



CONSULTATION FEEDBACK PAPER

Monday 9th December 2024

Distribution:

- All staff
- Trade Union Representatives
- Executive Councillors
- Scrutiny Committee Chair & Opposition Spokes

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Group Design consultation for City Services, Communities, Corporate, and Economy and Place ran from Monday 14 October 2024 to Friday 15 November 2024. The purpose was to share with all staff proposals to redesign our council so it can become a more modern and financially sustainable organisation that is better able to serve our residents and communities and work effectively with our key partners.

This paper provides a summary of the feedback and key themes received from you during the consultation. The feedback received is continuing to inform next steps and shape the plan for the 25 February 2025 implementation paper.

This has been an important and necessary exercise for the Council. Many colleagues took time to provide thoughtful feedback and identified issues of concern and posed solutions. The process also illustrated that many of you care deeply about the council's future and have a good knowledge about the whole Council. It also highlighted that some staff have yet to accept the need for change or feel anxious about that change.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

There was a lot of feedback that both challenged as well as confirmed the consultation proposals. Some responses contained multiple points or issues. When analysing the feedback these were reviewed and categorised separately.

Several clarifications were addressed during consultation and included in [Addendums published on CityNet](#) to correct errors or answer frequently asked questions.

Some of the reported errors reflect the lack of consistency between data held by the Corporate Hub and data used by staff, for example in relation to job titles.

Staff responded to the consultation in a variety of ways. The total number of written submissions was 523, across email and MS Forms. The breakdown by group is:

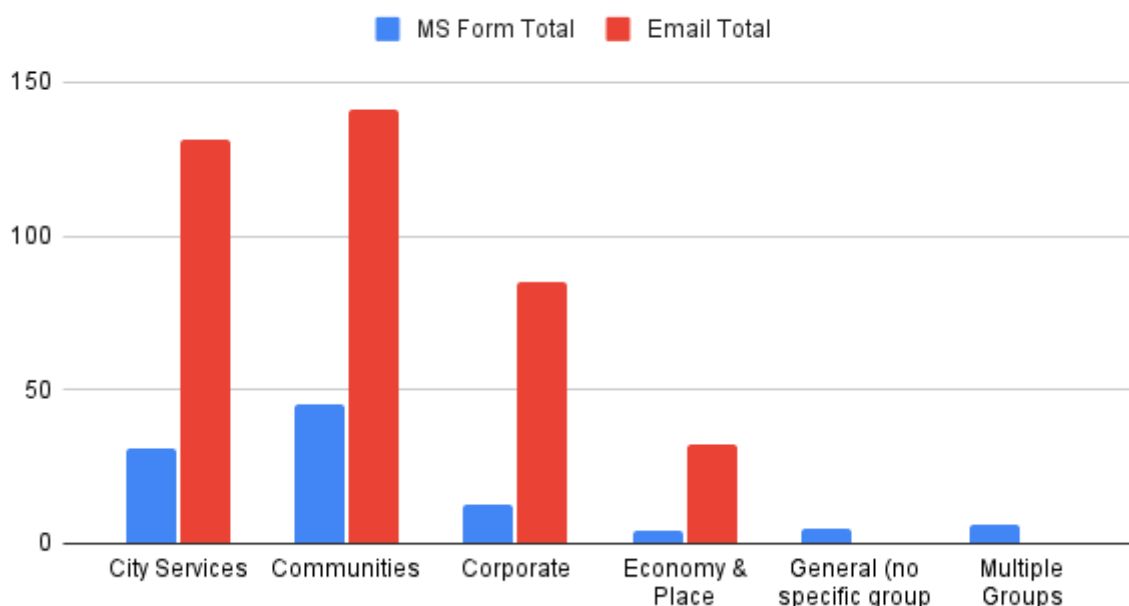
- Communities: 203 - 39%
- City Services: 164 - 31%
- Corporate: 110 - 21%
- Economy and Place: 36 - 7%
- General: 5 - 1%
- Multiple: 6 - 1%

RESPONSES BY CHANNELS

Email was the preferred means to respond. Anonymous forms and face-to-face feedback were less common with considerably fewer choosing this method compared to the formal written feedback routes that were offered.

In cases where feedback was shared verbally it was subsequently scripted and shared into the Group Design feedback spreadsheet. It was not counted in the written response statistics but will be taken into consideration as part of the planning for implementation.

Contact method by group



4.0 KEY THEMES FROM RESPONSES

The breakdown of responses per theme, organised by group, is as follows. Comments about **Team Structures** and **Job Descriptions** were most frequently raised. Other topics, including **Lifts and Shifts**, **Deleted Roles**, **Ways of Working**, and **Culture Change**, also featured prominently.

