

Organisation Design Communication Paper – Outcome following consultation

A reshaped council to deliver ‘A better Brighton & Hove for all’

6th March 2024

1. Purpose of the Communication Paper

1.1 A communication was launched on 29th January 2024 outlining proposals for the creation of a new Corporate Leadership Team for the council, and a new directorate structure. The original consultation paper provides the full rationale for the proposals that were designed to ensure:

- A structure that reflects the vision of 'A better Brighton & Hove for all' and is designed to deliver the outcomes set out in the Council Plan.
- Increases collaboration, horizontal working and reduces duplication to promote 'One Council' working.
- Addresses the current narrow remits of some posts at Executive Director level and provides the basis for a more streamlined structure that will provide savings and support longer term financial sustainability.
- Seeks to provide increased opportunity to lead through connection and partnership across the organisation with our communities and strategic partners.

1.2 During the communication period, we have received a significant amount of feedback and information from colleagues across the organisation. I am delighted by the level of engagement and interest in the shape of our organisation, and this outcome document will provide responses to the feedback and lay the foundations for the next phase of our redesign, that will be led and managed by Jess Gibbons, our new Chief Executive.

1.3 There was a great deal of synergy in the comments received, and for ease of reference I have grouped the main feedback into themes below. Where there were individual issues raised, I have responded on an individual basis.

1.4 I want to take this opportunity to thank each person that has taken the time to email me, and to provide valuable and well thought through feedback. This has provided much food for thought, and a great deal of information for me to take forward in informing our next steps, and to pass on to our incoming Chief Executive, as she embarks on the next phase of the change taking place in our organisation. I want to acknowledge that this period of change has been extremely challenging for some of you, and to thank you for your professionalism and support as we work through this change together.

2. Consultation feedback – key themes

2.1 Before addressing the key themes in detail, I wanted to confirm that following careful consideration of all the information gathered during the consultation I will be recommending to Strategy, Finance and City Regeneration Committee on 14th March, changes to the Council's Officer Scheme of Delegations to reflect a new directorate structure, reducing from 5 to 4 directorates. Following much feedback, the directorate names have been changed to:

- Corporate Services
- City Services

- Housing, Care and Wellbeing
- Families, Children and Learning

2.2 I have set out below the key purpose of each of the directorates, which has been updated in the light of feedback received.

2.3 **Corporate Services**

2.3.1 Corporate services will focus on the Council Plan outcome of ensuring a responsive council with well-run services:

- Meeting the needs of our residents and other customers
- Connecting with our communities through effective engagement and collaboration
- Ensuring we are a fair and inclusive council and City
- Establishing effective ways of working
- Ensuring good governance and financial resilience

2.3.2 The directorate will drive new ways of working through digital, data and insight that puts the needs of customers, residents, local businesses, and visitors at the heart of everything we do. Whilst the direct delivery of many customer services sits with City Services and other front-line directorates, Corporate Services will ensure we proactively understand the different experiences and requirements of our diverse communities and provide information that ensures we are able to adapt services accordingly.

2.3.3 Supporting services to deliver a fair and inclusive council will be a key outcome for the Corporate Services directorate, and our aim will be to embed this work in all that we do as we continue the excellent work delivered under our anti-racist strategy, our accessible city strategy, and other work designed to build on the business partnering relationships that exist to benefit services and create better outcomes for residents.

2.3.4 The directorate will ensure the right communication and engagement is in place to actively listen to the views of residents and customers, co-designing services where appropriate but also being clear about what we can and cannot do. Responsibility for engagement will include with our communities and the voluntary sector.

2.3.5 The directorate will deliver effective policy and partnership support to increase joined up and collaborative working with partners to manage demand and focus on the prevention of problems before they occur. Further work will be needed to join up policy work across the council to ensure a cross-cutting approach to challenges.

2.3.6 Effective governance and legal support will be provided, to support the work of the council and to embed and maximise efficiencies arising from more streamlined governance and a Council now with a majority administration.

2.3.7 The directorate will lead on establishing a performance framework for the council and will provide a joined-up performance function that makes the best use of data to monitor progress and drive service improvement, and to ensure the focus of the whole organisation is on our priorities and the delivery of the Council Plan.

2.3.8 The directorate will ensure we recruit, develop, and retain a diverse workforce which reflects the communities we serve and provides a working environment and culture that embeds equality, diversity, and inclusion at the heart of everything we do. The directorate will provide the interventions needed to develop skills for now and the future, ensuring staff are equipped to embrace new technology and drive service transformation and digital innovation. Corporate Services will provide a working

environment that is safe, inclusive, accessible, and supportive of staff health and wellbeing.

2.3.9 The directorate will support the council to make the best use of resources and address significant financial pressures to ensure the most vulnerable citizens can be protected as far as possible from the impact of reduced council funding and will drive forward the transformation and modernisation of services.

