



Commission meeting, 3.00 - 5.30pm, 8th December 2021

Minutes

1. Welcome, membership changes and introductions

Liz Barber (Chair) welcomed Commissioners to the meeting and announced the following changes to the Commission:

- New Officer for East of the region: Mark Jones, Director of Regeneration Hull City Council
- New Commissioner: Dan Parsons, Director of the Energy and Environment Institute, University of Hull, Dan has been chairing our Research and Evidence Panel.
- New Commissioner: Peter Cole, Principal Environmental and Sustainability Officer at Transport for the North
- Standing down as a Commissioner: Mike Maudsley, as he is leaving Drax. Ed Leach/Tanisha Beebee are attending on behalf of Drax at this meeting.
- Standing down as a Commissioner: Martin Stead, as he has left Sewell Group.
- Natasha Nauth (Nat West) and Amir Hussain (founder and CEO of Yeme Architects) have also joined and were welcomed.

2. Actions from the last meeting not covered elsewhere.

The actions from the last meeting not covered elsewhere were discussed. Please see the appended Action Log. The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

3. Brief report from the Regional Green Jobs and Skills Summit.

There were around 60 people attended in person and about 60 online. Andy Gouldson gave a big thankyou to Sarah Clark from Aura and the team at Marketing Humber for organising the event. Jobs and Skills will be a priority for the new Future Economy Panel.

4. Brief review of the Climate Action Plan and the Yorkshire Post Climate Summit.

- The new 3-minute animation about the CAP was played – this animation is for public engagement purposes. The Chair thanked Simon Moore and Kate Lock for producing an excellent animation.

- This was followed by a discussion on the communications strategy.
- The YHCC communications team are sharing two actions from the plan a day on Twitter up until Christmas day. They are sharing short clips from the animation every day. There will be another on 9 December with the full video.
- There will be a fresh communications campaign in the New Year. Alongside traditional media (e.g., BBC, ITV, the Yorkshire Post, and other platforms) Twitter is the main communication platform for YHCC. This can be extended going forward – for example to LinkedIn
- We can all play a part in the communications strategy in getting the message out to our organisations and networks.
- Commissioners were invited to follow YHCC on Twitter and get notifications, and then retweet them and to share the YouTube link of the animation with their contacts and organisations.
- Commissioners are asked to share content with their own networks and to ask their marketing depts to amplify messages from the Commission where appropriate.
- There was a reflection on the Climate Summit event. The Commission were asked for their views on whether it should be an annual event.
- Media coverage of the event and the action plan was very good and did a lot to raise the profile of the scale of the opportunity of collaboration at the Yorkshire and Humber level.
- The relationship with the Yorkshire Post enabled the Commission to focus its resources on the preparation of the action plan rather than the organisation of the summit.
- An annual event could be great – possibly with a different theme each year - but we need to build on the strengths and address some of the issues that emerged this year.
- The main issues were: YHCC would have preferred tickets to be free; online access had technical issues, there were issues around sponsorship and control of the agenda and there needed to be more time for Q&A.
- Re the audience we did reach – the event enabled us to connect more to business and policy organisations, but probably less to community organisations.

5. Main agenda item: Strategy and resourcing discussion

The Chair introduced the item.

- The Commission is at a key moment as it has to move on to delivery and making an actual difference. But resources are limited and if we try to do everything we may end up doing nothing. The focus should be on low resource, high impact opportunities. We also need to focus on finding more resources – e.g., through fund-raising campaigns and support for funding bids. We shouldn't duplicate existing initiatives, but we can support, review, celebrate and spread best practice. And we should focus on areas where not enough is happening.
- If we can think about where we will be at this meeting in a year's time – what would the few big things we can do that will have made a real difference? What would look like a good year? What are the big-ticket items we can do this year?

- The Commissioners split into three breakout groups for 30 minutes and the chairs of each group provided a summary of the group discussions: Framework for Change, Climate Resilience and Net Zero.

Each group provided a summary to the Commission:

Framework for Change

- Develop a regional climate leaders' pledge and ask the 50 largest organisations to take the pledge. How to make a pledge effective and not duplicate other pledges? How to report back to keep track of progress?
- Connect into wider networks, for example the 400,000 people living in social housing. Work through education within curriculums and through initiatives such as the Carbon Literacy project.
- Provide an annual report for the region. There is existing data for reporting on net zero, but reporting is more challenging in other areas. There is potential for a climate observatory to monitor progress and share best practise.