There is a distinction between Culture Change and Ways of Working though they are interrelated. Culture tends to reflect the values, behaviours, and relationships, and what it feels like to work within a particular team for example. Ways of Working tends to reflect processes, current and historic practice, and the application of best practice – or how things are done. Looking across all group there were nearly twice as many responses received about our Ways of Working (42 total) compared to Culture change (19 total), addressing these key themes will be part of the work going forward.

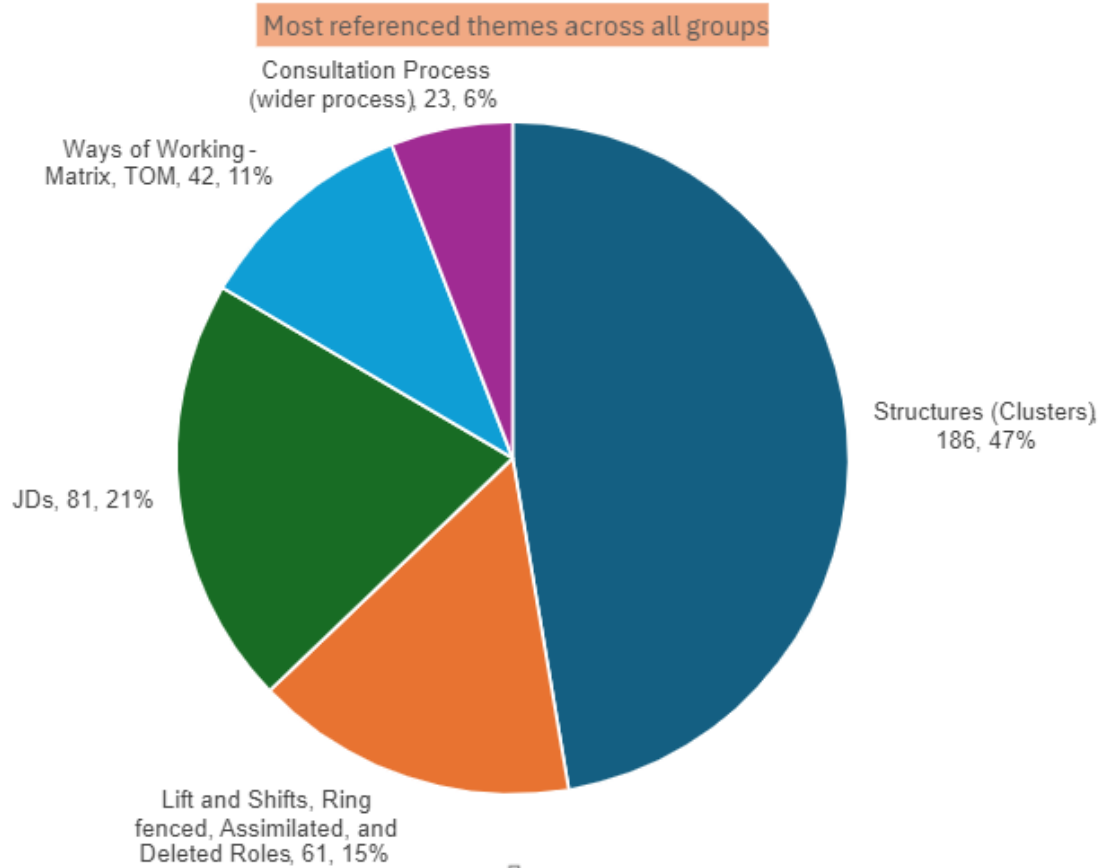
TOP 5 MOST DISCUSSED THEMES BY GROUP

The following is a descriptive table of themes expressed during the consultation.