2.4 City Services

2.4.1 City Services will focus on ensuring we have a city to be proud of through an accessible, clean, and sustainable environment, and we are developing a flourishing and inclusive local economy that attracts and nurtures business and talent:

- Developing Brighton & Hove as a place where people want to live, work and learn
- Driving the policy and delivery of a new and expanded programme of council home and affordable home building
- Keeping our city clean and manage waste
- Working towards carbon net zero
- Protecting and enhancing the city's natural environment
- Making it easier for people to move around the city
- Meeting the needs of our residents and other customers
- Creating safe public spaces that are accessible to all

2.4.2 In the future it is proposed that a range of services are brought together to provide a clear, unified customer ethos and approach across the council. It is proposed that this review will bring together the data and insight from customer feedback, alongside the expertise in services to inform decisions about the line management of other front facing customer services. The aim will be to ensure we are joining up services and systems where possible, to make things easier for customers.

2.4.3 This detailed work will include consideration of the customer components of Revenues & Benefits, Environment, Planning, Housing and Transport. This list is not exhaustive, and a detailed piece of work will be scoped and sponsored by the Corporate Director City Services, and taken forward by the Assistant Director, Customer, Modernisation and Performance.

2.4.4 A fundamental role for this directorate will be to regenerate our city and reduce inequality with as much pace as possible. This includes driving the policy and delivery of a new and expanded programme of council home and affordable home building. Thousands more of these homes are needed over the next five years, that are good quality and sustainable. This directorate must seek every opportunity to attract funds from outside the city to invest in projects and programmes for regeneration. The property function will be used to support regeneration and through asset management will ensure the council is making the best use of its property portfolio. The directorate will have an enhanced role, following the transfer of functions from the LEP, to work alongside businesses to develop apprenticeship schemes for young people and support a successful economy in all areas including support and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

2.4.5 The directorate will be responsible for delivery of an accessible, clean, and sustainable environment that enhances the quality of life and sense of wellbeing for residents. Continued modernisation of waste services will provide reliable refuse and improved recycling rates, and clean, attractive, and well-maintained streets and public spaces.

- 2.4.6 Working towards carbon net zero for the city will be an aim that underpins all the directorate's services and provides the leadership and steer for the wider council in achieving this outcome. Making it easier for people to move around the city will also be an over-arching aim with a clear plan to address the transport needs and challenges of the city.
- 2.4.7 The directorate will ensure the creative and artistic offer of the city is accessible for residents and supports families, young people and those not currently well represented in participation to benefit from the learning and enjoyment of accessing a strong cultural offer. The directorate will also lead on ensuring improvements are made to leisure facilities to promote the health and wellbeing of the city, and particularly residents living in more deprived areas and those who currently are under-represented in participation in sport and leisure activities. Further consideration of the importance of tourism in economic development will be considered through the consultation, and further in phase 2.
- 2.4.8 Safer Communities will also move into City Services, ensuring a robust approach to regulatory activity, licensing policy and applications. Further discussions will now also take place to explore in detail the connection between the community safety functions, including the commissioning of domestic violence services, addressing violence against women and girls, and delivering the prevent statutory duties, and the functions of the Policy team, and the Community, Equality and Third Sector team. A further discussion about Emergency Planning, and where this best sits, is also needed. These discussions will be led by the Corporate Director City Services in collaboration with the relevant Assistant Directors and Heads of Service, which will establish whether some parts of the team should move at an earlier stage into Corporate Services.

2.5 Families, Children and Learning

- 2.5.1 Families, Children and Learning Services will focus on the Council Plan outcome of ensuring we have a fair and inclusive city, and a better future for children and young people:
- Keeping children and young people safe and ensuring no child or family is left behind.
 - Developing our prevention and family support work and providing excellent social work services
 - Supporting the provision of high quality and inclusive education from early years through to adult learning.
 - Leading transformational change in education inequalities in the city to drive up life chances and outcomes for children from the most deprived families and neighbourhoods.
 - Increase use of libraries and further develop inclusive and accessible family hubs to provide the right support at the right time to families.
 - Enabling people to live health, happy and fulfilling lives and reducing inequality.
- 2.5.2 The directorate will maintain a focus on the city's most disadvantaged children, young people and families with the clear objective of ensuring that all children in Brighton & Hove can reach their full potential. Economic inequality has a huge impact on educational outcomes, and these have remained stubbornly unequal in Brighton & Hove for generations. This directorate will be charged with leading transformation in this area, through listening to the voices of those with lived experience of Brighton and Hove's care and education system and ensuring services are joined up by improving and developing the Fairer Brighton & Hove Disadvantage Strategy Framework. By

driving collaboration within the council and building strong relationships and joint working across the wider system, the directorate will deliver high quality, inclusive and accessible services that make the best use of the resource available.

2.5.3 The directorates management of library services will provide an opportunity for the creative use of both resources and space to continue development of inclusive and accessible family hubs designed to provide the right support at the right time to families. Alongside this, the directorate will promote life-long learning and work with partners to deliver ambitious employment, training, and apprenticeship opportunities.

