
Governance Committee: West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and discontinuance of the Orbis Public Law Joint Committee

West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

Background and Context

- 1** The Health and Wellbeing Board has reviewed its Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Following the adoption of the new strategy, the Board has reviewed its terms of reference (last updated in 2014) to align them with new working arrangements. Proposed amendments **are set out at Appendix 1**.

Proposal

- 2** The Board paid particular attention to representation from the voluntary sector. Representation on the Board for the sector was increased from two to three full voting members, consisting of a representative from defined representative groups plus an 'open seat' to give subject specialist advice to the two core members as and when required. The Board's accountability has also been made clearer. Other changes to note are:
 - The West Sussex Health Inequalities Network no longer exists and therefore representation from this organisation has been removed.
 - The Surrey and Sussex Area Team of NHS England withdrew their membership and so representation from them has been removed. They continue to receive papers and to be consulted with when required.

Recommended

- (1)** That the revised terms of reference for the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved for inclusion in the County Council's Constitution; and

Discontinuance of the Orbis Public Law Joint Committee

Background and Context

- 3** West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and Surrey County Council agreed in March 2016 to develop a single legal service to provide legal services to each of the four constituent authorities and the wider public sector.
- 4** All four authorities faced similar issues and individually have limited resilience and capacity for specialist advice and support. It was planned that an integrated service across the four councils would build resilience and save external costs.
- 5** The proposals for a formal partnership were scrutinised by Performance and Finance Select Committee and received full support. Teams were to be integrated and the work of the four authorities distributed across the single service, aligning recruitment of staff, ways of working and service systems and standards. The staffing and resource budgets were to be pooled.
- 6** A joint committee made up of the responsible lead members of each authority was established to oversee the work of the partnership. It met three times each year to track the implementation of the business plan and to monitor the

realisation of benefits. It met as a public joint committee in accordance with terms of reference approved by each of the four councils. The partners had agreed that April 2019 would be the date for the start of the pooled budget arrangement and a plan for the implementation of service integration was also agreed.

- 7 In April 2019 Surrey County Council indicated that, due to comprehensive internal service reviews, Surrey's commitment to the joint legal services project would need to be paused for at least one year. A high level assessment of the viability of the integration plan and the savings based on a three authority model showed that the savings could not be realised and that the costs and disruption associated with the integration plan could lead to an adverse position for each authority.

Proposal

- 8 It was agreed between the three other lead officers that a less structured partnership arrangement should be maintained but that full integration and the pooling of service budgets is not likely to provide the full benefits planned for the larger partnership. The partnership will maintain the practical benefits to date:
- A common case management system
 - A jointly managed framework for external legal services
 - A shared training and cpd programme
 - Links between teams to share knowledge and expertise
 - Sharing costs of common pieces of work
 - Sharing other resources when viable to do so
 - The 'caselines' system for web-based proceedings through the Brighton Care Centre for child protection proceedings
- 9 It was also decided that the joint committee could no longer serve a useful purpose. It had been established to provide political oversight of the integrated service and of the pooled budget. The proposal is therefore to discontinue the joint committee. Joint working arrangements will be managed through established operational discussions between the lead officers. The Cabinet Member will be briefed on any developments of any significance.

Recommended

- (2) That the Orbis Public Law Joint Committee be discontinued and be removed from the scheme of delegation in the Constitution.

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Background papers

None