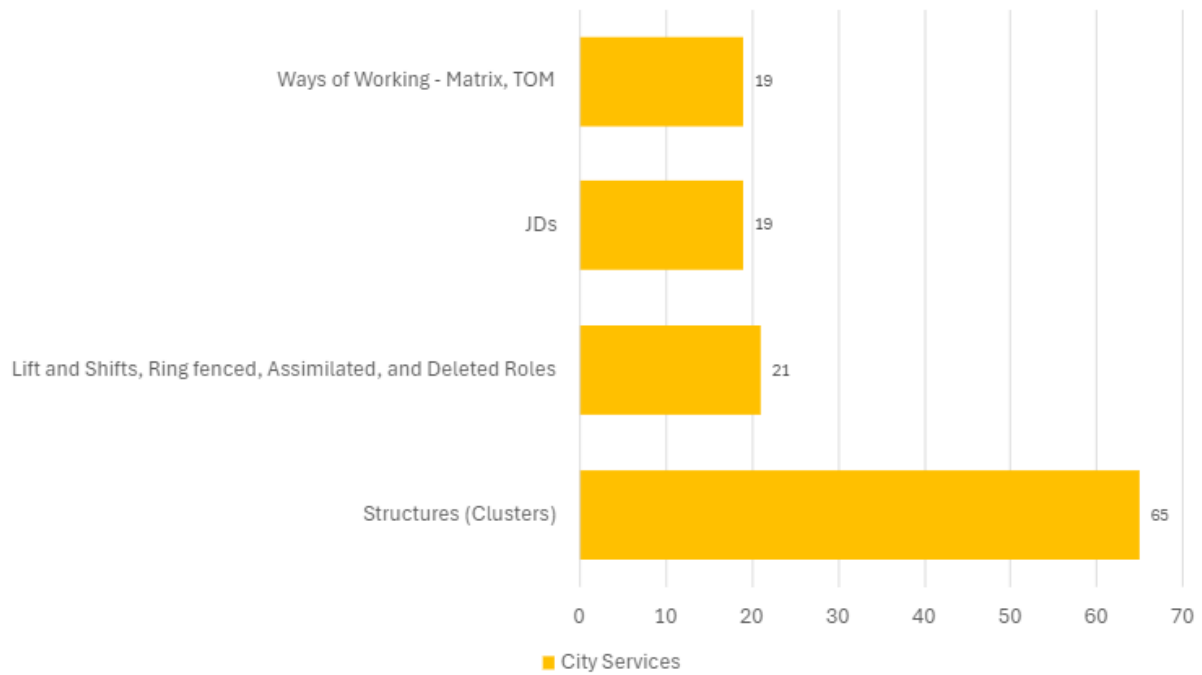
Theme	Description
Vision and strategic goals	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to broader plans and vision for the future of the council including direction of travel and aims of the wider change process.
Managing Change	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to stakeholder collaboration & engagement including how and if they were engaged and change management plans to facilitate transitions into new normal.
Impact of Change	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to the internal and external impact of the changes being put forward including, internal risks and concerns over resource and capacity.
Financial Implications	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to the financial implications of the proposed changes as it relates to the council.
Errors, Omissions, and Corrections	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to mistakes in the consultation paper that needed correcting or clarifying.
Structures	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to the internal structures of the council before, during and after the proposed changes are put in place.
Job Descriptions	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to new job descriptions or significant changes to existing job descriptions.
HR	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to HR including but not limited to; compliance, equalities policies, and pay.
Operations	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to practical implementation of changes, and existing activities and who does them.
Lift & Shifts, Ring fencing, Assimilation, and Deletion of Roles	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to changes to roles including their deletion, movement within the council, ring fencing of vacant or changed roles, and assimilation of old roles into new ones.
Consultation Process	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to the consultation process, the decisions around how it was carried out, the upcoming stages of the consultation, and the consultation paper and the processes around it (addendums, changes, etc)
Engagement and Communication	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to how the changes proposed have been communicated and how staff have been engaged, as well as plans for future communication.
Ways of Working	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to changes to formal practice and processes.
Culture Change	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to leadership, informal practice, and processes.
Systems	Includes questions, comments and feedback related to digital systems, their futures, who will manage them and how transitions will be managed.

For this piece of analysis, comments were divided into individual pieces of feedback in the case where more than one theme was present, to get a more accurate representation of the topics being raised. The categories identified and measured are as follows:

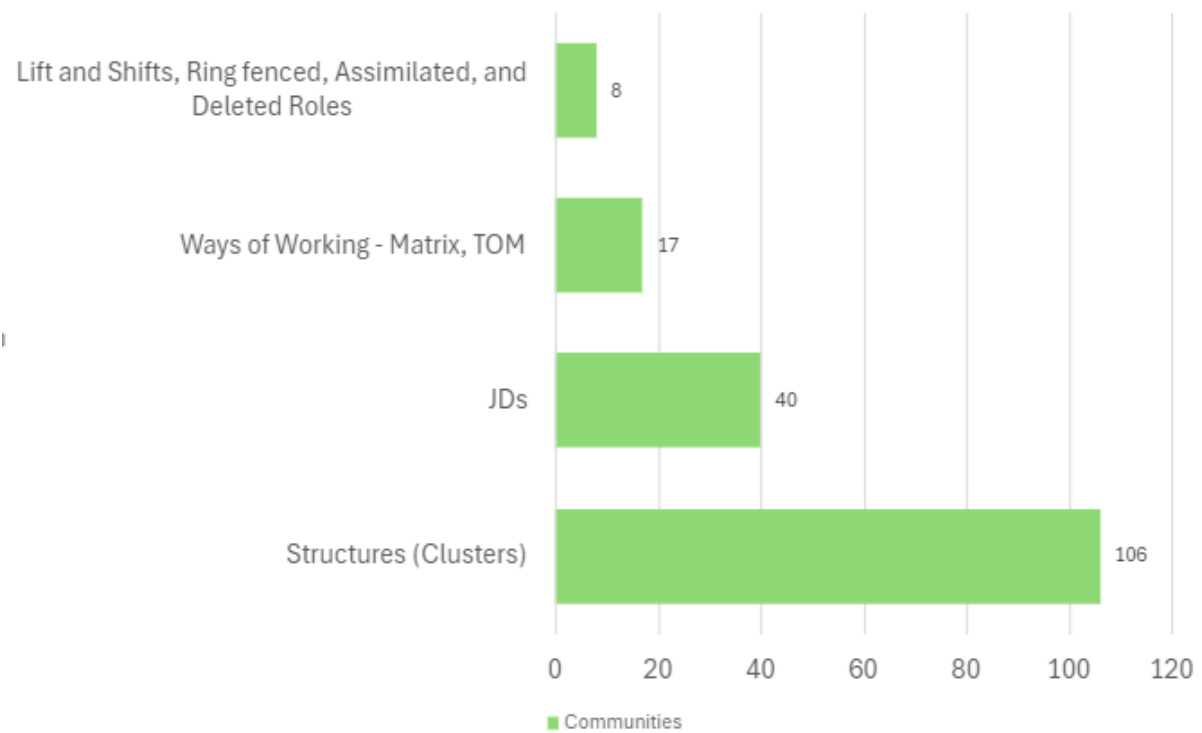
The graphs below show the top five most mentioned themes by group.



