YORKSHIRE PURCHASING ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday 17th July 2026

Present:

Bradford
Councillor Thewlis

Doncaster
Councillor Church

Knowsley
Councillor Lonergan

North Yorkshire
Councillor White

Rotherham
Councillor McKiernan

St Helens
Councillor Kent

Wigan
Councillor Anderson

Wakefield
Councillor Atcheson

York
Councillor Rose

1:	**Members Declaration of Interest**
	No declarations of interest were made.
2:	**Apologies for Absence**
	Apologies for absence submitted prior to the meeting were accepted on behalf of Councillor Bancroft (Barnsley).
3:	**Election of Chair**
	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 2026/27. A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor Rose (York). **Resolved** – (1) That Councillor Rose of York Council be elected Chair of the Management Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2026/27.

4:	**Election of Vice Chair**
	The Chair requested nominations for the position of Vice Chair for 2026/27. A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor McKiernan (Rotherham). **Resolved** – (1) That Councillor McKiernan of Rotherham Council be elected as Vice Chair of the Management Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2026/27.
5:	**Election of Audit & Governance Sub-Committee Chair**
	The Chair requested nominations for the position of Audit & Governance Sub-Committee Chair for 2026/27. A nomination was received and seconded on behalf of Councillor Church (Doncaster). **Resolved** – (1) That Councillor Church of Doncaster Council be elected as Chair of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for 2026/27.
6:	**Membership of the YPO Management Committee**
	The Managing Director asked members to review the information contained in the report regarding Committee representation from Member Authorities. It was noted that awaiting confirmation of representation from Kirklees Council and Calderdale Council. **Resolved** – (1) That the content of the report relating to Management Committee Membership be noted.
7:	**Appointments to Sub Committees & Joint Consultative Committee**
	Consideration was given to a report to receive nominations from the Constituent Authorities in relation to Membership of Sub-Committees and Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and to determine the membership for those meetings for the twelve-month period commencing July 2026. Simon Hill provided the background information on each sub-committee and explained that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Management Committee are automatically appointed to the JCC. It was agreed that the following Councillors would be appointed to the JCC: Councillor Rose (York), Councillor McKiernan (Rotherham), Councillor Atcheson (Wakefield), Councillor Thewlis (Bradford), and Councillor Anderson (Wigan). The remaining eight members of the Management Committee would therefore be appointed to the Audit & Governance sub-committee.

	Resolved – (1) That the report be noted. (2) That the proposal around sub-committee representation was agreed by all.
8:	**Terms of Reference & Work Programme 2026-2027**
	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. 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. The calendar of meetings shows the flow of governance in the organisation, from internal meetings to officer meetings, to Member Committee meetings. A discussion was held around meetings held in person and online. Gillian Marshall noted that the formal committee meetings must take place in person, but informal meetings can go ahead online. It was noted this may support attendance. **Resolved -** (1) That the terms of reference for 2026/27 for the Management Committee, Audit & Governance Sub-Committee, and Joint Consultative Committee be agreed. (2) That the Principal Agenda Items for 2026/27 be agreed. (3) That the Meeting Schedule for 2026/27 be agreed.
9:	**Urgent Items**
	No urgent items were discussed.
10:	**Minutes of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee – 3rd July 2026**
	Resolved – (1) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit & Governance Sub Committee held on 3rd July 2026 be accepted as a correct record, and the recommendations contained within the minutes are also agreed.
11:	**Update from Chair of Audit & Governance Sub-Committee - Verbal**
	Councillor Rose (York) provided a verbal update of the work undertaken by the Audit & Governance sub-committee over the past 12-month period. 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.

	Councillors were satisfied with the outcomes of both the internal and external audits. Cllr Rose thanked Julie Hawley for her years of service as the Executive Director – Finance at YPO. **Resolved** – (1) That the verbal update be noted.
12:	**Minutes of the Management Committee – 21st November 2025**
	Resolved – (1) That the Minutes of the meeting of the YPO Management Committee held on 21st November 2025 be accepted as a correct record.
13:	**Appointment of Executive Director – Finance & Resources**
	Simon Hill (Managing Director) shared the report requesting that Members ratify the appointment of the Executive Director – Finance & Resources, by the YPO Appointments Sub Committee. The Appointments Sub Committee met on Thursday 23 April 2026 and the minutes are attached as Appendix 1. HR support was provided to the Committee to ensure impartiality in the interview process. The Managing Director and the Non-Executive Director attended the interview panel in an advisory capacity. Simon welcomed Richard Hinds to the meeting. Richard Hinds introduced himself to the Committee. **Resolved** – (1) That the recommended appointment to the position of Executive Director be appointed on the terms recommended by the Appointments Sub Committee.
14:	**Board Notice Periods**
	Simon Hill (Managing Director) talked through the report which provides Members with options around the Board of Directors notice periods at YPO, following a market research paper completed on YPO's behalf by North Yorkshire resourcing. Simon explained the background to this. The resignation of Julie Hawley prompted a discussion around the length of notice periods for the Directors in the organisation. Julie Hawley voluntarily extended her notice period, which has been helpful for continuity purposes. Cllr Rose noted it is useful to see the split between private and public sector. Councillors made various comments regarding the options relating to the length of the notice periods, and the positives and negatives of both options. It was noted that a change to the notice periods would require a variation to the employment contract which would require agreement by all parties.

