



Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission meeting 21 June 2023

Commission Panel updates:

This paper is for information. It provides a brief update of the work of each of the Commissions' Panels, in order to provide transparency and visibility across the Commission.

1. Climate Adaptation & Resilience:

1.1. Focus during last 3 months

Two DI Sessions hosted: Emergencies & Preparedness; and Health & Wellbeing.

We have continued with the Local Authority Climate Adaptation Programme looking at both strategic risks and service level adaptive planning.

A considerable amount of effort has been put into developing our work with the health sector, most notably our partnership with the [Association of Directors of Public Health](#) which was publicised on Friday 9th June & Monday 12th June, including a blog written by Co-Chair Roz Davies: [The climate and ecological crisis is a public health crisis | Yorkshire & Humberside Climate Commission \(yorksandhumberclimate.org.uk\)](#). This is being done in close collaboration with the Net Zero Panel.

We have also been working on developing some future weather narratives, based on climate projections, but translated into day to day language and relating to extreme weather events that people will remember and understand. This work links to a series of actions in the Framework for Change section, as well as Action 14, and Action Nii.

1.2 Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

The long term engagement approach with the health sector is key to delivering Action G, where we (YHCC) committed to: "work with health professionals to develop an outline strategy on how to address the climate and nature and health and wellbeing agendas in a joined up way to make a tangible difference for the most vulnerable people in our society".

Our work with the Local Resilience Forums is also key to delivering Action Ni, to help incorporate climate risks into wider resilience strategies.

1.3 Key reflections for the commission's awareness

At a system level the fundamental importance of defining roles, boundaries and clear governance is becoming ever increasingly clear and urgent. As is maintaining a focus on reducing inequalities and striving for equity across all aspects of climate action.

At an individual level it is becoming clearer that different approaches are needed. We have always recognised that a one size fits all approach won't work in terms of communicating climate risk or enabling adaptive thinking to develop and flourish, but it is becoming clear that very different approaches are going to be appropriate depending on the social-economic advantage that the person, or community, has.

1.4 Forward look

Our last Delivering Impact session will be on the 6th July as a fringe event for Yorkshire Sustainability Week. We are trying something different: we have some fantastic speakers lined up and hope to have some businesses join us to learn about some adaptation toolkits that have been developed elsewhere around the country, and so gain some rapid insights into how to develop them for Yorkshire and Humber. We are hopeful that we will get a good and varied attendance for this session, focused on Business and Industry, and that we will be able to publish Yorkshire and Humber focused toolkits in due course.

2. **Net Zero**

2.1. Focus during last 3 months

- Delivering Impact session on Energy Supply and Distribution exploring what the region's role is in enabling the decarbonisation of the energy system, as well as the distribution network. We were joined by expert speakers who helped us explore the vision for the energy system from both an academic and policy perspective; the economic gains the region could have from investment in the energy network; and the role of community energy and smart local energy systems.
- Delivering Impact session on Transport's focus was on how we effectively enable a reduction in car use, particularly around enabling modal shift.

2.2. Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- **Supergen Energy Networks Hub** Working with academics from the University of Leeds as part of the Supergen Energy Networks Hub to progress research that will facilitate decision making on investment in the energy

network. The distribution network will require a huge amount of investment as the grid becomes more flexible, decentralised and resilient. This research aims to practically support that decision making.

- **Health:** Working with Climate Adaptation and Resilience panel and NHS Greener team to engage ICBs on health, looking at a Climate Health Summit.

2.3. Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- Andy's expertise is sorely missed in the panel. We have been working with academics via the REP to support the rigour of position papers.
- We've had some fantastic new additions to the panel including representation from Yorkshire Water and the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub. Panel is really engaged and there is momentum building.

2.4. Forward look

- We will be progressing the transport question and asking how the YHCC can effectively build a strong voice to put investment in modal shift clearly on the table. We are focusing on the types of messages that will be most effective for different stakeholders in the region: the strategic, economic and human case for change.
- In the session in August we will reflect on where the panel's focus will be for phase 2 of the Commission's work.