2.5.4 The directorate will drive forward a new programme of improving educational outcomes across the City, from nursery to sixth form college, to include innovative policymaking and lobbying central government for changes to policy and resourcing where necessary. This will include improved SEND provision and social and therapeutic support where necessary, a reduction in school exclusions and using all levers possible to ensure a healthy network and family of schools at primary and secondary level which can thrive. The directorate will work collaboratively in supporting the City Services directorate to make the city more affordable for young families and working with school leaders to develop solutions.

2.6 **Housing, Care and Wellbeing**

2.6.1 The Housing, Care and Wellbeing Directorate will support the outcome of a fair and inclusive city where people can live and age well:

- Enabling people to live healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives, and enabling safer communities.
- Ensuring there is a safe, effective, sustainable and high-quality health and care provision in the city
- Providing excellent social work services and ensuring effective adult safeguarding arrangement.
- Providing joined up services for vulnerable adults and ensuring everyone has access to the information, advice, and services they need.
- Improving housing quality
- Increasing housing supply
- Improving housing support for residents, meeting housing needs and supporting those made homeless

2.6.2 The Housing, Care and Wellbeing directorate brings together services for adults with the provision of suitable housing across the city. Access to decent, quality affordable housing is key to people's health and wellbeing, and providing the right housing support in an integrated way with other services will ensure the best use of resources and joined-up support for our most vulnerable people accessing housing and other services.

2.6.3 This directorate will develop innovative policy responses to the particular challenges facing the City, including addiction, rough sleeping and homelessness. The directorate will have a focus on ending rough sleeping and homelessness in Brighton & Hove. Brighton has one of the highest numbers of rough sleepers in the country with a 27% rise in rough sleeping between 2022-23. But by 2010 rough sleeping in Brighton & Hove was down to single digits and it can be again with better resourcing and smarter, more joined up, working. This directorate will centre the voices of those with lived experience of homelessness in Brighton & Hove and seek to recruit those with lived experience of the issues the directorate is seeking to address.

- 2.6.4 The directorate will ensure that the council strategies, policies, and services promote better health and wellbeing for all, advance public health and reduce unfair differences between the most and least healthy. This will involve making improvements to how we offer information, advice and support to help people stay healthy and independent, and to access the care and support they need.
- 2.6.5 The directorate will lead on building strong relationships across the health and social care system to provide joined-up community teams and ensure services work together and are centred around the needs of people. Good quality social work will be at the heart of the activities of the directorate. The directorate has a responsibility to ensure there is a sustainable care market that can meet the needs of growing numbers of local people in need to care while enabling residents to maintain their independence as long as they are able.
- 2.6.6 Enabling and supporting communities to be safer places to live will be a key role for Housing, Care and Wellbeing Services, and further consideration of the join-up with other services will be needed to ensure this work is as effective as possible. Adult safeguarding responsibilities will be critical, including working with community organisations and others across the city to ensure vulnerable adults are kept safe.
- 2.6.7 This directorate will also lead on commissioning, to ensure a joined-up approach to ensuring people and their carers have the support they need. A review of commissioning across the council will take place in phase 2.

Overall structure

- 2.7 There was broad support for the redesign of the structure of the council, with an acknowledgement that we need a more streamlined approach, greater clarity and transparency on decision making and priorities, and on achieving a greater connection with the city and its residents. It was widely acknowledged that this change needs to fit with the new governance structures, and that the move to a cabinet system provides us with opportunities for a more strategic focus on the priorities of the Council Plan, and a way to manage our finite resources more effectively. It was also acknowledged in many of the responses that the real change needed will be achieved through cultural change, rather than our organisation design.
- 2.8 There were serious concerns raised about what was perceived to be the removal of the Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities directorate. Rather than a deletion of any one directorate, we are creating a new organisational design, with phase 1 creating 4 new directorates, and new roles at the most senior level. The services provided from within the current HNC directorate are highly valued, delivering improving services to residents as well as policy and strategic support across the council. This level of improvement will continue as we develop a new organisational structure that aligns to the Council Plan and will provide us with increased opportunities for joined up working.
- 2.9 There were some concerns raised about the language in the document, and the balance between corporate functions and frontline delivery. The term 'stronger corporate centre' refers to the fact that the council will work more effectively and collaboratively as one corporate body. The establishment of a new corporate leadership team will change the current model fundamentally, with much greater join up between what has traditionally been termed 'corporate functions' and 'front line delivery'. Our culture change programme will address any perception that service directorates are 'done to' by the corporate centre. This is an artificial divide in an

organisation where we are all here to serve the city. There is much good practice for us to build on, with a strong business partnering model already used by those in supporting roles. Joined up working will be role modelled by the Corporate Leadership Team, and with our strategies and approaches to performance management, policy development, resource management, financial planning, digital development and our customer offer being owned and driven forward by the Corporate Leadership Team as a whole. All Corporate Directors will be responsible for ensuring the council works as One Council, with accountability for council-wide priorities and strategies sitting alongside a range of functional responsibilities.

