Item 3

11th June 2024

Glasgow City Council

Glasgow Community Planning Partnership Strategic Partnership

Report by Mike Burns, Programme Director – Whole Family Wellbeing & Child Poverty
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CHILD POVERTY AND WHOLE FAMILY WELLBEING FUND UPDATE

Purpose of Report:

This report provides members with an update on activity to align our city's policies to tackle child poverty. It includes detail on the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF), the subsequent creation of a Whole Family Early Intervention Fund (WFEIF) and the proposed governance arrangements for this fund. Finally, it proposes the actions required to collectively shape the city's Performance Management Framework and Action Plan for our Local Outcome Improvement Plan and our key priority to tackle family poverty.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

a) note progress made on policy alignment in relation to child poverty within the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2024-34;
b) note the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund award to the local authority;
c) note the creation of a Whole Family Early Intervention Fund to align the use of specific financial allocations;
d) agree the proposed funding governance arrangements through the Community Planning structures;
e) agree the proposed funding awards set out in Section 6; and
f) agree the next steps to shape the Local Outcome Improvement Plan's Performance Management Framework and associated Action Plan.

Ward No(s):	Citywide: ✓
Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐	consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1 Introduction

1.1 This report provides members with an update on activity to align our city's policies to tackle child poverty. It includes detail on the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF), the subsequent creation of a Whole Family Early Intervention Fund (WFEIF) and the proposed governance arrangements for this fund. Finally, it proposes the actions required to collectively shape the city's Performance Management Framework and Action Plan for our Local Outcome Improvement Plan and our key priority to tackle family poverty.

2 Activity to Date

2.1 Our work to date has reaffirmed that systems change, specifically a deliberate approach to implementation to achieve socially significant change, is the way forward. We know, through both our data and our insights from citizens, service users and providers, that poverty is endemic in our city, too many people are struggling to cope, and current conditions provide little hope to those seeking a better life. Glasgow's understanding of the impact of structural social and economic inequalities is also much clearer, along with greater systemic insight into the weaknesses of the current system.

2.2 In addition to understanding the scale of poverty, the Child Poverty Pathfinder has increasingly been able to articulate the indirect impact of a lack of financial resources. We know that for families living in poverty, the challenges are not simply about money. The life chances and experiences for these families are significantly impacted and children experiencing poverty do not thrive. We can evidence the correlation between economic and social challenges and show that where poverty exists there is also;

- Higher rates of non-participation in work;
- Lower literacy and numeracy rates;
- Higher likelihood that young people leave school with few educational qualifications;
- Higher incidence of vulnerable children aged 0-5 known to social work;
- Poorer measures of community safety;
- Higher levels of alcohol and drug related hospital stays
- Higher likelihood of homelessness for those in deep poverty (35%); and
- Higher use of person-centred support services.

These statistics reinforce our renewed understanding that poverty *is* the **common** enemy across our citizens, services and organisations. It is both the cause *and* effect of our inextricably linked social and economic challenges. Despite this, our efforts to tackle the impact of poverty are fragmented and unco-ordinated. The city's enabling conditions have undoubtedly been further undermined by the impact of Brexit, the global pandemic and the 'after shocks' of the impact on mental health and the cost-of-living crisis. Improved alignment, of both policy and resources, and the redesign and reform of services alongside our partners and through the lens of citizen need, provides a significant opportunity to address this and represents a necessity for robust mitigation and direct action to help children, young people, and their families.

3 Policy Alignment

3.1 Pivotal to identifying system barriers to change is an understanding of the reach and impact of poverty across the city and the actions in place to mitigate this. Using the capacity available within the Child Poverty Pathfinder it has been possible to more accurately articulate both the correlation of poverty on our service demands and the *additional cost of* ***child*** *poverty* to the public purse and the wider Glasgow economy.

3.2 Research undertaken using methodology developed by Bramley & Watkins (Heriot Watt University), highlights that the annual costs of addressing the ***damage done*** by child poverty in Glasgow sits between £823m and £1.09bn. A significant proportion of these costs within the public sector are borne by our Children & Families Service in the Health & Social Care Partnership, are in relation to housing costs, or are on national anti-poverty initiatives such as specific grant allocations from the Scottish Government.