3. Land Water Nature Food:

3.1 Focus during last 3 months

- DI session held on Cultural Adaptation, exploring the role of attitudes, behaviours and communication in transitioning the region towards regenerative land use. Five expert speakers presented at the session: Peter Lefort from Exeter University on positive social tipping points; Prof. Carys Swanwick of Sheffield University on attitudes to landscape and land use; Andy Goldring CEO of the Permaculture Association on value-driven decision-making; Katherine Bates from South Pennines Park on engaging the public in land use; and Pamela Candea from The Surefoot Effect on creating the right conditions for people to engage and make positive changes.
- DI session held on Nutrient Cycles and Soil Health focused largely on farming practices. Speakers at this session were Iain McDonell, Senior Environment Officer for Agriculture in Yorkshire at the Environment Agency and Paul Temple, an experienced arable and beef farmer from Wold Farm who transitioned his approach into biology-based farming focused on soil health.
- Scoping for phase two of the land, water, nature, food panel's work has begun and will continue throughout the next quarter through a series of collaborative meetings, workshops and planning sessions between

Commissioners, Panel members, the core Commission Team and external experts.

3.2 Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- **A strategic approach to land use for the region:** initial conversations with senior Defra representatives have been positive, indicating there is appetite for conversations to continue about Yorkshire and the Humber potentially 'scaling up' pilots of regional land use frameworks in Devon and Cambridgeshire.
- **Regional observatory:** Linked to the ambition of having a regional observatory, we are seeking to get two methodologies on carbon potentials and land use in other areas applied in Yorkshire. Conversations have been held with GIS experts at the University of Leeds, and the possibilities for this work to progress is currently being scoped.
- **Supporting Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS):** following the session facilitated by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to share knowledge and best practice from the LNRS pilots, the YHCC has set up quarterly meetings with LNRS leads within the region to continue this collaborative approach and enable a joined-up approach across the region. In addition the core team have made connections and introductions to key members of the YHCC network to help LNRS leads find representatives for their steering groups, some LWNF panel members are dedicating their time to these steering groups.

3.3 Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- Because the LWNF Panel's focus on land use is so fundamental to the work of the three other Panels, a need has been identified for one or more sessions to be held with multiple Panels inputting into phase two planning, crosscutting the subject focuses of the original Panel setup.

3.4 Forward look

- Panel chairs and core team are meeting to outline planning process for phase two and identify priority workstreams.
- Workshop dates will be proposed for cross-cutting panel sessions. These are likely to be in-person and held after the DI programme comes to a close in September.

4. Future Economy

4.1. Focus during last 3 months

- The DI session on Finance and Investment in April was really well attended, with a really good discussion. It's clear that there is finance out there that

could be directed towards net zero, nature's recovery and climate adaptation. We received a presentation from Prof Nick Robins from Grantham Institute; considered how looking holistically at smart sustainable cities could enable investment; and heard from four practitioners who are using innovative techniques to facilitate investment.

- DI session on Procurement and Supply chains on 14th June. This is a key area, where quite often the majority of emissions lie, where organisations can influence globally and improve the region more locally.

4.2. Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- We have set up a task and finish group as part of the FE panel to look at where the initial scoping of a finance and investment could best sit. A regional-scale finance platform could enable investment in the region and appears to be the right scale to facilitate a just transition.

4.3. Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- Green Jobs and Skills climate action report is still on Commonplace and looking for comments. Please share with your networks.

4.4. Forward look

- Two more delivering impact sessions left in the series: innovation & entrepreneurship and circular economy & resource efficiency.
- We are working in collaboration with RPF on understanding the overlap between economic development strategies and climate action planning.

5. Research & Evidence

5.1. Focus during last 3 months

- Continued support for identifying researchers working in DI session areas, and identification of more intensive support to panels where required.

5.2 Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- Members continue to circulate calls for expertise to their networks and institutions.

5.3. Key reflections for the Commission's awareness

- The Yorkshire and Humber [Policy Innovation Partnership](#) has been awarded Stage 1 funding from UKRI. Lead by Gary Dymski (Leeds) it will focus on building diverse partnerships with priority local stakeholders that can support the development of region-wide approaches for achieving more robust, inclusive, and sustainable growth. The priority areas of focus are:
 - boosting local economic performance through inclusive growth

- living and working sustainably in a greener economy, including connecting 'big picture' climate change goals
- innovation and green technologies
- communities in their places
- data and informatics

This funding will support partnerships development and co-develop a research agenda to deliver strong proposals for phase two, where up to four LPIPs will receive up to £4.8 million each. It will leverage existing Yorkshire Universities activity and the new activity established through the [Y-PERN network](#), and provides an exciting opportunity to resource policy-focussed research in areas directly relevant to the Commission's aims.

