

# YORKSHIRE PURCHASING ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## Present:

**Barnsley**  
Councillor Frost

**Calderdale**  
Councillor Judge

**Doncaster**  
Councillor Church

**Kirklees**  
Councillor Turner

**North Yorkshire**  
Councillor White  
Councillor Bastiman (Substitute)

**Wigan**  
Councillor Anderson

**Wakefield**  
Councillor Pickersgill

**York**  
Councillor Rose

<b>1:</b>	<b>Members Declaration of Interest</b>
	No declarations of interest were made.
<b>2:</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
	Apologies for absence submitted prior to the meeting were accepted on behalf of Councillors Lonergan (Knowsley), Thornton (Bradford), Bond (St Helens), and Baker-Rogers (Rotherham).
<b>3:</b>	<b>Election of Chair</b>
	The Monitoring Officer requested nominations for the position of Chair of the Management Committee who in turn would become the Chair of the Joint Consultative Committee/Appointments Sub-Committee for the year 2025/26.  A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor Turner (Kirklees).

	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That Councillor Turner of Kirklees Council be elected Chair of the Management Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2025/26.</p>
<b>4:</b>	<b>Election of Vice Chair</b>
	<p>The Chair requested nominations for the position of Vice Chair for 2025/26.</p> <p>A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor Frost (Barnsley).</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That Councillor Frost of Barnsley Council be elected as Vice Chair of the Management Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2025/26.</p>
<b>5:</b>	<b>Election of Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee Chair</b>
	<p>The Chair requested nominations for the position of Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee Chair for 2025/26.</p> <p>A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor Rose (City of York).</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That Councillor Rose of York Council be elected as Chair of the Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2025/26.</p>
<b>6:</b>	<b>Urgent Items</b>
	No urgent items were discussed.
<b>7:</b>	<b>Minutes of the Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025</b>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit &amp; Governance Sub Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025 be accepted as a correct record, and the recommendations contained within the minutes are also agreed.</p>
<b>8:</b>	<b>Minutes of the Management Committee – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024</b>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the Minutes of the meeting of the YPO Management Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024 be accepted as a correct record.</p>
<b>9:</b>	<b>Membership of the YPO Management Committee</b>
	<p>The Managing Director asked members to review the information contained in the report regarding Committee representation from Member Authorities.</p> <p>It was noted that since the publication of the agenda pack, there has been a change to the North Yorkshire substitute. Councillor Bastiman replaces Councillor Thompson as substitute.</p>

	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the content of the report relating to Management Committee Membership be noted.</p>
<b>10:</b>	<p><b>Appointments to Sub Committees &amp; Joint Consultative Committee</b></p> <p>Consideration was given to a report to receive nominations from the Constituent Authorities in relation to Membership of Sub-Committees and Joint Consultative Committee and to determine the membership for those meetings for the twelve-month period commencing July 2025.</p> <p>Simon Hill put forward a proposal for those Councillors currently Members of the Joint Consultative Committee to remain (Councillor Pickersgill (Wakefield), Councillor Thornton (Bradford), and Councillor Bond (St Helens), plus the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Management Committee (Councillors Turner and Frost). This would mean the remaining eight Members would become members of the Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the report be noted.</p> <p>(2) That the proposal around sub-committee representation was agreed by all.</p>
<b>11:</b>	<p><b>Terms of Reference &amp; Work Programme 2025-2026</b></p> <p>Consideration was given to a report of the Managing Director which detailed the work of the YPO Management Committee and its associated Sub-Committees. The report also included the Meeting Schedule, Terms of Reference, and Principal Agenda Items for each Committee and Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Simon Hill explained the proposed principal agenda items are the minimum agenda items for each meeting, other items can be added as and when required or suggested by Members.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> - (1) That the terms of reference for 2025/26 for the Management Committee, Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee, and Joint Consultative Committee be agreed.</p> <p>(2) That the Principal Agenda Items for 2025/26 be agreed.</p> <p>(3) That the Meeting Schedule for 2025/26 be agreed.</p>
<b>12:</b>	<p><b>Update from Chair of Audit &amp; Governance Sub-Committee - Verbal</b></p> <p>Councillor Turner (Kirklees) provided a verbal update of the work undertaken by the Audit &amp; Governance sub-committee over the past 12-month period.</p> <p>The update included work areas covered by internal and external audit, and Management items, plus reports that have been specifically requested by Members to be brought back to the sub-committee for review.</p>

