

# Notice of Meeting



## Orbis Joint Committee

**Date & time**

Friday, 16 October  
2020 at 11.00 am

**Place**

Remote via Teams

**Contact**

Angela Guest  
Room 122, County Hall  
Tel 020 8541 9229

Angela.guest@surreycc.gov.uk  
v.uk

**Please note that due to the COVID-19 situation this meeting will take place remotely.**

**Please be aware that a link to view a recording of the meeting will be available on the East Sussex County Council website.**

**If you have any queries relating to accessing this agenda please email [democratic.services@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@surreycc.gov.uk). Alternatively you can contact Member and Democratic Services at East Sussex County Council by emailing [democratic.services@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@eastsussex.gov.uk).**

**Members of the Committee**

Councillor Nick Bennett (East Sussex County Council), Councillor Bob Standley (East Sussex County Council), Councillor Dr Zully Grant-Duff (Surrey County Council), Councillor Mel Few (Surrey County Council), Councillor Daniel Yates (Brighton & Hove City Council) and Councillor David Gibson (Brighton & Hove City Council)

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter

- i. Any disclosable pecuniary interests and / or
- ii. Other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at this meeting

#### **NOTES:**

- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest
- As well as an interest of the Member, this includes any interest, of which the Member is aware, that relates to the Member's spouse or civil partner (or any person with whom the Member is living as a spouse or civil partner)

Members with a significant personal interest may participate in the discussion and vote on that matter unless that interest could be reasonably regarded as prejudicial.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 28 MAY 2020**

(Pages 5  
- 8)

To approve the minutes as a correct record.

### **4 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

#### **4a Members' Questions**

The deadline for Members' questions is 12pm four working days before the meeting (\*date).

#### **4b Public Questions**

The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (\*date).

### **5 ORBIS BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

(Pages 9  
- 12)

The report provides an update to the Joint Committee of the financial position of Orbis

### **6 ORBIS PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

(Pages  
13 - 28)

To provide an update on key performance metrics across the partnership

### **7 SERVICE SPOTLIGHT - BUSINESS OPERATIONS**

(Pages  
29 - 34)

This spotlight report provides the Orbis Joint Committee with an overview of the activities and achievements by Business Operations

## **8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

## **9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Orbis Joint Committee will take place on 22 January 2021

**Philip Baker**  
Assistant Chief  
Executive

**East Sussex**  
County Council

**Geoff Raw**  
  
Chief  
Executive  
**Brighton & Hove City**  
Council

**Joanna Killian**  
Chief  
Executive  
**Surrey County**  
Council

Published: Thursday, 8 October 2020

**FIELD\_TITLE**

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## ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Orbis Joint Committee held at County Hall, Lewes on 28 May 2020.

++ The Members were not present in person, but took the decisions remotely ++

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PRESENT Councillors Nick Bennett (Chair) and Bob Standley (both East Sussex County Council); Zully Grant-Duff and Mel Few (both Surrey County Council); and Daniel Yates and David Gibson (both Brighton & Hove City Council)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 15 APRIL 2019

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

### 4 ORBIS PERFORMANCE MONITORING

4.1 The Committee considered a report by Nigel Manvell (Deputy Chief Finance Officer Brighton & Hove City Council), Kevin Foster (Chief Operating Officer East Sussex County Council), Leigh Whitehouse (Executive Director of Resources Surrey County Council) together with a presentation by officers which highlighted:

- The Covid-19 response and request for ideas for future agenda items of interest to Members
- The Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) for 2020-2023 now signed, which provides a good way forward for the Partnership
- Annex 2 and the Orbis Blueprint which sets out the strategic framework and the business plans, with their focus on Customer, Innovation and People
- Collaboration between partners to ensure service delivery to customers across the Partnership
- Rapid responses from IT&D to enable flexible and homeworking

4.2 Members asked questions about:

- Property and HR disaggregation, when this took effect and impacts on budgets
- New IAA, the levels of service integration and the Blueprint
- Annual Audit process, and any potential delays impacting of publication of the accounts
- Transition of services from pandemic response to a new “business as usual” delivery, and how the Committee could oversee that transition

4.3 Officers responded:

- Property is fully disaggregated from the budgets for 2020/21, and was disaggregated during 2019/20. The Contribution Ratio has been amended accordingly, and the 2020/21 budget based on the new Ratio.

- Fully integrated services are: Business Operations; IT&D; Procurement. Partially integrated are: Finance and HR & OD. Centres of Excellence are: Internal Audit; Insurance, Financial accounting systems; Treasury and Tax.
- The accounts will be audited independently based on the partners' contributions, which will be reflected in the respective Statements of Accounts. The deadline for publication has been put back to November.
- Officers suggested the Committee consider a report on the Target Operating Model and priorities for the Partnership post-Covid at a future meeting, and the impacts on performance monitoring in future years.

4.4 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report

## 5 IT & DIGITAL SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

5.1 The Committee considered a report by Nigel Manvell (Deputy Chief Finance Officer Brighton & Hove City Council), Kevin Foster (Chief Operating Officer East Sussex County Council), Leigh Whitehouse (Executive Director of Resources Surrey County Council). Matt Scott, the Chief Information Officer, highlighted the following:

- The requirement to replace 3 separate IT systems, used as an opportunity to catalyse the digital transformation, including a new helpdesk and replacement core platform and a review to simplify and streamline support services.
- The Improvement programme includes the "Knowhow" platform to provide online guides and tips for staff, in the form of video guides and documentation.
- Pioneering experience level agreements using Happy Signals to get feedback from service users on satisfaction levels. It can be benchmarked against other authorities that use the platform.
- Project delivery programme delivering 160 projects in a range of areas such as digital innovation and replacement of frontline systems.
- Commercial development is successful, with four years of year on year growth adding revenue contributions against overheads down to the direct relationships with the customer base, being able to respond to their pressures.
- Innovation in the data centre, moving towards a cloud solution, but with older, legacy, systems that don't work as well in a cloud environment being refreshed, moving towards hyperconvergence.
- Enabling the agile workforce, supporting an advanced form of flexible working and responding to the needs to work remotely during the Covid-19 crisis, including: the deployment of Windows 10; issuing of hybrids and laptops; development of wifi and virtual private networks to share data securely.
- Digital collaboration across local government – to deliver consistent services there is a need to engage across traditional authority boundaries, so work has been done on the national Digital Declaration for better use of technology and data.
- Digital strategic delivery – each authority has a different digital posture which needs a different response, but a benefit of the Partnership is accelerated learning which can be shared and applied.
- Covid-19 response which has demonstrated where the Digital Service has supported the partner authorities which was a significant mobilisation of resources.

