



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

**Report by Bailie Anne McTaggart, City Convener for
Communities and Equalities**

Contact: Kevin Rush: 74613

Item 1

4th December 2025

Glasgow Communities Fund (2026-2029)

Purpose of Report:

To provide information on the application process and assessment framework applied to the Glasgow Communities Fund Phase 3 (GCF3) and seek approval of a 3-year package of grant recommendations from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029.

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to:

- note the application process and the assessment framework supporting the GCF3 recommendations;
- approve the GCF3 programme of recommendations as set out in Appendix 1;
- note the applications not recommended for funding as set out in Appendix 2; and
- agree, in terms of Standing Order No 30 (7), that these decisions will not be subject to the call-in process for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.5.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Glasgow Communities Fund (GCF) was introduced by the Council in October 2020. The fund provides a 3-year programme of grant support to third sector organisations to deliver on the aims of the fund, being:
- Building the skills, capacity and resilience of individuals and communities
 - Supporting activities and services that enable and empower communities to become involved in the social, economic, and cultural life of the city
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people with protected characteristics
- 1.2 The current phase of the fund (known as GCF2) is in the final year of the 3-year 2023-2026 programme. It provides almost £16m annually in grant funding to 217 third sector organisations, supporting the delivery of a diverse programme of service provision across the city.
- 1.3 Additionally, GCF2 provides over £2.1m grant support annually from core Council funding to support Financial Inclusion and Legal Support activity, delivered by the Glasgow Advice and Information Network (GAIN) members. The support for the Financial Inclusion and Legal Support activity currently delivered through the GAIN network will remain a separate strategic funding programme which will be subject to the same conditions as detailed in section 6.3 of this paper. This will be managed separately from the GCF3 core budget.
- 1.4 This report sets out the GCF3 journey from application to assessment and recommends a 3-year package of grant support to 193 organisations as set out in appendix 1.
- 1.5 Committee approval is sought to suspend the call-in procedure under Council Standing Order 30 (7). Suspension of the call-in procedure will provide a confirmed position to all GCF3 applicants, allowing for grant award packages to be issued to successful applicants and for unsuccessful applicants to be contacted regarding available capacity building support, prior to the Council going into recess on 15 December 2025.

2. Background

- 2.1 The GCF3 framework has been developed by the Grants and Monitoring team (herein referred to as the 'grants team') following a review of the GCF2 process and engagement with stakeholders, the outcome of which was reported to the Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities, Culture and Engagement (WECCE) City Policy Committee on [30 May 2024](#).

- 2.2 Two key insights from the review identified (a) the need for GCF3 to demonstrate clear alignment with the Council's Strategic Plan and (b) strong support for the involvement of Council Family strategic lead officers in the GCF3 assessment process.
- 2.3 On 5 December 2024, the [City Administration Committee](#) (CAC) approved the development of a GCF3 framework that would deliver on the 4 missions underpinning 'grand challenge one' of the Council's Strategic Plan, as set out below:

Grand Challenge One: Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities	
Mission 1.1	End child poverty in our city using early intervention to support families
Mission 1.2	Meet the learning and care needs of children and their families before and through school
Mission 1.3	Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities
Mission 1.4	Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant

- 2.4 Working collaboratively with strategic lead officers from across the Council Family, five GCF3 themes were developed to exclusively support the missions of Grand Challenge One, and to align with wider Council Family strategic priorities, being:
- Supporting Children, Young People and Families
 - Promoting Culture and Creativity
 - Developing Community Infrastructure
 - Improving Health and Wellbeing
 - Challenging Violence Against Women and Girls
- 2.5 Accompanying each of the themes is explanatory detail, covering the theme aims, focus and expectations; examples of activities that would align with the theme; and theme specific outcomes. Information on GCF3 together with detailed information on the themes can be found on the GCF webpage [here](#).
- 2.6 Committee is asked to note that the end-to-end development and implementation of the GCF3 framework to date has been undertaken in consultation and collaboration with strategic lead stakeholders from across the Council Family.