	<b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the verbal update be noted.
<b>13:</b>	<b>Lead Authority Issues - Verbal</b>
	<p>Gillian Marshall (Wakefield) expressed her concerns regarding attendance and quoracy levels remain. The Joint Consultative Sub-Committee was cancelled this morning due to not being quorate.</p> <p>We are looking at options around how this can be improved going forward.</p> <p>Cllr Turner reiterated the importance of attendance to ensue meetings can go ahead and to support the officers. Cllr Turner asked that attendance is prioritised.</p> <p>Councillors made numerous points around the risks of non-attendance. We need to ensure that all those involved are aware and see this as a priority.</p> <p>Officers agreed. Julie Hawley noted that as our owning members underwrite the cost of the organisation, we are doing everything we can to make YPO as successful as possible for everyone involved.</p>
<b>14:</b>	<b>Exclusion of the Public &amp; Press</b>
	<b>Resolved</b> - <i>That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Items 15 to 18 on the grounds that they were likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as described in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.</i>
	<b>IN PRIVATE:</b>
<b>15:</b>	<b>Business Update - (Exempt Paragraph 3)</b>
	<p>The Managing Director (Simon Hill) presented the Business Update which provided Members with an update on activities of the organisation since the last committee and provided an overview on forthcoming activities and challenges.</p> <p>Simon explained that market conditions in the education sector are tough. We are looking at our strategy to ensure we are able to grow in the future. Part of this strategy is the One YPO project, which focuses on profitable growth by ensuring that internal functions are joined up to streamline processes.</p> <p>Richard Taylor (Interim Executive Director- Commercial) shared we are working within incredibly challenging market conditions currently. Competitors have been aggressive during the peak period with various discounts, we are also seeing new competitors entering the education market. We have seen an increase in our BESA market share figures in June which is positive.</p> <p>The Commercial team have been focussing on providing customers with the best offers during peak, and looking at new incentives. The next focus is on back-to-school planning.</p>

Julie Hawley (Executive Director – Finance) shared we are current in the fourth year of our five-year strategy. We re reviewing our performance against target, and have seen a strong peak performance following a tough first 5 months of the year.

Julie Hawley shared an update around the governance of the YPO Procurement Holdings Limited company. We are looking to streamline the processes, and an update report will be coming to the Limited Company Board meeting next week.

YPO recently won an award at the Inside Out Awards for Public Sector Employer of the Year. Councillors noted this is very positive and congratulated the YPO Officers on this achievement.

Jacquie Lightfoot (Executive Director – Operations) shared an update on Operations. The Supply Chain team have won an award for exceptional availability which is very positive.

Plans are continuing to be worked on for the warehouse extension. Jacquie provided an update on timescales, it is progressing well. We will continue to keep Members updated on the progress of this and will bring back further information to a future informal members session.

We are also looking at various other process improvement options within the warehouse, including new technologies.

We recently received the ISO 27001 Information & Cyber security accreditation, which is a great business wide achievement. A lot has been done to digitally update our Health & Safety processes also, which has greatly improvement engagement across the business.

Andrea Smith (Executive Director – Procurement) shared an update on the restructure piece that has taken place across the procurement teams, the aim is to future proof the teams and ensure better working together across the categories. The Public Sector Customer Engagement team has also now been established, which will help with the support we can provide to local authorities.

Andrea provided an update on system improvements we are working on within the procurement teams.

On the trading side of procurement, we are working with suppliers on special offers for customers, and also continuing to work well with our partners.

Helen noted her thanks to the Board, there has been a considerable amount of work that has gone into all the activity taking place business wide.

Councillor Pickersgill asked a question relating to the process of hearings involving members. Julie Hawley to check this and clarify.