5.2 Members asked questions about:

- Hyperconvergence and whether the data centre would be completely cloud-based.

5.3 Officers responded:

- The authorities have an in-house cloud-based platform, which is combined with use of the public cloud. Each authority has provision in its own capital programme to complete implementation with a strategy setting out core component of the project which will provide enhanced computing processing power, with a cyber security benefit in terms of a response to an incident. There will still be a need for an in-house provision for the next 4-5 years given the legacy systems. The Partnership can also monitor developments in the market of on-premises cloud-based solutions.

5.4 The Committee RESOLVED to thank the staff, in particular in relation to the Covid-19 response, and noted the report.

## 6 BUDGET MONITORING

6.1 The Committee considered a report by the Nigel Manvell (Deputy Chief Finance Officer Brighton & Hove City Council), Kevin Foster (Chief Operating Officer East Sussex County Council), Leigh Whitehouse (Executive Director of Resources Surrey County Council) together with a presentation by officers which highlighted:

- Achievement of the 2019/20 budget targets, including some challenging savings targets of £3.1m
- Finance and Property services had overspends, but these have been disaggregated from the partnership, with temporary resources put in place to support disaggregation process
- Underspends in IT&D and Procurement, which will hopefully be carried forward, linked to open positions in the service structure
- Covid-19 will impact the modelling of the savings target going forward
- Challenges in relation to savings for 2020/21, which will be reported through the usual monitoring channels of each authority

6.2 Members asked questions about:

- Total expenditure and operating budget figures provided in the report

6.3 Officers responded:

- There are significant levels of traded services, treated as income, which reduces the net total expenditure. The figures will be clarified for the next meeting.

6.4 The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

## 7 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

7.1 The next meeting will be held on 16 October 2020.

The meeting ended at 12.35 pm.

ChairPresentList  
Chair



BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL  
EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND  
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020

LEAD OFFICER: NIGEL MANVELL (DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL), KEVIN FOSTER (CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL), LEIGH WHITEHOUSE (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL)

**SUBJECT: Budget Monitoring**

## SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To provide an update to the Joint committee on the financial position of Orbis

## RECOMMENDATION:

The Joint Committee is asked to note the report.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Joint Committee is responsible for ensuring the sound financial management of the partnership, delivering the business plan and monitoring the investment.

## DETAILS:

The Orbis operating model changed from 2020/21. Service areas are now categorised as either “Fully integrated”, “Partially integrated” or “Centres of Expertise”. Categorisation is determined by the nature of the service and the participation of sovereign authorities. This is therefore reflected within the tables below.

The Orbis joint operating budget of £39.3m for 20/21 includes efficiency targets of £1.6m (**Table 1**).

The forecast year-end outturn as at the end of Q1 is an overspend of £965k. The main contributor to this is within Business Operations, where a £750k savings target is now unlikely to be met in 2020/21. Detailed savings proposals were drawn up in 2018/19 for fully integrated services and the three-year target for Business Operations was £2.020m. Of these, the first-year savings of £0.770m were delivered in full, but the 2nd year savings of £0.750m have slipped and, combined with the next year’s savings of £0.500m, are at risk. The impact of COVID-19 has limited the ability to deliver any savings this year due to the difficulties in undertaking a consultation process under the current circumstances, as well as added pressure on transactional services (for example, additional payments made to social care providers). A significant component of the response to the above will be the utilisation of new technologies. These technologies will increase the opportunities for future efficiencies and savings. However, these are not due to be effective

until 2022/23 and onwards. There are also overspends within management and the centres of expertise, however these are being reviewed and addressed.

**Table 1 – Joint Operating Budget Q1 20/21**

Orbis Operating Budget		Year to Date (Q1)			Full Year		
		Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Fully Integrated</b>	Business Operations	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	IT&D	1,273	2,449	1,176	5,094	5,844	750
	Management	4,943	4,872	-71	19,772	19,772	0
	Procurement	100	471	371	402	520	118
	<b>TOTAL FULLY INTEGRATED</b>	1,114	1,136	22	4,458	4,455	-3
<b>Partially integrated</b>	<b>TOTAL FULLY INTEGRATED</b>	7,431	8,928	1,497	29,725	30,591	865
	Finance	814	720	-94	3,255	3,305	50
	HR&OD	807	832	25	3,227	3,227	0
	Management	26	0	-26	103	103	0
<b>Centres of Expertise</b>	<b>TOTAL PARTIALLY INTEGRATED</b>	1,646	1,552	-94	6,585	6,635	50
	<b>TOTAL CoE</b>	748	629	-119	2,993	3,043	50
<b>TOTAL ORBIS</b>		<b>9,826</b>	<b>11,109</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>39,304</b>	<b>40,269</b>	<b>965</b>

The Orbis Joint Committee is responsible for managing all aspects of the Joint Operating Budget, including staffing. The staffing budget is set on the estimated establishment needed to deliver services, after deducting costs for an estimated level of vacancies.

The full year staffing forecast variance is £634k (**Table 2**).