	Resolved – (1) That Members agreed to proceed with the option of increasing the Board notice periods to six months. This change would take place following internal consultation and agreement by all relevant parties.
15:	**Annual Report**
	The Managing Director, Simon Hill, submitted the annual report to the Management Committee as set out in the YPO Management Agreement. It was explained that it was intended to circulate the Annual Report to Leaders, Chief Executives and Finance Directors of Member Authorities and also use it more widely as marketing and promotional material. A copy of the report was circulated to Management Committee Members prior to the meeting, and individual authority Benefits Statements will be provided to Members in September. Simon Hill talked through the highlights of the report. **Resolved** – (1) That the report be noted.
16:	**Lead Authority Issues - Verbal**
	Gillian Marshall (Monitoring Officer – Wakefield Council) shared that the Lead Authority note their concern around levels of attendance at YPO meetings, particularly from specific authorities with regular low attendance levels.
17:	**Exclusion of the Public & Press**
	Resolved - *That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Items 18 to 22 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*.
	IN PRIVATE:
18:	**Business Update - (Exempt Paragraph 3)**
	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. Richard Taylor (Executive Director – Commercial) talked through the commercial updates. Multiple promotional activities have taken place throughout the peak period of June and July, which has resulted in a positive peak performance. We are working in a challenging market with budget pressures in education and aggressive competitors.

	We have recently integrated a financial management platform for schools which is a big opportunity. Richard provided an update on changes in the leadership of the commercial team, which will support the growth plans. Our brand proposition work is progressing well, and work continues on the implementation of the new website platform. Simon reiterated our main peak period is the last 6 weeks of the school term leading up to the summer holidays. This period is where schools place large orders ready for the return to school in September. During this period, we increase our shifts and take on additional agency staff. As our peak period is halfway through our financial year, we can plan our expenditure for the rest of the year after peak has taken place. June came in ahead of budget, and so far, July is up against last year. A question was raised around the YPO Partnerships Board. Andrea Smith explained that we are involved in various partnerships at YPO, however there is currently no internal process to review the value and benefits of these. The Partnerships Board will provide this internal oversight and governance of the process for entering into and renewing partnerships, to ensure we are seeing appropriate returns. Julie Hawley (Executive Director – Finance) provided the financial, project and IT updates. We are managing our cash position well. This year has been a transitional year focussing on delivering digital transformation. The project team have been supporting colleagues across the business to deliver some key system implementations. Julie talked through some of the key projects and the current status of these. We have recently achieved the ISO27001 accreditation, which focusses on cyber security, data, and risk, as well as physical security of the building. A discussion was held around the carbon emissions work and how we are tracking things at YPO. A further discussion on recruitment challenges and how YPO compares in the market was held. This is currently under review. Jacquie Lightfoot (Executive Director – Operations) provided an update on the Logistics and People Services areas. The People Services team are focussing on internal improvements and digitising processes wherever possible, as well as ensuring key policy updates are completed.

	A management development programme is being worked on to support our staff development and succession planning. The team are also supporting with staff wellbeing initiatives, to benefit our staff. The logistics team have very robust processes in place for peak, and it is very well planned. Stock availability is a key focus during this time to ensure we provide the best possible service to customers and manage our stock holdings in the best way. Jacquie shared we have recently appointed a second 3PL carrier to ensure we have appropriate capacity, contingency and flexibility across the parcel network. To support future workforce resilience, YPO Logistics has expanded the number of apprentices entering the warehouse. This investment in early career talent strengthens our operational pipeline and supports long term succession planning. The logistics team also have ambition to extend the apprenticeship routes into other areas of the logistics team. Jacquie provided the property update which involves the purchase of the site we have been leasing for the last five years. This purchase will be self-funded by YPO. Simon noted that we are requesting Members delegate oversight of the proposed purchase to the Chairs group in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer from the Lead Authority. This will be following agreement of a full business case. Wakefield Council will support YPO with this as Wakefield hold the YPO assets on behalf of the other 12 owning member authorities. A discussion was held around staff surveys, and the good feedback we have received on the wellbeing initiatives. Cllr McKiernan noted that Rotherham Council have also been working on the transition to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). It was noted a case study could be helpful. Jacquie Lightfoot to link in with the YPO Transport Manager on this. Andrea Smith (Executive Director – Procurement) shared the procurement update. Andrea shared an update on the progress of some key frameworks, and the performance of the categories. Our rebate reporting system is having a positive impact on the tracking of this. Ashley Cartwright (Head of Procurement Products & Supply Solutions) explained the peak for product sales is the lead up to the school summer holidays, then we also have a mini-peak when schools return in September.

