



Dr Zully Grant-Duff
Chairman, Corporate Services Select Committee
Room 122
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 2DN

19 February 2018

Dear Zully,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th January 2018.

Thank you very much for the very useful contribution from your committee to the business plans for Orbis and Orbis Public Law. I have answered your specific points as below:

- Prior to the most recent meetings of the two Joint Orbis committees I raised with Members of both committees our collective concerns regarding the lack of key performance indicators. The officers produced at the recent Joint Committee meeting a draft dashboard of data that they now intend to publish and I think you will find this useful when looking at performance and productivity.
- There are a number of consultations underway regarding restructuring and further integration across a number of the areas within Orbis and I believe there is now sufficient momentum behind that process to ensure that the new structures are delivered within a reasonable timescale and that indeed staff remain motivated through that process. In the meantime there continues to be a drive to streamline processes and whilst this work has some way to go, I do believe it is moving faster and in the right direction.
- Part of the restructuring exercise addresses your point regarding centres of expertise. In relation to Orbis public law an interim head has now been appointed and work is actively being undertaken to look at what skill sets exist in each of the locations as well as cost etc, with a view to moving towards a consolidation of capability within certain of the centres. Whilst this is good news, I think that we will need to keep a close eye on the pace of that work but certainly there is a recognition that it needs to be done and a steps plan in place. It is probably worthwhile you looking at the minutes of the last meeting of Orbis public law where you will see a much more detailed and useful timetable for closer integration.
- At the moment there is a focus on identifying the total legal spend and who has control over that spend. I think the next stage is then to consider a notional recharge to each of the service areas or at least a much clearer understanding on the part of the service of the cost of delivery.

This also extends to property assets and I understand that particular piece of work to identify the running costs of the buildings within the County is now very near to completion. I think we all agreed that the more data the service areas have on the true cost of delivering that service the better they can address further efficiencies.

Your input into the two plans is much appreciated and I hope that when your committee reviews progress at a future meeting you will be reasonably comfortable that things are definitely moving in the right direction but also see that there is a recognition by Orbis management that the pace of integration and therefore the delivery of further efficiencies needs to be a key driver in moving forward the business plan. Only then will then be in a position to look for third party revenue, should they think there is a good business case to do so.

I am happy to expand on any points if you wish me to.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Oliver', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Oliver
Cabinet Member for Property and Business Services