**Table 2 – Subjective analysis Q1 20/21**

Orbis Operating Budget - Subjective		Year to Date			Full Year		
		Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance
Staffing		12,352	12,913	561	49,409	50,043	634
Non-Staffing		1,052	1,312	260	4,208	4,275	66
Total Expenditure		13,404	14,225	821	53,618	54,318	700
Income		-3,579	-3,116	463	-14,314	-14,049	265
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>9,826</b>	<b>11,109</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>39,304</b>	<b>40,269</b>	<b>965</b>

The Joint Committee is also asked to review Orbis spend on Agency staff. The expenditure to date on agency staff is 5% of total staffing spend (**Table 3**). The use of agency staff is avoided where possible however there are a limited range of circumstances where it is appropriate, for example specific skills for a project or to cover business critical vacant posts in the short term. Table 3 shows the 2020/21 Q1 agency spend by service.

**Table 3**

Orbis Operating Budget	Agency	Non Agency Staffing	Total Staffing	Agency Proportion
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Business Ops	67	2,932	2,999	2%
Finance - BHCC & ESCC	22	1,047	1,069	2%
Finance - Centres of Expertise	29	716	745	4%
HR&OD - BHCC & ESCC	-2	1,109	1,107	0%
IT&D	432	5,274	5,706	8%
Management	0	170	170	0%
Procurement	51	1,066	1,117	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>12,314</b>	<b>12,913</b>	<b>5%</b>

#### Efficiencies

**Table 4**

	£000	Rating
Business Operations	750	Red
IT & Digital	500	Green
Procurement	305	Green

As per the narrative above, it is deemed unlikely that the efficiencies within Business Operations will be made in 20/21. Efficiencies within IT&D and Procurement are currently assessed as being achievable and to be met within the current budget allocations.

## Contributions

The partner contribution rates are set out in table 5 below. The contribution rates differ depending on the level of integration within the given service.

**Table 5 – Agreed Contribution Rates**

<b>Contributions - Fully integrated</b>	
BHCC	22.3%
ESCC	24.6%
SCC	53.1%
<b>Contributions - Partially integrated</b>	
BHCC	47.1%
ESCC	52.9%
<b>Contributions - Centres of Expertise</b>	
BHCC	25.6%
ESCC	27.8%
SCC	46.6%

These rates can then be applied to determine the net contribution per partner (**Table 6**).

**Table 6 – Partner net contributions**

	<b>Full Year</b>		
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000
BHCC	10,481	10,710	229
ESCC	11,645	11,898	254
SCC	17,178	17,661	483

### Contact Officer:

Thomas Alty – Head of Finance (ESCC)

Jacob Holliday – Orbis Finance Manager (ESCC)

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL  
EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND  
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020

LEAD OFFICER: NIGEL MANVELL (DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL), KEVIN FOSTER (CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL), LEIGH WHITEHOUSE (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL)

**SUBJECT: ORBIS PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

To provide an update on key performance metrics across the partnership.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

1. Note the Orbis service performance information presented;
2. Advise whether service performance information should continue to be presented in the format shown in Section 2 and Annexe 1;
3. Advise if there are any additional/alternative performance measures that would be of interest;
4. Advise whether the People insight data presented in section 3 is still relevant/helpful;
5. Agree the proposal for Internal Audit as the focus of the next service spotlight performance review.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The responsibility of the Joint Committee is to oversee and improve the delivery of the services for the benefit of each participating council and in particular to monitor the Orbis Business Plan and performance of the partnership.

## **DETAILS:**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1. It is recognised there are known challenges collecting consolidated performance data for Orbis services due to services being at different stages of integration and because data is captured differently by each sovereign organisation who each have different ERP platforms.

1.2. At the last Orbis Joint Committee Meeting in May 2020, the Orbis blueprint was introduced. As a reminder the Orbis blueprint has been developed to clearly define the Orbis Business Plan on a page, setting out the key building blocks for the partnership and the areas to focus on in order to be successful - 'people', 'customer' and 'innovation'. The Orbis blueprint is provided again at Annexe 1 for reference.

## **2. Service performance**

- 2.1. Using the same headings of 'people', 'customer' and 'innovation' we have developed a highlight summary table of each service's key current priorities, future areas of focus and the resulting benefits to the partnership (Annexe 2)
- 2.2. It is hoped Joint Committee find this information relevant, meaningful and of interest and that by presenting information in this way illustrates how Orbis is making a difference to each of the partner organisations which can be further developed each quarter.
- 2.3. In addition to the summary table, it is proposed each service provide a narrative in order to update and inform Joint Committee on their current areas of focus.
- 2.4. The focus of the narrative contained in this report is how each service has responded and is recovering from COVID-19 in terms of whether there has been any impact on delivery of their planned strategic priorities.

### **i. Orbis Performance & Change team**

Priority work areas that were identified pre-Covid were paused in order to respond with an offer which supported the vast majority of Orbis employees who were working remotely. A variety of workshops and online learning activities were developed and delivered at pace and over 450 people attended between April and June with extremely positive feedback received and a net promotor score of 70+. As a result of the positive feedback received, a wider eLearning strategy is being developed so that Orbis staff can continue to access ongoing support at a time that suits them. An eLearning style Orbis induction has been developed and will be launched later this month to create a sense of belonging for new staff joining the partnership in the absence of them being able to meet team members, customers and stakeholders in a face to face environment.

### **ii. Business Operations**

To avoid duplication with the information presented in the service spotlight performance review, information for Business Operations has not been included in this section.

### **iii. Finance**

Recognising Finance are at an earlier stage in their journey of integration than other Orbis services, Finance's response has understandably been local, supporting their respective sovereign organisations to respond and reset. Remote working has been successful in terms of delivery of business as usual activity which has continued without disruption. Continued remote working has the potential to impact on Finance's ability to provide the level of Business Partnering advice customers currently need as there has been an increase in demand from customers with some areas needing significant support; for example, the Brighton Centre, a live music and entertainment venue remains closed until further notice and Adult Social Care in both partner organisations are significantly reshaping their service delivery models. Finance are assessing the resource and skill requirements of their staff to be able to

appropriately support customers with their reset and recovery plans – the ask from customers is different and that therefore requires a different way of thinking.