3. The application process

- 3.1 The GCF3 application process was open from 13 February until 12 midday 7 April 2025, it was promoted widely through various Council Family, third sector partner and social media channels. Applicants were able to access a link to the application pack, which included:

- Fund Overview
- Link to the on-line application form
- Microsoft Excel Budget Template
- Step-by-Step Guide to the application form
- Microsoft Word version of Application form (intended to help applicants prepare their application prior to submission on-line)
- Mock example of a completed application form
- Mock example of a completed budget template

3.2 The GCF3 application form was devised around the assessment criteria approved by the CAC, including:

- Evidence of directly delivering on the missions supporting Grand Challenge One
- Evidence of project need and impact in terms of SIMD/ward/local data and demographics (including 'poverty programme' booster wards)
- Equality impacts
- Capacity of applicants
- Governance and Finance
- Partnership working and local connectedness
- Local accountability
- Impact
- Sustainability

3.3 Prior to going live with the application process, the grants team consulted with GCVS's Third Sector Human Rights and Equalities (THRE) team on the application form and corresponding guidance documents. The THRE team reviewed the documentation, provided feedback and suggested changes, all of which were incorporated. The THRE team also developed and delivered GCF bespoke training for the grants team in March 2025, aimed at raising awareness of human rights and equalities and why they matter.

3.4 Further, ahead of going live, the application form and supporting guidance was tested by a range of organisations with varying capacity. 19 organisations provided valuable feedback, including on clarity, design and functionality, which informed changes and improvements to the live process.

3.5 Applicants were able to access a package of support as outlined below:

- On-line Information Sessions - provided in partnership with Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) to potential applicants. Over 450 people joined the sessions held on 19, 21, 24, 25 and 26 February;
- Live Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – published on the GCF webpage and updated after each of the 5 information sessions above;
- GCVS provided direct support to applicants, delivering "Making Better Applications" workshops. GCVS also provided the opportunity of pre-submission 'application reviews', involving 1- to-1 surgeries aimed

primarily at lower capacity organisations and/or new applicants to GCF;
and

- Assistance from the grants team was available throughout the application window to help with application and technical related queries.

Applying to GCF

- 3.6 Applicants were invited to apply on-line and to upload supporting documents as part of their application, as below:
- Copy of the current Governing document
 - A copy of the most recent approved annual accounts or income and expenditure statement
 - A copy of the last Managing Board/Committee minute
 - A copy of the latest bank statement (within 3 months)
 - A completed budget template (provided as part of the application pack)
- 3.7 Applicants were required to select one 'Primary Theme' which most closely aligned to their proposed project and to then select corresponding theme outcomes. The option to select a 'Secondary Theme' and related outcomes was also available.
- 3.8 Each applicant received a confirmation email containing a PDF version of the submitted application form for their retention. On closure of the application process, a total of 470 applications had been received.
- 3.9 The applications were logged and validated by the grants team. As part of the validation process, 5 applications were deemed ineligible for consideration due to 2 applicants seeking less than the minimum award, 2 ineligible for governance reasons and 1 application submitted after the deadline. In each case, applicants were contacted to explain the outcome of their application. Two applications were subsequently withdrawn later during the assessment process.
- 3.10 Where eligible applicants had submitted incorrect or incomplete supporting documentation, they were contacted and given 3 working days to resolve any anomalies, flexibility was applied on a case-by-case basis. A total of 48 organisations fell into this category.
- 3.11 463* eligible applications with a total value of £149,986,822 were received against the Primary Funding themes as set out below:

GCF3 Themes	Applications received
Supporting Children, Young People and Families	138
Promoting Culture and Creativity	71
Developing Community Infrastructure	120

Improving Health and Wellbeing	122
Challenging Violence Against Women and Girls	12
Total	*463

*465 applications were received but two were subsequently withdrawn by the organisation.

- 3.12 Applicants were provided with progress updates in April, June and October, including information on the total number and value of applications received, the breakdown per theme and the timescales for assessment.