3.3 We are also increasingly able to demonstrate that, given the interconnected impact of poverty, intentional alignment of disparate policies will mitigate and contribute to tackling poverty. Fundamental is our deliberate intention to ensure alignment across policies, at both national and local level, to address both economic and social regeneration. Working with partners, our emerging narrative is much more clearly focused on the impact that the eradication of poverty will have collectively and specifically the positive impact on public sector finances.

3.4 Aligning our policy intentions to this shared priority brings the best opportunity to both optimise the impact of current provision and invest in capacity to reform and co-ordinate our city resources. Pivotal to achieving this is investment in the capacity and expertise to identify the current disorder within our system, to understand the opportunities to bring about improved order, and more specifically to precisely and intentionally implement systemic reform.

3.5 Exploratory work to date has both confirmed the criticality of providing person centred support (relational, strength based and with a strong focus on anti-poverty practice) underpinned by a collaborative infrastructure and a more detailed understanding of the barriers to deliver systemic change. Furthermore, we can also better articulate the role of fragmentation and duplication of services as a barrier to change. Specifically we are able to confirm;

- that Glasgow is on the right track in taking an integrated, multi-agency approach to pursuing whole system change to tackle child poverty;
- the continued relevance of prioritising action to tackle barriers in relation to data, funding, commissioning, and culture;
- the criticality of shared accountability that includes performance measurements, finances and stakeholder ownership; and

- that holistic, person-centred modes of engagement with citizens are more successful and lead to positive social returns on investment for citizens, organisations and the public service system more broadly.

3.6 This policy alignment has manifested itself most explicitly in the publication of Glasgow's new Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2024-34. This Plan, reflecting a renewed focus of intent by the Community Planning Partnership, places eradicating family poverty at the very heart of the city's agenda. A targeted focus for the 0-5 years population through an early intervention and prevention model is particularly highlighted. The Plan sets out a commitment to use both person-centred and place based approaches with all partners committed to whole system change based on shared outcomes. This shift means that tackling child poverty is no longer **on** the agenda, it **is** the agenda.

3.7 The inclusion of a child poverty priority in the recently published Integrated Children's Services Plan, also overseen through the Community Planning structures, provides a further opportunity to align and strengthen both the city's collective resolve, its funding and the governance arrangements around our child poverty ambitions.

3.8 Glasgow newly focused and expanded Community Planning Partnership will use its strategic leadership and refreshed accountability to be specific and deliberate. It provides the city framework through which to align our individual policy intentions towards a shared commitment on child poverty and to co-ordinate both our actions and our measures of success to this end.

3.9 The city has a track record of successfully securing social change. Over the course of nine years, there been a significant shift in the numbers of children and young people being taken into care. Alongside securing substantial financial savings, this has involved the commencement of a core model of practice change across front line staff resulting in significantly improved outcomes for the city's children and families. Investing in additional leadership and capacity from ***within*** the system to oversee development and implementation will ensure that our city endeavour to eradicate child poverty has the best opportunity to succeed.

3.10 A new post, Programme Director – Whole Family Wellbeing and Child Poverty has therefore been created for a fixed term of two years to lead and facilitate this work. This role will ensure alignment of the complementary work underway to deliver transformational change through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, the Promise, the Child Poverty Pathfinder, Employability and All Aged Childcare provisions – all aligned through the Community Planning Partnership structures.

3.11 This post will also operate within the Child Poverty Pathfinder to maximise the opportunity to collectively and fundamentally address our child poverty challenge, promote early intervention and more effective prevention. This brings a determination to build on the progress made by the collective team to

date, a methodology and track record of delivering seismic and sustainable system change.

4. Whole Family Wellbeing Fund – Transformational Capacity

4.1 In March 2023, Glasgow City Council accepted an allocation of £19.4m Whole Family Wellbeing Fund from Scottish Government on behalf of the local Children Services Executive Group. These funds were made available as part of a national £500m package to deliver the Promise and transform the way that family support is delivered. The funds are available for use across the lifetime of the Parliament specifically to ensure that families can access seamless, person-centred holistic support wrapped around their individual needs.

4.2 The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) sets out to;

- Improve family wellbeing
- Reduce inequalities in family wellbeing – between the most and least disadvantaged communities;
- Reduce the number of families requiring crisis intervention – achieved through a shift in investment to prevention and early intervention; and
- Reduce the number of children and young people living away from their families.

