



Chief Finance Officer

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK
March 2021



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Welcome Letter from the Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Finance Officer at First Choice Homes Oldham. We are an ambitious association that has three main objectives: to be an excellent landlord; to develop new homes; and to support the development of genuinely sustainable communities.

It's important to highlight from the outset that we are a financially very robust organisation. We have achieved very good performance levels against a range of measures including rent collection and vacant homes, even through the pandemic. We do not carry a high level of debt, and we are well placed to support an ambitious development programme which doesn't just mean building new homes. We want to ensure that all of our properties are attractive, safe, well maintained, efficient to live in and in areas our residents are happy with.

I was delighted to have been appointed as Chief Executive in January, as it's an exciting time for Oldham and the wider Greater Manchester region. I want FCHO to play a bigger role in partnership working around regeneration and economic development, continuing to make Oldham a fantastic place to live and work. The challenges that we, and the area, face mean that we need to work in close partnership with our local Council, as well as others who can help us achieve our objectives.

It's essential that we do all we can to support our residents as we operate in one of the poorest parts of the country, an area with significant housing issues.

Average incomes are not just below the national average, they are towards the bottom of the regional averages too. Our rents are lower than most of our comparators, and we know that many of our residents struggle to afford to rent a property, never mind to buy one.

From a leadership perspective, we strongly believe that our customers and our colleagues should be treated well and with the utmost respect. Customers' views are really important to us and are essential in shaping the way in which we deliver our services. Our colleagues have a key role to play in representing us externally, and they need to have the skills and confidence to provide an excellent landlord service to all our customers.

All of which brings me to our Chief Finance Officer. In this new post, we are looking for a creative and dynamic person, who makes things happen and brings developments to life by supporting and working closely with our teams and our partners. We want an ambitious, caring and intelligent leader who appreciates that bringing out the best in people is the way to achieve our objectives. We want someone who not only says this, but who actually evidences it every single day.

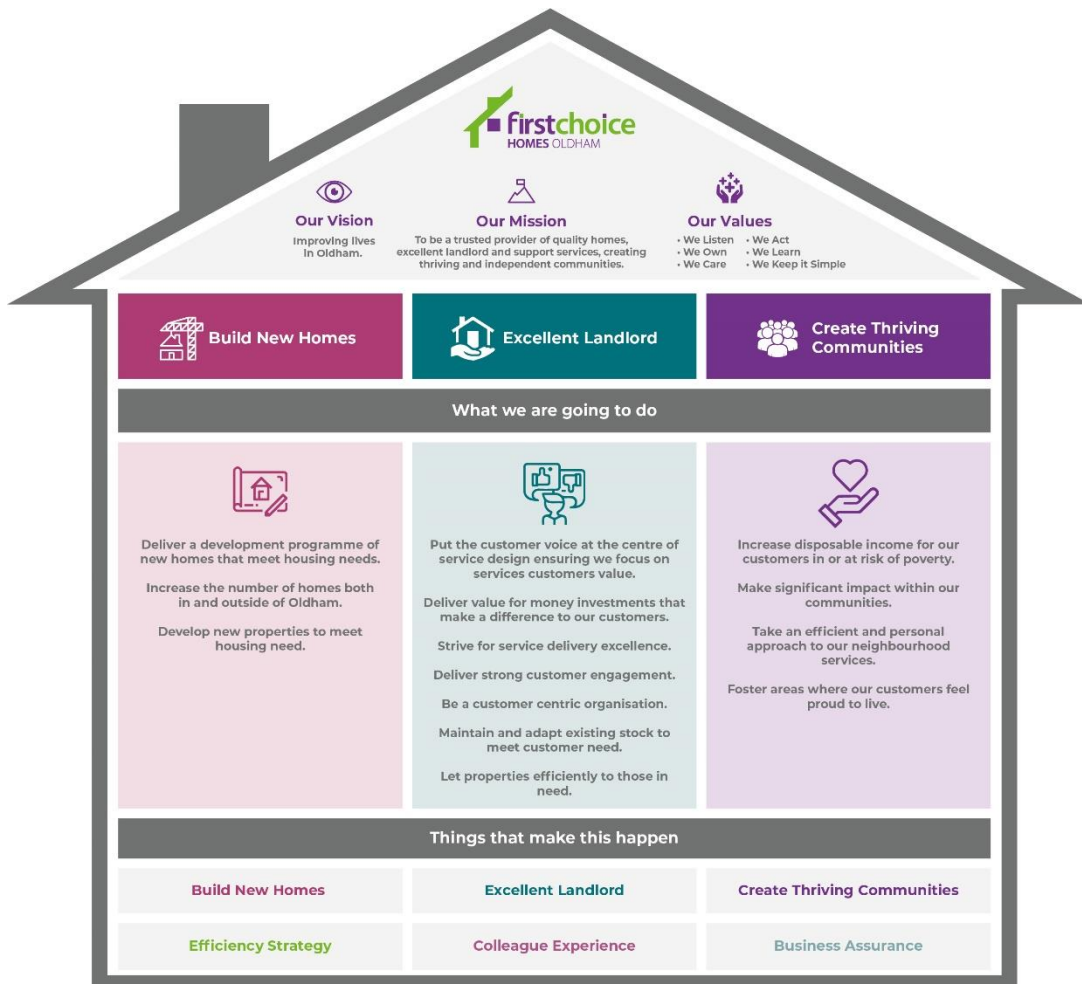
If this appeals to you, then we would welcome receiving your application. I look forward to meeting you during the recruitment process.

Donna Cezair
Chief Executive



We are a housing association formed to benefit our local community.