4. The GCF3 assessment framework

- 4.1 The development and implementation of the GCF3 framework involved 3 main participants: the Oversight Group; the Grants and Monitoring team; and Council Family strategic lead officers. Information on the participants and corresponding roles, are set out in paragraphs 4.2 – 4.4 below:

- 4.2 An *Oversight Group (OG)* was established during March-April 2025 to lead on the GCF3 assessment process. The OG was established to:

- lead on strategic planning, design and delivery of the GCF3 framework;
- oversee resource commitment and officer engagement within respective service areas; and
- to implement an assessment process which delivers a programme of recommendations considered to achieve maximum impact within available budget for consideration by the CAC

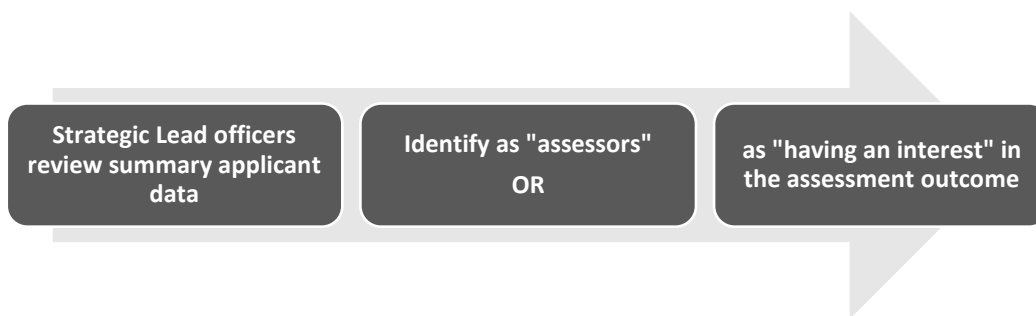
- 4.2.1 The OG met monthly during May to September 2025, involving senior officer representation from Council Family service areas as below:

Service	Team / Responsibility
Glasgow Life	Communities – including CLD, Youth and Facilities
	Sport, Physical Activity and Wellbeing
	Arts and Culture
HSCP	Children and Families Services
	Health Improvement and Equalities
	Older People
	Homelessness
GCC – Chief Execs	CED – Financial Inclusion and Transformation
	CED – Grants Team
	CED – Communities Team
	CED – Economic Development
	CED – Digital Services
GCC - Education	Education Services - Early Years
GCC – NRS	Glasgow Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership

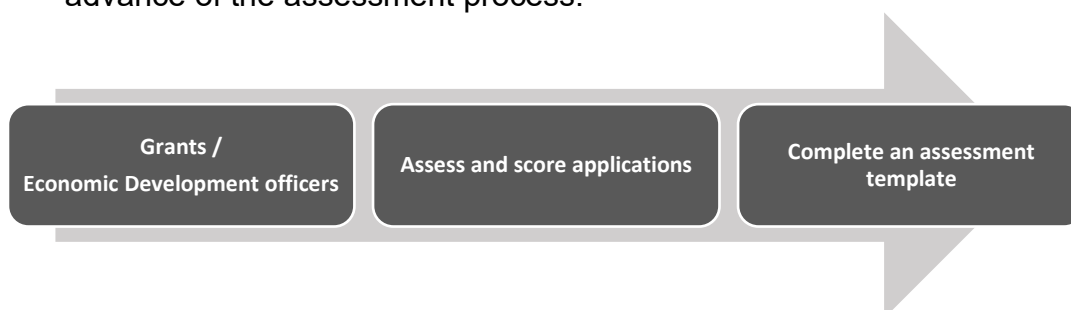
- 4.3 The Grants and Monitoring team within the Chief Executive's Economic Development Division is responsible for delivery of the GCF. The role of the team in the GCF3 process is to:
- support the OG and Council Family colleagues on all aspects of the GCF throughout the process, including provision of guidance material, management information and analysis to facilitate and support the funding recommendation process;
 - log, verify, validate applications and provide an initial assessment and score of the application and conduct any peer reviews required; and
 - provide training for identified assessors, including the facilitation of training on Human Rights and Equalities from GCVS's THRE team.
- 4.3.1 Officers within the Grants and Monitoring team had been identified as interim 'theme leads' to support communication and collaboration with Council Family officers throughout the assessment process. The role of the 'theme lead' in the GCF3 programme will be developed in collaboration with the OG during the course of the GCF3 programme.
- 4.4 **Council Family strategic lead officers** - The OG identified officers from their respective services to participate in the assessment process. The role of Council Family strategic lead officers was to:
- review the summary application data template and determine if they identify as 'assessors' or as 'having an interest' in relevant applications;
 - attend training/briefing sessions on GCF;
 - review the initial assessment of applications, either individually or in conjunction with Council Family colleagues; and
 - complete or participate in the completion of one assessment template for each application reviewed and indicate a priority ranking.