- At the panel meeting on 12th June, we began discussions around how we can use the convening platform of the Commission to add value beyond contributing expertise to DI sessions. This could take the form of best practice sharing between HEIs with regards to sustainability plans, identification of critical masses of expertise and new synergies between institutions, shared student training as well as closer engagement with the Thematic Panels, but needs to remain in line with the Commission's goals. Discussions at the whole commission meeting in September will be important in helping to steer this new phase of the REP.

5.4 Forward look

- As the Commission moves into its next phase, there is real enthusiasm from the panel to understand how we can better use the expertise in HEIs across the region to support the Commission's goals, and what role the Commission could play in partnering with, and catalysing new, research bids emerging from the themes identified to date.

6. Communities & Engagement

6.1 Focus during last 3 months

- **Terms of reference:** the panel has developed new, more focused terms of reference to help guide its work through the rest of the phase one period.
- **Engagement events:** the panel has continued to develop the faith strand of work, has engaged with the Regional Youth Climate Assembly and continues to develop a programme of work with the YCLA / ERNLLCA (representative bodies for Town & Parish Councils)
- **Commonplace:** the panel has discussed the progress of the Commonplace consultations and noted the need to improve engagement but also the limitations of this type of tool for engaging with communities.
- **Sharing practice:** The panel's workplan moving forward is likely to focus much more on sharing good practice around the region in terms of local

community climate action and ways of engaging with people on climate and nature. With this in mind successful exploratory meetings have been held with the Ashden Trust and Carbon Copy with a view to forming partnerships that will enable the Commission to disseminate this knowledge more effectively.

6.2. Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- **Encouraging action in schools (action 7 of the CAP):** Working with Panel member and Commissioner Stuart Strathdee, we have written to key education leads in local authorities to encourage them to get involved with a developing Yorkshire & Humber branch of the UK Schools Sustainability Network. We are also writing to all Multi Academy Trusts in the region both to invite them to sign the Climate Action Pledge and to consider joining the UKSSN.

6.3. Key reflections for the Commission's awareness

- **Planning for phase two:** The Panel has sometimes struggled to have a clear sense of direction yet the need to enable meaningful engagement on climate and nature within communities is huge. Many of the issues other panels are tackling have a strong community element. The Panel and wider Commission needs to reflect on how to better focus and resource this area of its work post March 2024.

6.4. Forward look

- The second Faith, nature & climate event has been postponed due to indefinite strike action within the University of Leeds. When it is held, it will be focusing on places of worship and community buildings.

7. Regional Policy Forum:

7.1 Focus during last 3 months

The Regional Policy Forum meeting in May did not take place because its timing clashed with the local elections, and so the Forum has not met since the last Commission. However, our work behind the scenes has continued apace, and we also now welcome Kate Josephs, Chief Executive of Sheffield City Council, who joins Cllr Jack Hemingway as co-chair.

7.2 Progress on any key actions that the Forum is enabling

Our work on shared principles for a climate-responsive planning system was received favourably by meetings of the Regional Chief Executives' group and the Yorkshire Leaders' Board in March. Subsequently, Yorkshire & Humber Councils have assisted us by consulting with all the local and combined authorities with a view to the principles being formally endorsed by the Leaders' Board at their next

meeting in July. The responses have been very positive, and we are currently drafting some minor changes to the principles that we hope will iron out any remaining concerns.

7.3 Key reflections for the Commission's awareness

It's really encouraging that Leaders and Chief Executives have engaged thoughtfully in this work and seen its value in expressing a collective sense of direction. The shared principles have already given us a much clearer basis for our national advocacy work when responding to recent government consultations, and we are using them to assist our engagement with North Yorkshire Council who are beginning work on a new Local Plan.

7.4 Forward look

The next Forum meeting is on 17 July and will focus on the topic of local economic transformation. We have been preparing for this through one-to-one conversations with a number of strategy and economic development officers from around the region, and invitations to the session will go out shortly. The objective of the session will be to explore what would be most useful to local and combined authorities who are integrating climate into their economic priorities.