We provide and manage housing - including social housing - but we do so much more. We help to care for and support our customers through a range of services designed to help improve people's lives.



What are our Values and Behaviours?

WE LISTEN
OWN CARE
ACT LEARN
KEEP IT SIMPLE
ARE FCHO

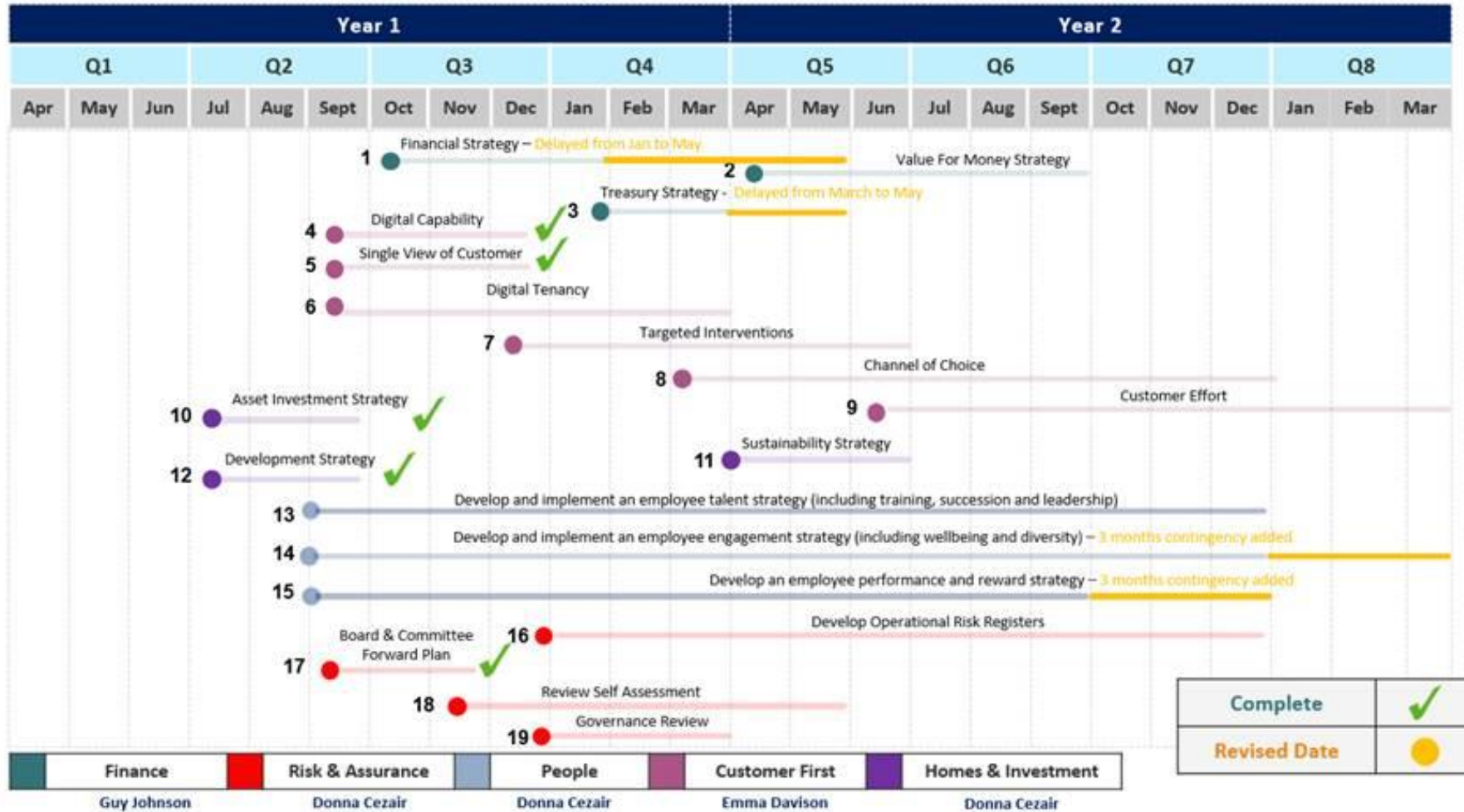
Value for money and performance

Strategic Plan 2020-22

We are looking to develop a new three-year strategic plan later this year and in the meantime, we are busy delivering the Strategic Milestones set out in the table below. Each action is allocated to a specific area of the business, with an Executive lead for delivery. These actions are set within our Board Forward Plan 2020-2022 and are aligned to our Strategic Objectives.

Our up-to-date financial statements and performance reports can be accessed via this link: <https://www.fcho.co.uk/who-we-are/our-finances-and-performance/>

Strategic Milestones: 2020-22



How we structure our business

We have Six Strategic Objectives:

- Excellent Landlord
- Create thriving communities
- Build new homes
- Efficiency Strategy
- Colleague experience
- Business assurance.

Our three Directorates are aligned to the Strategic Objectives and each is led by a member of the Executive Team:

CFO – New Homes and Efficiency

Our Finance and Development teams sit here, alongside our IT and Business Intelligence functions, as well as our crucial income collection team. The rationale is to ensure that as our development activities mature and grow, they are closely aligned to our financial planning and controls as well as our customer insight data.

COO – Landlord and Communities

All of our operations concerning our homes and our customers are closely aligned within one directorate to work closely together to deliver the highest service standards. We are committed to hearing our customer's voice, and working with them to create safe and happy places to live.

CEO – People and Assurance

Creating a dynamic and motivating company to work for, which is properly governed and well organised, is the focus of this directorate. Investing in our colleagues and enabling them to do their best work is as important as being led by authentic, leaders who have the highest levels of integrity, probity and seek assurance on all aspects of the business.