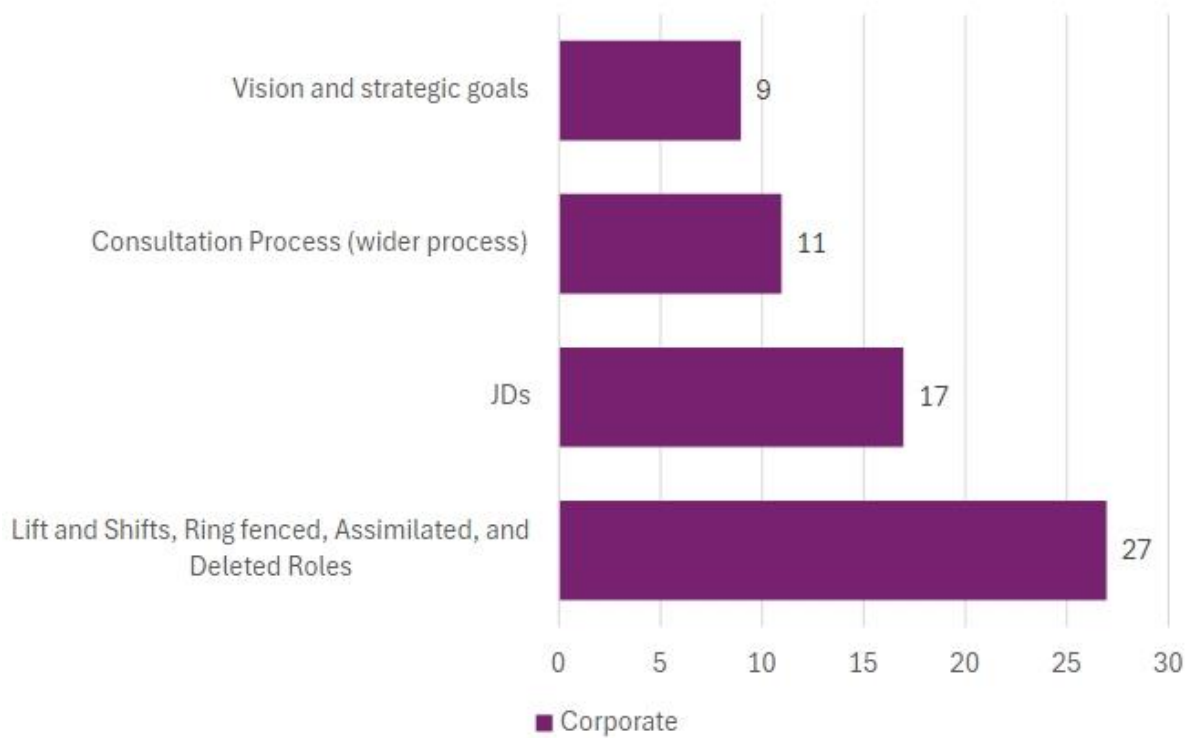
Most referenced themes - City Services



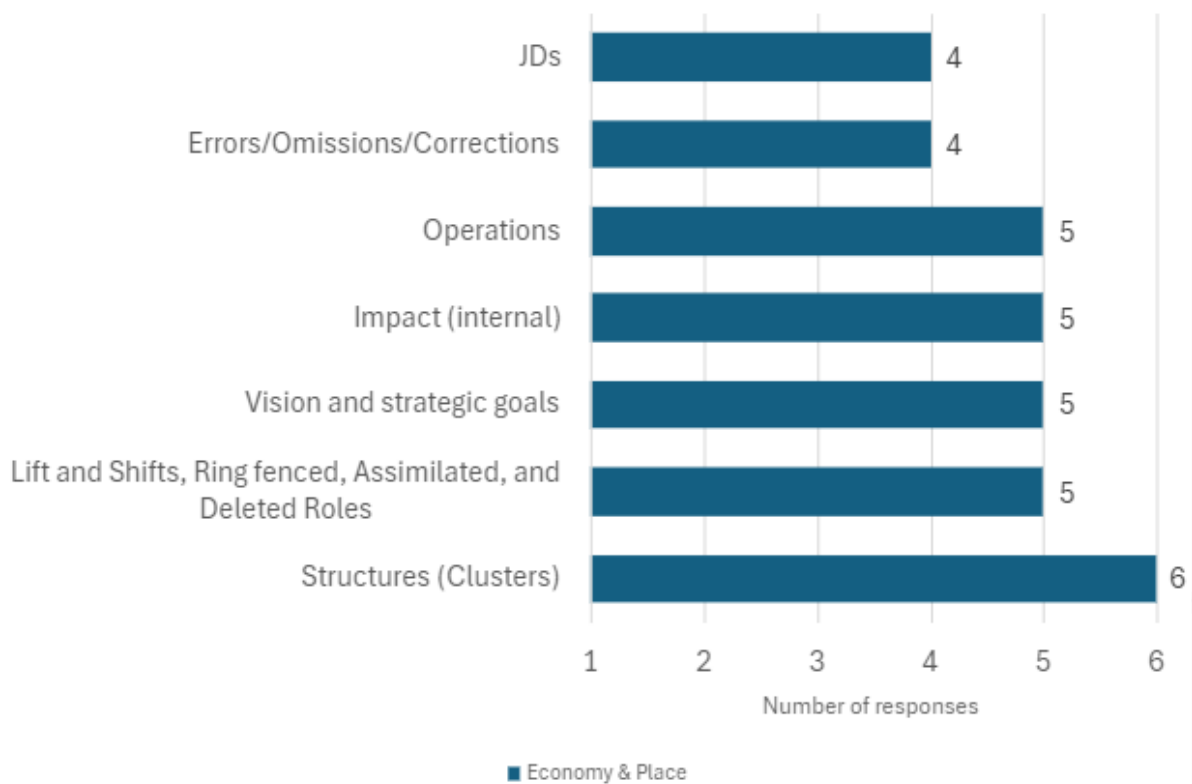
Most referenced themes- Communities



Most referenced themes- Corporate



Most referenced themes- Economy & Place



5.0 CITY SERVICES

James Elms, City Services Director, would like to thank all City Services colleagues for your patience through this review process, and particularly your continued efforts to deliver our services to residents and tenants during periods of change.

Secondly, he would also like to thank all colleagues who have provided constructive and considered feedback to the proposals set out in the City Services Review consultation paper.

A very high-level summary is being shared via this document, we have also created a separate document which provides further detail on how we want to continue to work with you in the coming weeks and how we plan to achieve that. The Engagement Update and Next Steps paper is available via CityNet and has also been distributed to staff.

HEADLINE TAKEAWAYS

- **Staff Highlight the Importance of Managing Workload:** Feedback highlights the need to align staffing levels and workloads, providing an opportunity to enhance support for teams.
- **New Operational Models:** Staff feedback shows the need for clear roles, two-way collaboration, and resource planning to support service delivery.
- **Transparency and Communication as Priorities:** Staff feedback highlights the value of open, ongoing communication and engagement to support effective change management.
- **Balancing Efficiency with Service Excellence:** Staff want to share ideas to ensure that service quality and customer satisfaction remain priorities as efficiency measures are implemented.
- **Strategic Alignment for Growth:** Feedback provides insights on how restructuring can align with growth, environmental, and operational priorities to deliver lasting impact.

SIX KEY THEMES

Workload and Resource Allocation

- The need to ensure staffing levels are sufficient to meet growing demands.
- Opportunities exist to focus resources on emerging priorities: damp and mold, biodiversity and place-based activities to ensure successful implementation

Structural and Operational Collaboration

- Suggestions highlight the importance of fostering collaboration across teams to ensure seamless operations. This is particularly important where there is lift/shift/merge proposed across the Council
- Opportunities to clarify roles and responsibilities can help reduce inefficiencies and strengthen team cohesion.

Supporting Staff Through Adjustments

- Feedback invites careful consideration of how working arrangements can balance operational needs with staff wellbeing.
- Engaging staff in discussions about job roles and evaluations can create a shared understanding and fairness.

Maintaining High Service Standards

- Staff provided valuable insights into maintaining service quality and responsiveness while adapting to new delivery models.
- Suggestions to refine processes and roles can help ensure efficiency without compromising standards.