#### **iv. HR&OD**

HR&OD in both organisations coordinated the redeployment of staff across the organisation to support the emergency Covid response as well as responding to the daily Government briefings updating processes, policies and FAQs. As organisations move from response to recovery HR&OD are supporting both partner organisations with their plans to enable staff to safely return to the workplace in the short and longer term identifying key considerations and implications from an employment, wellbeing and training perspective and working collaboratively with colleagues in IT&D and Property to ensure alignment of strategic aims.

#### **v. Internal Audit**

As a result of the hard work of the team throughout 2019/20, sufficient work was completed prior to the Coronavirus outbreak to enable an overall annual audit opinion to be provided for each Council. There were still a higher number of reviews than normal not fully completed at the year end, including a number where reports were issued to management but because of greater priorities caused by the outbreak, they were not asked for a formal response. For this reason, a number of reports remained in 'draft' status at the year end, albeit they have still been taken into account when forming the overall audit opinion.

It will be necessary to fundamentally review the 2020/21 audit plans, in response to Coronavirus and the impact this has had on each organisation and their risks environments, working closely with management and Members to ensure proper consultation is carried out, and approval is obtained, in relation to any revisions. Internal Audit are planning for the future and what this might mean for delivering assurance in what could be such a fundamentally different environment. As part of this, they will be liaising with professional bodies and other local authority internal audit providers to help ensure the most effective response is developed.

#### **vi. IT & Digital**

IT & Digital has maintained the response momentum developed during the Covid lockdown period and continues to drive forward the adoption of new technology and support innovative ways of working across the Orbis partnership. Major IT infrastructure projects have been restarted and IT&D is playing an enabling role across all three councils in support of the major directorate or corporate change projects. The challenge faced by the service is the competing requirement to continue to deliver significant operational budget savings whilst also responding to increased demands for technology enabled new ways of working to support operational and strategic council priorities.

#### **vii. Procurement**

The effects of Covid remain at the forefront of minds in Procurement. Procurement have seen an impact on their forward planning, with the effect of emergency procedures and also of the Supplier Relief programme. As they move out of both of these areas, they will be working closely with Internal Audit to see what impact this has had on the work and supply chain. Procurement will naturally be closely linked to each of the recovery plans for all sovereign authorities.

The Procurement service continue to support PPE procurement across each of the authorities and whilst the level of purchasing for these has seen a drop in recent weeks, there is still a need to plan for the coming winter months and flu season. It has been confirmed that Central Government support for PPE delivery will cease from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. Procurement are working with CBC colleagues to map out what stock to retain as well as plan for that handover at the end of March 2021.

### 3. People insight

3.1. The following data is for Q1 2020/21 – April, May and June 2020 and is provided in the spirit of providing further contextual data against the budget and savings profile for each service.

3.2. All figures in this report reflect the change in service make-up of the partnership, which came into effect 1st April 2020. Specifically, figures for Property (all partners), Finance and HR&OD (SCC only) have been removed.

**Table 1 – Overall headline statistics by organisation**

	Orbis total	Brighton & Hove	East Sussex	Surrey
<b>Average employee numbers FTE</b>	1322.88	536.47	376.81	409.60
<b>Average Agency staff spend</b>	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.3. It is important to track the number of FTEs in any business to understand whether there are significant changes in the short-term workforce. In an environment where savings are being delivered it is expected that the workforce would be decreasing over time.

3.4. The significant reduction in overall FTE numbers for the partnership compared to previous reports, is explained as the partnership now comprises fewer services (1322.88 average FTE in Q1 2020/21, compared to 1721.73 average FTE reported in Q4).

3.5. Spending on agency staff for Orbis overall decreased compared to Q4 2019/20, with reductions in all services, except IT&D which increased from 4.03% in Q4 to 6.50% in Q1.

**Table 2 - FTE by service and organisation**

	BHCC		ESCC		SCC	
	Average FTE	% of total	Average FTE	% of total	Average FTE	% of total
Business Operations	232.86	43.40%	62.00	16.45%	210.19	51.31%
Finance	57.43	10.70%	73.28	19.45%	N/A	
HR&OD	74.53	13.89%	45.64	12.11%	N/A	
IT&D	153.37	28.59%	166.75	44.25%	163.04	39.80%
Procurement	18.28	3.41%	29.14	7.73%	36.37	8.88%
<b>Total average FTE</b>	<b>536.47</b>		<b>376.81</b>		<b>409.60</b>	

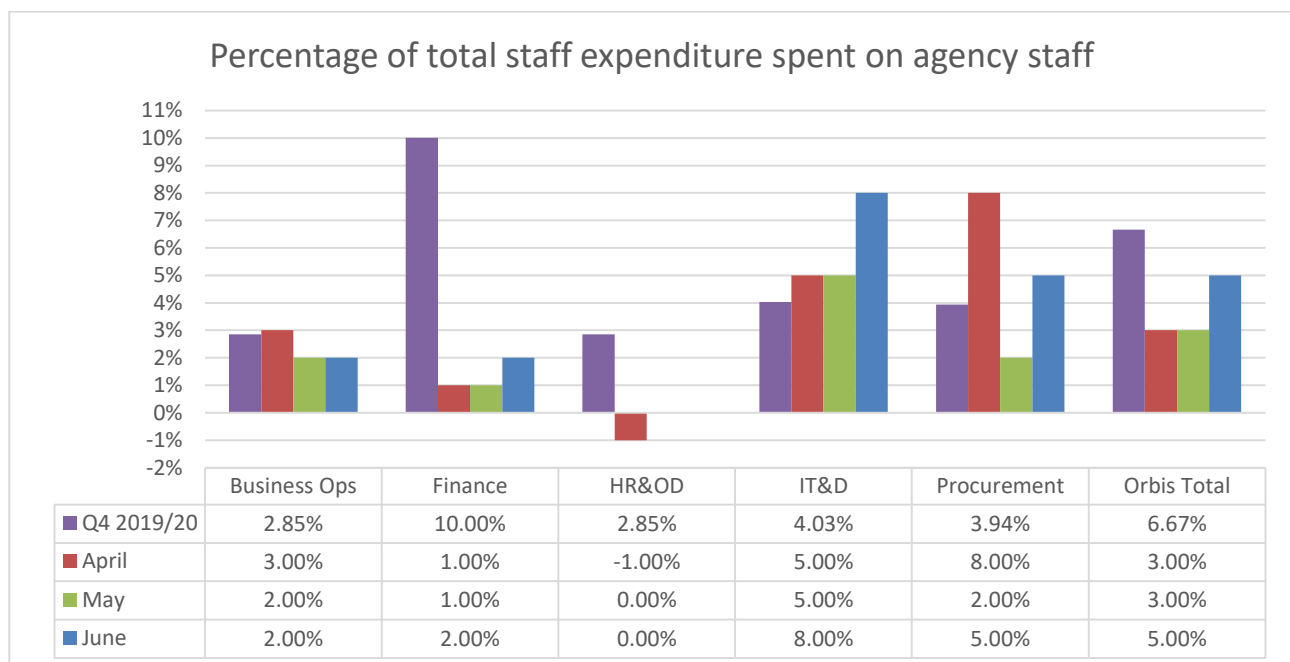
Figures for property not included (all partners). Figures for Finance and HR&OD not included for SCC.