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Email fit@fcho.co.uk

firstchoice
HOMES OLDHAM

Our Executive Team

Donna Cezair – Chief Executive



Donna became our Chief Executive in January 2021. She brings extensive experience of leading customer focused organisations in the housing sector.

Donna is keen to ensure that our customers receive a caring and responsive service from FCHO and that all our staff enjoy what they do and have the support of a forward thinking and creative business.

She and the team are also keen to establish productive relationships with a range of stakeholders to support our customers and Oldham residents, and to build as many new homes as possible in thriving communities, which help people to achieve their true potential.

Guy Johnson - Interim Executive Director Corporate Services

Guy oversees the Corporate Services Directorate.

Guy is a qualified Accountant and built a career in accounting practice before moving to the housing sector 19 years ago.

He has worked in similar interim director and assistant director roles for the past five and a half years. He is committed to creating collaborative working environments where all teams work together to find solutions and provide great customer service.



Emma Davison – Chief Operations Officer



Emma is our Chief Operations Officer and oversees services for customers, including our Community Services teams, Contact Centre, Neighbourhood Services, Neighbourhood Care (estates caretaking and grounds maintenance), Property Care, and strategic asset management. She is tasked with ensuring that our services deliver great customer outcomes and are efficient.

Emma has had an extensive career in customer services from contact centres to digital and e-customer service. Her last role was in the private sector at retailer JD Sports. Emma is committed to creating excellent services for our customers and giving our customers a voice - building relationships based on trust, understanding and respect.

Our Board

The role of our non-executive directors

The Board has ultimate responsibility and control of the Group's corporate governance and financial regulation arrangements and affairs. Its central role is to lead, direct, control, scrutinise and evaluate First Choice Homes Oldham. This includes determining strategic direction and policies, establishing and overseeing control and risk management frameworks, satisfying itself on the integrity of financial information and ensuring that First Choice Homes Oldham achieves its aims and objectives.

Ged Lucas - Board Chair and Member of New Living Homes Limited



I am proud to be the Chair of First Choice Homes Oldham, a position I have held since September 2016. However, I started working in housing in 1975 and was a Director of Housing for three Local Authorities. I finished my local government career as a Deputy Chief Executive, responsible for a wide range of areas including housing, regeneration, environment, planning, economic and community development. I was also closely involved in the development of Greater Manchester Devolution. I then went on to become an independent consultant and interim manager and prior to being with First Choice Homes Oldham, I was a Non-Executive Director with Trafford Housing Trust for four and a half years.

Hilda Kaponda FCCA, BEng (Hons), MBA - Chair of Governance and Remuneration Committee

I was appointed as a Non-Executive Director in June 2016 and I Chair the Governance and Remuneration Committee.

I am a qualified accountant with over 20 years' experience in social housing finance and I have my own consultancy company. My previous roles include Executive Director of Finance at Equity Housing Group, working as a Lead Regulator at The Housing Corporation, Group Finance Manager at Harvest Housing Group and Director of Finance and ICT at Eastlands Partnership Homes.



Philip Pearson, ACA - Member of Audit and Risk Committee



I was appointed as a Non-Executive Director in September 2015. I am a Member of the Audit and Risk Committee and have previously been a member of the Development Committee and the Chair of New Living Homes Limited. Among other business interests, I am the Senior Finance Business Partner at Joseph Rowntree Foundation. This incorporates the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust which looks after 3,000+ socially rented portfolios in North Yorkshire and beyond.

Amanda Harris, BA (Hons) Law, MBA - Member of Governance and Remuneration Committee

I was appointed as a Non-Executive Director in October 2018. I am a governance and legal specialist and a qualified solicitor with over 20 years' experience in the public and housing sectors. I now have my own consultancy and bring to the Board significant knowledge of governance, corporate management, strategic planning and regulatory compliance.



Throughout my career I have been involved with services and partnerships which have at their core the aim of enabling and supporting people and communities to be their best. I am excited to be part of an organisation that has a strong customer focus, believes in social responsibility and is enabling environments that allow communities to thrive.

Mumtaz Ali, BSc (Hons), ACCA, FCCA - Member of Audit and Risk Committee



I was appointed as a Co-optee in September 2015 and as a Non-Executive Director in November 2015. In my position as a Non-Executive Director, I am keen on helping First Choice Homes Oldham to continue to provide a high-quality housing services to the residents of Oldham. I am also a member of the Audit and Risk Committee.

I have over 20 years' experience of working in Finance especially in the Public Sector, having worked in the NHS, Probation Services, Education and Housing.

Jean Mira - Member of Audit and Risk Committee and Governance and Remuneration Committee

My appointment as a Non-Executive Director commenced on 1 October 2018. I have lived in Oldham all my life in Social Housing and I understand the need for good housing and the positive change it can make to people's lives.



I currently work for Bury Council Communities and Wellbeing Department dealing with Recruitment and HR. My previous position was with the Street Lighting Department of Bury Council where I was part of a £4m LED street lighting replacement programme as well as supervising contractors, ordering materials and invoicing. I have also worked in the Housing, Governance and Strategy Section dealing with all aspects of Housing Governance, policy and housing allocations.

Ronnie Clawson BSc (Hons), CIPD - Member of Audit and Risk Committee



I was appointed as a Non-Executive Director on 1 October 2018 and am also a member of the Audit Committee.

I bring over 20 years' experience as an Executive and Non-Executive Director in the social housing and charitable sectors, having served as a senior manager and Board Member of various housing organisations over that period. I was also for many years a trustee of a pension scheme with a fund of over £100m and was Vice Chair of a charity supporting young, vulnerable people at risk of homelessness in London.