Climate Resilience

- 5 actions were identified as being the main focus:
 - Support resilient infrastructure systems
 - Strengthen plans for sea level rise
 - Support resilience in food and farming
 - Develop targeted climate risk communications
 - Promote links between adaptation and health
- There are also cross-cutting roles for the Commission – e.g., in supporting and mobilising actions, creating forums for best practice, promoting inclusive decision making.

Net Zero

- On broad crosscutting issues we need to map the region (and adjacent regions?) and show leadership.
- How do we join-up thinking, how do we bring people together and also access networks through which we can amplify our messages?
- Priorities mentioned include:
 - Supporting the decarbonisation of energy including community energy
 - Housing retrofit
 - Public and active transport
 - Circular/green economy and land use.

The Chair identified the next step as to consolidate the feedback and come back with a prioritised plan. There will be a leadership group meeting with the chairs and leaders and then the plan will be brought back to the Commission for feedback by the end of January.

Action 10: Andy and team to consult and consolidate the feedback and bring a draft prioritised plan to the Leadership Team and then to the Commission by the end of January for feedback.

Action 11: Andy /Liz Barber to explore fundraising and identify what we could then prioritise with additional resourcing

6. Commission position statement on aviation

The Commission discussed developing a position statement on aviation with the aim of publishing it by the end of January.

- There was an initial presentation by the Director:
 - The Commission recommended that aviation and shipping should be added to the YHCC target, which makes meeting our broader carbon reduction targets harder.
 - The suggestion nationally is that there are technical solutions, plus offsetting, plus influencing consumers to make sustainable choices.
 - Local and regional action is possible, but we are missing a national aviation strategy that is aligned with the 6th carbon budget and that coordinates action across the UK – and this impacted on the Leeds Bradford decision.
 - There are three key aspects to consider:
 1. Supply of aviation (i.e., airports)
 2. Technologies used (i.e., aviation fuels and engine efficiency)
 3. Consumption and demand for aviation (i.e., consumer behaviour).
 - Polly Cook: The Leeds City Council perspective is that this is an open planning decision, we have a published position relative to aviation but would have to abstain from commenting specifically on Leeds Bradford Airport. The Council has issued a statement recognising that the lack of a national aviation strategy raises significant challenges.
 - Peter Cole: The Commission is in a good position to speak, whereas Local Authorities are quite invested, and it is difficult to have the conversation. Leeds Citizens' Jury did change politicians' minds and we are looking at this at TFN. A national aviation strategy would be useful – without this, decisions that create a local disadvantage or that lead to leakage of passengers to other airports is not going to be acceptable for policy makers. The Jet Zero proposals will not take us to net zero and they are founded on a 60% rise in airmiles when the CCC modelled a 25% increase with no expansion of airport capacity in the 6th carbon budget. Is it possible to get closer to the CCC's approach and combine it with a regional distribution of flights including to the north to reduce car travel to the south to airports.
 - Simon Bowens: We do not want to be seen to be ducking the issue of airport expansion and frequent flyers. Is the Commission being guided by CCC or the Jet Zero strategy? We need to refer back to CCC.
 - Natasha Nauth: We must balance economics versus carbon emissions and consider the impact on employment and jobs. Will people fly anyway? Driving to another airport creates carbon emissions. Developing carbon neutral fuel is ideal but we must base things on the existing technology.
 - Nigel Foster: The Commission should call for a national aviation strategy.
 - Dan Parsons: Alignment with the CCC makes sense. The Commission should not be afraid to release a statement that says it's difficult, there is ongoing work, policy decisions that can be made. Air passenger duty is one example.

