budgets, can confirm that this Explanatory Memorandum meets the required standard.

2.2 The Senior Civil Servant, Jonathan Hoare, Deputy Director at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, responsible for Net Zero strategy, can confirm that this Explanatory Memorandum meets the required standard.

3. Contact

3.1 Abshir Weli, Net Zero Policy Advisor at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero can be contacted by email at the following address with any queries regarding the instrument: NZSP@Energysecurity.gov.uk, or by telephone: 07752 778403.

Part One: Explanation, and context, of the Instrument

4. Overview of the Instrument

What does the legislation do?

4.1 The Secretary of State is required by the Climate Change Act 2008 to respond to the points made by the Committee on Climate Change's (the "Committee") progress report, and lay her response before Parliament no later than 15th October in each year which the Committee report is made. This instrument extends the deadline for responding to the Committee's 2026 progress report from 15th October to 17th December 2026.

Where does the legislation extend to, and apply?

4.2 The extent of this instrument is the United Kingdom.

4.3 The territorial application of this instrument is the United Kingdom.

5. Policy Context

What is being done and why?

5.1 The Committee was established as an independent statutory body under the Act. It advises the UK and devolved administrations on emissions targets and reports annually to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and preparing for the impacts of climate change (adaptation).

5.2 Section 37(4) of the Climate Change Act 2008 requires that the government response to this report is laid no later than 15th October.

5.3 The Prime Minister appointed a new cabinet in July 2026. Delaying the statutory deadline will allow government the time to more substantively respond to the Committee's points.

5.4 The Government will therefore delay the response to no later than 17th December 2026 to enable the response to be laid in Parliament before winter recess.

What was the previous policy, how is this different?

5.5 There is no substantive policy change. This legislation extends the deadline for responding to the Committee's Progress Report.

6. Legislative and Legal Context

How has the law changed?

6.1 This legislation extends the deadline for the Secretary of State to respond to the Committee's report from 15th October 2026 to 17th December 2026, using the power under section 37(5) of the Climate Change Act 2008.

Why was this approach taken to change the law?

6.2 This is the only possible approach to make the necessary changes.

7. Consultation

Summary of consultation outcome and methodology

7.1 Consultation is not required for this instrument under the Climate Change Act 2008, and a consultation has not been conducted for this instrument, given this is a minor extension to a statutory deadline.

7.2 The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has engaged with the Committee and the devolved administrations on its intention to lay this instrument.

8. Applicable Guidance

8.1 Guidance has not been produced for this instrument because the memorandum provides the full background to the purpose of this instrument.

Part Two: Impact and the Better Regulation Framework

9. Impact Assessment

9.1 A full Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument because the SI solely adjusts the statutory deadline to respond to 'the points' raised by the Committee's annual progress report and no, or no significant, impact on the private or voluntary sectors is foreseen.

Impact on businesses, charities and voluntary bodies

9.2 There is no, or no significant, impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

9.3 The legislation does not impact small or micro businesses.

9.4 There is no, or no significant, impact on the public sector.

10. Monitoring and review

What is the approach to monitoring and reviewing this legislation?

10.1 This instrument does not include a statutory review clause, and the Department does not intend to monitor this instrument, as it amends the deadline for 2026 only and does not impose burdens on businesses.

Part Three: Statements and Matters of Particular Interest to Parliament

11. Matters of special interest to Parliament

11.1 None.

12. European Convention on Human Rights

12.1 As the instrument is subject to negative procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

13. European Union Acts

13.1 This instrument is not made under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the European Union (Future Relationship) Act 2020 or the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 ("relevant European Union Acts").