BHCC and ESCC 1 FTE = 37 contract hours per week, SCC 1 FTE = 36 contract hours per week  
Figures include vacant posts and are not the budgeted FTE.

- 3.6. Note that as a Unitary Authority BHCC provide extra services within Business Operations e.g. Council Tax and Housing Benefits
- 3.7. Staff numbers reduced by 10 FTE between April and May in BHCC, but the Q1 average is still around 12 FTE higher than the overall yearly average for BHCC in 2019-20. Finance and IT&D saw increases compared to last year's average, with small decreases in Business Operations, HR&OD and Procurement.
- 3.8. ESCC saw fluctuations in the number of FTE in a couple of services, with a small decrease in Finance between May and June, and a larger increase in Procurement during the same period, but numbers for the other services and the Authority overall were relatively stable.
- 3.9. SCC saw small increases in the number of FTE in all three of its services, Business Operations, IT&D and Procurement, however the Q1 average is still very close to the 2019/20 yearly average.

#### Agency spend



- 3.10. Agency spend in Business Operations, Finance and HR&OD has decreased in Q1.
- 3.11. Finance saw a significant decrease in agency spending compared to Q4.
- 3.12. Agency spending in HR&OD is negative due to reversal of 2019/20 year-end accruals.
- 3.13. The increase in agency proportion for IT&D and Procurement is due to arrears of charges posted in June.
- 3.14. Overall agency spending for Orbis was 1.06% down on the Q4 figure.

#### **4. JMB highlight report**

Annexe 3 provides a highlight of each service's three year savings profile and associated planned activities to achieve savings.

**Contact Officer:**

Nikki Neal – Head of Strategy, Performance and Change

**Consulted:**

Kevin Foster – Chief Operating Officer (ESCC)

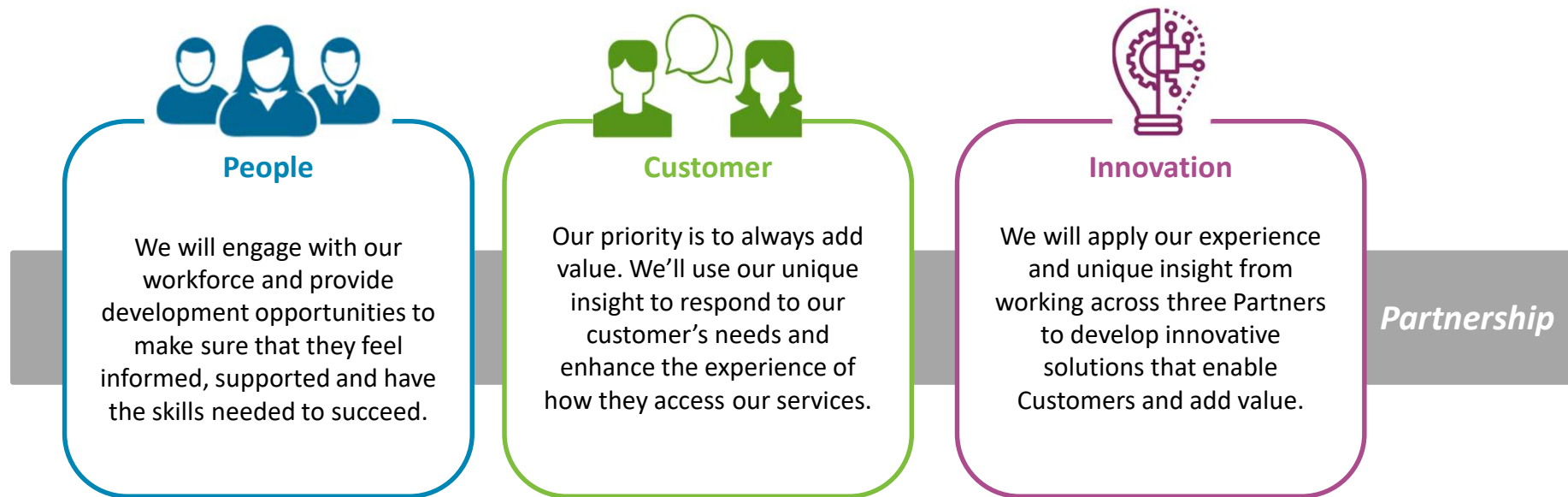
Leigh Whitehouse – Executive Director of Resources (SCC)

Nigel Manvell - Deputy Chief Finance Officer (BHCC)



*A trusted partnership delivering value to customers and residents through our expertise, innovation and passion*

We will continue to work in Partnership to ensure that we deliver the best possible experience for our customers and staff. Our three key areas of focus will be:



We will achieve this through the Orbis principles:



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## Appendix 2

	People		Customer		Innovation	
	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact
<b>Orbis Performance &amp; Change Team</b>  <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); position: absolute; left: -60px; top: 50%;">Page 21</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of online courses and virtual workshops were developed and delivered to support staff and managers with the challenges associated with the rapid shift to remote working</li> <li>A wider eLearning strategy in development</li> <li>The Development Pool relaunched September 2020</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>450 members of staff attended between April and June with consistently positive feedback received (+70 net promotor score)</li> <li>There will be a suite of available resources for use by all Orbis staff which can be accessed 24/7</li> <li>Provides an opportunity for people looking to develop themselves and their career, to access activities and experiences to support their aspirations. Also provides dedicated resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second cohort of Developing Partnering Excellence Programme starting September 2020</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The programme has been developed to equip colleagues with tools and techniques to work effectively in the complex partnership environment and to build ‘Partnering’ skills in order to add value and provide the best possible service to our Customers across the three Partner authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An online eLearning style Orbis induction has been developed accompanied by a virtual ‘new starter network’ and will be launched September 2020</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help new starters feel a sense of belonging to the Orbis partnership; understand the nuances of cultural differences and a way to build relationships and a peer network with people outside of their immediate team</li> </ul>

	<b>People</b>		<b>Customer</b>		<b>Innovation</b>	
	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact
<b>Business Operations (fully integrated)</b>  <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); position: absolute; left: -40px; top: 50%; font-weight: bold;">Page 22</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Transformation and Shared Services Leadership Apprenticeship programme developed and first cohort of 8 apprentices starting pilot programme in November</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 18 month apprenticeship will:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide the skills and opportunity to accelerate the scale and pace of Bus Ops collaborative transformation journey as a service</li> <li>Build a culture of collaborative working within and across the service and with partners</li> <li>Build in house skills that will support Bus Ops' strategic objectives</li> <li>Enable multi-disciplinary &amp; multi-agency team working between organisations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme to further develop the commercial acumen of the service and to embed a more commercial approach into the standard operating model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will allow service managers to better assess their competitive positioning and the potential for both further growth and increased profitability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pipeline of activity to deliver further opportunities to support the delivery of business plans through the deployment of well-placed and purposeful automation.</li> <li>Working closely with IT&amp;D looking to expand the use of automation at the Lewes site and where possible as well as test and implement new technologies such as chatbots.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will support the delivery of business plans through the deployment of well-placed and purposeful automation.</li> <li>To aid enhancement of self-service offerings</li> </ul>
<b>Finance (partially integrated)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprenticeships and professional development programmes continuing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively supporting our 'grow our own' strategy to supplement our usual recruitment methods and to ensure staff development needs are being met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing the resource and skill requirements needed to be able to appropriately support customers with their reset and recovery plans – the ask from customers is different and that therefore requires a different way of thinking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will ensure customers are able to successfully be supported in terms of the Financial advice required to deliver their reset and recovery plans and reshaping of their service offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chatbot in development stages working in partnership with HROD and IT&amp;D</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will enable customers to have access to advice from Finance outside of "normal" office hours</li> </ul>

	<b>People</b>		<b>Customer</b>		<b>Innovation</b>	
	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact
<b>HROD (partially integrated)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual investigation skills training programme rolled out to integrated HR Advisory team and other members of wider HROD service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieves a consistent quality standard and approach to a core part of the HR Advisory offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the People Promise at BHCC and the People Strategy at ESCC in response to changes to the way staff are working in the short and longer term</li> <li>• An enhanced customer offer including updated templates and approach to investigations</li> <li>• Procuring new Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme across all three partners</li> <li>• Dedicated Business Partner resource assigned to support the Adult Social Care and Health transformation programmes in both authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These strategies are essential to ensuring that HROD initiatives and approaches are aligned to needs of the business</li> <li>• Offer across the partnership is consistent and utilises best practice learning between the organisations which means customers receive the benefit of wider expertise</li> <li>• Will enhance the wellbeing offer to include a virtual element</li> <li>• Large scale transformation to enable new ways of working will be able to be supported and successfully delivered without impact to BAU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of concept chatbot in development with IT&amp;D with the learning being used to inform similar works in Finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important step in encouraging more user independence and driving channel shift away from high volumes of telephone calls. Also provides customers with a resource to gain HR advice on a 24/7 basis which is important given the large number of customers who do not work normal office hours and who are further reviewing their service offer in response to Coronavirus.</li> </ul>

	<b>People</b>		<b>Customer</b>		<b>Innovation</b>	
	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact	Activities this quarter	Impact
<b>Internal Audit (CoE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully appointed five new staff at entry level, with a focus on training and development to effectively ‘grow our own’ with support for appropriate professional development, including utilising apprenticeship schemes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has successfully addressed the historic challenge of recruiting suitably skilled and experienced staff at the Senior/Principal Auditor level and therefore reduced the cost associated with supplementing internal resource with external contractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified the most important changes rapidly made by services in response to Coronavirus and associated lockdown/social distancing measures in terms of those most likely to undermine, weaken or expose the organisations to new risk and provided advice to management including the production of an updated fraud risk assessment specifically in relation to Coronavirus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensured, as far as possible, an appropriate internal control environment is being maintained in all partner councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Started to develop a programme for delivering assurance over key financial systems through use of data analytics, utilising entire data populations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will ensure that each partner’s internal audit plan 2020/21 is able to be completed in a Covid secure environment and is not unduly affected by social distancing measures or remote working.</li> </ul>
<b>IT&amp;D (fully integrated)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools ICT Customer Experience and Business Systems teams have achieved accreditation to support the scholarpack IT system</li> <li>IT&amp;D wide staff surveys and engagements have taken place to reflect upon the last 6 months of largely remote working and start developing plans for future ways of working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opens up avenues for Schools ICT Services to offer support to schools who are looking to change their MIS provider and therefore remaining highly attractive within the competitive schools IT market.</li> <li>Results will be combined with insights from earlier polls and used to shape a renewed vision of service agility for IT&amp;D and to further inform corporate plans such as space planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT infrastructure work underway at Woodhatch in Reigate to get it fully operational within a demanding timescale</li> <li>Device refresh programme resumed post Covid to enable replacement of Windows 7 and Windows 8 devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable Woodhatch to become the new civic heart for SCC</li> <li>Vital that staff have the right tools to help them work efficiently in increasingly flexible ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to sudden and dramatic change to ways of working, IT&amp;D rolled out new method of connecting remotely to the BHCC network called ‘Always on VPN’ to over 2,600 windows 10 devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed the business to lift the restriction on connecting via DirectAccess that were put in place in March.</li> <li>Colleagues from all business areas can now connect to the corporate network from any location without limitation.</li> <li>Number of Orbis build Windows 10 devices that have reliance on DirectAccess is zero.</li> </ul>





