

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Climate Commission

Terms of Reference

1. Scope and Function

1.1 The scope of the Commission is defined as:

1. Net zero and beyond
Accelerating the development and delivery of our climate mitigation plans and holding a focus on adapting to the impacts of climate change we are already experiencing and those we can predict to see in the future.
2. Ecological regeneration
Working with the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership and others to champion work to deliver natural climate and land and flood management solutions in support of environmental and biodiversity targets to support the ecological emergency response.
3. Just transition
Working with sectors and systems (e.g. health, VCSE, business) alongside the proposed Fairer Cornwall Commission, to ensure a just transition for one and all.
4. Interconnection
Acknowledging how solutions and challenges are connected across different sectors, and different places, and how they will change over time.

1.2 The purpose of the Commission is to provide the following functions:

1. Challenge
Provide a challenge to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's leaders, communities, residents and organisations on effective delivery and impact of plans and policies. Champion and promote at a strategic level the response to climate change. Commission and provide technical advice and assurance to existing strategic groups, networks and organisations.
2. Catalyse
Support the development of the strategy and vision of stakeholders and advance collective action towards climate targets. Deliver thought leadership, and an evidence base to help achieve climate commitments, including on system-wide issues where solutions are not yet known.
3. Convene
Bring together new groups and organisations where gaps exist, to enable evidence-based action to help drive climate commitments and accelerate progress.

1.3 The Commission is not a public body, it has no statutory basis or legal powers and it is not a planner, regulator or a delivery body.

1.4 In all of its activities, the Commission will seek to apply the Nolan principles of public life by acting in the public interest and promoting integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership and by promoting inclusion and diversity.

2. Commissioners

2.1 Commissioners for the Cornwall Climate Commission will be selected from an open and transparent application process.

2.2 The Commission will have the option to undertake recruitment as needed in order to fulfill its purpose.

2.3 Selection will be made by Commissioners, and will be based on:

1. A highly diverse range of Commissioners, with a wide range of skill sets, experience, geography, ages, and backgrounds..
2. How applicants can contribute to the scope and function of the Commission.
3. Ensuring the required level of energy, capacity and commitment across Commissioners.
4. Representation from:
 - a. At least one Commissioner with a strong connection to the Isles of Scilly.
 - b. At least two Commissioners between the ages of 18 and 30.

2.4 The initial membership will be agreed by the Cornwall Climate Commission Development Group.

2.5 The Commission will initially consist of between 10 and 15 Commissioners.

2.6 Membership will include a Chair and Vice Chair.

2.6.1 The Chair must act as an independent individual and not as a representative of a particular organisation or group.

2.6.2 The Development Group will select a Chair to serve an initial one-year term.

2.6.3 After the first year, the Commissioners will elect a Chair every 3 years.

2.7 Commissioners will serve a 3 year term with the potential for re-appointment for a second term.

2.7.1 One third of the first intake of Commissioners will agree to serve only one term, ensuring a balance between continuity and turnover in Commissioners over time.

2.8 Members of the Commission will be appointed on an individual basis (i.e. not as representatives of their company or organisation).

2.9 All members shall support the scope and functions of the Commission as set out above.

3. Governance

3.1 Meetings will be held quarterly, with the option for more frequent meetings as required.

3.2 Meetings will take place in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format as required.

3.3 Decisions within the Commission will be made using a consent-based process, aiming for overlap of tolerance, with each member holding objection rights.

3.3.1 Commissioners may amend this Terms of Reference by bringing proposals to the decision making by consent process.

3.3.2 Commissioners may decide to delegate specific authority to individual members or sub-groups. Decision making in these cases would not require the use of a consent-based process. The delegation of authority itself remains a consent-based decision.

3.4 At the beginning of each meeting of the Commission, Commissioners shall declare any conflicts of interest arising from the agenda. Declarations of such conflicts shall be recorded in the minutes of the meetings. The agenda and the meeting will be managed to ensure that these issues are managed appropriately.

3.4.1 Commissioners shall submit to the Chair and secretariat a list of interests relevant to the work of the Commission within 28 days of being appointed.

3.5 Commissioners will advise the Chair of any change in their circumstances or interests at the earliest available opportunity. Commissioners should make every attempt to attend meetings. Apologies and requests for substitutions should be submitted to the Chair/Secretariat in advance of the meetings. If a Commissioner is absent for three meetings in succession, membership will be reviewed and may be revoked.

3.6 The Commission may also establish:

1. Working Groups to focus on key tasks as appropriate.
2. Panels to address key priorities. These panels will normally be convened and co-chaired by 2 or more Commissioners who will invite wider participation, and coordinate panel activities and feedback any insights and outputs generated into the Commission.
3. A regional policy forum to enable the Commission to have two-way interactions with both elected members and lead officers with responsibility for climate related activities in local authorities across the region.
4. A national policy forum to enable the Commission to have two-way interactions with the region's MPs and peers and with key national government ministries.
5. An audit and resources committee to oversee the governance and resourcing of the Commission and to ensure that its different activities are coordinated and joined-up.

3.7 The independence of the Commission is critical to its role and effectiveness. The Commission will conduct a regular review, which may be done by a third party, of its governance arrangements, its independence and its wider effectiveness.

3.8 A three-quarters majority of Commissioners, including the Chair, may decide to revoke the membership of a Commissioner if they:

1. Are absent from three successive meetings of the Commission without the Commission's approval.
2. Actively harm the reputation of the Commission, or hinder its ability to perform its functions.

3.9 Meeting records will be made publicly available, within one calendar month of the meeting at which they are approved, along with the membership of the Commission and its structure.

3.10 The Commission will be established for three years in the first instance, with a review of its contribution and value-added in year three to establish whether it should continue.

4. Resource

4.1 The Commission will seek funds to support its activities, but will not take resources from any organisation, group, or individual that, in their opinion, could actively harm its reputation or hinder its ability to perform its functions.

4.2 Funding will be accepted only on the condition that funders recognise the independence of the Commission and acknowledge that funding does not bring any influence over the work of the Commission.

4.3 The sources of all funding (including in-kind support) will be fully and publicly acknowledged, including in the annual report and at any events organised or on any publications generated on the basis of any financial support.