Enhancing Consultation and Engagement

- Feedback highlights the importance of clear communication and structured opportunities for staff input.
- Staff ideas and insights offer valuable contributions to shaping effective changes and fostering trust.

Aligning Restructuring with Council Values

- Staff highlight the need to align changes with council values of collaboration, compassion, courage and accountability.
- Opportunities exist to reinforce the council's commitments to growth, sustainability, and service excellence.

WHAT'S NEXT

We understand the importance of your feedback, and we are committed to incorporating valuable insights into the final proposals. To achieve this, we will have dedicated workshops with Trade Unions and colleagues over the coming weeks and months to provide a space for open dialogue, constructive criticism, and the exploration of alternative approaches.

6.0 COMMUNITIES

Thank you to everyone that has given thought to the proposals shared within consultation. Throughout the process Sam Scharf, Communities Director, has had the opportunity to meet with several teams and individuals who have shared their considerations. Sam appreciated the time and thought everyone has given to their written feedback. No matter the context in which you were feeding back you have made considered representation which Sam has reviewed in detail.

This summary does not try to capture all the feedback received; however, Sam would like to provide reassurance that all feedback has been read and will continue to be considered through to the main implementation process.

Because we are publishing an early implementation paper alongside this feedback document, elements of the wider implementation are reflected in what is being shared here today. This is to allow for continued and meaningful engagement and allows for the wider management team to be part of this. Even where we have clarity within the roles for the majority of Communities Group Management Team (CGMT), significant reflection and engagement is required to form the detail underpinning this structure.

Alongside this feedback we have discussed with you the publication of a supplementary paper that outlines some wider thinking regarding transformation, more focused on non-structural change. We have held off publishing this due to capacity to consider a further document within the same time period.

In delaying we also wanted to reflect your feedback within the supplementary document. This has allowed us to focus on this phase of transformation. We plan to circulate this supplementary document ahead of the Communities Group Town Hall on 18 December to allow for time for you to read the document and use that opportunity to discuss it further.

HEADLINE TAKEAWAYS

- **Approach to consultation:** Concerns were raised about the limitations of the processes for engagement and understanding of roles and teams, including proposed role assimilations and restriction of opportunities. Further to this it was highlighted there has been a lack of communication and briefings available to engage with stakeholders.
- **Building from solid foundations:** Concerns were raised about the level of change without having established an understanding of some of the principal foundations of impact data, performance, and systems.
- **Team mergers, role realignment and lift and shift:** Feedback identified the need to better explain the proposal of purpose-based teams and continued ability to

work across clusters and Groups to deliver in the best resident services. We also heard where proposals could have a detrimental impact on our customer journeys.

- **Resourcing and resilience:** One of the principles within the redesign is to bring together roles with complimentary skills, experience, and cultures to enhance resilience and provide some agility to respond to service pressures. We received feedback where the proposed changes aren't believed to have addressed these issues, as well as wider resourcing pressures within individual roles and teams.
- **The risks to cross-organisational pressures:** Across several teams, areas relating to growth and safeguarding were raised both in terms of the need to establish clarity across roles and also organisational accountabilities.

KEY THEMES

Structural and operational collaboration

- Support and recognition of the principle and intent of purpose-based working and broadly an understanding of the value this could bring, however, with challenges and differences of opinion relating to specific areas.
- Support and recognition of taking a neighbourhood-based approach to delivery, with some reservations relating to particular roles and clarity of how this will work in practice.
- Specific areas of concern linked to both principles above related to:
 - Community Engagement and Enforcement with key elements raised around losing connections to operational teams, volunteer management, skills alignment, and loss of capacity.
 - Homelessness and housing advice with key elements regarding the breaking up of customer pathways, funding risks and misinterpretations of roles.
 - Tenancy sustainment and financial inclusion with key elements relating to tenure neutrality, resourcing, and customer pathways.
 - Community Safety with key elements regarding the proposed movement or people/activities and resource alignment
 - Voids and Lettings with specific regard to the appropriateness of the functions proposed being brought together.

Tenure Neutrality

- Across several areas, a positive recognition of the value of bringing similar skills, capacity, and work objectives together to become more agile and provide a coherent approach to residents.

- Concerns raised about the principle of developing further areas of the Communities Group into more tenure neutral teams and losing focus on those most in need of support.
- Technical challenge as to how this could be achieved effectively with split budgets, discreet roles, and potential requirements for consultation.
- Resident and leaseholder challenge to ensure there is no dilution or displacement of resources away from the HRA.

Growth

- Concerns regarding the capacity and skills to effectively manage growth, which reflected pressures on teams across the Group and organisation as well as specialist resources.
- How best to deliver a structure, with systems and processes that balances technical service specialisms alongside organisational wide collaboration on issues such as Growth.