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# Annexe 3

Service	Savings Targets (£)			Total Savings Target	RAG Staus Update	Planned Activites	Risks
	19/20	20/21	21/22				
IT&D	500	500	500	1,500	A further £750k has been reduced from the service expenditure (operating) budget (unallocated efficiencies from previous years and £500k the 20/21 target).	New service pressures relating to pay increments and an unfunded Data Protection Officer post will create pressures that will need to be managed in-year.	Increased demand for support and developments in connection with the Orbis councils' recovery may place additional financial pressure on the service
HR South	500	0	0	500	19/20 targets achieved as a result of a restructure which took effect from 1 April 2019		
Business Operations	770	750	500	2,020	19/20 target achieved xxxxxx	Operational efficiencies planned against service restructure have needed to be paused due to COVID-19.	The combination of COVID and council focus means that the savings continue to be at risk.
Finance South	338	0	0	338	19/20 savings achieved through vacancies (for which some have permanently been removed from budgets), efficiencies and integrated working		
Procurement	873	305	50	1,228	19/20 savings were over delivered through redundancies, income and vacancies	Continued challenges to resources and workload have increased the risk to achieving these savings in this financial year	Known reduction of income from frameworks (£70k) Risk of delivery of savings targets to partner authorities
Total	2,981	1,555	1,050	5,586			

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BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL  
EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND  
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020

**LEAD OFFICER:** NIGEL MANVELL (DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL), KEVIN FOSTER (CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL), LEIGH WHITEHOUSE (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL)

**SUBJECT:** BUSINESS OPERATIONS SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

## **SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

This spotlight report provides the Orbis Joint Committee with an overview of the activities and achievements by Business Operations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Orbis Joint Committee is asked to note the on-going service developments and the future strategic direction for the partnership service.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Joint Committee is responsible for the effective monitoring of Orbis performance

## **DETAILS:**

### **Background**

1.1 The Business Operations service is an integrated Orbis partnership function. The service provides the transactional activities for the three councils for Finance, procure to pay and Hire to retire functions. It operates as a Shared Service delivering best practice processing on essential council needs such as paying staff, paying suppliers and collecting income. The service operates over our three main council sites in Kingston, Lewes and Brighton

1.2 An interim Assistant Director of Business Operations was appointed in May 2019 and conducted a review of the service. This highlighted much good practice but saw the need to improve leadership, financial planning, staff moral and performance monitoring. A series of interventions against each has seen improvements in each area some of which are outlined in the report below.

1.3 The Orbis business plan has considerable savings expectations against Business Operations. These have been met each year, but the future plans outline the next stage of service development needed to meet the ongoing savings. The service has traditionally met savings through self-service, automation, commercialisation and the next focus is on increased integration across the partnership.

1.4 The service has an operating model which derives efficiencies & innovation through scale and emphasises operational excellence, customer and staff satisfaction and low unit cost as its heart. This has led to a strong reputation in its field externally leading to traded services being a key part of our strategy.

## 2 Service Updates

### *Performance Monitoring*

2.1 With the council migrating towards evidence-based decision making, Business Operations is looking to utilise its large quantities of data and convert this into meaningful insight into our own performance. By implementing Result Orientated KPIs we will focus upon those metrics that support our strategic goals rather than the current output orientated measures. Following the Business Operations review a Head of Performance & Insight was appointed and is developing proof of concepts for performance dashboards. These will be shared with key stakeholders across the partnership to ensure we are capturing the customer needs in addition to our own operational requirements before rolling out across the remaining functional areas.

2.2 We will look to develop three levels of performance dashboards to support operational delivery; Service performance indicators for use with our organisation, operational performance indicators for use by our managers in running successful teams and capacity modelling so we use our resources to manage demand.

### *Project Delivery*

2.3 The Business Operations service project roadmap is driven by delivering change which supports the service to meet its strategic goals. These include the aligned procurement and implementation of cross site applications; support of the SCC DB&I and ESCC MBOS programmes; delivery of wellbeing and people led initiatives to support staff through change and development; the roll out of W10 devices to ensure no disruption to service delivery and both the tactical and strategic impact of the CV19 measures.

### *Commercial Development*

2.4 In addition to providing transactional and other support services to each of the three councils, Business Operations also provides traded services to a range of external customers within the geographic boundaries of the councils and beyond.

These services fall into the 3 categories summarised in the table below.

Orbis Services	Service	Customers	'000s
Payroll Services	Payroll and pensions admin services	650	£2,500k
HR Services	HR advisory and transactional support including recruitment and DBS checks	350	£550k
Finance Services	Financial management and finance operations including debt management	10	£200k
<b>Total</b>		<b>900 (discrete)</b>	<b>£3,250k</b>

Taken together these services generate additional revenue in excess of £3m per annum which is used to offset overhead costs and to deliver savings back to each of the councils.

Following the transitioning back of pension administration services (see below), most of this income now relates to Payroll and HR services but also includes finance support and helpdesk.

Services are provided to approximately 900 discrete organisations, including 650 schools, with a very high level of customer retention each year alongside steady year on year growth. The majority of our customers are maintained schools and Academies located primarily across the 3 council areas with some other public service and not for profit organisations. Some services are combined and provided to the same customers.

