



Main Commission Meeting

21 June 2023, 3.00 – 5.30pm, MS Teams

Minutes

1. Welcome and introductions

- Simon Pringle chaired the meeting. Liz Barber was unable to chair due to caring responsibilities.
- The Chair informed Commissioners that the focus session would be a presentation from Jonathan Porritt, Co-founder of Forum for the Future on his insights and perspective on Carbon Capture and Storage, and Biomass Energy. The purpose was to develop understanding of the issues and tensions around the topic and enable the Commission to publish a Commission viewpoint to support and inform discussions around this important issue for our region.
- The first Whole Commission face to face meeting is happening on the 13 Sept and Commissioners are encouraged to carve out the time for this event.

Apologies

Liz Barber, Andy Gouldson, Kate Lock, Polly Cook, Oliver Harmar, Helen Slinger, Mark Jones.

Membership

Andy Gouldson has been away from work since April and will be away until the Autumn – we wish Andy a speedy return to good health.

Welcome to Adam Ashman from Yorkshire Water who joins us as a Commissioner.

Kate Josephs takes on the role of Lead Local Authority Chief Exec for Net Zero and Climate (replacing Wallace Sampson) and will be co-chairing the Regional Policy Forum with Cllr Jack Hemingway.

Sarah Pemberton from the National Trust has stepped down from her role as Commissioner but wants to continue to work with us during the next phase in a more targeted way – e.g., our work towards a strategic framework for land use.

Cllr Chris Matthews stepped down in the last elections and so has created a Vice Chair vacancy for East Yorkshire. Recognition was given of Chris's commitment to this work and his support in maintaining clear links to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

The Commissions Team are optimistic that Oliver Coppard will be taking on the role of Vice Chair for South Yorkshire. We will confirm in due course.

The new Vice-Chairs for East Yorkshire and North Yorkshire will be confirmed shortly.

The Chair asked for any declarations of conflicts of interest. None were recorded.

2. Co-Directors Progress Update

Rosa provided a verbal update along with Paper 1 part 1 and Paper 1 part 2.

- Andy Gouldson is expected to be away until the Autumn, and Rosa is covering his co-Director role.
- There are other staff with illness and caring responsibilities, plus there is ongoing industrial action, and this is having a significant impact on the internal capacity of the Commissions Team but most of the main outputs have been unaffected so far.
- Currently the Commission has one Vice-Chair (Cllr Hemingway); hopefully we will be able to have our full complement of Vice-Chairs by September.
- The financial position is still evolving and the Leadership Group is working on this.
- The DI programme has completed 17 sessions with 7 to go. This has involved 79 speakers from 71 organisations and over 1000 hours of expert insight and feedback to date: The Commissions Team are very grateful for all contributors and Commissioners' time and input.
- There has been generally good progress on the 20 Actions. See Paper 1 for the update report. The just transition plan and mapping regional collaborations are the main outstanding issues.
- 67 organisations have taken the Climate Action Pledge. Rosa thanked the Commissioners whose organisations who have taken the Pledge and asked the other Commissioners to encourage their organisations to do so if they hadn't signed yet. Currently the Commissions Team are targeting key organisations including local authorities, universities, NHS, multi-academy trusts, and Commission-related organisations.

- Looking ahead to March 2024, there are four products we're planning to produce:
 - High-impact report – main findings from first phase
 - Actions unpacked – principally a way to access all the reports, inputs and links relating to the DI programme
 - YHCC End of Phase Report – a more reflective piece about what has worked well and what the challenges have been
 - An updated Climate Action Plan – updated action points and narrative.

- The Yorkshire Leaders Board wants the Commission to continue to 2030 and has confirmed its financial contribution.
- The University of Leeds has confirmed core funding support up to 2029: The Deputy Vice Chancellor will be writing to Commissioners soon. Relying on this funding alone will mean a capacity reduction and the University of Leeds contribution is intended as seed funding to attract partnership contributions, and to enable us to work towards a sustainable model. Please contact Rosa with any thoughts and suggestions.
- The Whole Commission day on 13 September will bring everyone together to work with Commissioners and Panel members inclusively on the way forward.

