

Appendix 2. Methodology

Data review

1.1 A desk-based review of evidence and literature relevant for each of the three Climate Commissions was undertaken to assess outputs/outcomes from the literature, who the key stakeholders are, and identification of information gaps. The data included plans, reports and meeting notes, some provided by the Commission teams and some sourced by the research team. A limitation of the research is that it was not possible to identify and review all relevant evidence within the available resource/timeframe. The research areas were used to frame the review and a matrix of the headline information gathered through the data review was developed for each Commission – see Appendix 1, provided separately. The review of data was supplemented by interviews with the PCAN lead for each of the Commissions, plus, in the case of Belfast interviews the Belfast City Council lead on the Commissions and another officer involved in the work of the Commission. The review of data and the interviews identified some key areas to explore further through stakeholder interviews as follows:

- Commissioners have been appointed in different ways by the different Commissions. Does this affect how the Commission functions?
- Some Commissioners are more actively involved in the work of each Commission than others. Does this impact the work of the Commission?
- There are varying amounts of information/reports available via the Commission websites, e.g. meeting notes, annual reports and research reports are variously available. Does this have any impact on what the Commissions can achieve?
- It is not clear what systems of monitoring are being implemented on the work of each Commission;
- How decisions are made by each Commission on priorities;
- Most of the documents reviewed are Commission produced, with some from the Council involved in each city, so this may hide influence and impact of the work of the Commissions in the third sector;
- It is not clear from the data review how each Commission is viewed by external stakeholders;
- It is not clear from the data review what the impact has been of all information provided by the Commission, e.g. on Council plans - whether this has delivered concrete climate action;
- Linked to above, in terms of replicability, it would be good to find out more about what people perceive as being the main ingredients for success of a Commission;
- Could other organisations have delivered what the Commissions have delivered?
- A question to explore as regards replicability of a Climate Commission model is the importance of access to knowledge, expertise and information sharing, such as that provided by Andy Gouldson and the Leeds Climate Commission to the establishment, operation and success of other Climate Commissions;
- Whether the city is the optimum scale for a Climate Commission.

The data review also identified two particular challenges/potential barriers for the Commissions in realising their full potential:

- Limits to the resources that could be provided from the PCAN programme;
- Lack of transparency between some Commission partners about resourcing.

Interviews

1.2 Interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders involved in the work of each Commission to explore the issues identified in the data review above. The research team drew up a list of stakeholder interviewees, or interviewee types for consideration by the PCAN project steering group. This included individuals in similar roles within each Commissions and external stakeholders where appropriate. These were agreed and 27 individual interviews were undertaken, in addition to those with the PCAN Commission leads during the data review. Two separate interviews were each undertaken with two individuals in the case of Leeds. Limitations of the interviews are set out in the limitations section Table 1 sets out the total number of interviews completed for each Climate Commission and across the PCAN programme.

Table 1. Number of interviews completed

Climate Commission/PCAN programme	Number of interviews completed	Number of additional interviews with PCAN/Commission leads
Belfast	7	3
Edinburgh	7	1
Leeds	8	1
PCAN programme	5	

1.3

Privacy notices were provided to interviewees, setting out the purpose of the interviews and how data collected would be used. This included that notes of interview responses would be made and shared with the P-CAN Advisory Group and Steering Group and they may feature in academic publications. Data would be anonymised. Insights would be used to inform our reporting to the P-CAN Steering Group, P-CAN Advisory Group and Climate Commissions. Organisations individuals are from would be named, but unless agreed with the interviewee, they would not be named in the report. Quotes would be anonymised, unless permission had been given to attribute these and quotes that provide obvious hints as to the source of said quote would be avoided.

1.4 Notes of interviews were made, with codes used for each interviewee. These were analysed to identify key issues, similarities and differences between the three Commissions, which are summarised in Appendix 2.

Focus groups

- 1.5 Issues emerging from the interviews were discussed with the client steering group and it was agreed to hold three focus groups to explore the following three questions in more detail:
- What can – or could - place-based Climate Commissions do that's unique and other organisations don't or can't?
 - Scale of Climate Commissions
 - Resourcing of Climate Commissions.
- 1.6 The numbers of participants registered for the first focus group were low, so individual discussions were held with these participants, rather than a focus group. The number of participants registered was four, meetings were arranged with all four, but only two participants were available for these, both of whom had been interviewed previously. Responses provided to the following questions:
- What are Commissions currently doing that is different to any other organisations?
 - Is there currently any duplication of roles/work undertaken by existing Commissions and other organisations?
 - What could Commissions do that other organisations don't, or are unable to do?
 - Are there any obstacles to Commissions being able to this?
- 1.7 The second focus group considered two key questions on the spatial scale of Climate Commissions. Number of participants was seven, five of whom had been interviewed previously
- What factors affect the scales at which an area-based climate commission is effective?
 - Is it possible for Climate Commissions operating at different scales in the same area to co-exist?
 - What should/could their different roles be?
 - What are/could the implications of this be?
- 1.8 The third focus group had to be cancelled due to a diary clash with the Queen's funeral, so an online survey of questions was sent to participants instead. The number of participants registered for the focus group was seven, five of whom had been interviewed previously. Following agreement by the PCAN steering group, surveys were sent to all participants who had registered and also to the PCAN leads for each of the three core Climate Commissions to circulate to Commissioners/individuals involved in each of the Commissions to complete. The survey was designed and issued using MS Forms, with the following questions that would have been explored during the focus group:
- What was the impact of the available resource on the operation and impact of the three PCAN Core Climate Commissions?
 - What type/how much resource is needed for a Commission to be successful?

- What would this enable a Commission to deliver?
 - How should resources be managed
- Who could/should provide the resource?
 - Implications for independence of Commissions

1.9 The survey was anonymous and five responses were received. Resourcing was the issue most commonly identified by interviewees as a constraint to the operation of the Climate Commissions. The focus group responses are considered in the Analysis and findings section later.

Analysis

1.10 A matrix was then developed for each Climate Commissions to analyse the data/evidence collected, using the research areas as the framework for this. This enabled assessment of impacts, commonalities and key differences across the three Commissions. It also enabled identification of key issues for consideration for the ongoing sustainability of the three existing PCAN-supported Climate Commissions and for the development of a replicable model of Climate Commissions. Additional evidence, such as Council Committee meeting notes was sought, where possible, to triangulate the data and evidence collected.