

1. INTRODUCTION

A report was presented to Council on 16 March 2020, which set out a small number of proposals to amend the Senior Management structure for Plymouth City Council to meet existing and future drivers for change. The report included proposals in relation to the Customer and Corporate Services Directorate, for which some additional changes are now proposed. The Directorate encompasses activities including Finance, Procurement, Capital Projects, FM, Human Resources and Organisational Development, Libraries, Customer Services, Service Centre, Business Change and Digital.

2. CURRENT POSITION

Following the approval of proposals in the report of 16 March 2020, the Council has been responding to the challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time implementation of the changes has been based on what was needed at the time to deal with the lockdowns and service impacts caused by the pandemic. With the route ahead now clearer, now is the time to complete the implementation of structures in the Customer and Corporate Services Directorate.

Changes that have occurred include the Service Director for HR and Organisational Development taking responsibility for Facilities Management and Capital Projects from the 1 September 2020 and the appointment of a new Service Director for Finance, in November 2020. The Service Director for Finance is the Council's statutory Section 151 Officer.

In December 2020 the post of Service Director for Customer Services and the Service Centre became vacant. This allowed a further opportunity to review the priorities and challenges for the Council and how it delivers its future operating model. This includes the delivery of the Council's Digital Plan 2020-2024, the ongoing delivery of business change, and the requirement to continuously develop customer experience. Ownership for our customer experience is a shared responsibility for staff across the Council. Defining and achieving a level of consistency across Council services requires senior and dedicated leadership which is why these proposals include a new Service Director level role with this accountability. The role of the Strategic Director for Customer and Corporate Services is to align our Customer, Digital, Accommodation, People and Financial plans and strategies to maximise return on these assets that all Council services depend upon.

In addition there is a compelling need to drive forward the benefits of Digital. The City has recently attracted £3M of full fibre investment (LFFN) awarded by Department of Culture, Media and Sport. This is delivering significant gigabit broadband capability to public sector assets which will enable the Council and partners to continue to respond to customer demand for innovative digital services working alongside traditional channels for service delivery. In addition, City Fibre announced a £50M private investment into the City bringing full fibre to businesses and households across the City.

This investment opens up a number of opportunities for employment, innovation and potential income streams for the City as a whole and therefore requires a significant amount of leadership, capacity and expertise to maximise those investments that are not currently in place. The Council also has an extensive digital plan to deliver over the next three years which will require new skills and capabilities that take us forward for the future and make sure that we have a digital inclusion approach to ensure all our customers are able to access our services.

Existing arrangements for Digital and Business Change activity are currently being managed on temporary arrangements which are not sustainable in the longer term. In line with the vast majority of local authorities there is now an identified requirement to have a Service Director or equivalent responsible for customer experience, digital services and cross cutting business change activity.

3. PROPOSALS

Customer and Corporate Services Directorate

It is proposed that the vacant role of Service Director of Customer Service and Service Centre is deleted.

It is proposed that a new role is created: Service Director for Digital and Customer Experience. The postholder will lead on Digital, Business Change, Customer Experience and Corporate Customer Service functions for the Council.

In addition and in response to the impacts that Covid-19 will have on the collection of Council Tax, increased management of bad debt and the demand on benefits it is also proposed that the Service Centre and Revenues and Benefits departments move under the remit of the Service Director for Finance. This will ensure the financial implications and complex legislative changes are dealt with through one set of line management rather than two.

4. COUNCIL PROCEDURE

Initial consultation on these proposals has taken place with those likely to be impacted. Subject to Council agreeing this approach, further individual consultation will take place with directly affected Chief Officers and other post holders to ensure they are fully informed of the proposed next steps and have the opportunity to raise any further comments or questions.

Trade union colleagues will also be updated with the opportunity to respond to the proposals and support their members.

The Chief Officer Appointments Panel will consider any further responses from the consultation carried out in respect of these proposals as they relate to Chief Officers.

