

MINUTES of the meeting of the **ORBIS** Joint Committee held at 2.00 pm on 20 January 2017 at Members' Conference Room, Surrey County Council, County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Monday, 3 April 2017.

Elected Members:

- * Councillor David Elkin
- * Councillor Denise Le Gal (SCC)

*= in attendance

In attendance

Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer, ESCC

Sergio Sgambellone, Director of HR, Orbis

Adrian Stockbridge, Orbis Programme Manager

Ann Charlton, Director of Legal, Democratic and Cultural Services, SCC

David Kuenssberg, Executive Director for Finance and Resources, (BHCC)

Adele Jenkins, EY

Neil Sartorio, EY

1/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

None received.

2/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

There were none.

3/17 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 3]

a MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 3a]

There were none.

b PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 3b]

There were none.

4/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 4]

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

5/17 ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN [Item 5]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the Orbis Joint Committee Forward Plan which was noted by Members. It was highlighted that the intention was to discuss the frequency of Orbis Joint Committee meetings would be discussed as part of item 12 on the agenda.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED:

The Orbis Joint Committee agreed to note the Forward Plan.

6/17 NOVEMBER BUDGET MONITORING [Item 6]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer, East Sussex County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and highlighted that Orbis was on course to deliver £1.8 million in efficiency savings for 2017/18 early. Members noted that there were ongoing discussions in Orbis regarding officers accepting voluntary severance packages which would lead to future savings.
2. A discussion was had regarding the level of investment that the partnership would make in technology in order to increase efficiency through the integration of self-service methods. Officers highlighted that work was still ongoing.
3. Members sought clarification on if the savings outlined in the report were proportional to the level of investment made by each local authority in the partnership. Officers confirmed that the savings in the report were proportional.

4. A discussion was had regarding redundancy costs in which it was highlighted that a separate finance provision would be used for East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) redundancy costs.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That;
the Orbis Joint Committee notes the:

- i. Services forecast -£1.8m budget variance at year end on the joint operating budget and £1.7m variance on the investment fund.
- ii. Services forecast to achieve £3m efficiencies by year end.

7/17 ORBIS OPERATING BUDGET 2017/18 [Item 7]

Declarations of interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer, East Sussex County Council
Sergio Sgambellone, Director of HR, Orbis

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and gave a brief summary of the savings included in the report. Members noted that work was still ongoing and a further report should be expected.
2. Members sought confirmation on whether the savings identified in the report had been adjusted in accordance with updates to the Orbis Operating Budget in October 2016 and enquired if there was potential for further savings to be achieved. Officers advised that the savings identified had been revised to reflect the changes to the Orbis Joint Operating budget while also stressing that it was possible for further savings to be achieved by in year by the partnership.
3. A discussion took place regarding the importance and financial benefits of revaluating how front line services are provided. It was noted that there were identifiable benefits in providing self-service opportunities and by looking into ways of empowering staff to facilitate improved decision making.
4. Committee Members questioned a footnote in the report which stated that management costs include an adjustment to ensure that the cost of pension contributions was similar in both SCC and ESCC. Officers informed the Committee that this was due to the pension provisions of each council being different and that they were equalised for the purposes of fairness.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee agreed to recommend the level of 2017/18 contributions to the Orbis Joint Operating Budget to both ESCC and SCC Cabinets for inclusion in the 2017/18 budget proposals for approval by the respective County Councils.

8/17 ORBIS AND EY CONSULTANCY PARTNERSHIP [Item 8]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer, East Sussex County Council
Neil Sartorio, EY
Adele Jenkins, EY

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and provided Members with an update of the partnership between Orbis and Ernst & Young (EY). It was noted that there were a number of key areas in which the partnership between EY and Orbis was developing such as the provision of specialist advice on areas where Orbis would benefit from an external viewpoint. Discussions also took place regarding the EPIC+ programme and the different development opportunities provided to help nurture and support talent.
2. Members sought an update on the Business Solutions Platform (SAP) and how it would be used in the organisation. Officers stated that they were currently exploring its strengths and the potential benefits that could be achieved by implementing a new system and how the two might dovetail together.
3. Officers highlighted further efforts to establish and strengthen the partnership between EY and Orbis. This initiatives such as shadowing officers to further understand how they work, research into the benefits of behavioural science and how it can be used in the organisation as well as further exploration into commercial opportunities.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee notes the progress being made by EY and Orbis on key elements of the work plan of this Public and Private Sector Partnership.

9/17 BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY COUNCIL UPDATE [Item 9]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

David Kuenssberg, Director of Finance & Resources, Brighton & Hove City Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and informed Members that progress was continuing to be made on Brighton and Hove City Council joining the Orbis Partnership. Members noted that work was ongoing to understand how different services could be aligned and advised that thus far services had proved to be working well together. Officers concluded by expressing their confidence in the integration process although it was highlighted that work was ongoing to ensure that BHCC would be integrated into the partnership effectively.
2. Members discussed the financial benefits and learning opportunities that came with working with other services within the partnership and stressed these would benefit the partnership as a whole.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee notes the progress being made towards BHCC joining the Orbis Partnership.

10/17 ORBIS PAY STRATEGY [Item 10]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Sergio Sgambellone, Director of Human Resources, Orbis

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officer introduced the report and discussed challenges that were faced with pay grades and how these would differ between local authorities within the partnership. Further discussion was had regarding those whose roles require travelling between counties and how this would be reflected within pay grades.
2. Members discussed the importance of integrating video conferencing to solve issues with travelling between each local authority.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee notes the approach being taken to develop the pay strategy and how this will inform blended pay for 'true partnership' roles.

11/17 EPIC+ STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME [Item 11]

Declarations of interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Kevin Foster, Chief Operating Officer, ESC
David Kuenssberg, Director of Finance & Resources, BHCC
Adele Jenkins, EY

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers introduced the report and informed Members of the ongoing progress of the Orbis brand by providing development opportunities to staff through the EPIC+ development programme. It was highlighted that staff would be supported and that those who show initiative and take responsibility for their own development would be most successful.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee notes the business challenges identified for the EPIC + development programme.

12/17 FREQUENCY OF ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING [Item 12]

Declarations of interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Adrian Stockbridge, Orbis Programme Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. A discussion was had around the frequency of Orbis Joint Committee meetings. Members agreed that the number of formal public meetings should be reduced to two a year and that there should be an additional two informal private meetings a year.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

That the number of formal public meetings conducted by the Orbis Joint Committee should be reduced to two a year and that there should be an additional two informal private meetings a year.

RESOLVED: That:

the Orbis Joint Committee agree the number of meetings that the Joint Committee will have each year.

13/17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 13]

The Committee noted that its next meeting would be held on 3 April 2017.

Meeting ended at: 3.36 pm

Chair