Steps in the assessment process

- 4.5 A GCF Assessment Framework approved by the OG provided comprehensive guidance to participants in the assessment process steps set out in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.10 below.
- 4.6 Prior to their input to the assessment process, a total of 119 Council and Council Family officers attended comprehensive GCF3 briefing sessions held over 11 April to 24 July.
- 4.7 **Step 1** – summary information on applicant data was shared with Council Family officers to determine whether they would like to be 'involved in the assessment' of an application and whether they had an 'an interest' in the assessment outcome.



- 4.7.1 Completed “GCF Templates” were returned to the grants team, individual returns were collated into one document and stored on SharePoint, a secure data sharing platform, which could be accessed by all participants in the process.
- 4.7.2 Where applications hadn’t been identified by strategic lead officers for ‘assessment’ or ‘interest’, the grants team looked at the activities being delivered by the applicant and linked in with relevant OG members for signposting advice.
- 4.7.3 Where more than one strategic lead officer had identified as an ‘assessor’ the OG agreed that the grants team consider the activities being delivered by the applicant and identify the most appropriate assessor. Remaining ‘assessors’ were re-identified as ‘having an interest’ in the outcome of the assessment to ensure engagement with them during the assessment process.
- 4.8 **Step 2** – the initial assessment of applications was undertaken by officers from the Economic Development Division. Comprehensive training on the completion of assessment templates was provided to all assessors in advance of the assessment process.



Applications and supporting documents were assessed during the period 14 April to 13 June 2025. The outcome of the assessment was captured on an “Assessment Template” (ref. paragraph 4.8.1 below).

- 4.8.1 Some developments were introduced to the assessment template, including:

SIMD score	A formula was applied to ward beneficiary data provided by applicants, resulting in an auto generated score by calculating the average SIMD score for each Ward and ranking them 1 to 5. For example, Wards
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	with most deprivation will be given a score of 5 down to 1 for those with the lowest levels
Child poverty booster ward score	Similar to the SIMD above, a formula and auto generated score was developed for the 10 identified child poverty booster wards.
Organisation Capacity Indicator	Indication of the applicant's capacity was achieved by considering factors such as geographical reach, resource constraints, minimal or no staffing and reliance on volunteers and annual turnover.
Equalities Indicator	Drawn from a question in the application form where the applicant was asked to identify if at least 75% of anticipated beneficiaries share protected characteristics. This data was considered alongside data on the specific characteristics provided by applicants.
Sub scoring criteria	Sub scores were introduced to the assessment criteria detailed in paragraph 4.8.2 which aligned directly with relevant questions in the application form.

4.8.2 The assessment criteria and associated weightings and the scoring guide, illustrated below were embedded within the assessment template:

Assessment criteria – a weighted score was automatically populated in the template for each criterion, providing an overall score for each application. There was also a comments column against each criterion for assessing officers to give reasons for their score and to highlight any strengths or reservations.

Criterion	Weighting %
Organisation Governance	10
Project Finance	10
Project Delivery	25
Project Impact	25
Project Outcomes	25
Sustainability	5

Scoring guide - scores ranging from 0-5 were allocated to each sub criterion. A maximum score of 5 against all criteria would result in a weighted score of 100, whereas a score of 1 for all criteria would result in a weighted score of 20:

Score	Score Key Assessment	Interpretation
5	Excellent	Satisfies and demonstrates exceptional understanding of criteria required. Response identifies factors that will offer potential added value
4	Good	Satisfies the requirement with some additional benefits
3	Acceptable	Satisfies the requirement with no reservations
2	Minor reservations	Satisfies the requirement with minor reservations and limited evidence to support the response
1	Serious reservations	Some attempt has been made to provide information but lacks detail
0	Unacceptable	Does not meet the requirement, insufficient information provided