- Oliver Harmer: YHCC we can say things that some of our organisations cannot say – that is our role as a climate commission. The national points are the good ones to make but we also need to remind people about their own climate action.
- Emma Richards – We need de-growth in some areas. We must act as if this is a climate emergency.
- Peter Cole –In the Humber there is massive opportunity around sustainable aviation fuels, and these could play a transitional role until we get to hydrogen fuels. Demand management needs to be hand in hand with clean growth opportunity for jobs. Research has been done on different neighbouring areas in Leeds and how much they are flying. There could be a more equitable split for who flies.
- Rosa Foster – The Commission is about being science based and providing evidence and putting aviation in context with other carbon outputs e.g., power stations. Focussing proportionality and explaining why we are focussing on it.
- Dan Parsons – The focus is on Leeds Bradford, but there are other airports in the region – is the Humber airport within the remit? Take a generic view around the region, not just Leeds Bradford.
- Simon Bowens – I would advocate on being against airport expansion, which is more in line with the scientific evidence
- Peter Cole – Could the Commission include a rail first statement for domestic aviation
- Rachael Bice – Aspects of the issue should be differentiated as it is important to separate them to make a clear statement: economic growth, sustainable industry, consumer demand. Further down the line we could make a stronger statement when the Commission is stronger, and this would involve being leaders/lobbying through a political action plan.
- Emma Bridge – I am against demonising occasional flying, but we must be brave, we cannot support the expansion of an airport reputationally. It must not look like we are ducking the issue.

Action 12: Andy to draft a statement reflecting the comments from the discussion on Leeds Bradford Airport. This will be sent round to the Commissioners for further comments and sign off in January.

7. Briefing - the UK Infrastructure Bank, Tom Holvey, Chief Economist, UKIB

Tom Holvey was not able to attend.

8. AOB

- Simon Moore provided an invite link to Slack which will also be emailed round. It is a way to communicate regularly on a less formal basis. Different working groups can set up their own channels.
- Liz Barber suggested we share actions from our meetings onto the Slack space e.g., from the leadership team meetings.
- For next year we could build communities of interest in Linked In which is more professional and links to core funding.
- A WhatsApp group would be useful but need a code for what we share.
- The Commissioners were invited to comment on the East Riding proposal for their climate strategy. The public can comment online and see everybody else's comments on it.

Next Commission meeting:

- Rosa Foster to bring the Humber strategy video to the next meeting.
- Update from Tom Holvey, UKIB.
- Presentation of a prioritised workplan following up on the climate action plan.
- Review of the aviation statement.

Dates of next meetings:

March 16th, 3.00-5.30pm – main Commission meeting

June 15th, 3.00-5.30pm – main Commission meeting

Annex 1 – Attendees

Attended:

Chair Liz Barber, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Water

Vice Chairs

Director Prof Andy Gouldson, University of Leeds

Senior Officer Nominees

Polly Cook, Senior Officer for Sustainable Energy and Air Quality, Leeds City Council

Wallace Sampson, Chief Executive, Harrogate Borough Council

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

Commissioners

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

Amandeep Kaur Maan, Eco-Sikh

Beckie Hart, Director for Yorkshire and Humber, Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

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

Chris Brown, Senior Director Sustainable Supply Chains, ASDA

Dr Jatinder Singh Mehmi, Sikh Alliance Yorkshire

Dr Peter O'Brien, Executive Director, Yorkshire Universities

Dr Siobhan Laird, Director, South Yorkshire Climate Alliance

Emma Richards, Project Leader, The Carbon Literacy Project

Emma Bridge, Chief Executive, Community Energy England

Gordon Rogers, former Head of Sustainability at Yorkshire Water

Kate Adams, Environmental and Land Use Advisor, NFU Northeast Region

Martyn Broadest, Executive Director, Connect Housing Association

Melanie Taylor, Head of Stakeholder Relations, Northern Gas Networks

Natasha Nauth, Relationship Director, NatWest

Nigel Foster, Director, Fore Consulting

Oliver Harmar, Area Director for Yorkshire, Environment Agency

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

Peter O'Brien, Executive Director, Yorkshire Universities

Philip Holdgate, Head of Production Sustainability, ITV Studios

Rosa Foster, Environment, Planning and Engagement Manager, Environment Agency

Rachael Bice, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Rob Purdy, Director of Balance Sheet Management, YBS

Sarah Pemberton, Assistant Director in the North, National Trust

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

Simon Bowens, Regional Campaign Organiser for Yorkshire and the North East, Friends of the Earth

Simon Pringle, Director, Project Rome

Stuart Strathdee, Chemistry Teacher, Greenhead College

Tanisha Beebee, Government Policy Senior Manager, Drax

Secretariat

Jane Stanbury, Secretariat Administrator

Kathryn Lock, Policy and Communications Manager

Amelia Duncan, Policy Fellow

Simon Moore, Communication Officer