4.3 The WFWF is a transformational change programme that prioritises early intervention and prevention. It prioritises a person-centred model of support that places the family's needs at the centre. Furthermore, it demands a collaborative, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach to funding, commissioning and delivery of family support. The Fund supports the capacity to build transformational capacity and skills across staff and test new, innovative approaches to service delivery.

4.4 Following extensive consultation and co-design with public and third sector stakeholders, three strands of work were agreed as the foundation themes of the WFWF plan in Glasgow. These are;

- Developing the capacity of universal services to identify whole family needs at an earlier stage;
- Building capacity to support families to engage with co-ordinated support at an earlier stage; and
- Developing a practice model for family support, taking to scale the learnings from the Glasgow Intensive Family Support Service.

There was also significant agreement on the potentially transformative impact of targeting families with a child aged 0-5 years (including pre-natal) to ensure family support at the earliest stage.

4.5 This work is designed to specifically complement the current re-design of the city's Family Support Strategy to further promote prevention, early intervention and address childhood poverty. Furthermore, the intention of this funding aligns entirely with the agreed ambition of the Glasgow Community Planning

Partnership as set out in its Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The co-ordination of the Family Support Strategy through the Integrated Children Services Plan which was approved in September 2023, and part of the Community Planning Structures ensures intentional alignment across our actions to improve outcomes for children and families.

5. Funding Alignment: Whole Family Early Intervention Fund & Governance

5.1 In tandem with exploring policy alignment referenced in Section 3, significant work has been undertaken to bring together appropriate funding allocations. This provides an opportunity to better co-ordinate the use and impact of these funds towards our shared ambition through collective oversight of allocation decisions. This approach has essentially created an aligned change fund that reflects our need to facilitate the practical delivery of our shared policy intent through improved funding flexibility. This intended model of operating will both increase the scope and impact of expenditure in the city, maximising the use of our resources towards our shared goals.

5.2 In partnership with colleagues at the Scottish Government, we have made progress in relation to increased funding flexibilities across funds aligned to specific policy agendas. Whilst work is ongoing to secure alignment to our funding ambitions at a national level, the development of a national framework to deliver on the Verity House Agreement will also provide further opportunities to facilitate greater funding alignment.

5.3 Glasgow has therefore established the Whole Family Early Intervention Fund which brings together the following allocations made to Glasgow City Council;

- No One Left Behind – Child Poverty Employability Funds (elements of)
- Whole Family Wellbeing Fund
- Child Poverty Fund

The Whole Family Early Intervention Fund currently totals £22.1m and can be used across the next three years (subject to further dialogue with the Scottish Government, a key partner within the Child Poverty Pathfinder, around specific permissions).

In addition to this, discussions are also at an advanced stage with a broader range of funding partners that invest in the city. This seeks to co-ordinate the intention and broader impact of these funds, which include additional public sector as well as charitable grants. Whilst not yet in the position to consider the significant alignment sought through the Whole Family Early Intervention Fund, this evolving co-ordination will also ensure the better use of city resources.

5.4 The agreed focus for the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, as outlined in Section 4, will form the foundations for the use of the new Whole Family Early Intervention Fund. It will;

- invest in change capacity to ensure that as a city we can maximise the use of resources already available to us;

- tending to the ‘As Is’ through investment in existing practice to meet ongoing demand and support reform where the focus aligns with our future approach;
- invest in innovative ‘demonstrations of change activity’ to test new practice in the short to medium term to provide further learning on which to build our transformational change;
- invest in specific population cohorts and communities identified as presenting particularly challenging circumstances; and
- Focus on areas of pressure that have emerged through our analysis of the current landscape, this includes; English as a Second or Other Language, Childcare, Mental Health, Financial Inclusion and community cohesion; and
- Support policy alignment and demonstrate the value of funding flexibility to deliver across a number of areas.

The intention is that this preventative funding addresses both the scale of ‘failure demand cost’ (anything between £823million to £1billion outlined in para 3.2), whilst simultaneously ensuring that the current spend in the city is realigned and coordinated more effectively.