- 2.10 Further discussion in phase 2 will be required to consider the council's approach to customer experience, both in terms of our strategy and the operational delivery of customer service. The work currently already started to map our current offer will be valuable to feed into the phase 2 considerations, and in deciding the approach needed to deliver a customer offer that meets the needs of residents in a joined-up way.
- 2.11 The new governance structure will provide for a more strategic approach to long term planning and decision making and will be built on close alignment and relationships between lead members and Corporate Directors, as well as those responsible for services at tier 3 where the main accountability for operational delivery will sit. This culture change will involve a change in ways of working for everyone involved and will build the capacity in the organisation for strategic planning. This will require operational detail to be held at the right level to ensure there aren't unrealistic expectations of Corporate Directors to hold all operational detail of their wider remits, and this change towards greater accountability and empowerment was welcomed by a number of current service heads.
- 2.12 Many of the responses sought further clarity on the savings figure of £2.4M that will be achieved through our organisational redesign, and acknowledgement of the need for greater efficiency. The changes proposed in phase one, will be the first of several changes that will contribute to the savings required but the overall £2.4 million is intended to be achieved looking at the shape and structure of the entire organisation as well as work to consider functional alignment and where they may be duplication. Section 4 of the original consultation paper outlines these initial proposals in some detail, and this paper will set out the decisions that have been made following the consultation. The changes in the structure outlined in these proposals will deliver a recurrent saving of £0.177m split across the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.13 Phase 2 will outline subsequent changes and will follow on from an extensive period of engagement led by our new Chief Executive. Once decisions are made, any future change will be subject to full consultation with those impacted. In the meantime, the savings required for 24/25 will start to be achieved with a continuation of vacancy management held at a directorate level. This vacancy management will continue until our organisational redesign is complete.

Process of consultation

- 2.14 Concerns were raised about the process of consultation, and that only those whose roles were directly impacted were part of the formal consultation. There were additionally questions raised about communication and the opportunity for colleagues to feed into the process, as well as some other concerns that the communications were too wide, given the impact on individuals. I have contacted several colleagues

individually so that this can be discussed in more detail. It is fully recognised that this has been a difficult process for some of you.

- 2.15 As we approach phase 2 of our organisational redesign, we will take on board any lessons learnt from this phase. Jess Gibbons is already planning her initial period of engagement which will take place before any decisions on the structure at tier 3 are taken. There is a balance in ensuring that there is sufficient engagement and opportunity for those impacted to influence the final decisions, whilst ensuring that we settle into a new organisational design as soon as possible.
- 2.16 I have covered the next steps we will be taking, in section 3 below. I have discussed this in detail with Jess Gibbons, and she is very excited about meeting colleagues and using the depth of knowledge and experience that so clearly exists in our organisation to inform the future decisions about structure. It is also acknowledged that our future ways of working will be as much about the culture of the organisation and how we work, as it will about the formal structures in place. Where we do make structural changes, we will follow our usual processes of consultation and engagement, and opportunities created will be available in accordance with appropriate change management processes.
- 2.17 Concerns were raised about the extent of planning that has taken place regarding phase 2. I can provide reassurance that Jess will be leading an open and transparent period of engagement before any decisions are taken. We have provided clarity in the paper about areas where it is felt there maybe duplication, and there were some other areas highlighted below that were raised through the consultation which will also be explored. Some mapping work, related to our customer offer, is being taken forward by Donna Chisholm and Rima Desai, and we have had very high-level conversations at ELT about potential areas of duplication. We also have a set of organisational design principles already in operation, that we will be using to inform phase 2 decisions. Jess will take forward this work from 18th March onwards, and there will be an open opportunity for you to contribute to this work.

Bringing together Adult Social Care and Housing

- 2.18 The focus of many of the consultation responses was the proposal to bring together a single directorate that will cover adult social care services and housing, with both positive and negative responses to this proposal provided, and there were many issues raised with the directorate name. During the consideration of directorate structure, alternative proposals were considered, and it was decided that for the challenges faced in this city the bringing together of housing with other services to support vulnerable adults was the right combination. Our ways of working, and the structures we build at tier 3 will ensure the directorate has the right level of expertise and accountability sitting with the right posts to ensure capacity to lead these 2 significant areas of service.
- 2.19 I set out below the main issues raised about the Health and Housing directorate:
- Concern about the breadth of role for a single Corporate Director for all of adult social care and housing services – all the Corporate Director roles will operate with a broader corporate focus, and this will require change to the current Assistant Director roles at tier 3. The transition to the new structure will therefore take time and will involve changes that will create greater clarity and accountability for service matters in roles at tier 3. This change will require a different way of working, including how we

manage our relationship with members. As we move to a new cabinet system, we will be looking for opportunities to streamline decision making and provide a much clearer view of the pipeline of work over the next 3 years.