	<p>A discussion was held around combined authorities and YPO's involvement. Simon said this is a very current topic and we have recently engaged with Leaders and Chief Executives of various combined authorities.</p> <p>A discussion was held around furniture and storage. Andrea explained improved supplier relationships have seen an improvement with lead times, and the design element of the team has also been built up further.</p> <p>Councillors asked for clarity on certain aspects of the report, and Officers provided appropriate responses.</p> <p>Councillor Turner thanked the Board for their input. There is a lot of work going on across the business which is positive to see.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – (1) That the report be noted.</p>
<b>16:</b>	<p><b>Dividend Distribution – (Exempt Paragraph 3)</b></p> <p>Members considered a report of the Head of Finance which sought agreement on the level and method of dividend distribution for the year 2024.</p> <p>Matthew Hirst (Head of Finance) talked through the background information and confirmed the profit figures for 2024. These figures have been externally audited and still stand. Matthew recapped the dividend distribution process and noted that Finance Directors have been involved. The dividend plan is in line with YPO's 5-year strategy.</p> <p>The dividend split between founder members and associate members is outlined in the report. The amount that will be returned to schools by way of loyalty vouchers is also confirmed within the report.</p> <p>It was noted that there is an element to support re-building our cash reserves, and YPO being financially self-sufficient.</p> <p>Matthew confirmed the EBITDA figure is used as this is more reflective of our operational performance.</p> <p>Councillor Rose raised a query around the dividend amounts and asked for clarification on this.</p> <p>Julie Hawley explained the dividend amounts have been agreed in consultation with Finance Directors at the beginning of the 5-year strategy. This also included agreement in investments back into the business.</p> <p>It was noted that investment required for the warehouse extension and associated costs has also been built into the dividend and investment strategy.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> - (1) That the Committee approve the proposed dividend amount, distribution split, and timings.</p>

	<p>(2) That the Committee note and accept the Founder Member commitment to ensure YPO continues to operate as a going concern in the medium to long term.</p>
<b>17:</b>	<b>Non-Executive Director Contract - (Exempt Paragraph 3)</b>
	<p>The Managing Director (Simon Hill) shared a report relating to the Non-Executive Director contract, and provided the background information around the review of the contract term length which took place in November 2024.</p> <p>A discussion was held around the options going forward, as detailed in the report.</p> <p>Simon Hill explained that the role of the Non-Executive Director sits between the Board and the Management Committee, and looks both ways.</p> <p>A discussion was held around the work involved, and considerations around the remuneration. We have recently benchmarked the role and it is competitive in the marketplace. It was agreed to discuss this further at a future informal members session.</p> <p>Members discussed the benefits of a Non-Executive Director, as well as possible input from External Auditors. It was noted that an Executive Director benefits from a less structured approach than auditors.</p> <p>A discussion was held around the approach to recruiting a Non-Executive Director.</p> <p>A proposal was received to recommend the extension of the current incumbent's contract for a further 3-year term.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> - (1) That Members agreed to the extension of the contract for the current incumbent for the next 3-years.</p> <p>(2) It was agreed to discuss the detail of the role of the Non-Executive Director at the next Informal Business update session, and whether a further benchmarking exercise is required.</p>
<b>18:</b>	<b>Report of Non-Executive Director – (Exempt Paragraph 3)</b>
	<p>Members gave consideration to a report of the Non-Executive Director which detailed her recent observations of the organisation. Helen Lisle talked through the key headlines of the report.</p> <p>Helen Lisle shared that a significant amount of work has taken place across the full procurement teams.</p> <p>The YPO Board have been focussing on Governance and ensuring the best utilising of resources. We are now starting to see the benefits of these improvements.</p>

	<p>Helen Lisle provided updates on the Energy team, the Learning Box project, and differing approach within the commercial team. The new Pricing team is in the process of being established.</p> <p>Helen Lisle reiterated the message around Member attendance. The informal sessions between formal Committee meetings are also key for increased understanding and debate. We need support from Members to link back into the authorities. This will support YPO to be able to provide best value to the authorities.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> - (1) That the report of the Non-Executive Director be noted.</p>
<p><b>17:</b></p>	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – That the next meeting of the YPO Management Committee is to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025.</p>