



Glasgow City Council

**Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City
Policy Committee**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,
Regeneration and Sustainability**

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Item 3

21st January 2025

THRIVING CITIES INITIATIVE UPDATE

Purpose of Report:

To provide Committee with an update on the Thriving Cities Initiative.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Note the content of the report.
- Note the next steps outlined for integration of learning from the Thriving Cities Initiative

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1 Introduction

- 1.1 During COP 26, the Glasgow City Council made a political commitment to become a Thriving City. A thriving city is defined by the C40 as one which reduces overall levels of consumption and creates an economy where everyone is given an opportunity to thrive without harming other people or the planet (www.c40.org).
- 1.2 To progress this work, Glasgow committed to working with C40, a global network of mayors from the world's leading cities that are united in action to address the climate crisis.
- 1.3 C40's mission is focused on tackling climate change through urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, while increasing the health, wellbeing and economic opportunities of urban citizens.
- 1.4 The Thriving Cities Initiative (TCI) is a key programme of work led by C40, to address these issues. TCI uses an iterative approach to support cities in addressing unsustainable consumption to help achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement and improve equity, quality of life and economic livelihoods in cities.
- 1.5 Glasgow, through its hosting of COP26 and its work in tackling the climate and ecological emergency, was invited to be part of this work.
- 1.6 The TCI project ran from January 2022 – December 2024 and this report provides a summary of the key outputs.

2 Thriving Cities Initiative in Glasgow

- 2.1 The TCI project in Glasgow had the initial following goals:
 - a) To develop an action pathway to move Glasgow towards becoming a thriving city. The action pathway will serve to enhance existing Council approved plans and frameworks, such as the Circular Economy Route Map. Any actions identified could be integrated into Glasgow's Climate Plan.
 - b) To develop a methodology for measuring progress towards becoming a thriving city and addressing urban consumption and pilot its use within a project based in Glasgow.
 - c) To develop communications tools and resources to mainstream sustainable lifestyles, focused on ensuring that Glaswegians have the necessary support to make decisions that will benefit them and their communities.
 - d) To share lessons learned from the Thriving Cities process demonstrating how cities can move towards thriving and address unsustainable consumption.

3 Delivery Update

- 3.1 The delivery of the TCI project has been led by the Sustainability Team within Glasgow City Council. However, to achieve the goals outlined above it was acknowledged that teams from across the organisation, and key strategic partners would also need to be involved. This led to a collaborative approach being prioritised, and an emphasis on shared learning and development of projects through workshop style sessions.
- 3.2 The network of officers and stakeholders involved in the TCI project were those who took part in the development of Glasgow's Thriving City Portrait (see [Committee report for overview of participants](#)).
- 3.3 Delivery of the TCI project was grouped into the following 3 workstreams in agreement with C40:
- Baseline Analysis and Stakeholder mapping
 - Convene City Changemakers to co-create action pathways
 - Develop measurement and evaluation through a community-based project

Progress against each of the aforementioned workstreams is detailed in the subsequent sections of this report.

3.4 Baseline Analysis and Stakeholder mapping:

- 3.4.1 Four workshops were run on urban consumption and the concept of thriving, introducing teams across Glasgow City Council to strategies and approaches for addressing urban consumption fostering collaboration across sectors and industries.
- 3.4.2 C40 reviewed Glasgow's Climate Action Plan, Adaptation Plan and Circular Economy Route Map to inform baseline analysis and project approach.
- 3.4.3 Scoping meetings were held with the Council's Sustainability team, the Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI) and GALLANT to inform stakeholder mapping and baseline analysis.
- 3.4.4 The development of social and climate vulnerability mapping and risk assessments to identify priority neighbourhoods, provided an evidence base for TCI to address the inequalities of consumption, as well as future work to integrate further climate action, adaptation and poverty reduction.

3.5 Convene City Changemakers to co-create action pathways:

- 3.5.1 Following the launch of the Thriving definitions, one workshop was held on addressing climate and social vulnerability and another on new approaches to

business, using the Thriving definitions as a guiding framework. These workshops served to create new partnerships between businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, Glasgow City Council and the University of Glasgow, as well as deepen collaboration between departments within the Council.

3.5.2 Based on the outcomes of the workshops and the social and climate mapping, the City Change Makers program was developed and delivered by the Centre for Civic Innovation. The climate and social mapping led us to work in neighbourhoods within the ten Child Poverty Booster Wards, Govan and Southside Central. The program supports local organisations in equitably addressing urban consumption, while also scaling their impact across their community and the city, reducing emissions and building resilience in local communities.

3.5.3 The Chamber of Commerce have developed the initial conversations held at the workshops and had led on a series of activities to support the business sector to understand and take action on becoming thriving. These include:

- Using the Agile City / Gallant / Chamber of Commerce partnership to raise the profile of how select businesses in Glasgow are addressing thriving themes and to develop case studies of best practice to share across the city.
- Hold monthly circular mixer sessions to bring business communities together across the city looking at thriving and circular principles, these are supported by Harley Haddow.
- Hosted a workshop with the Doughnut Economics Action Lab and 20 business leaders from a range of sectors to engage in open dialogue to identify the common barriers to thriving and mechanisms to collectively overcome them.

3.5.4 Facilitation of a final lessons learned session, bringing together all parties involved in the project to identify how the project outcomes can be integrated into ongoing work.

3.6 Develop measurement and evaluation through a community-based project:

3.6.1 The CCI partnered with the TCI and wider Glasgow City Council teams to develop The City Change Makers program focused on Enabling Community Action on Urban Consumption, Resilience and Wellbeing, and to understand how the city might support people in Glasgow to better respond to climate change. It was created to work with local communities who are facing the worst impacts of climate change and understand the challenges they face, what they care about, and what they would like to see happen in the future.