Ron Smith - Member of Investment and Development Committee

I was appointed as a Co-optee to the Board on 1 October 2018 and appointed as a Non-Executive Director on 7 August 2019. I have been a tenant for over 25 years, and I have a really good understanding of local issues. My role on the Board will be to provide a unique tenant insight into how First Choice Homes Oldham can change lives in Oldham and our communities for the better.



I have been involved in a number of tenant groups including Barker Street Tenants Group, First Estate Agreement with First Choice Homes Oldham and other partners, local and sounding boards, Repairs and Aids and Adaptations groups and more recently the First Choice Homes Oldham Customer Congress.

I firmly believe that customers should receive a high-quality service from First Choice Homes Oldham and the Board should ensure that First Choice Homes Oldham continues to be an excellent housing provider.

Barbara Brownridge BA (Hons), Dip TP - Member of Investment and Development Committee



I was appointed as a Non-Executive Director in April 2019. I was previously appointed to the Board in May 2011 and was Chair of the Governance and Remuneration Committee and was a member of the Audit and Risk Committee from 2013 to 2015. I left the FCHO Board in April 2018 due to a change in the administrative leadership team at OMBC.

I became a Councillor for Chadderton North Ward in 2010 having been involved in local politics for over 30 years. I moved to Oldham in 1972 and I am committed to making Oldham the best place it can be and to provide homes across all tenures.

Emma Richman (BSc(Hons) Architecture, Planning & the Built Environment, BSc (Hons) Building Surveying) - Member of Investment and Development Committee (joining 24 March 2021)

I am currently the Executive Director of Operations at Peaks and Plains Housing Trust and have worked in social housing for the last 25 years. I am a qualified Architect and Building Surveyor and was a former independent board member and Chair of Southway Housing Trust for nine years.



I am a former Chair of the North West Branch of Women in Property and have been on their committee for the last seven years and I am currently a trustee on the committee to help with the redevelopment of the Pankhurst Centre in Manchester.

I was recently named in the top 10 Property Disruptors in Insider magazine and also won Woman of the Year at the 2018 Woman in Housing Awards. My area of interest is Development, Asset Management and Compliance. I am a member of the National Housing Federation's Quality of existing homes group and Building Safety group.

Charlie Dunn (MRICS and RICS) - Member of Investment and Development Committee (joining 24 March 2021)



I am a Chartered Quantity Surveyor (MRICS) by profession and have been a senior Executive in a number of major Construction and Property focused companies, operating across The North of England, Midlands and Scotland for over 30 years.

I have extensive experience of successfully delivering major Asset Renewal and New Build Housing Programmes in the Social and Private Housing Sectors and I have also been an active member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), serving in a number of senior support roles including General Council and Professional Conduct.

Margaret Goddard - MSc, Cert CIH - Co-optee Member of Investment and Development Committee and Board Member of New Living Homes Limited (joining 24 March 2021)

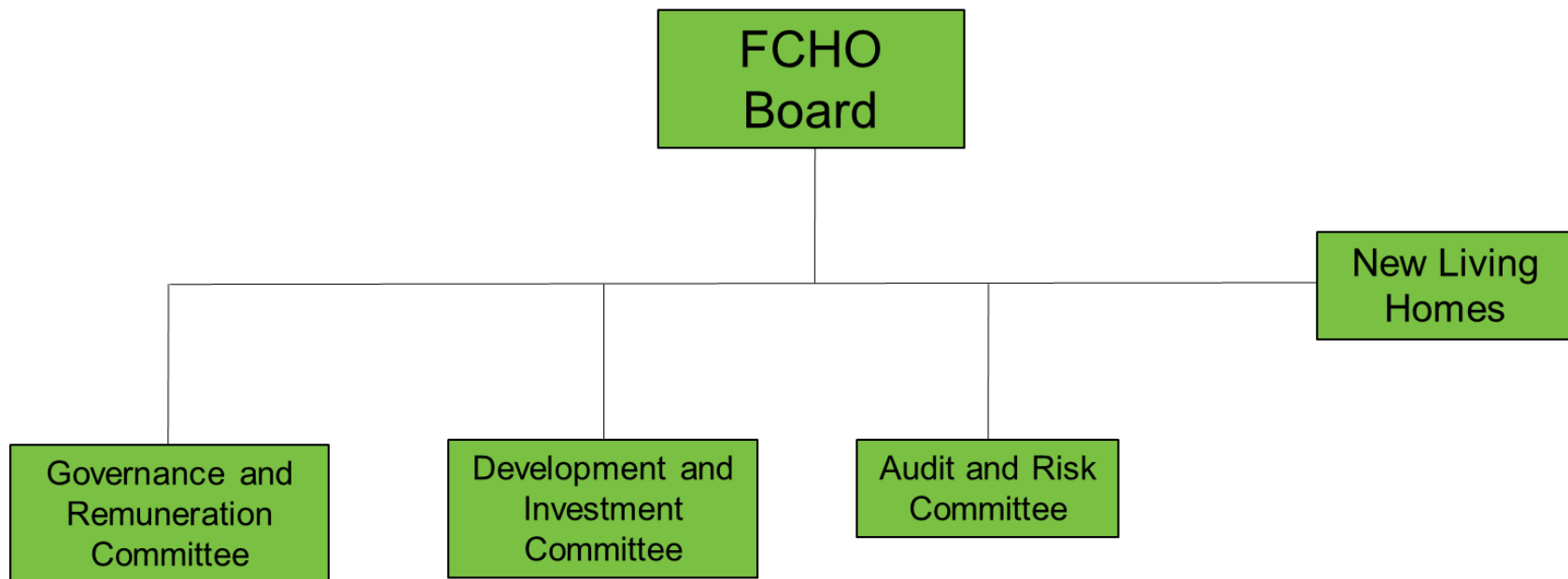
I have significant experience in the housing sector specialising in growth, development, asset management and transformation. I have held a number of executive and non-executive positions across the North West. I am passionate about the build environment, good design and place making. I'm an advocate for partnership working and empowering communities in order to deliver the best outcomes for customers.