Capacity and engagement within the voluntary sector:

- Concerns regarding the capacity of the voluntary sector to take further opportunities and or responsibilities to support those within our communities.
- Concerns regarding a further movement away from direct delivery and the impact on particular communities, the potential gaps in services and the time it takes to transfer to an empowerment type of approach.

WHAT'S NEXT

There was a challenge in deciding whether to go ahead with an early implementation of Communities Group Management Team (CGMT), linked with the fact that there is still development on the structures for the main implementation to be done with those who are potentially impacted by early changes to CGMT roles. It is Sam's priority to work with those teams and individuals in readiness for the publication of the main implementation paper in February.

- We will continue engagement with teams with a particular focus on:
 - better explaining the thinking behind the proposals
 - gaining a better understanding of the challenges of working across teams and how to address these
 - understanding the critical customer journeys and service links where proposals could have the greatest impact.
- To continue engagement with tenant and leaseholder representatives.

- To communicate further with external stakeholders and provide succinct and consistent briefings for colleagues to liaise with external organisations and be clear how they can provide input.
- With the early implementation of the majority of Communities Group Management Team these managers will work across the Group to further consider the feedback and support implementation.

7.0 CORPORATE HUB

Thank you to everyone who responded. Our Chief Operating Officer Jane Wilson, ran a number of whole group sessions during the consultation, met with Hub teams and had one to one meetings with staff where appropriate. There were numerous considered responses, as well as queries about the potential impact for individuals.

There are some specific factors to take into account for the Corporate Hub, including the early implementation paper for the finance team being issued on 9 December, the planned consultation paper for the transformation team coming in January, and the very recent implementation of the outcomes of the previous Corporate Hub design consultation, held earlier this year.

Some of the feedback received has asked about the relationship between the Transformation team and other teams in the Corporate Hub. That feedback will be taken into consideration in the development of the planned January consultation paper.

HEADLINE TAKEAWAYS

No concerns raised about the Corporate Hub model: Perhaps because we had only very recently consulted on this (the management consultation process that was launched in April), and have already done a lot of work with staff on purpose, functions, activities and values, the feedback received has been so helpful in that it has reiterated the approach that we are all signed up to in terms of the Hub and Spoke model.

Concerns relating to the previous consultation: there was some feedback relating to the consultation and implementation papers which came out in the summer of 2024. The changes in that implementation are not part of this consultation and implementation is continuing as set out at the time: we are a collective team, working together to support the council achieve its objectives in the most effective and efficient way possible, recognising that we all have a part to play in delivering this aim.

Understanding how the hub will work in practice: this has been covered in previous papers but is worth setting out again as there were concerns around how shifts in line management would affect the ability to carry out essential activities.

Many of the roles in the Corporate Hub are rooted in technical and professional skills, and line management is organised around those functional skills. This includes for example the new digital team, which recognises the significant and ongoing increase in

our reliance on digital expertise, in the same way as financial, legal, HR and other professional experts in the Corporate Hub.

However, line management is not our only organising principle: it is used to support professional skills and career development but is often not the best way to organise our work. Therefore, alongside the proposals for this next iteration of the Corporate Hub staffing and line management structure, our approach to cross functional working will continue to develop.

The simplest way of describing this is that every member of the Corporate Hub will have a home team (their functional team, which is where their line management will sit), and they will also have other teams that they work in and with. It is likely that for some staff most of their work will be with those other teams. This applies as much within the Corporate Hub as it does to our work with the rest of the council. The work to set up this cross-functional approach is ongoing, and all staff will be involved as it progresses.

KEY THEMES

Lift and Shift, Roles being deleted, people being moved

- A significant proportion of the feedback received highlighted concerns regarding roles proposed for deletion or changes to line management
- Changes to the Finance team has prompted feedback relating to concerns over workload for remaining staff, concerns of impact on BAU particularly around Payroll, and management/leadership within the team being unclear once changes have happened.
- People are concerned about how the changes will affect the current projects that are running.
- Questions around how the decisions to delete or change certain roles and the criteria used to make the decisions.

Job Descriptions

- Questions clarifying the content of new JDs and questioning why certain responsibilities had been moved into them.
- Questions on how new roles will work within the new structure and with existing roles.
- Questions around how the process of applying to new roles will be managed.

Finance & Transformation Team Changes

- Feedback highlighted concerns about the specifics of proposed changes to the Finance Team. The early implementation plans for Finance have been published today (9 December) and this is where to read the detail of confirmed changes for the team and the rationale for them.
- As previously referenced, proposals for the Transformation Team will be shared within a separate consultation paper due to be published in January 2025. It is intended that any changes confirmed as an outcome of the results of this consultation will be reviewed and consolidated into the main implementation paper due to be published in February 2025.

How is this going to work?