5.5 The Children Services Executive Group (CSEG), which reports into the GCPP, will continue to be responsible for overseeing the development and collective agreement of the detailed use of this expanded funding resource, in line with the steer from GCPP. As previously agreed, specifically for the WFWF, the CSEG will undertake the necessary process to allocate funding using the GCC ‘Cost of Living Crisis Funding’ process developed with Internal Audit.

5.6 A Child Poverty Steering Group, evolved from the current Senior Officers Group, will provide the appropriate corporate governance required from Glasgow City Council as the grant recipient for these funds. This Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council and comprises the Chief Officer of the HSCP, Executive Director of Financial Services (GCC), Director of Regional Economic Growth, and the Executive Director of Education (GCC). Partner activity continues to be governed by the GCPP Executive Board and Strategic Partnership structures, which are chaired by the council. These structures are illustrated at **Annex A**.

6. Next Steps

6.1 Given this opportunity for order across our city structures, agreement is now required on the specific next steps to create momentum for targeted but significant change for our families in poverty.

6.2 It is proposed that, in line with the WFEIF criteria set out in para 5.4, the initial following high level allocations are made;

- £10m is made available for use over three years to invest in early work to test new and enhance existing ways of working. These resources will be invested in Demonstration of Change activity in the ten ‘booster’ wards in the city. These wards have been identified as having the highest levels of

child poverty/need and were outlined in the Child Poverty Pathfinder Update provided to the Strategic Partnership on the 13th February 2024.

Using the Child Poverty Dashboard, it has been possible to identify the communities with the highest concentrations of child poverty in the city. Furthermore, our analysis has identified specific challenges and opportunities for those families who are experiencing **deep poverty** (income of 40% or less than the UK median) and those that are **on the cusp of poverty,** with a view to undertaking targeted action in these communities.

Alongside these citywide statistics, our data analysis has identified the communities where the number of households experiencing child poverty is at its **highest**. Using our electoral wards as a starting point, we now understand in more detail the distribution of child poverty. We will use this to ensure that our next steps are targeted to best effect within the neighbourhoods and communities in these wards. Table 1 provides an overview of the child poverty levels and subsequent rates (%) in those **wards experiencing the highest rates of child poverty** (the booster wards) using the most recent analysis of data.

Table 1: Number of households, children, and the poverty rate for booster wards across the city (March 2024)

Ward name	Number of households	Number of children	Poverty rate %
Southside Central	865	1790	32.1
Calton	910	1690	34.6
Canal	855	1545	28.1
Drumchapel/Anniesland	805	1540	26.4
Garscadden/Scotstounhill	800	1565	29.3
East Centre	730	1405	24.9
Linn	695	1210	21.7
Greater Pollok	695	1365	18.7
Springburn/Robroyston	645	1200	24.2
Govan	600	1070	25.1
TOTAL	**7600**	**14380**	**26.2**

Source: Council tax reduction and housing benefit data, Glasgow City Council

- £3m is made available for use over three years to be attentive to the current demands on the 'As Is' system as well as to support alignment and build capacity across organisations in preparation for involvement in new ways of working; and

- £1.5m is made available for use over three years to contribute to the implementation of the Community Planning Partnership's place-based approach including supporting systemic change and underpinning & complementing the person-centred approaches.

7.2 Performance Management Framework & Action Plan Development

7.1 Alongside the progress made to secure both policy and funding alignment, the GCPP will collaborate intensively to develop its Performance Framework and associated Action. The Partnership has recognised the importance of maximising this watershed opportunity to be intentional, specific and deliberate as it shapes the next phase of its work.

7.2 It is therefore proposed that members of the Strategic Partnership are supported in discussions to agree the approach to this work. Our agreed local outcomes, and the approach we take to implement these, must demonstrate the actions taken, the impact secured from these but also the additionality of our change capacity and the impact of our new ways of working. This requires careful and thoughtful facilitation and partners are invited to participate in shaping the methodology to secure this.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Members are asked to:

a) note progress made on policy alignment in relation to child poverty within the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2024-34;
b) note the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund award to the local authority;
c) note the creation of a Whole Family Early Intervention Fund to align the use of specific financial allocations;
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f) agree the next steps to shape the Local Outcome Improvement Plan's Performance Management Framework and associated Action Plan.

Annex A
Child Poverty Governance Structures