I am delighted to be part of an organisation that combines my passion for regeneration and development, while putting customers at the heart of everything we do.

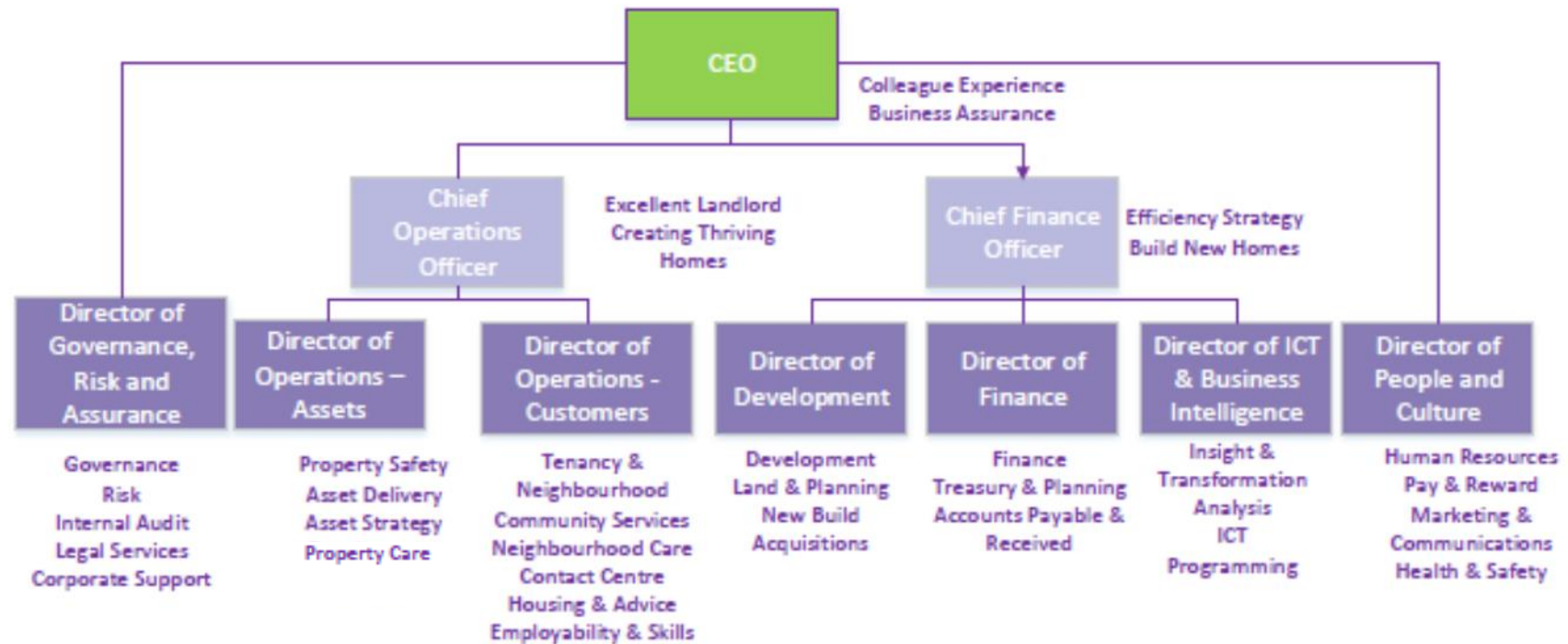


Governance Structure – November 2020

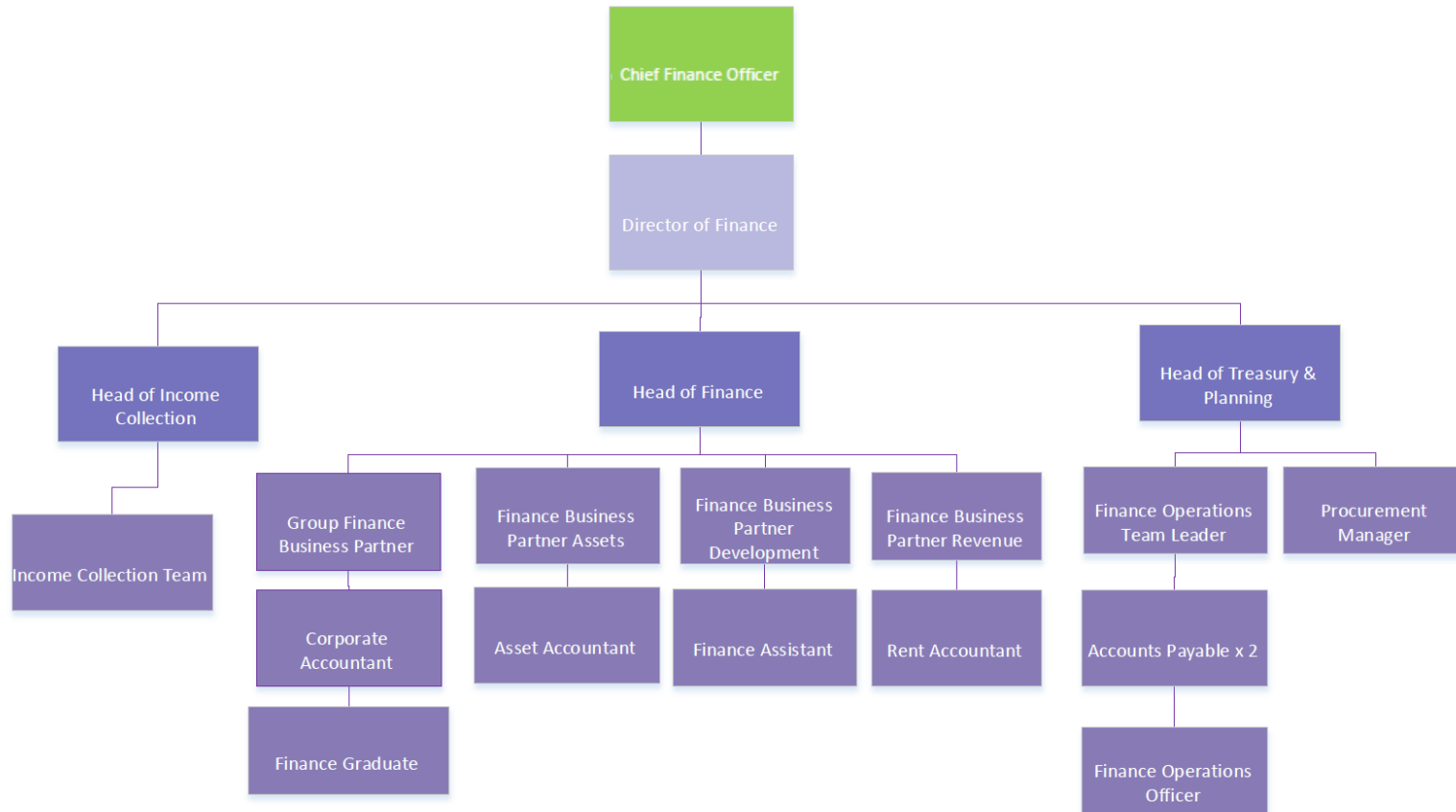




Proposed Leadership Structure – March 2021

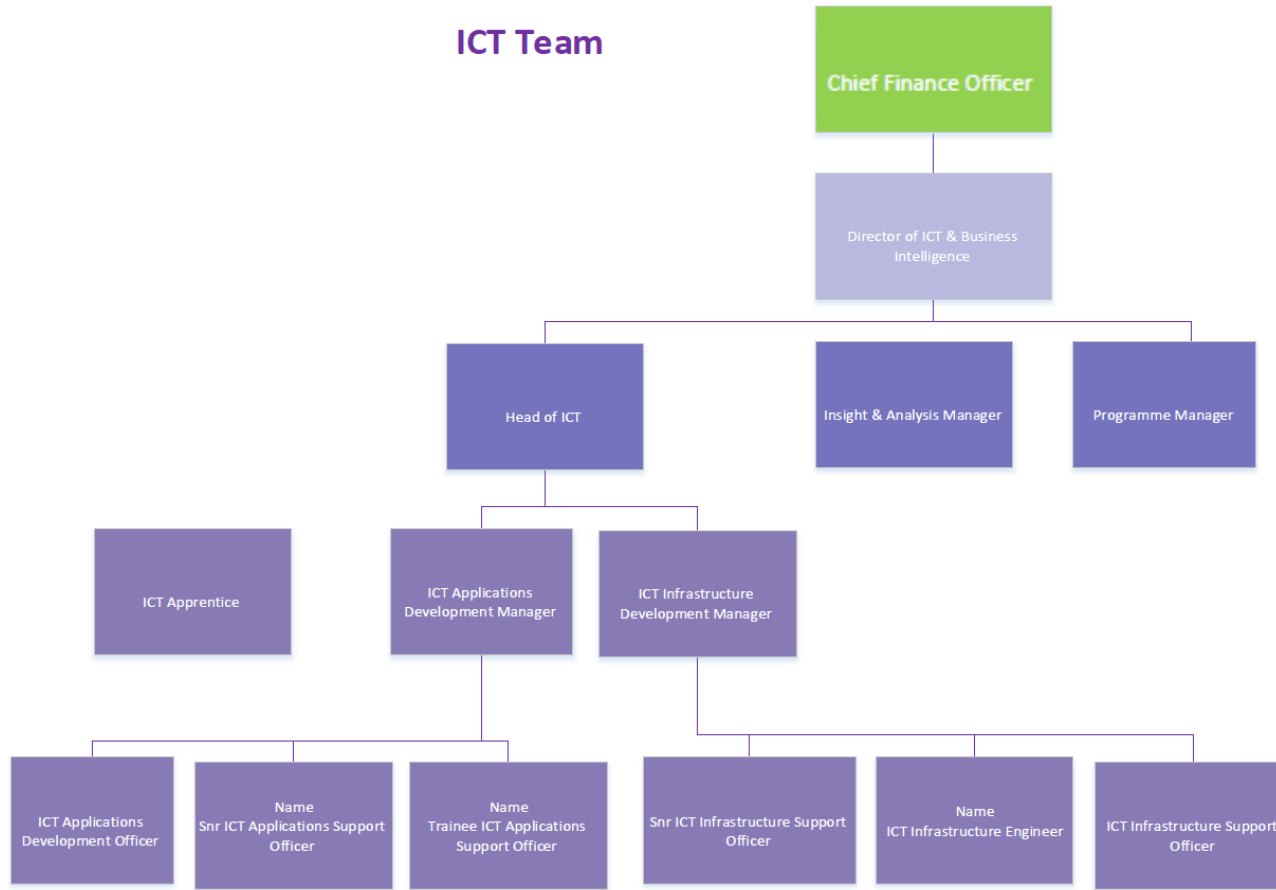


Finance Team



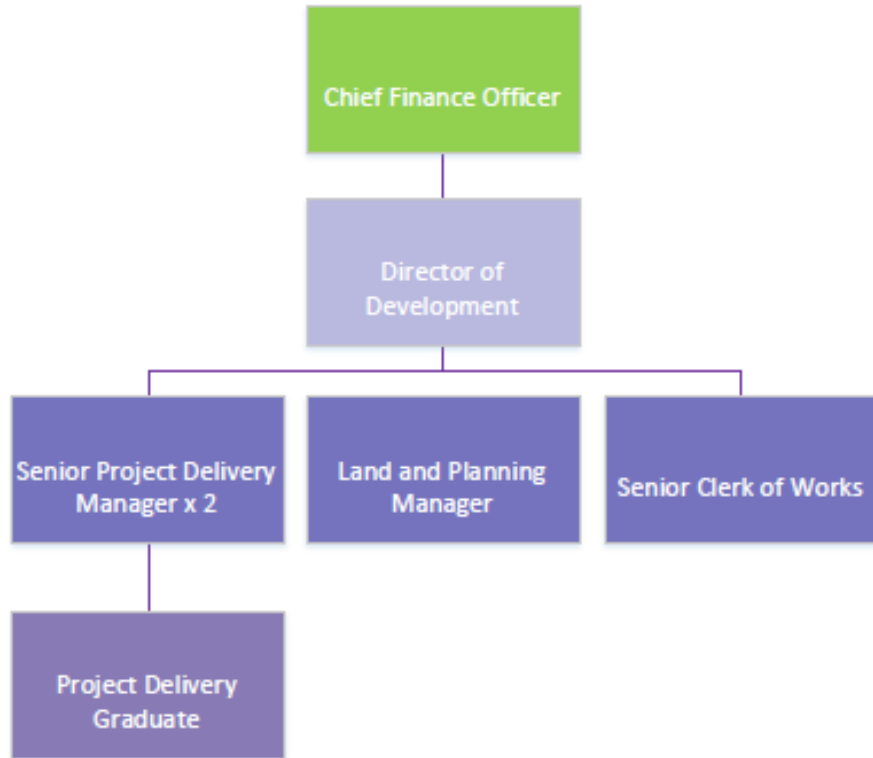


ICT Team

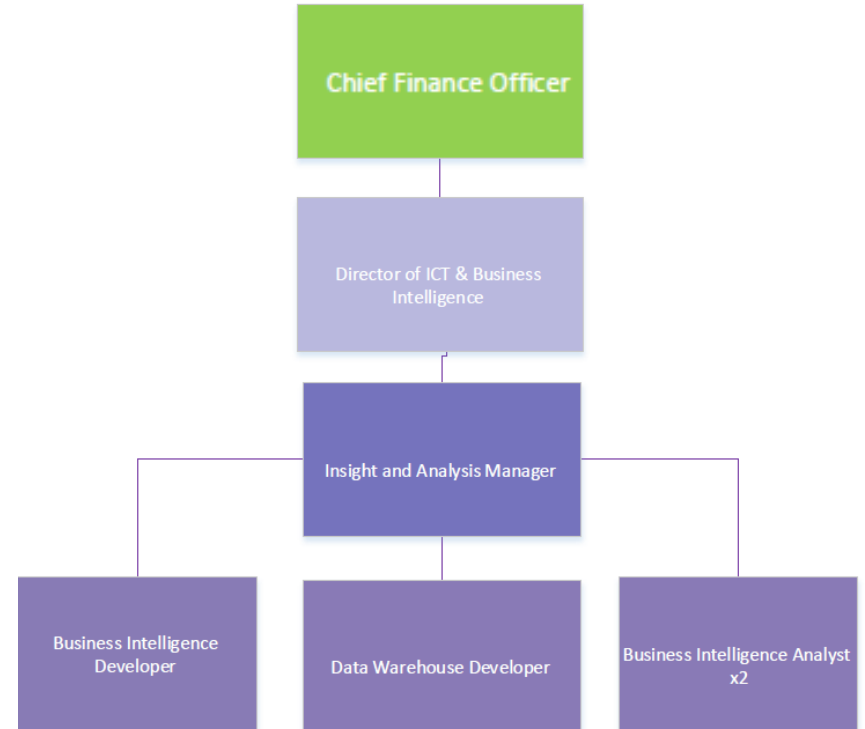




Development Team



Business Intelligence Team



Role Profile

Post Title	Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Division	Section - Leadership
Grade	Leadership
Remuneration	Circa £115,000 plus benefits (key benefits include 30 days annual leave plus bank holidays, 6% pension contribution and healthcare cash plan)

Purpose of Post:

- Provide the leadership required for FCHO to deliver its development and growth targets, alongside maintaining the relevant controls and management frameworks to ensure the organisation is financially viable and meeting all of its statutory and regulatory obligations.
- Be responsible for the delivery of effective services from the Finance, I.T., Business Intelligence, Development and Income Collection Teams; ensuring a great customer experience and contributing to our growth aspirations.
- Collaborate with the other members of the Executive Team, to create a dynamic and stimulating organisation where colleagues can do their best work and be their best selves every day.
- Be a strong and proactive ambassador for FCHO; forging productive relationships with key stakeholders to strengthen the reputation and impact of FCHO for local communities.
- Participate in the effective development of FCHO's strategic direction, and share responsibility with the Executive Team for the overall success of the business, through performance improvement, transformation, delivering efficiencies and putting customer service at the heart of everything we do.