- Questions about how the consultation process will continue
- Questions about how feedback will be considered both as just the corporate group and as part of the larger pool
- Comments on the complexity of the consultation process and confusion caused by the volume and frequency of information.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Between now and Christmas, the focus will be firstly on ensuring that the staff directly affected by the early implementation paper are properly engaged and supported, and secondly on carrying out the work necessary to draft the January consultation paper.

Further conversations and discussions in relation to questions that don't relate either to the early implementation, or to the additional consultation paper regarding the Transformation Team, will be scheduled in the New Year, when there will be opportunities for staff who have raised specific questions in relation to their current roles to have further conversations with Jane and their line manager. This will be done in good time for any changes ahead of the release of the main implementation paper, scheduled for 25 February 2025.

8.0 ECONOMY AND PLACE

The proposed redesign of the Economy and Place (E&P) Group aims to enhance the council's ability to respond to and manage future growth opportunities, deliver on the Councils' climate and sustainability ambitions and consolidate teams working with key economic partners into one Group. The consultation sought ideas, reflections, and challenge from staff on the proposals and the overall process.

There were 36 pieces of written feedback received as well as verbal feedback during discussions held with the Chief Executive, as acting Director for Economy and Place. Feedback was also received from a discussion with the Property Team and from meetings with the interim E&P Group Management Team (Ben Binns, Phil Taylor, Andrew Limb, and Robert Pollock).

HEADLINE TAKEAWAYS

- **Broad support for consolidating retrofit activity:** the creation of a dedicated Energy & Retrofit team combining roles from different groups was generally viewed as a positive proposal. Some concerns were raised about maintaining effective working arrangements with planned maintenance and environmental health, and suggested alternative structures proposed.
- **Role and capacity of the Energy and Retrofit Manager:** specific feedback about the scope, responsibilities, and capacity of the proposed Energy and Retrofit Manager role were received. The proposed grade level may need to be reconsidered as it has broad management responsibilities.
- **Greater integration of environmental functions:** several people expressed a desire for greater integration of environmental functions across the council. For example, by bringing together climate change, economic development, energy, and some environmental health functions under a single strategic lead.
- **Strategic Asset Management:** surprisingly little written feedback was received about proposals to take a more strategic and integrated approach to the way the council manages its assets to achieve NetZero commitments and ensure high levels of compliance and safety. This idea was flagged in late 2023.
- **Managing Growth:** Cambridge is a fast-growing city with significant interest from government about how that can be accelerated. This is a whole council issue and responsibility as it affects almost everything we do. The new Economy and Place

Group will have a significant role in influencing the debate, along with other Groups including Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service.

KEY THEMES

- **Consistency of grades:** some staff raised concerns about potential discrepancies in the grading of roles and requested clarification on certain job titles and the impact of the proposed changes on their positions.
- **Workload and Capacity:** several comments highlighted concern about a potential increase in workload and whether the proposed structure adequately addresses these concerns. In particular, management and support for staff as a result of proposed moves of teams or individuals between groups.
- **Expertise and Collaboration:** some feedback raised concerns about creating an Energy & Retrofit team due to the potential loss of expertise to the City Services or Communities Group, as well as an anxiety about capacity for collaboration where this led to a smaller team in current group structures.
- **Growth and Development:** specific concerns were raised regarding the impact of the proposed changes on the council's ability to manage and coordinate activities related to growth and development.

WHAT'S NEXT

The proposed redesign will be refined through careful consideration of the helpful feedback received. In order to support that process:

- The Chief Executive and Lynne Miles, new Director for Economy and Place, will hold a drop-in session for any staff affected by the Economy and Place proposals. Details will be shared in due course.
- A workshop with proposed members of Energy and Retrofit Team will be held in January
- Finalised job descriptions to be evaluated

9.0 NEXT STEPS

The next stage of the process is being planned.

For some colleagues, as flagged in the consultation document this comes in the form of early implementation for members of:

- the Finance Team,
- Communities Group Management Team
- and the Folk Festival Team.

The rationale for early implementation relates to immediate operational requirements. In the case of some of the Communities Group Management Team, this will allow for their more direct input into the wider implementation. With respect to the Folk Festival roles, this is due to the operational nature of the festival and requirement to have an established structure in place as quickly as possible.

Directors are all committed to listening to their teams and responding to concerns and feedback as they work through the final stages of the design process. It goes without saying that just because formal consultation has concluded, there is no need for the dialogue to stop. In fact, it is imperative that it continues, and we actively encourage it over the coming weeks and months.

TIMELINES

Today (Monday 9 December) we have shared with you the following documents:

- Early Implementation Paper for the Finance Team
- Early Implementation Paper for parts of the Communities Group Management Team and Folk Festival staff
- Summary Consultation Feedback Document (all Groups)
- City Services Review Consultation – Engagement update (City Services)

The next document to be published on Tuesday 25 February is the main Implementation Paper after the February Full Council meeting (24 February).