

## MINUTES

**Meeting: Commission Meeting**

**Date: 24 February 2021**

**Time: 1pm**

**Place: Video conference**

### Attendees

#### Commission Members:

Sir John Armitt	(Chair)
Professor Sir Tim Besley	(Commissioner)
Neale Coleman CBE	(Commissioner)
Professor David Fisk CB	(Commissioner)
Andy Green CBE	(Commissioner)
Professor Sadie Morgan OBE	(Commissioner) (Items 7-10)
Julia Prescott	(Commissioner)
Bridget Rosewell CBE	(Commissioner)

#### Secretariat:

James Heath	(Chief Executive)
James Richardson	(Chief Economist)
Giles Stevens	(Director of Policy)
Hannah Brown	(Director of Policy)
	(Head of Communications)
	(Head of Private Office)
	(Senior Policy Adviser)
	(Policy Adviser)
	(Policy Adviser)
	(Policy Adviser)
	(Private Secretary to the Chair and Chief Executive) (Items 6-10)
	(Assistant Director) (Item 6 & 10)
	(Assistant Director) (Item 7)
	(Senior Policy Adviser) (Item 7)
	(Modelling Lead) (Item 7)
	(Rail Needs Study Lead) (Item 7)
	(Senior Policy Adviser) (Item 7)
	(Assistant Director) (Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser) (Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser) (Item 10)

## Young Professionals Panel

Ann Zhang	(Young Professionals Panel Chair)	(Items 1-6)
Mike Davies	(Young Professionals Panel member)	(Item 6)
Sophie Deas	(Young Professionals Panel member)	(Item 6)

## External guests

Martin Cave	(Chair, Ofgem)	(Item 8)
Jonathan Brearley	(Chief Executive, Ofgem)	(Item 8)

### 1. Apologies and Welcome

1.1 Sadie Morgan apologised for absence for the first hour of the meeting

### 2 Minutes and matters arising

2.1 No comments were made on the minutes of the last meeting. The Chair noted that the actions in the action log had been completed.

### 3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 No interests were declared.

### 4 Chair's Update

4.1 The Chair updated on his activities since the last meeting. He noted a productive meeting with John Penrose on the Penrose review of competition policy and with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on the UK Infrastructure Bank.

### 5 Chief Executive's Update

5.1 The Chief Executive (JH) provided an update on his activities since the last meeting. He noted that the Annual Monitoring Report was published on 17 February and that media attention focused on the preparation for electric vehicles and the phasing out of diesel HGVs.

5.2 JH noted that the new study on towns and local growth would be announced on 3 March.

5.3 JH said Commissioner views from the recent strategy day would be reflected in a paper on the workplan and the roadmap to NIA2 to be brought to the Commission at its March meeting.

### 6 Young Professionals Panel

6.1 The Chair invited Ann Zhang (AZ) Mike Davis (MD) and Sophie Deas (SD) to present on their activities since they last presented to the Commission in October 2020 and to present on their response to the National Infrastructure Strategy.

- 6.2 AZ noted that two infra(un)structured podcasts had been recorded and that the YPP had held a workshop with the NIC to inform the AMR. She noted that an energy devolution roundtable was being planned and that the panel was rescoping its activities as a result of the challenges of Covid.
- 6.3 MD and SD outlined the YPP's response to the NIS focusing on four key themes: a holistic and outcomes-based approach (e.g. by using take-up as a measure of access to high speed broadband); a nationally effective but locally focussed approach (e.g. through locally-led energy planning); an approach which is net-zero ready (e.g. by maximising the decarbonisation opportunities of rail); and a strategy which ensures a pipeline of future infrastructure professionals.

## **7 Towns study**

- 7.1 The Chair invited TH to outline the draft terms of reference for the towns and local growth study. TH noted these would be published on 3 March 2021 but that key points included a focus on transport and digital, providing an evidence base on economic and quality of life impacts of infrastructure in different types of town, to consider the impact of Covid and where infrastructure may help address behaviour change, and to consider local delivery and capability including a potential role for the UK Infrastructure Bank. TH noted that the final report would be due in September 2021.
- 7.2 TH asked whether Commissioners were content to rely on existing literature to describe the impact of infrastructure on economic outcomes, whether there were specific quality of life outcomes Commissioners were interested in, whether there were any specific hypotheses or typologies to be considered, whether they were content with the outlined approach to engagement and whether there were specific points of governance the study team should focus on. TH noted that further details of the study would be tabled at the Board in March.

**DECISION: Commissioners were content with the proposed approach to the study and the engagement programme to support it.**

## **8 External Speakers – Martin Cave and Jonathan Brearley**

- 8.1 The Chair invited Martin Cave (MC) and Jonathan Brearley (JB) to provide an overview of Ofgem's price controls and approach to the path to net zero.

## **9 Purpose statement**

- 9.1 The Chair invited BW to introduce a proposed new strapline and mission statement for the Commission.

## **10 COP 26 options**

- 10.1 The Chair invited CB to outline options for Commission involvement in COP 26.

## **11 AOB**

- 11.1 No items of AOB were recorded.