



Main Commission Meeting

8 March 2023, 3.00 – 5.30pm, MS Teams

Minutes

1. Welcome and introductions

- Thanks were given on behalf of the Commission to Wallace Samson, who is standing down as Chief Executive of Harrogate Borough Council and as our lead Chief Executive on the Commission. Wallace has done an amazing job and has been instrumental in the work of the Commission and given time, energy and expertise.
- Thanks were given to Cllr Richard Cooper, our Vice Chair for North Yorkshire, who is standing down due to the reorganisation of the North Yorkshire authorities. Richard's contributions in the life of the Commission so far have really been appreciated. His candour and ability to keep the Leadership Team on track will be hugely missed.
- Liz Barber reflected on the Commission's shock and sorrow at the untimely death of Rob Purdy from Yorkshire Building Society. Rob was a valued friend and colleague and his input into and support for the Yorkshire and Humber Commission is warmly acknowledged.
- Thanks were conveyed to Mel Taylor who has left Northern Gas Networks. Mel was a Commissioner and member of the Net Zero and Future Economy Panels. Neil Whalley was welcomed as the new Commissioner for Northern Gas Networks.
- Daniel Barrett from NHS England was welcomed as a new Commissioner to address the important link between climate and health.
- Thanks were given to Gill Mulroe for a great contribution as co-Chair to the Communities and Engagement panel over the last year. Gill will still continue as a Commissioner until March 2024.

Apologies

Jack Hemingway, Mark Jones, Gordon Rogers, Beckie Hart, Amir Hussein, Simon Pringle and Kate Lock

2. Meeting action log and minutes from the last meeting

- The Minutes from December's meeting were approved.
- Action log – There were two outstanding actions; Action 27, a response to the Department for Transport on aviation and Action 29, an analysis of the Forum for the Future report. The Co-Directors had not had enough time for these but will pick them up.

3. Co-Directors Progress Update

Rosa Foster presented the DI Sessions Programme Overview (Paper 1)

- The Overview table shows the progress of the DI Sessions Programme. Nine sessions have happened with fifteen more to go, ably facilitated by Sam and Kat.
- Thanks were given to the Commissioners who are involved in the Panels and have pointed us to important key speakers.
- There are four sessions with registration open. Commissioners are encouraged to give their input and promote the subsequent consultations across their professional networks.
- There are two consultations open at any one time.

Rosa Foster presented the amendments to the 23 actions from the CAP (Paper 2)

- Broadly the 50 actions for the region still stand. The 23 actions for the Commission are being amended in light of capacity and funding restraints, making a deliverable work program in the final year.
- The 23 actions were originally categorised by resource dependency including some that were categorised as requiring additional funding.
- The spreadsheet shows the proposed changes, and the colour coding is explained on the spreadsheet.
- Commissioners were asked to respond by 17 March with concerns or comments to the Secretariat. If concerns are not raised, it will be assumed that the amendments can be made.

Comment on the amendments to the 23 actions

- Regarding the action on Energy to develop a regional energy area plan – this would build on the Local Area Energy Plans and adding something new from a regional perspective.

Funding update

Andy Gouldson outlined the funding options for after March 2024.

- Yorkshire Leaders Board – The Co-Directors have a meeting with the Chief Executives and then with the Yorkshire Leaders Board about renewing their support and providing funding of £40K. This will indicate the buy-in of LAs across the region and will act as an indicator of commitment to others.
- The in-principle support from the University of Leeds for 2024 – 2030 should hopefully be confirmed as actual support shortly. The plan for the next phase of the Commission will be brought to Commissioners for their input.
- ESRC have asked for expressions of interest for a new centre on Investment in Sustainable places. A coordinated bid has been put in for this with the Research and Evidence Panel and the next step is to get approval from University of Leeds. The call for this will go live in May.
- There is a funding opportunity from UKRI and Irish Research Funders which is another possible option.
- In summary, there is nothing definite yet, but the Co-Directors are actively working on funding opportunities from March next year.
- In developing these bids, the Co-Directors are shaping four high level foci. They are not going into detail at this stage about the shape and form of the Commission and propose to do that with Commissioners. This will involve reviewing the Terms of Reference, the 6 panels, the membership of the Commission and the rhythm of the meetings.

Comments on the funding presentation

- In addition to the funding from the Yorkshire Leaders Board, is there more that the Local Authorities could do? Each authority will be doing its own thing, as do the Combined Authorities. Is there an opportunity, possibly to be discussed at the meeting with the Chief Executives, on how we bring that together?
- The initial ask is to the Yorkshire Leaders Board which has a limited budget. Combined Authorities could be approached about specific initiatives, and also a range of public and private sector organisations.

