

Summary

The Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Climate Commission welcomes the White Paper as an ambitious statement of intent, demonstrating Cornwall's ability to lead a good, green growth strategy and implementation plan to secure a more independent and sustainable future for the county.

There is significant overlap between the proposals outlines in the Paper and the Commission's own objectives, and we hope to play a key role in supporting the meeting of these shared goals. The Commission is keen to see further detail over time as to how the proposals are expected to be achieved, acknowledging the significant complexity of the changes required.

Underpinning this complexity is the understanding that the combined impacts of the climate and ecological crises will cause significant stress and challenge to existing structures across Cornwall. The Commission is keen to champion the need to build resilience into our systems, and to highlight the interdependencies and complex risks that will frustrate our ambitions if they are not addressed now.

The aspirations of the Paper could be more concrete in order to justify the funding required and avoid waste of national financial resources without clear accountability. This includes clarity on the funding gap following the ending of various EU funding streams.

Identified gaps

More specifically, there are a number of areas that we hope to see expanded over time, acknowledging the need for brevity in the Paper.

On housing the only reference made to retrofit is the Warm Homes Cornwall. There seems to be more attention being put on new build and social housing than the existing private housing stock; we would like to see a better balance here. Cornwall has 290,000 homes already lived in, of which over 65% need upgrades to make them fit for the future, especially to cope with disrupted and extreme weather conditions. The approach appears weak because it makes comparison to Manchester and the West Midlands, areas that have large quantities of dense urban housing. A Decent Homes approach in Cornwall needs to have a rural focus able to address the needs of dispersed smaller communities.

Beyond the focus areas identified, an additional area to consider in the future would be the impact of transport on carbon emissions and what can be done about that in rural economies. Transport is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions in Cornwall. There seems to be much work going on across the country around carbon reduction/modal shift in urban areas but a lot less in rural areas. It feels like bigger thinking is needed in this space as an enabler of good, green growth, and another area where Cornwall could and should have a unique and leading role to play.

We would also welcome a stronger acknowledgement of the importance of developing, and retaining, the skills required for meeting our ambitions. The importance of not only upskilling and reskilling the existing workforces across all sectors but also *preparing* to train the emerging workforce plays a key role in the progression of Cornwall's economy and intricate infrastructure.

This infrastructure includes the need to upskill in local decision-making skills. As in many government papers, there is reference to local councils and parishes supporting these

developments, which are recognised as complex. They, and their communities, need support. Devolution will be new for everyone and will take getting used to.

Another gap in the local governance institutions referenced is Just Transition - a department or sector that focuses on the impact of the transition to Net Zero onto people generally. Sometimes this is missed in the sustainability analysis and operations such as mining operations can be developed with Net Zero ambitions in mind with disregard for the impact on the local population and the needs to retrain, ensure health and safety of operations etc.

From a public funding perspective we would value concrete proposals/programs and associated KPIs (I.e. x amount required to train x no of employees in order to generate x new jobs by x year) with individuals responsible for implementation and some success incentives for them. The plan needs to be more concrete than identifying areas where funding is needed with no clarity as to how much and what kind of concrete projects this will go towards.

Recommendations

1. Some of the language and syntax in the Paper is hard to understand, and requires unpicking in order to add clarity and increase accessibility.
2. The reference to higher rates of Council Tax for second homes should link the income generated to the improvement of homes for local residents and the provision of new homes, not only to community safety.
3. Cornwall is already regarded as a healthy place to live, with easy access to nature for exercise, health and wellbeing. The county provides an abundance of great produce on the land and from the sea to nourish its occupants, which are also shipped all over the country. This should be enhanced and further promoted.
4. Cornwall's beauty, attraction and individualism relies on its natural state and assets, and the government already recognises that the region has a great role to play in the 'green industrial revolution' of the UK, providing opportunity to harvest many clean and green alternative renewable energy sources and minerals required for such. Therefore any development, whether economic or social, must have the improvement and protection of this environment at its heart, whether that is through carbon reduction, increase of biodiversity, or reduction of our human impact on it.
5. If Cornwall is to assist in making Britain a clean energy superpower then that needs to be reflected in the quantity and speed of investment at which all aspects of life (transport, access and infrastructure) and living (housing and homes) in Cornwall are supported if more diverse people, professions and industries are to be attracted, encouraged, grown and retained in this region.
6. *"A skills and training focus should include support (including targeted financial support) to upskilling in community decision-making and creation and management of local projects."*
This will also support the community in ensuring accountability at the local authority level (as it is not just accountability officers that would do this).
7. We would welcome on-going clarity as to whether proposals are focused on carbon reduction, mitigation, and/or adaptation.
8. A Proposed Budget for the various One and All Cornwall ambitions with different items and an estimated cost for each of them based on some concrete projects that can be followed through to delivery. This would ensure there is targeted funding tailored to specific needs and some accountability rather than a 'give us money and we will think what to do with it in this area' approach.
9. Ideally we would also have a prioritisation against each item of the budget so we know what would be funded first and what would be funded second once first funding is secured. This would be valuable in all One and All Cornwall sections.