Any other roles will be consulted on by management representatives in line with existing arrangements relating to those on NJC terms and conditions. Other processes, for example those relating to any future recruitment and selection, will also be undertaken in line with existing arrangements.

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

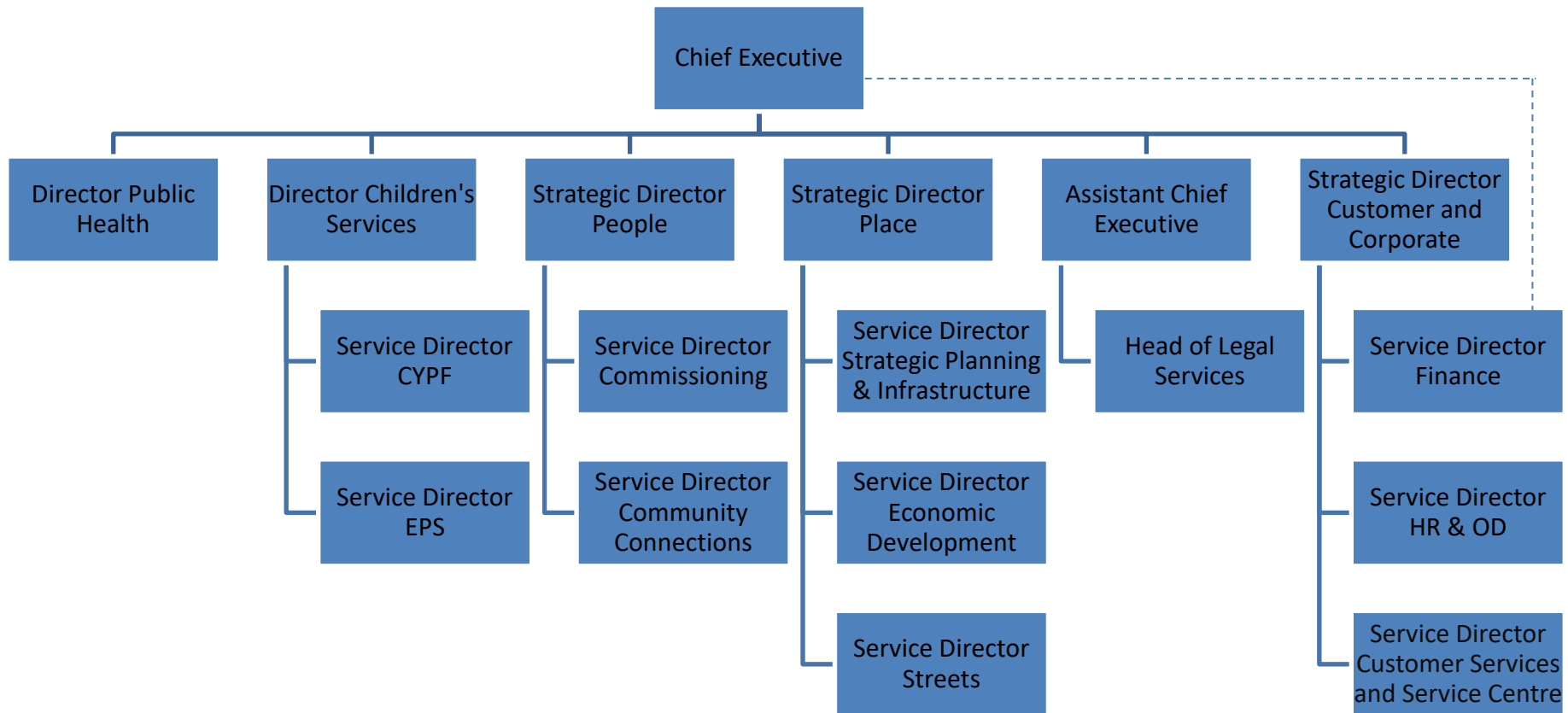
There will be no increase in the Chief Officer establishment from this proposal. Chief Officer and other salaries are accounted for within the budget agreed by Council in February 2021.