4. Updates from the forums and panels (3 mins each)

Climate Adaptation Resilience Panel – Rosa Foster

A written update was provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- The CRA Panel are working on developing two or three climate narratives for the region, anchored in the future and based on science. The narratives would explore what types of future there might be in a tangible real way. These could be used by all partners for different conversations.
- There is great momentum in the health sector in terms of climate adaptation and resilience.

Net Zero Panel - Andy Gouldson

A written update has been provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- Thanks to Kat for her hard work on the DI sessions and the Co-Chair Simon Pringle.

Land, Water, Nature and Food Panel – Rachael Bice

A written update has been provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- The LWNF panel away day will consider three areas: 1. planning for the next DI session, 2. What do we want the headline narrative to be from our panel and the importance of being bold as a Commission. 3. Land use – how to position Yorkshire alongside the pilot work going on in Devon.

Future Economy Panel – Bill Adams

A written update has been provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- Commissioners were encouraged to look at the Green Jobs and Skills topic on Commonplace. This was quite well attended, with quite a few Trade Unions in attendance. More comments would be welcome. There was concern around Government policies; there has been a lot of to-ing and fro-ing for example, opening coal power stations, proposing different heating systems etc.
- There are massive skill issues; our colleagues in the Education Department have not got the capacity to train people. How can we use LSIP to improve training? The panel is hoping to bring together as wide a group as possible to enable a green skills programme for the region.

Communities & Engagement Panel – Jon Kedwards

A written update was provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- A new approach is being taken for the Community and Engagement Panel meetings with a focus on a single topic and an open invite to Community groups involved in climate action.
- Climate Action Leeds presented at the February meeting with a focus on local community climate action.

- Community Energy are presenting at the March session.

Research & Evidence Panel – Robyn Inglis

A written update was provided in Paper 3

- Now that the DI session pipeline is set up, the Research and Evidence Panel would like to understand more what their role is and what other role they could play to feed in more actively to the other panels.

Regional and National Policy Fora – Wallace Sampson

A written update was provided in Paper 3

Comments in addition to the written update:

- Huge thanks to Andrew Wood who facilitated two workshops with the specialist planning policy people across the region which led to YHCC making a regional response to the NPPF consultation and a draft of the shared planning policy principles.
- This can be taken to the LA Chief Execs and the YLBs to get support for those principles, and LAs can then use them as they seek to update their local plans.

5. A 30 by 30 target to restore 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030

- Introduction to 30 by 30 from Rachael Bice (presentation slides attached)

The purpose of the session is:

1. Make the link to Yorkshire and Humber region from the COP 15 outcomes.
2. Gain interesting feedback from a broader group.

- Early insight from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trusts' state of nature in the region report from Sharne

The presentation was based on preliminary findings and therefore the slides are not being circulated.

Key points from the presentation

- In the Yorkshire region there are nature rich and resilient lands from sea to cities to fells.
- Systematic recording is needed to compare and understand change over time, to produce data that is representative and data that can draw out the patterns.

- The report has produced a list of threatened Yorkshire species and Yorkshire stronghold species.
- Whilst the overall number of species looks to be static, looking into the detail indicates a loss of diversity and a homogenisation with wider UK, meaning the region is losing its ability to contribute to the national biodiversity and so broader resilience.
- To achieve our goals, we need to know what our starting point is and what are the mechanisms.
- Quality is important; identifying which parts of the land are positively managed, the size of sites, how isolated they are and what condition they are in.
- What are the habitat preferences for the Yorkshire species of concern? There are some unique habitats that could produce big returns for biodiversity, and limestone-based habitats are a large & unique anchor for the region.

Discussion - How can we present this to our companies/places of work

- Focus on the benefits of nature recovery, the co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation e.g., leaky dams, planting riverside vegetations. This is interesting to funders.
- More emphasis on ecosystems being our life support systems and how essential it is to have clean air and clean water, trees cooling our cities and drawing down pollution.
- Demonstrate information in an image-based way by using graphs and pie charts. Use case studies to describe how mitigation is working or not working and why.
- Emphasise more broadly the big benefits. Utilise this Commission which brings together so much cross-sectional expertise and channel it. Government has a raft of new tools but very little practical learning about how these can be used together. Profile a case study on how to do this as government is struggling with how to bring everything together to enable it. Planning – how do we ensure that LN Recovery Strategies are embedded at LA level?
- What is the sequestration value of existing habitats and what would their loss result in? How threatened is changing climate to sequestration? What does this mean to people who own gardens? What can you do in parks? What contribution could non-large-scale habitats make? What impact can green and blue corridors have? What are the weeds? Using the naturalist app. Changing attitudes.
- Helping LAs and Public Bodies, for example the Street Tree Enquiry. These matters can become siloed in an organisation – are these teams listened to by other teams e.g., highways? There is some work to do around organisational barriers – some colleagues are inspired and energised, and others feel it's nothing to do with them. These are complex systems – how to build this in? There is a national shortage in planning and it's very difficult to recruit.
- People don't know what the words mean. Target language to communicate to a wider audience.
- Work in schools. Map nature activity in schools across the whole country. This could link with what schools could do on their sites and gets the message out into communities.

