

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



ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 12 APRIL 2018

LEAD OFFICER: KEVIN FOSTER (CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL), SHEILA LITTLE (DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL) & DAVID KUENSSBERG (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FINANCE & RESOURCES, BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL)

SUBJECT: BUSINESS OPERATIONS SERVICE UPDATE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Orbis Business Operations Function is progressing its integration journey required to deliver the efficiencies identified in the original Orbis Business plan.

Following Brighton and Hove City Council joining the partnership, a 2 year transformation plan is being implemented in consultation with the unions, staff and Orbis Leadership Team.

This report produces an update of the progresses made to-date and an outline of the key outcomes expected for the Financial year 2018/19.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The Joint Committee note the progresses made
2. The Joint Committee is sighted of the Business Operations plans to reach full integration by September 2019
3. The Joint Committee is sighted of the plans to begin implementing Robotic Process Automation

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure the Joint Committee is kept informed about the progress to-date and understands the approach being taken for the Business Operations Function with regards to their Orbis aspirations to achieve efficiencies.

DETAILS:

Service Update for the Business Operations Function.

1. The Business Operations service has been operating across the original two founding partners for some 4 years now. In the past year transactional teams from BHCC have joined the department as well as the BHCC Revenues and Benefits service.
2. During late 2017 the management teams within the department were placed in formal consultation and the resulting restructure standardised the managerial spans of control across the three authorities.
3. Business Operations have taken the decision to minimise the number of managers working across multiple sites due to the inefficiencies and loss of onsite staff support that this offers high volume transactional services like ours. Business Operations will instead seek to integrate the work of the three authorities to a point where a member of staff on any site will be able to work on any or all of the partner's workflows.
4. Starting in February 2018 the senior management team is sponsoring a series of detailed reviews of each department within the service (eg Recruitment, Accounts Payable etc.) with a goal of defining how the work is best structured, be it on a single or multiple sites. This work is expected to take about a year, however implementation of individual departmental strategies will begin as they are defined within the project.
5. In addition to the above work, however still forming part of the overall strategy, will be the implementation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA). Early tests suggest that there are significant benefits to Orbis and its sovereign partners from implementing this technology. A pilot in the pensions teams suggest that we could be "going live" with the first implementations in April. It is anticipated that further implementations of RPA could be happening every week for two to three years.
6. The strategy of rationalising our work across three sites and the implementation of RPA is both transformational and potentially disruptive to staff. Our intention is to minimise this disruption by implementing the changes over as long a period of time as is reasonable and fully consulting with staff, stakeholders and unions.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

7. The Transformation and integration plans for 2018/19 will identify the financial and non-financial risks along with proposed treatments.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

8. The cost of the proposed next steps required to achieve the new Business Operations Integrated model and consequent funding will be presented in due course.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

9. Detailed plans of the proposed changes will be prepared in collaboration with Staff, Stakeholders.

Contact Officer:

Simon Pollock, Assistant Director of Business Operations

Consulted:

Kevin Foster – Chief Operating Officer

Sheila Little – Director of Finance

David Kuenssberg - Executive Director of Finance & Resources

Adrian Stockbridge – Orbis Programme Manager

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