

Commission meeting 7 December 2022

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

- Held first Delivering Impact Session on People & Communities (co-hosted with the Communities & Engagement Panel) & developed second DI session on Infrastructure (being held Friday 9/12)
- Focus session held on Health & Climate – see [Blog here](#), and supported an Adaptation session held by Bradford & Craven NHS
- Developing & launching the LA Climate Adaptation Programme
- Supporting NYLRF consider their role in Climate Change.

1.2 Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- Communicating Climate risk & challenges around adaptation:
 - Prof Steve Scott-Bottoms one man show "Who Ya Gonna Call?", developed as part of the UKRI CLimate Resilience Programme, has been extremely well received.
 - Collaboration with EA underway to develop a short film on Adaptation – a post card from the future.

1.2 Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- There is a real and growing appetite to understand what the future will be like, and so how to prepare. There is of course a series of challenges with this (not least that it is inherently uncertain) but we think some 'standard' scenarios that we can all use across the region to start the conversations will be helpful, and could help with developing a common language too.

1.3 Forward look

- There is a real gap in support to businesses regarding adaptation, especially beyond Flood. The Panel will consider how to best explore this through the forthcoming DI Session, which could/should be co-sponsored with the FE Panel. This also links clearly to the Climate

Action Pledge. Options of focus are being explored, and views from the Commission are welcome. The DI session is currently scheduled for Feb 23, but might need to be rescheduled so that it has most impact.

- Work will begin in earnest via the LA Climate Adaptation Programme.
- We will consolidate our collaborations with the ICBs and the Association of Directors of Public Health.
- Our first two DI sessions will go onto Common Place for public consultation and engagement.

2. Land Water Nature Food:

2.1 Focus during last 3 months

- Creating a secure and sustainable food system: DI session went well, speakers were Chris Clark from Nethergill Associates and Dr Chris Yap, a research fellow on the Fix Our Food programme. Draft report is now in review with panel members and live on Commonplace for public feedback.
- Nature's Recovery, achieving 30:30 and beyond: DI session just held. Speakers were Sir John Lawton, Tessa Levens from YWT and Nicky Rivers from Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust. Draft report due to launch on Commonplace in the New Year.

2.2 Progress on any key actions that the panel is enabling

- On nature and biodiversity and on land-use and farming: DI sessions are progressing our exploration of the need for a regional land use strategy
- On education and awareness: Connecting with the Fix Our Food project has revealed opportunities for the Commission to support better education around sustainable food and nature
- On the business pledge: we're looking at how the YWT can support businesses with their commitments to nature and help to turn the pledge into positive action

2.3 Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- We're learning as we go on how to improve the DI sessions for maximum productivity and progress such as testing different numbers of speakers and adjusting the format of the discussion.

2.4 Forward look

- After the festive break we have our DI session on Mitigating Climate Change, Net Zero and Nature-based Solutions.

- We'll also be holding a full day panel session in March to workshop the topics covered to date and begin shaping the panel's ultimate output - any Commissioners able to provide us with a venue please speak to Sam.

3. Net Zero

Verbal update will be provided

4. Future Economy

Verbal update will be provided

4.1. 5. Research & Evidence

5.1. Focus during last 3 months

- Development of process to identify academic input into briefing documents to support panel-led Delivering Impact sessions (leads Monika Antal and Marina Tapley, YU)
- Identifying institutional leads to serve on the panel of the University of Leeds' Student Sustainability Research Conference that champions student sustainability research in the region.

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

- A number of academics have already been put in touch with the panels to feed into the DI sessions that have taken place.

5.3. Key reflections for the commission's awareness

- The appointment of the Engagement and impact Officers has been welcomed! With Kat Armstrong and Sam Herbert in post it's a clearer path of engagement with the panels, and will ensure that the academics who are recruited by the REP to support the DI sessions are well-integrated with the panels.

5.4. Forward look

- We are working with Kat and Sam as the formats of DI sessions evolve to continue to recruit academics to support these sessions and the State of the Region report, for presentation to the REP at our 12/12 meeting.
- Kat and I will meet with Katie Thomas, YNYLEP to understand where the activities of REP and the LEP's Routemap to Carbon Negative provide opportunities to link up.