Key Responsibilities:

Finance, Growth and Developments

- Ensure effective strategies, plans, policies, procedures and systems are in place for the Finance, Development, IT & Business Intelligence and Income Collection teams which comply with all regulatory and governance requirements.
- Monitor the financial viability of the organisation and implement a borrowing strategy to ensure the long term financial health of the organisation.
- Develop and deliver new and innovative ways of securing and maximising investments; leveraging funding sources and diversifying products to deliver the growth needs of the organisation.

- Be accountable for the preparation of all financial information, including business plans, annual budgets, financial forecasts and the thirty-year plan.
- Implement relevant controls to manage and mitigate all financial risks in the short, medium and long term.
- Ensure that robust monitoring, forecasting and reporting systems are in place to provide accurate and timely financial management information and data for decision making.
- Ensure all financial and development decisions are taken within the context of an effective and accountable risk assessment framework.
- Drive and create a variety of approaches to appraise, challenge and deliver development projects in order to maximise all opportunities for FCHO to deliver new homes.
- Support the development team to establish prolific partnerships, joint ventures and strategic alliances in order to deliver FCHO's growth targets.
- Explore opportunities for business expansion including stock purchase / transfer and other propositions for growth.

Leadership / Driving a High Performance Culture

- Be an active member of the Leadership Team by contributing to delivering the Strategic Plan and developing a values-led culture of high performance.
- Provide inspirational leadership, support and direction to motivate team members to perform to their full potential and deliver high quality services in line with best practice.
- Role model the behaviours that encourage all colleagues to embrace and live the FCHO values through their attitudes and actions.
- Be an active member of the Executive Team in developing and delivering the strategic objectives and support each other to create a culture of kindness and tolerance.
- Understand, anticipate and respond to the wider economic, social and political external environment impacting on the organisation and adapt services to meet changing needs and deliver a great customer experience.
- Promote and lead a culture of continuous improvement which underpins the long term commercial success of the organisation through incremental gains.
- Ensure that colleagues are able to bring the best version of themselves to work, helping them to create great days at work. Provide an experience that helps them feel proud, valued, energized, challenged as well as connected and informed.

Customer Service and Value

- Understand the needs of different customer segments both within and outside of the organisation and orchestrate plans to respond effectively to these.
- Promote a model of "Business Partnering" and encourage feedback and challenge from service users in order to keep driving improvements.
- Develop a comprehensive approach to "Value for Money" which encompasses financial efficiencies, social value and benefits realised from projects.
- Work with the Executive Team to design and implement transformational change strategies which maximise the use of technology to improve services and reduce customer effort.

Building and Maintaining Effective Stakeholder Relationships

- Participate in developing the business, specifically assisting the Chief Executive in identifying opportunities to improve and grow FCHO.
- Develop and maintain professional relationships with Board Members and other key stakeholders within the FCHO governance structure, focusing on achieving excellent customer and business outcomes.
- Build partnerships with external organisations, actively seeking the development of new business opportunities that will improve outcomes for customers and the communities we serve.

General

- Ensure compliance with all health and safety and other organisational compliance requirements are met across all teams within the Directorate.
- Ensure the voice of tenants, customers, leaseholders and colleagues continues to be actively used in service design delivery, and evaluation.
- Promote what FCHO does and raise awareness of key issues affecting the sector and the organisation in order to be a force for good.



Person Specification

Education and Qualifications

- Qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA) with evidence of continuous professional development.

Knowledge and Experience

- A proven track record of successful strategic leadership, with a style that is visible, approachable and engenders trust.
- An understanding of development finance, scheme appraisal and project viability analyses that can evidence a track record of making developments happen.
- Well-developed business management skills and experience of delivering excellent customer-based services in a complex organisation with both social and commercial drivers.
- Experience of reporting to Boards and Committees.
- Experience of fund management, investment, treasury management, raising loans and dealing with lenders and financiers.
- Understanding of IT applications across a range of functions, with experience of how they can maximise colleague impact and service delivery.
- Development and implementation of successful partnerships with external organisations, leading to customer and business outcomes that “make a difference”.
- Successful track record in delivering top performing organisational “Key Performance Indicators” via effective performance and programme management.

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to build, lead and inspire large colleague teams (within and outside the direct management line) at all levels, who are committed to working with others to achieve FCHO’s vision, values and priorities.
- An inspiring people manager and credible leader.
- A strong team working ethos that breaks through silos.
- Excellent judgement and emotional intelligence.
- Ability to actively champion diversity, equality and inclusion.
- Self-motivated and able to inspire and motivate team members.
- Progressive and innovative thinker who brings creative solutions to the table.
- Ability to operate effectively within a highly regulated environment.
- Excellent communication skills demonstrated through excellence in presentation, negotiation, analytical and influencing skills.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit an up to date copy of your CV, along with a Supporting Statement (maximum of two pages) which summarises your most relevant professional skills and experiences.

Applications should be submitted via: www.gatenbysanderson.com and must be received by **9:00am Friday 16 April 2021**.

Please provide your home, mobile and email contact details and let us know of any dates when you are not available or where you may have difficulty with the indicative timetable.



You should also provide the names, positions, organisations and contact details for two referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer. We would not approach these referees before the shortlist stage, and only with your permission. If you do not wish us to approach your referees at any stage, please state this clearly.

If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, please contact Nick Roberts on 07393 013697 or Simon Wing on 0207 426 3976 or Delicia Coutinho on 07741 264 892.

Timetable for Selection

Closing date	9:00am Friday 16 April 2021
Preliminary interviews with GatenbySanderson	Late April / Early May
Shortlist meeting	Week commencing 10 May
Final Panel Interview	Week commencing 24 May