- The Corporate Director that will cover all adult and housing services (see name discussion below) will build on the partnership work that already exists between colleagues in HNC and HASC, to drive forward further collaboration that will support our most vulnerable residents in a more holistic way. Tier 3 roles will have clear remits and accountability, with much greater opportunity to build effective relationships with lead members and to support the Corporate Directors with political handling and management. There was concern that there would be a loss of a 'strong voice' for Housing at an executive level, but in appointing to the role of Corporate Director, a robust process will be followed to consider suitability for a role with this broad remit for 2 highly regulated statutory functions. We will also ensure that the Corporate Leadership Team provides joined up leadership to navigate through the biggest change to English social housing regulation and legislation for more than a decade. In phase 2 we will need to consider carefully what this means in terms of the leadership and resource for the Housing function, and to ensure a whole council approach with wrap around resource is put in place, building on the collaboration that already exists.
- Concern about timing with the incoming new inspection regimes and whether one post could hold the technical expertise required. Clearly there is much to be learnt as a council about our approach to inspections, and how we provide support in the planning for, and management of the inspection process. Children's services have long been subject to multiple inspections, both as a service directly and in supporting schools across the city. Whilst there are new inspection regimes that will need to be managed in relation to adult social care and housing, we will draw learning from what is already known about how best to plan and manage inspections. We have a great deal of talent and expertise in our adult social care, housing and children's teams, and we will take flexible approaches to resource allocation to ensure we have the right support in place during inspections.
- The statutory Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) functions: during the interim period, the current Assistant Director of Operations (HASC) will undertake the statutory DASS functions pending the appointment of a formal interim Executive Director. Initially the proposed structure places the DASS function with the new Corporate Director role, but as we proceed through phase 2 of the consultation, further discussion on this point will be had with those staff impacted. The Corporate Director will continue to have accountability for safeguarding adults, and this will involve a direct link to the principal social worker and safeguarding colleagues to provide the oversight and leadership as set out in the Care Act. Whilst this will be discussed further in phase 2, that direct link will continue both in the interim and permanent arrangements.

2.20 In terms of positive response, the opportunities and potential to join and improve services and outcomes for vulnerable residents was acknowledged in many responses, with a flavour of these responses provided below:

- Providing an opportunity for positive joint working and improvements to what can currently feel like a silo'd structure between housing and adult social care, alongside building on the areas where strong relationships, collaboration and joint working are well embedded.
- Building on excellent work that is already underway regarding our Extra Care Housing provision where changes have resulted in a more customer focussed and

efficient allocations systems, and tangible improvements in void reduction and increased occupancy rates.

- Providing opportunities for a One Council approach to some of the city's most intractable issues such as mental health and homelessness, as well as meeting the holistic needs of an ageing population, and a sense of excitement from colleagues to see what opportunities will arise from new ways of working.

Directorate name and importance of adult social care services

2.21 There was significant feedback that the title of the Health and Housing Directorate was not clear, with this being the most often raised issue by some way. There was a great deal of concern that the professional role of Adult Social Care was not mentioned in the title given the significance of this area of work and the scale of the budget. It was also felt that the title maybe misleading, and residents and customers may think that the directorate provides NHS services. There was also concern raised about 'Families' not being referenced in the Children and Learning directorate.

2.22 These issues have been carefully considered, particularly ensuring that the extremely important work of our Adult Social Care teams is valued and recognised for the services provided to some of the city's most vulnerable residents. In considering the directorate names, I was very keen that we avoided the shortening of the directorate titles into acronyms, that make no sense to many of our staff, but certainly no sense to the wider community and those that are accessing our services.

2.23 Some of the feedback on the original document highlighted the absence of adult social care and safeguarding as specific areas of work from the directorate description. I had used generic terms which were intended to cover these vital areas of work, but in week 2 of the consultation the document was updated to make more specific reference to adult social care. As part of this outcome, I wanted to highlight the importance of these areas of work, and specifically the vital importance of the statutory services provided, and to formally acknowledge the valued work of colleagues who provide such excellent dedication and professional support in these areas.

The move of Library Services to Families, Children and Learning Directorate

2.24 It was acknowledged in the responses to the consultation that libraries are a service that could sit logically with many parts of the council, and that sitting the service with Families, Children and Learning strengthens the links with other family learning services, albeit the service offer of libraries is much wider than this. There was particular concern about how services such as digital inclusion, access to PC's, business support and the provision of community and learning events will be supported within the proposed arrangements.