Appendix 1 – Individual Responses in Full

Overall reflections

- The white paper is to be welcomed as an ambitious intent to demonstrate Cornwall's ability to lead a good, green growth strategy and implementation plan to secure a more independent and sustainable future for the county.
- The document doesn't seem to acknowledge the need to build resilience or acknowledge that the combined impacts of climate and ecological crises will cause challenge and stress to existing structures.
- Although the Paper outlines proposals which align with the Commission's, there is still the absence of *how* these will be achieved. However, the Paper as a whole is positive and demonstrates that Cornwall has an integral part to play within the UK's economy.
- Aspirational but could be more concrete in order to justify funding and avoid waste of national financial resources without some sort of accountability.
- What is the funding gap following departure from the EU. A lot of funding happened via various EU streams (i.e. ESIF etc). Have these stopped? Been replaced? Created a budget hole or halt of any projects?

Identified gaps

- Unconvinced that the interconnected ecological ambitions of Cornwall are integrated – only mentioned in Pages 18-19.
- On housing the only reference made to retrofit is the Warm Homes Cornwall. There seems to be more attention being put on new build and social housing than the existing private housing stock; I would like to see a better balance here. Cornwall has 290,000 homes already lived in, of which over 65% need upgrades to make them fit for the future, especially to cope with disrupted and extreme weather conditions. The approach appears weak because it makes comparison to Manchester and the West Midlands, areas that have large quantities of dense urban housing. A Decent Homes approach in Cornwall needs to have a rural focus able to address the needs of dispersed smaller communities.
- The 4 focus areas highlighted in the paper (Natural resources/Ombudsman/Marine & Coastal Partnership/Farm advisory service) would seem to emphasis areas where Cornwall could and should have a unique and leading role to play. One additional area to consider in the future would be the impact of transport on carbon emissions and what can be done about that in rural economies. Transport is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions in Cornwall. There seems to be much work going on across the country around carbon reduction/modal shift in urban areas but a lot less in rural areas. It feels like bigger thinking is needed in this space as an enabler of good, green growth.
- I am saddened to see that skills were only mentioned once within the paper. The importance of not only upskilling and reskilling the existing workforces across all

sectors in CloS, but *preparing* to train the emerging workforce plays a key role in the progression of Cornwall's economy and intricate infrastructure.

- The need for skills within our communities includes the need to upskill in local decision-making skills. As in many government papers, there is reference to local councils and parishes supporting these developments, which are recognised as complex. They, and their communities, need support. Devolution will be new for everyone and will take getting used to.
- P9 - Provides good headlines for what is required in various areas. However, from a public funding perspective providing some concrete proposals/programs and associated KPIs (i.e. x amount required to train x no of employees in order to generate x new jobs by x year) with individuals responsible for implementation and some success incentives for them would probably work best. Plan needs to be more concrete than identifying areas where funding is needed with no clarity as to how much and what kind of concrete projects this will go towards. All we have now is an identifications of areas where some funding is needed which is not very helpful.
- P18-19 - These are good identification of local governance institutions in this area. I would say the only missing aspect would be Just Transition - a department or sector that focuses on the impact of the transition to Net Zero onto people generally. Sometimes this is missed in the sustainability analysis and things like (mining operations) can be developed with Net Zero ambitions in mind with disregard for the impact on the local population and the needs to retrain, ensure health and safety of operations etc.

Recommendations

- I think the following sentence (P18) is a bit baffling and we could work to unpick this to make it more meaningful.
“Consolidating agencies and funding would enable us to deliver an integrated approach to place-led restoration of our natural capital, tackle the climate and ecological emergency and adapt our infrastructure and communities to a changing environment with more streamlined allocation of funding to Cornwall’s priorities, management and regulatory enforcement, which can be supplemented with green finance channelled through the Cornwall Natural Capital Exchange Platform.”
- Any decisions made regarding devolution should bear all these factors for a cleaner, greener and fairer future in mind, whilst reducing or even trying to reverse our human impact on the planet. We must lead by example and do the best that we can to achieve this.
- I am disappointed that the reference to higher rates of Council Tax for second homes links the income generated to community safety rather than the improvement of homes for local residents and the provision of new homes.
- Cornwall is already regarded as a healthy place to live, with easy access to nature for exercise, health and wellbeing. The county provides an abundance of great produce on the land and from the sea to nourish its occupants, which are also shipped all over the country. This should be enhanced and further promoted.
- As the main reason for Cornwall's beauty, attraction and individualism relies on it's natural state and assets, and the government already recognises that the region has a great role to play in the 'green industrial revolution' of the UK, providing opportunity to

harvest many clean and green alternative renewable energy sources and minerals required for such, then it should go without saying that any development, whether economic or social, must have the improvement and protection of this environment at its heart, whether that is through carbon reduction, increase of biodiversity, or reduction of our human impact on it.

- If Cornwall is to assist in making Britain a clean energy superpower then that needs to be reflected in the quantity and speed of investment at which all aspects of life (transport, access and infrastructure) and living (housing and homes) in Cornwall are supported if more diverse people, professions and industries are to be attracted, encouraged, grown and retained in this region.
- On-going clarity around whether proposals are around reduction and/or mitigation I think would be also helpful and one, if relevant, to build into future conversations.#
- Perhaps we could have a Proposed Budget for the various One and All Cornwall ambitions with different items and an estimated cost for each of them based on some concrete projects that can be followed through to delivery. This would ensure there is « targeted funding tailored to specific needs » and some accountability rather than a « give us money and we will think what to do with it in this area » approach.
- Ideally we would also have a prioritisation against each item of the budget so we know what would be funded first and what would be funded second once first funding is secured. I identify this as an issue in all One and All Cornwall sections.
- *"A skills and training focus should include support (including targeted financial support) to upskilling in community decision-making and creation and management of local projects."*
This will also support the community in ensuring accountability at the local authority level (as it is not just accountability officers that would do this).