Key points from the discussion:

- It was recognised how much has been achieved.
- Is there a plan to expand the DI Programme to wider audiences in phase 2?
This is up for discussion on 13 Sep. The Commissions Team are already trialling slightly different approaches, for example the Business DI session was a more practical session during Yorkshire Sustainability Week.
- A format for case studies will be shared with Commissioners.
- Do we have specific audiences in mind for our comms products? Should we do bespoke work for certain key audiences? The Commissions Team are open to suggestions on this.
- What lines of enquiry are we pursuing with funding to build on the coalition of support? Our capacity issues are constraining the Commissions team work on this currently, but the team recognise it as a key issue. The team have been actively exploring research funding, including one substantial application. However even if all these opportunities manifest, the resources wouldn't be realised until November 2024, and as things stand, this presents a six month financial pressure on the current resourcing capacity for the team.
- The Whole Commission event on the 13/9 is important as we will be shaping the core work programmes of the commission, and these will need to be scoped and funded – or delivered through aligned and supporting partnerships.

Action 31 – Commissions Team share the format for case studies

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

Regional and National Policy Fora

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Kate Josephs:

- Kate is pleased to follow in Wallace Sampson's footsteps on behalf of the YH LA Chief Execs.
- The Regional Policy Forum last met in March, the focus has been on planning policy principles with very positive conversations across authorities with a view to consistency that will assist in driving policy change. They are hoping for Yorkshire Leaders' Board support in July.
- The policy consultation responses the Commissions Team are developing with the Forum are not pulling punches and are also building consensus.
- The next Regional Policy Forum is focusing on jobs, skills and economy in July.

Net Zero Panel

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Kat Armstrong:

- The panel has been very active with some new additions, though we are missing Andy Gouldson's expertise, and our Research & Evidence Panel has been assisting in his absence.
- Our next DI paper for circulation will be on energy supply and distribution.

- The recent session on transport had a clear focus on enabling modal shift – what is needed to catalyse action on this?
- The panel are also working on the Supergen energy networks hubs and Local Area Energy Plans.
- The panel are working with other panels on a possible Climate & Health Summit.
- The final two DI sessions are: CCS/BECCS and Consumption and Behaviour.

Land, Water, Nature and Food Panel

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Sam Herbert:

- There are two DI sessions available for feedback on the Commonplace Platform: Cultural Adaptation and Soil health and nutrient cycles.
- There are two sessions remaining: Water in the landscape and Marine considerations.
- There is another paper going live soon.
- Work on a systems approach to a Regional Land Use Framework is taking shape. The panel are looking at drawing on collaboration with Oxford on mapping land use and carbon.

Climate Adaptation Resilience Panel

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Rosa Foster:

- Key reflections are the increasing importance of governance and looking at what is each organisation's role in adaptation and resilience, and so being able to clearly identify the gaps and mis-connections/understandings in expectations and awareness between key organisations.
- The collaboration between the YHCC with the Association of Directors of Public Health in the region is very exciting and has a lot of potential to help us raise the profile of climate action, whilst also addressing the multiple and interrelated challenges of health inequalities.

Communities & Engagement Panel

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Rosa Foster:

- The panel recognises that it has initially struggled to develop a defined a work programme, without its own series of delivering impact sessions, and so it has reviewed its terms of reference.
- However, despite this, there have been several engagement events with local town and parish councils, work with the regional youth climate assembly and partners like Carbon Copy and Ashton Trust, all of which are showing the value of working through and with other established networks.

Future Economy

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Bill Adams:

- There was a well-attended DI session looking at smart, sustainable cities and how to facilitate investment.
- The panel have set up a task & finish group for how to bring in green finance.
- Panel members are meeting the SY and WY mayoral teams to connect up with regional programmes.
- DI sessions on circular economy and just transition are coming next.
- The Climate Action Pledge is a useful resource here and indicates that employers in the region are forward-looking.

Research & Evidence Panel

Written update provided.