	The team have done a great job, and we are prepared for the September back to school demand. Ashley provided an update on some global supply chain issues, and our line fill status. Ashley shared an update on the success of some of the key promotions, YPO Branded products, and an update on the furniture & design unit. **Resolved –** (1) That the report be noted. (2) The Committee agreed to delegate oversight and scrutiny of the proposed property purchase to the Chair, Vice Chair and Chair of Audit & Governance, acting in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer from the Lead Authority.
19:	**Governance & Legal Review – (Exempt Paragraph 3)**
	The Managing Director (Simon Hill) provided Members with the background information relating to this report. We are currently undertaking legal advice in relation to the options available to use in relation to YPO Procurement Holdings Ltd, and the trading relationship between the Limited Company and YPO Joint Committee. Legal advice is being reviewed by YPO officers and Wakefield Council legal officers, and once finalised, it will be discussed with founder member legal officers under legal privilege before being provided to elected members of the Joint Committee and representative directors of the Limited Company. **Resolved –** (1) That members note the content of the report and the further verbal update provided in the meeting.
20:	**Draft 5-Year Strategy – (Exempt Paragraph 3)**
	The Managing Director shared the draft 5-year strategy, for the period commencing in January 2027. The strategy document is currently in draft form due to the high level of turnover in YPO membership flowing the recent local elections. Consultation will take place with all members in the current months, prior to a final approval request at the November Management Committee. The draft document has been considered by the founder member Finance Directors, Legal Directors and Chief executive forums, with no concerns or objections identified at this stage. Simon noted that within the report there is an additional request that if any acquisition opportunities arise in the intervening period, these should be considered on members' behalf by the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Management Committee, the Chair of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee and the Monitoring Officer & Section 151 Officer from the Lead Authority.

	Gillian Marshall noted that if the YPO Procurement Holdings Limited company has involvement in any acquisitions, the approvals process would be handled separately as it is a separate entity. A discussion was held around the level of delegated powers held by the Managing Director and YPO Board, as well as emergency powers that are in place as per the YPO Management agreement. **Resolved –** (1) That members considered the draft 5 Year strategy document and engage in further consultation with YPO officers in the coming months, prior to a request for approval at the November Management Committee, and (2) Members agreed that any acquisition opportunities which arise in the intervening period should be considered on members' behalf by the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Management Committee, the Chair of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee and the Monitoring Officer & Section 151 Officer from the Lead Authority.
21:	**Dividend Distribution – (Exempt Paragraph 3)**
	Members considered a report of the Head of Finance which sought agreement on the level and method of dividend distribution for the year 2025. Matthew Hirst (Head of Finance) talked through the background information and confirmed the profit figures for 2025. Matthew explained we have followed the dividend strategy agreed since 2022. This has involved putting cash back into the business to support digital transformation. Matthew explained the weighting and split of the dividend between founder and associate members. There is also a loyalty voucher element which goes back directly to schools. It was noted that a new dividend strategy is being prepared in line the new Organisational 5-year strategy that will be presented to members in November 2026 for approval. The final details of both documents are being finalised, but a headline commitment will be to more than double the £13m in dividends, that have been paid since 2022, from 2027 to 2030. We are exploring the option of amending the mechanism of the current loyalty scheme. This would have no impact on the cash dividend to our owning authorities. We would be looking for this change to commence from 1st January 2027. We are currently reviewing the best way of doing this, the aim of which is to create more customer loyalty and modernise the scheme. The percentage amount of profits appointed to loyalty would remain unchanged. A discussion was held around the dividend amounts and the impact of changing this. It was noted that investments as well as cash flow and cash

	reserves have been factored into the proposed amount. Simon Hill noted we have hit our dividend commitments each year of this strategy period, as well as investing to support future growth. Saf Nawaz (S151 Officer – Wakefield Council) recommend the dividend amount is kept to the recommended figures, these figures have been reviewed and agreed by the Finance Directors within the owning member authorities. **Resolved -** (1) That the Committee approve the proposed dividend amount for 2025, the distribution split, and timings. (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. (3) That the Committee approve the proposed changes to loyalty and the removal from the dividend process, and note that the loyalty scheme will now become an in-year expense and captured during the annual business planning and budget setting process.
22:	**Report of Non-Executive Director – (Exempt Paragraph 3)**
	Members gave consideration to a report of the Non-Executive Director which detailed her recent observations of the organisation. Simon Hill shared the report is for information. Helen Lisle provided a verbal update to Members in the Audit & Governance sub-committee on 3rd July. **Resolved** - (1) That the report of the Non-Executive Director be noted.
23:	**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING** **Resolved –** That the next meeting of the YPO Management Committee is to be held on 20th November 2026.