3.6.2 The Centre for Civic Innovation secured funding from the CNCA for citizen participation and together with the funding secured by NRS Sustainability from the TCI, the project supported two organisations (Make Do and Grow and Govanhill Housing Association) and local people from the neighbourhoods

where these organisations are based (Govan and Govanhill) to prototype, test, and scale their ideas, and support neighbourhood action that builds resilience to the impacts of climate change, whilst improving the wellbeing of people and planet.

3.6.3 This involved developing a design accelerator programme, a series of workshops taking participants through a design process, to develop solutions to the climate-related challenges they experience in their local areas. The programme supported groups to co-design community-led projects that both tackle climate change and serve the needs of local people and also provided every participant with a participation grant as well as a globally recognised qualification in service design.

3.6.4 Final project prototypes that have emerged will be tested locally with a view to scaling and building capacity across the city. The solutions aim to build on what is already strong in these neighbourhoods and support climate and socio-economically vulnerable communities, to make better use of resources to create fair and equitable solutions that benefit people and planet.

3.6.5 The final report for the City Change Makers program is attached as Appendix 1, and showcases the ways of working, what was achieved and what can be learnt from this approach.

3.6.6 The prototype community-based project ideas will be trialled on the ground in early 2025.

3.7 C40 are currently finalising a publication showcasing Glasgow's journey throughout the Thriving Cities Initiative to inspire other cities to adopt systemic approaches and leverage the full range of their powers to equitably address urban consumption through a climate justice lens. This will be published in January 2025.

4 Lessons Learned

4.1 As the project progressed it was evident that the goals set at the outset, were not completely aligned with the priorities for action identified through stakeholder engagement and baselining. The approach for the TCI project was reviewed and focussed more on a localised, replicable approach, created through the design and delivery of the City Change Makers programme. The ability to be agile with project development has been a critical aspect to the realisation of successful outcomes.

Based on this flexible approach, the City Change Makers programme has:

- Created an action pathway, specific to the needs identified by two local communities.
- Developed and is piloting a methodology for measuring progress in these communities
- Developed communications tools and resources to share the approach to

working with communities on sustainability projects.

- 4.2 Based on the experiences gained through the City Change Makers programme, in order to catalyse local change, it is necessary to have significant local capacity, both in terms of Council resource as well as having on the ground support direct into communities. Also, the provision of participation grants for all of the individuals involved was a critical component of this as it covered the costs experienced by those interested in participation. The full suite of City Change Makers learning is highlighted in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 The narrative on urban consumption and sustainable lifestyles evolved significantly over the course of the program. To ensure that climate action respects and resonates with local communities, it is important to develop ground-up narratives and support vulnerable communities. We learned through this process that focusing narratives around meeting people's needs, building on what we have already and developing skills and capacity was more effective and compelling than framing action around sustainable lifestyles.
- 4.4 One of the challenges identified was a lack of sufficient resources for implementation, or to trial new innovative approaches. Ongoing support beyond the end of the TCI project would ensure continuity and ultimately a much greater impact within City Change Maker communities.
- 4.5 The final workshop also highlighted that the opportunities and space for shared working and collaboration across city actors was invaluable, and that a continued emphasis on community and place based work was needed to progress action towards becoming thriving.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Share the outputs from the City Change Makers project across council teams to ensure learning can be embedded within future climate engagement projects.
- 5.2 Glasgow City Council to continue to support the funded projects and delivery work with the two City Change Maker communities and enable the completion of identified projects. This will take the form of support to navigate council processes, provide specialist advice and key contacts, and to sign post to any relevant upcoming funding opportunities for future phases of delivery.
- 5.3 Integrate priority themes and learning from the final workshop into the updated Action Plan of Glasgow's Climate Plan.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report
<i>Legal:</i>	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report
<i>Personnel:</i>	GCC Sustainability and a wide range of internal colleagues will continue to have involvement in providing support to the City Changemakers until completion of their projects.
<i>Procurement:</i>	There are no direct procurement implications arising from the report
Council Strategic Plan:	Contributes to Grand Challenges 1,2 and 3.

- Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities; Mission 3, Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.
- Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens; Mission 1, Support Glasgow Residents into sustainable and fair work. Mission 2, Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy.
- Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative, and efficient way for our communities; Mission 3, Enable staff to deliver a sustainable and innovative council structure that delivers value for money
- Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow; Mission 2, Become a Net Zero Carbon city by 2030.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

It supports the outcomes indirectly through consideration of a Just Transition where people are at the heart of a Thriving City.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

This work has potential to have a positive impact on all equality outcomes. A consideration of a Just transition for the people of Glasgow underpins this work. Positive impacts may range from a wider diversity of sustainable employment opportunities accessible to all, through to improved environments where health and wellbeing benefit.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Not directly. However, through the ongoing action towards becoming a Thriving City it is hoped that socio-economic disadvantage would reduce.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

The project supports the following Climate Plan actions directly - 4, Climate literacy; 6, Net Zero City plan; 11 Just Transition and 59, Circular Economy

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

Integrating the learning from the TCI project would mean that there would be a possible reduction in overall levels of consumption and an economy is created where everyone is given an opportunity to thrive without harming other people or the planet

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Yes, by working with communities and stakeholders to reduce overall levels of consumption there will be a reduction in associated emissions.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report Y/N

Not applicable to this report.

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out.

N/A

7 Recommendations

7.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

- Note the content of the report.

- Note the next steps outlined for integration of learning from the Thriving Cities Initiative