- Connections to the Planning Principles proposal for the region (Paper 4) - from Andrew Wood

The presentation slides are attached

Comments on the presentation

- There is often a disconnect where local plan policies are not properly implemented at development management stage. For example, this can lead to brownfield sites being built on that have higher ecological value than greenfield sites. Skills and resources are needed in development management. What powers and capacities do LAs have to implement this?
- There is a grad scheme trying to work with what local skills are required. Peter O'Brien can input some of the comments into the HE sector re acute skills shortages.

Climate Action Pledge update - presentation from Jon Kedwards

The presentation slides are attached.

The presentation included the following:

- An update on the organisations that have joined since the launch in November 2022
- The priorities going forward
- Key asks for Commissioners.
- It was emphasised that more backing was needed from Commissioners as so far 1/3 of Commissioners' organisations had signed up. Commissioners were encouraged to contact Jon for assistance in encouraging your organisations to sign up.
- Commissioners were encouraged to consider joining the Climate Pledge Oversight group. There are 3 people signed up so far.

AOB

Future scoping the Commission

It was proposed that there should be a face-to-face Commission meeting in the summer for future scoping of the Commission. There was a positive response to this.

Action 30: Future scoping of the Commission post March 2024 in a face-to-face Commission meeting in June

Date of the next meeting: **Wednesday 21 June 2023** (Please note this is a change of date)

Close

Appendix 1 – Attendance

Chair

Liz Barber

Vice Chairs

Co – Directors

Prof Andy Gouldson, University of Leeds

Rosa Foster, University of Leeds and Planning and Engagement Manger, Environment Agency

Senior Officer Nominees

Wallace Sampson, Chief Executive, Harrogate Borough Council

Ian Floyd, Director of Customer and Corporate Services, City of York Council

Kate Josephs, Chief Executive, Sheffield City Council

Martin Budd, on behalf of Mark Jones, Hull City Council

Commissioners

Alexis Percival, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Bill Adams, Regional Secretary for Yorkshire and the Humber, Trades Union Congress (TUC)

Bruce Heppenstall, Plant Director, Drax

Charlee Bewsher and Samuel Finn, RYCA

Daniel Barrett, NHS

Dr Jatinder Singh Mehmi, Sikh Alliance Yorkshire

Dr Peter O'Brien, Executive Director, Yorkshire Universities

Dr Robyn Cooper Inglis, Research and Innovation Development Manager for Environment, University of York

Dr Siobhan Laird, Director, South Yorkshire Climate Alliance

Gill Mulroe

Helen Slinger, Head of Sustainable Business, Yorkshire Water

Martyn Broadest, Executive Director, Connect Housing Association

Neil Whalley, Head of Stakeholder Relations, Northern Gas Networks

Natasha Nauth, Relationship Director, NatWest

Oliver Harmar, Area Director for Yorkshire, Environment Agency

Peter Cole, Principal Environmental and Sustainability Officer, Transport for the North

Philip Holdgate, Head of Production Sustainability, ITV Studios

Rachael Bice, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Sarah Clark, Operations Manager, Aura Innovation Centre, University of Hull

Stuart Strathdee, Chemistry teacher, Greenhead College

Secretariat

Jane Stanbury, Secretariat Administrator

Kat Armstrong, Engagement and Impact Officer

Sam Herbert, Engagement and Impact Officer

Jon Kedwards, Engagement and Impact Officer

Margo Hanson, Research Manager

Andrew Wood, Senior Engagement and Impact Officer

Appendix 2 – Links shared in the chat

[Leaders Unlocked \(leaders-unlocked.org\)](https://www.leaders-unlocked.org/).

<https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/education/generalism-enhance>

[Who's signed the pledge? | Yorkshire & Humberside Climate Commission](https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/education/generalism-enhance)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/student-finance-to-be-radically-transformed-from-2025>

[Sheffield Street Trees Inquiry](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/city-centre/sheffield-street-trees-inquiry)

[Losing what we love \(rspb.org.uk\)](https://www.rspb.org.uk/what-we-love)