



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

ORBIS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: 16TH 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 1st 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
Average employee numbers FTE	1322.88	536.47	376.81	409.60
Average Agency staff spend	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%
Total average FTE	536.47		376.81		409.60	

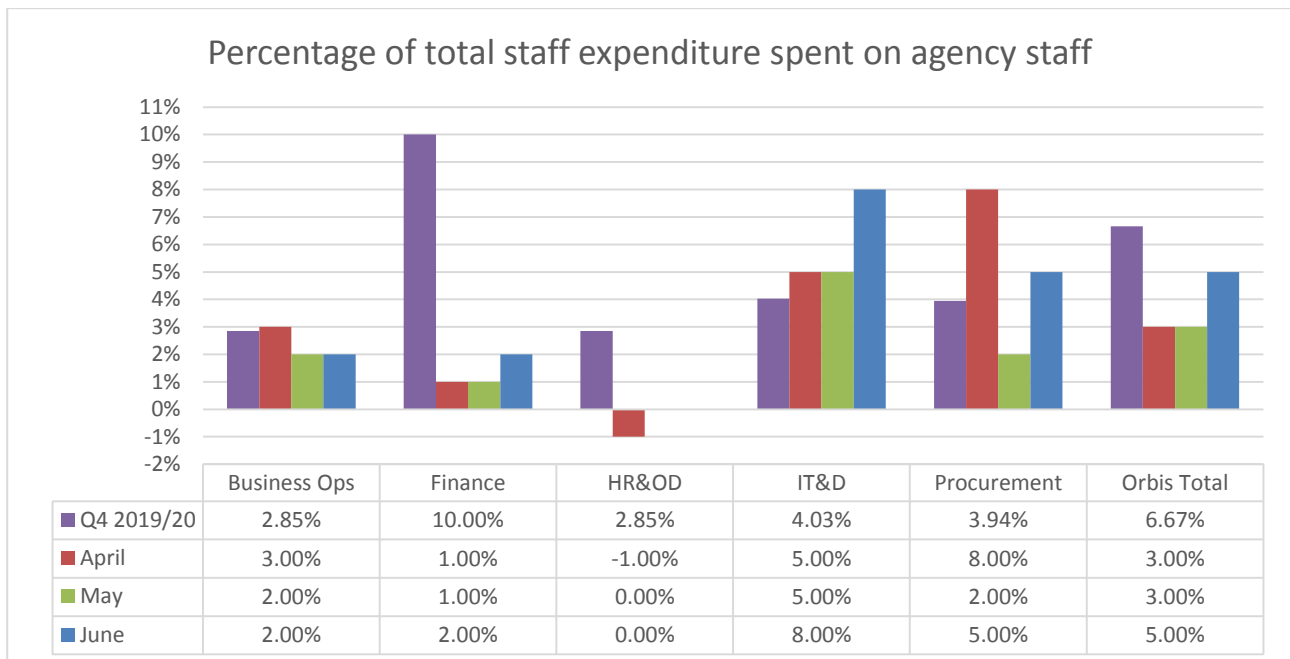
Figures for property not included (all partners). Figures for Finance and HR&OD not included for SCC.

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:

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Consulted:

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