2.25 There were specific questions about how libraries link to family hubs, given the specific mention of this in the consultation. This thinking is to be explored in much more detail and depth in phase 2, but some examples from other local authorities demonstrate models where libraries are used as hubs to work closely with families and residents who find it difficult to access the support they need through mainstream services. The library services, in some local authority areas have evolved into family hubs that support people to help themselves and each other, providing physical space to provide more localised services. Further exploration is needed as to whether the community support provided through family hubs, which involves providing information, advice and guidance, delivering volunteering and community development, and the delivery of interventions for families across levels of need could benefit from closer working

across the physical spaces that our libraries provide. This is just one element of join up, and the consultation feedback also highlighted the importance of continued collaboration between libraries and many other areas of the council.

- 2.26 There was much positivity in the responses from libraries and welcoming of opportunities to work closely with other services, particularly where this might provide the opportunity for financial efficiency or enhancing the offer to residents.

The move of Safer Communities to City Services

- 2.27 There were some positive responses to the move of Safer Communities to City Services, particularly in regard to the synergies between the regulatory services of Environmental Protection, Licencing, Trading Standards fitting well with the regulatory work that currently sits within the current EEC directorate. There were also concerns expressed about the move away from Housing given the close working on anti-social behaviour. This concern is recognised and will be addressed by our ways of working which will ensure the expertise within the community safety team provides support in a joined-up way across the council, with the key relationship with housing colleagues continuing and developing.
- 2.28 During phase 2, further consideration is needed to how we best take forward our work to ensure our communities are safer places to live and work, with various views shared about how these services are cross cutting and interlinked across community safety, housing and community engagement and how we fulfil our statutory duties under the Prevent agenda, where solutions often require health, education, employment, housing and children's services.
- 2.29 Further discussions will now also take place to explore in detail the connection between the community safety functions, including the commissioning of domestic violence services, addressing violence against women and girls, and delivering the prevent statutory duties, and the functions of the Policy team, and the Community, Equality and Third Sector team. A further discussion about Emergency Planning, and where this best sits, is also needed. These discussions will be led by the Corporate Director City Services in collaboration with the relevant Assistant Directors and Heads of Service, which will establish whether some parts of the team should move at an earlier stage into Corporate Services.
- 2.30 In phase 1, Life Events will remain as a reporting line into Housing, Care and Wellbeing but further consideration will be given to this area in phase 2, to explore the synergies with other functions in City Services.

The move of Community, Equalities and Third Sector team to Corporate Services

- 2.31 There was concern about the move of these services away from Housing, given the legal and regulatory obligations to engage with tenants as well as enabling communities to influence decision making and hold the council as landlord to account. The Council Plan sets out the council's determination to ensure residents views, experiences and needs are central to our decision making, and it is important that we have a consistent and joined up approach to enriching and deepening our engagement activity, sharing our expertise across the council. The importance of engagement in developing housing policy and services is fundamental and a central part of the Council Plan, and this strong link between engagement and housing will continue.

- 2.32 There were comments raised that the proposals weaken the focus on engaging with communities and delivering a fair and inclusive council, given this work is currently led from within the HNC directorate. I can provide reassurance that how we engage with communities, and driving forward with a fair and inclusive council, will continue to be embedded within services across the council. These are priority areas of work, with community engagement being one of our biggest challenges and a major priority of the new administration. Bringing community engagement closer to our policy and communications work will provide greater opportunities to effectively listen to our communities, support services to respond and effectively communicate the changes we have made. This aligns with our Council Plan and is designed to build trusting relationships and ensure our communities feel heard.
- 2.33 Supporting services to deliver a fair and inclusive council will be a key outcome for the Corporate Services directorate, and this will be reflected clearly in future communications. Our aim will be to embed this work in all that we do, and ensure our focus is outward and our work driven by the right communication and engagement with our diverse communities. Jess Gibbons is looking forward to discussing this key corporate priority further as we seek to continue the excellent work delivered under our anti-racist strategy, our accessible city strategy, and other work designed to build on the excellent business partnering relationships that exist to benefit services and create better outcomes for residents.

Support functions for directorate structures

- 2.34 There were concerns raised during the consultation from colleagues that provide support to the current directorate structure. I have confirmed to those colleagues that as part of this consultation process there are no other immediate changes to roles and when the directorate structure changes, all current roles will transfer into the new directorates pending further work as part of phase 2 (see next steps and timeline in section 3).
- 2.35 The next step in our organisation redesign, will be to consider the structure of roles reporting into the new Corporate Directors, and how we avoid duplication and drive cross organisational change to meet our aspirations set out in 1.1 above.
- 2.36 During phase 2 we will be looking at the way directorates are supported and how we respond in an agile and cross cutting way to challenges. We will be seeking to balance directorate specific needs for support with the need for flexible structures that maximise our ability to work cross organisationally. There are many examples of where we might benefit from an even greater level of join-up and flexible use of resources, such as responding to major challenges around school organisation or the homelessness crisis, and in supporting each other with common challenges such as the work to prepare for and see through increasing numbers of inspections. In all these areas the role of Business Managers and other support roles are crucial.
- 2.37 These are all considerations that will be further discussed in phase 2, and in the meantime, I have reassured those currently in Executive Assistant (EA) and Business Improvement Manager roles that there will be no immediate change to roles, although there will be some discussion about remits, and for EA's which senior leaders they support.