Going forward there is a programme to further develop the commercial acumen of the service and to embed a more commercial approach into the standard operating model – this will allow service managers to better assess their competitive positioning and the potential for both further growth and increased profitability.

### ***Robotic Process Automation***

2.5 Robotics Process Automation is software incorporating AI technologies that can replicate high volume repetitive tasks to free up staff to more value-add activity. Business Operations recognised the potential for our service and conducted proof of concepts to test the technologies capabilities for back office processing. The proof of concepts helped us learn how we could best exploit the software for our councils, and we built a robotics lab in collaboration with IT&D. The lab is responsible for the identification of process, engaging teams, development and delivery of robotic process automation solutions.

2.6 Since establishing the robotics lab Business Operations have launched 15 RPA deployments with examples being backlog clearance for pensions, bulk processing of fire claims and password resets for self-service portals. We have a pipeline of activity to deliver further opportunities to support the delivery of business plans through the deployment of well-placed and purposeful automation.

2.7 Working closely with IT&D we are looking to expand the use of automation in our Lewes site and where possible as well as test and implement new technologies such as chatbots to aid enhancement of self-service offerings.

### ***Collaborative Apprenticeship***

2.8 Business Operations has been working with HR&OD across the councils to bring in place a Collaborative Transformation and Shared Services Leadership Apprenticeship programme to the partnership. The first cohort of 8 Business Operations staff will be starting the pilot programme in November. The first of its kind it will see delegates across our partnership working together to build collaboration skills and a common language in developing partnership. The 18-month apprenticeship will provide:

- The skills and opportunity to accelerate the scale and pace of our collaborative transformation journey as a service
- Build a culture of collaborative working within and across the service and with our partners
- Build in house skills that will support our strategic objectives
- Enabling multi-disciplinary & multi-agency team working between organisations

The future in local government will see the need to work in partnership across all areas of our business with blue light, health and local partnerships becoming more important to ongoing sustainability. It is therefore

hoped that if successful this training could prove beneficial beyond ORBIS and to our councils in the drive to create successful collaboration.

### ***Pensions Administration***

2.9 The administration for both Surrey and East Sussex Pension Fund was provided internally via the Orbis Partnership. In addition to the council funds, the service managed administration for the funds of four London Boroughs: Westminster, Hillingdon, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham.

The pensions administration had considerable legacy and cultural issues, a series of poor audits and recent changes in legislation placing higher levels of scrutiny on the service through the forming of pensions committees and boards. A review was commissioned to review the management arrangements of pensions administration, understand the learning from the frequent turnover in the Head of Pension Administration role and recent experience of procurement for a new contract for the pensions administration system.

2.10 The review concluded that the scale of the role for Head of Pensions administration was not viable to manage the large numbers of stakeholders as well as drive the improvements needed across process, culture, data and systems. The report therefore recommended that the pensions administration services return to their respective councils to allow for the management focus to provide sufficient strategic oversight, change capability and foster closer relationships with funds. The change to the new management arrangements was implemented on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

2.11 Business Operations still provide helpdesk services to the Pensions administration of both East Sussex and Surrey and in the transitional year have been supporting the change as well as providing commercial support to the London Borough clients.

### ***COVID-19 and service response***

2.12 As with many service areas, the COVID-19 pandemic put unprecedented strain on service delivery. As a predominantly back office service very reliant on office working we needed to get a mainly desk based service mobile overnight. We formed a project team during early March to help plan for a lockdown and working with IT&D across the partnership we were able to get everyone home and operational. The human response from our teams typified our personality as a service such as staff volunteering their own equipment for those that had none, people volunteering to deliver equipment to those that could not travel, use of teams so staff could connect as they did in the office on queries and linking up with key stakeholders and audit on changes to enable remote working. This was a significant shift in how we worked and given the critical nature of the services we provide such as Payroll we had to ensure that this was not impacted.

2.13 The initial and ongoing response within the Business Operation Service has been exceptional – both from individuals and whole teams. We have had to quickly adapt to our new environment but also seen that this has opened opportunities for us to explore further. Some of the highlights from our response have been:

- Automating manual processes to allow people to still access our services remotely (such as e-expenses & claims in ESCC payroll)
- Laptop roll out across the service
- Responding to legislative changes (such as immediate payments to suppliers and furlough)
- Working with cells on issues (highlighting Pcard use and supporting needs)
- Revised business continuity plans to include COVID response
- Improved performance in some areas (such as 96% prompt payment in ESCC)
- Providing early support to managers on Recruitment advice



- And most importantly no loss in Business Continuity which saw our staff working flexibly out of hours to ensure high volume processing such as banking runs could complete.

2.14 We recognised early on in lockdown that this would be a difficult transition for our staff to move to remote working. In the early months of lockdown we issued surveys which received good engagement from the teams. The first highlighted a technical issue with the lines to the data centre that we were able to raise with IT&D to get additional capacity from BT which supported all councils. The other area of focus for us was on staff wellbeing as they struggled with isolation and anxiety about the virus. Business Operations had in place wellbeing champions across the partnership and they worked very hard on bringing together the resources from across the councils and beyond to help staff. Regular communications and using multiple ways to contact meant that staff felt very involved and continued encouragement to talk to ensure we support everyone as much as possible.

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 Business Operations is a core part of the ORBIS delivery and is providing services in line with its strategy that add value to our organisations

3.2 Recognition that Business Operations has met significant savings on behalf of the partnership over the last three years and continues to pursue aggressive targets. The savings for 20/21 are at risk as COVID had to be prioritised and restructures were not deemed appropriate whilst responding to the pandemic.

3.3 Business Operations are integral to the council's ERP programmes as major users of the technology and will provide high levels of support through both the evaluation and implementation of the system.

#### **Contact Officer:**

Mike Lea – Assistant Director of Business Operations

#### **Consulted:**

Kevin Foster – Chief Operating Officer (ESCC)

Leigh Whitehouse – Executive Director of Resources (SCC)

Nigel Manvell - Deputy Chief Finance Officer (BHCC)

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