New role profiles and wider pay bands were introduced for Chief Officers with effect from 1 October 2019. Where roles have changed there will be consideration of whether or not this impacts on the pay rate with referral to an independent job evaluation process if required. No changes will be made to current salaries without reference to the Chief Officer Appointments Panel.

6. PROPOSED TIMETABLE

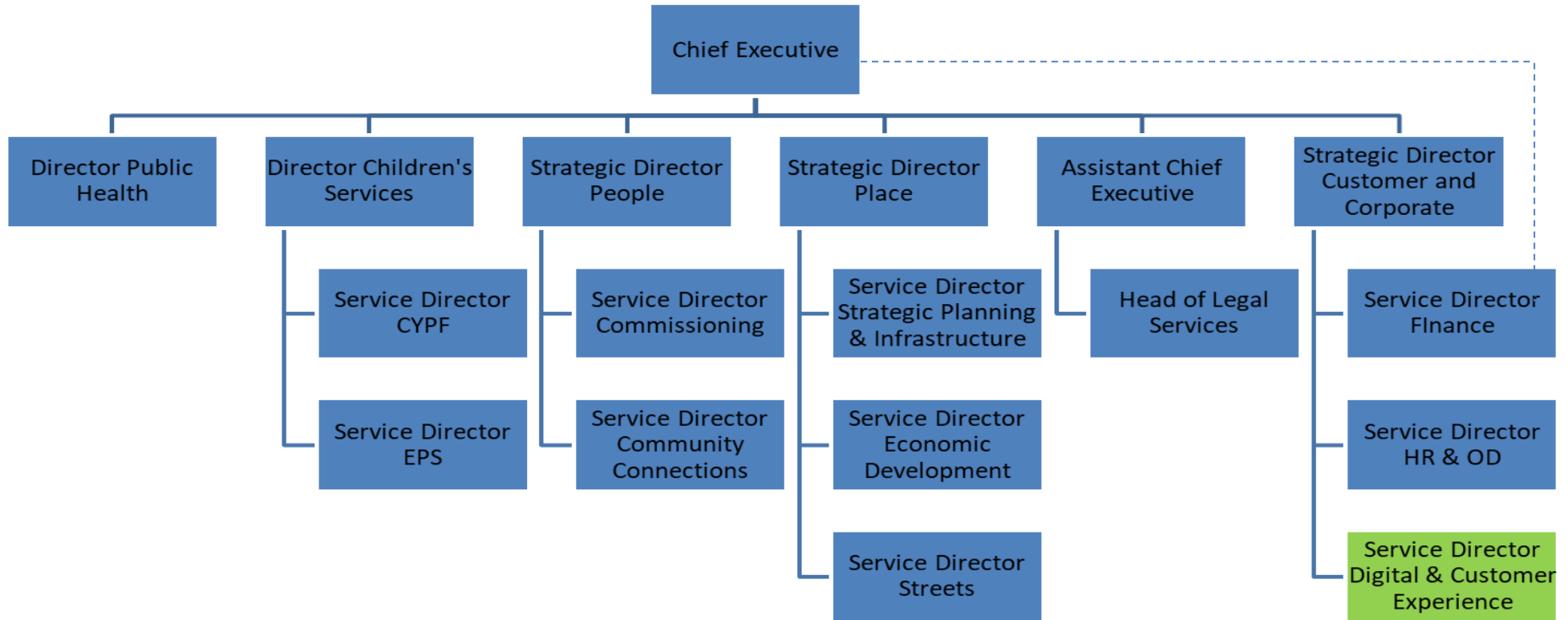
If the proposals are approved by Council on 15 March 2021 it is anticipated that Members of the Chief Officer Appointment Panel which is scheduled to meet on 26 March 2021 will commence work required to implement this activity.

Appendix A – Current structure



Note: There is a dotted line of responsibility for the Service Director Finance to the Chief Executive for the statutory accountabilities and responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer.

Appendix B – Proposed structure



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