Additional comments from Robyn Cooper-Inglis:

- The panel are developing a Terms of reference for the new phase.
- YPIP is moving forward (see link in papers). The University of York is leading on this.

Focus Session: CCS & BECCS

- The Chair noted that Commissioners were in attendance as individuals, not as representatives of their organisations.
- The Chair introduced special guest Jonathan Porritt. Jonathan was a founding director of Forum For the Future and is recognised as one of the world's leading environmental campaigners and authors. Jonathan has spent 30+ years providing strategic advice to leading UK and international companies to deepen their understanding of today's converging environmental and social crises and supporting them in developing solutions. He has convened and chaired leading advisory panels, as well as overseeing inquiries into controversial issues such as palm oil, aviation and bioenergy.
- The Chair introduced special guest Professor Mohammed Pourkashanian, who is Head of the Energy Institute at the University of Sheffield and has been recognised with an OBE for his services to net zero research and innovation. He and his students have authored over 492 publications in refereed journals and conference proceedings and have co-authored a several books on solid fuels and biomass combustion. Alongside many other roles, Mohammed is Chair of the International CCS Test Centre Network (<https://itcn-global.org/>), a member of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF): Industrial Decarbonisation Advisory Group responsible for Hydrogen theme, and a Fellow of the Energy Institute and a Chartered Engineer. We are privileged that Mohammed is here today to support our discussions.
- The Commission had a thorough and informed discussion on the complex issues on CCS and BECCS supported by Mohammed and Jonathan.

Action: Commissioners were asked to review the draft Viewpoint paper, in light of the discussion, and to consider if they had any amendments they would like to see. Comments and feedback to be shared with the Commissions team by the 29 June.

AOB – Success Stories from YHCC Commissioners

- Martyn Broadest: Connect Housing are using renewables on their housing stock as a game changer project – there is potential for this to be done at scale. They are working with WYCA’s Climate Plan and they are looking to collaborate on retrofit delivery to support the supply chain for retrofit measures.

- Stuart Stratheed: The DfE want a sustainability lead in every secondary school, following the publication of their sustainability in schools strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy>. Manchester Met University has a useful tool to support this. There is a conference for consortiums of 6th form colleges. A student from Greenhead College has won the Universities Sustainability Award.

- Dr Jatinder Singh Mehmi: There is a project in the Environment Agency on behavioural science which has found that people aren’t seeing the effect of their changes/choices and that this is impacting further positive changes from happening. It's very important to understand people’s values and the rules and societal norms that they have in society, along with understanding the wider structures that we work in terms of governance, regulation and everything else. It's important to think about the behavioural sciences, not so that we make perfect decisions, just less bad ones.

Date of the next meeting: **Wednesday 13 September, 09.00 - 16.30**, central Leeds (venue tbc).

Appendix 1 – Attendance

Chair

Liz Barber was able to attend part of the meeting. Simon Pringle acted as Chair throughout.

Vice Chairs

West Yorkshire – Councillor Jack Hemingway, Deputy Leader of Wakefield Council

Co – Directors

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

Senior Officer Nominees

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

Amir Hussein, Amir Hussein, CEO of Yeme Architects, Yeme Tech and Yeme Lab

Anna Wright, Environment and Land Use Advisor, NFU North East

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

Bruce Heppenstall, Plant Director, Drax

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

Martyn Broadest, Executive Director, Connect Housing Association

Neil Whalley, Head of Stakeholder Relations, Northern Gas Networks

Natasha Nauth, Relationship Director, NatWest

Rachael Bice, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

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

Stuart Strathdee, Chemistry teacher, Greenhead College

Secretariat

Kat Armstrong, Engagement and Impact Officer

Sam Herbert, Engagement and Impact Officer

Andrew Wood, Senior Engagement and Impact Officer

Appendix 2 – Links shared in the chat

[About | Sustainability Centre | The University of Sheffield](#)

[Countryside COP 3](#) this November – a week of events on all things relating to the rural economy/climate. If any commissioners would like to run an event as part of this, please pop me an email at anna.wright@nfu.org.uk