Communications

2.38 Feedback was provided about a more strategic approach required for communications, with the impact of current funding arrangements needing to be addressed to facilitate this. As part of this, further thought is needed into how we maximise communications reach with digital and other channels, and ensuring a holistic approach to developing communications that maximise the use of a variety of platforms.

Areas of functional alignment

2.39 It was acknowledged by many that the council needed to find more effective methods of engagement, and build on the collaboration that already exists, and has seen the recent development of the new community engagement approach. This uses a new digital platform and other blended approaches to ensure a one council joined up approach to engagement and is an area we need to further explore to ensure we maximise the insight gathered, and how we use this across policy thinking and service delivery. There was also feedback that highlighted the importance of embedding community engagement, insight and equalities into service delivery, and ensuring that there are strong relationships and collaboration between subject experts and services delivery.

2.40 The original consultation document highlighted 11 areas where it is felt further review maybe needed to remove duplication, improve efficiency, and further develop a one council approach. There were suggestions of additional areas that could also be included, such as how we approach data analytics, research and evaluation and our approach to partnership working. These areas will be further considered in phase 2.

3. Next steps

3.1 Following the extensive feedback and consultation, it has been decided to proceed with the reduction in number of directorates, and the establishment of a new corporate leadership team (see new structure charts attached at appendix 1). The feedback has demonstrated the extent of change needed as well as the enthusiasm of leaders across the organisation to be involved in the next steps.

3.2 The most significant feedback related to the naming of directorates, and therefore this has been reconsidered. The revised directorates will be named as follows:

- Corporate Services
- City Services
- Housing, Care and Wellbeing
- Families, Children and Learning

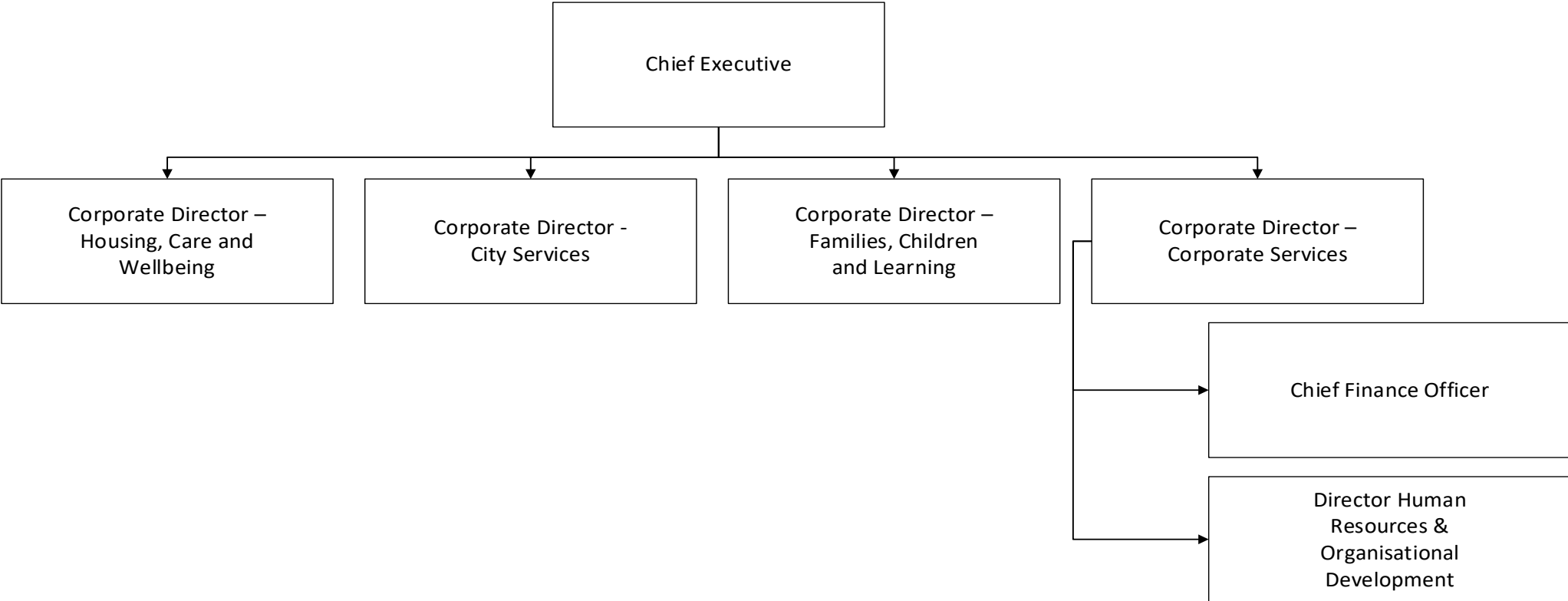
3.3 The role of Corporate Director Housing, Care and Wellbeing is a new position which will be appointed to in accordance with the processes for appointment of a Corporate Director. Further detail will follow on this shortly.