6. Communities & Engagement

Focus during last 3 months

- The panel has discussed its role / purpose and future focus to enable greater impact.
- Top priority for the panel remains the linkages between the cost of living crisis and climate change, and in particular the need to enable people to reduce energy demand and retrofit their houses.
- The panel is now working to feed community perspectives into the Delivering Impact sessions and encourage engagement in the Commonplace platform.
- A sub-group has been developing the proposed Faith in the Environment event.

Forward look - Activities for the next quarter

- Spring event - Faith in the Environment (working title).

The aim is to engage faith groups to explore how faith can be a driver for climate action – and to reach communities who have not been well represented in the climate conversation.

- Engagement programme with the Yorkshire Local Councils Association (Town and Parish Councils). The first meeting is likely to be Jan 30th. This ongoing programme may provide opportunities for the other panels to engage with these communities on key topics.
- Evening meeting with the Regional Youth Climate Assembly early in the New Year
- A communications and engagement plan for communities is in development.

7. Regional Policy Forum:

7.1 Focus during last 3 months

The Forum meeting 3rd October examined how decisions made now can lock in good or bad outcomes far into the future. Leeds City Council are currently consulting on their Local Plan Stage 1 Update, which has a climate focus. Whilst other authorities are at different stages with their Local Plans, and will wish to take their own approaches, the Leeds Plan is a

potential test case for the scope that national policy allows for climate innovation in plan-making, so this will be of interest to everyone in the Commission. Meanwhile in South Yorkshire the Mayoral Authority, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and all of South Yorkshire's local authorities have collaborated to produce a 'Connected by Water' action plan for flood risk management and resilience.

At the meeting it was agreed to take a discussion paper to a future Forum meeting about establishing high-level principles for both net zero and resilience, which reflect what all RPF members are trying to achieve in policy terms, and which would help authorities when review their plans. Every authority will want to pursue climate action in a locally-appropriate way, but demonstrating consensus on the broad principles and direction of travel will be valuable.

7.2 Progress on any key actions that the Forum is enabling

The Commission's letter to the Prime Minister set out some key national policy asks, and these directly informed our response to Chris Skidmore's review of the UK Net Zero Strategy. Progress on the Forum's work will complement this and is likely to produce further national policy issues that we can pursue through the National Policy Forum. But a key focus must be on policy progress that we can achieve regionally and sub-regionally without over-dependence on national changes.

Working towards our aim of establishing high-level policy principles, we are:

- building up our knowledge base of each local authority, mayoral authority and LEP's policy ambitions, as expressed in local plans and other policy documents;
- liaising with the Yorkshire Universities Y-PERN initiative, in conjunction with our Future Economy Panel, to make sure there is good joined-up thinking on researching and monitoring the climate aspects of levelling up and economic resilience.
- Drafting a formal response to the Leeds Local Plan update consultation (deadline 19 December) and working closely with Leeds City Council to maximise the value and impact of this work;
- Engaging as much as possible in the work of the Commission Panels to make sure the policy principles we consider are fully informed by the experiences of our wider stakeholders.

7.3 Key reflections for the commission's awareness

Whilst it is unlikely that we will have the capacity to engage directly in every Local Plan process across the region, the planning reforms emerging from the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill, plus the York & North Yorkshire Devolution Deal, are likely to create a heavy workload for local plan teams across the region. Assisting them in climate-related aspects through improvements to the evidence base and through mutual support may therefore become pivotal. We are putting significant resource into the Leeds local plan update because of the potential to achieve region-wide impact: if the plan-making process enables Leeds to innovate as they are hoping, then this should benefit other authorities wishing to innovate too.

7.4 Forward look

The next Forum meeting on 20th February will now focus on the high-level policy principles work discussed here.

The Forum's previously-advertised topics for 20 February of communications and engagement, and scope 3 emissions, will be better considered through joint working with our Panels as separate sessions - details to follow.

An outstanding action on retrofit and the cost-of-living crisis will be progressed in conjunction with the Net Zero Panel.