

MINUTES

Meeting: Commission Meeting

Date: 24 March 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)
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)	
	(Director of Policy)	
	(Private Secretary to the Chair and Chief Executive)	
	(Senior Policy Adviser)	
	(Assistant Director)	(Item 7)
	(Policy Adviser)	(Item 7)
	(Assistant Director)	(Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser)	(Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser)	(Item 8)
	(Modelling Lead)	(Item 8)
	(Rail Needs Study Lead)	(Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser)	(Item 8)
	(Senior Technical Adviser)	(Item 8)
	(Economic Adviser)	(Item 8)
	(Senior Policy Adviser)	(Item 8)

External guests

Debjeni Ghosh	(Non-Executive Director, NIC)
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1. Apologies and Welcome

1.1 Professor Sir Tim Besley apologised for absence for the first twenty minutes 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 session with the Thames Valley Forum on levelling up and growth. He also noted a meeting with Hon Catherine McKenna, Infrastructure Minister for Canada to discuss the launch of Canada's National Infrastructure Assessment.

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 government will not publish the IRP or the Williams Review before local elections in May. He also noted that the UK Infrastructure Bank should be operational by June.

5.2 JH informed Commissioners that he had had good meetings with key stakeholders in government to discuss initial plans for NIA2.

6 Workplan

6.1 The Chief Executive (JH) talked Commissioners through the proposed workplan for 2021-22 and 2022-23 following the Commissioner strategy day on 12 February. The plan included priority areas to focus on for NIA2, in addition to the studies on Greenhouse Gas Removals, Towns and the NIA2 baseline report.

DECISION: Commissioners approved the 2021-22 workplan.

7 NIA2 Baseline

7.1 The Chair invited Giles Stevens (GS) and EB to outline the plans for the NIA2 baseline assessment. EB explained that there are three phases to the work: Baseline assessment (to autumn 2021), 18 months of work on policy and analysis projects (to mid 2023) and c.6 months to finalise NIA2 recommendations to autumn 2023.

DECISION: Commissioners were content with the proposed approach to the baseline assessment.

8 Towns Study

8.1 The Chair invited GM to provide an overview of the planned approach to the Towns study, highlighting that the problem definition was the main focus of the session. GM confirmed that the study will focus on how approaches to infrastructure will vary across different towns with different characteristics.

8.2 GM stated that there will also be a governance workstream, considering the appropriate local decision making and delivery structure needed to support the recommended approach to investment. In particular it will focus on how infrastructure investment should interact with other supporting policies, such as investment in skills.

DECISION: Commissioners were content with the proposed approach.

9 Review of Technical and Analytical Panels

9.1 The Chair invited James Richardson (JR) to outline the proposals to introduce study-specific panels, in place for the duration of relevant studies. JR opened to Commissioners for comments.

9.2 Commissioners noted that the panels should reflect the Commission's diversity policy and targets.

DECISION: Commissioners approved the proposed changes to the technical and analytical panels.

10 AOB

10.1 No items of AOB were recorded.