3.4 Pending the appointment of the Corporate Director (Housing, Care and Wellbeing), interim arrangements will be put in place. These will be discussed in more detail with those impacted over the next 2 weeks, and further information will follow on this. All other changes will take effect from 1st April 2024.

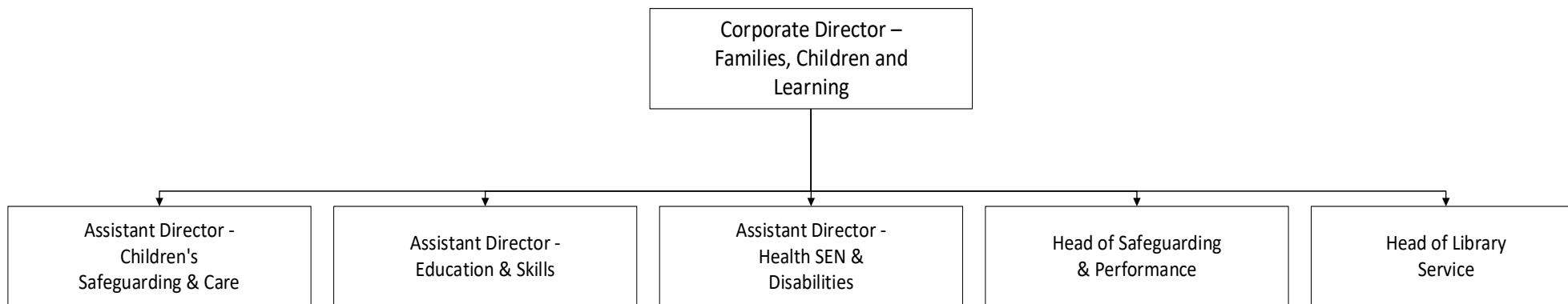
3.5 Once again, I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to everyone that has contributed during the period of consultation, and for the hard work and professionalism across the organisation during this period of change.

Appendix 1 – New Structure Charts

Corporate Leadership Team

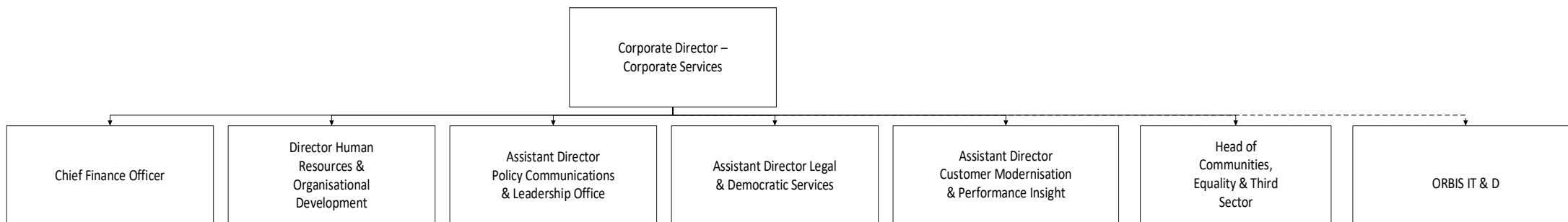


Families, Children and Learning

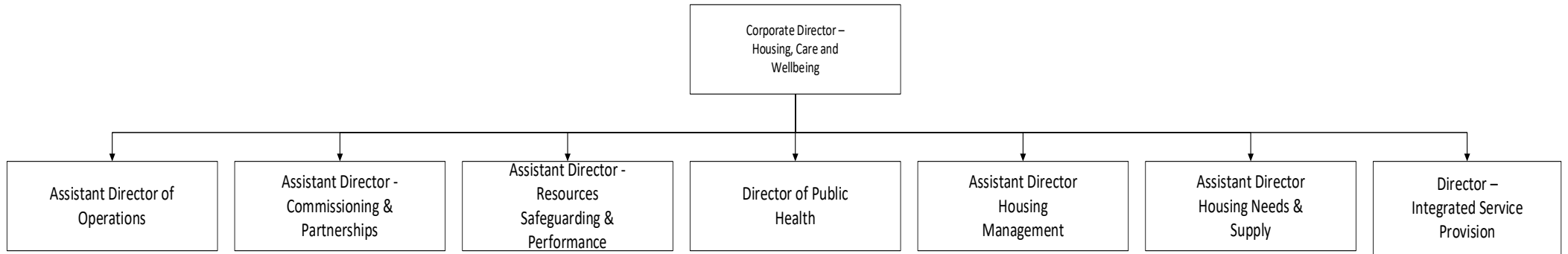


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Corporate Services



Housing, Care and Wellbeing



70 City Services