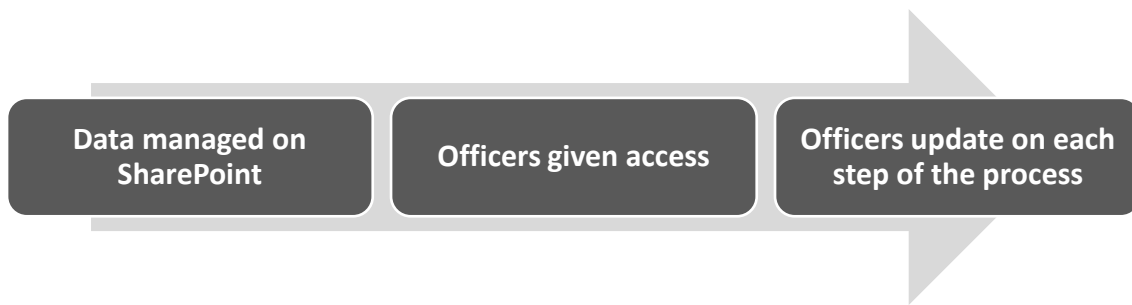
4.8.3 Data quality checks on the application data and on the initial assessments were undertaken by the grants team with the outcome and actions logged.

4.8.4 A total of 99 initial assessments were peer reviewed by nominated officers in the grants team as part of this process. In some cases, assessments had been flagged for a peer review by the assessing officer, seeking a second opinion on their assessment. In other cases, peer reviews were identified as part of the data quality checking process. Each assessing officer had at least one of their assessments peer reviewed. Circumstances of peer reviews are summarised below:

- Peer review requested by the assessor
- A high assessment score but not recommended for funding
- A low assessment score but recommended for funding
- Where costs were deemed ineligible by the assessor

On conclusion of the assessment process, a total of 111 comprehensive peer reviews and a further 28 “summary” peer reviews, mostly as part of the impact analysis stage at paragraph 5 were undertaken.

4.9 **Step 3** – a SharePoint workspace was created to support the process and mechanism for managing, tracking and sharing the outcome of the assessment steps. The workspace could be accessed by multiple users across the Council Family simultaneously, providing live data on the journey and outcome of applications referred to Council Family strategic leads for review.



4.9.1 The secure workspace contained key GCF documents for use by officers to aid their review of assessments, including the live “GCF tracker” where progress could be recorded. Access to the workspace was restricted to each service area, accessible only by officers involved in the GCF3 assessment process.

4.10 **Step 4** – following completion of the initial application assessment by the grants team, relevant documents were uploaded to the designated SharePoint workspace of the appropriate Council Family officer, being:

- The Application Form and completed Budget Template
- The Assessment Template completed by the grants team



4.10.1 The assessment template has 4 tabs where assessment outcome data is recorded, as follows:

Tab 1 – outcome of the initial assessment by the grants team

Tab 2 – contains ward data – for information only

Tab 3 - outcome of application peer review, where applicable

Comprehensive training on the GCF3 framework was provided to all Council Family officers in advance of their participation in the assessment process.

4.10.2 Tab 4 was then completed by the Council Family officer following review of the application form and budget template, as set out in the steps below:

Steps	Outcome
Review the Scoring Template / application / budget doc	Review the application, considering whether the score and recommendation appear to be fully reflective of the application.
Provide summary comments on the scoring template	Review the criteria/questions indicating whether you agree or disagree with the assessment, providing comments to support the overall conclusion.
Consider the recommendation	Drawing on expertise and knowledge of the themed activity being proposed and the application overall, consider if there is anything to add to the recommendation.
Identify level of priority	Drawing on expertise and knowledge of the proposed activity, consider and comment on the extent to which the project aligns to strategic priorities and indicate the considered level of priority, following the ranking guide provided (see 4.10.3 below).

4.10.3 The ranking guide used for the GCF2 process was refreshed for ease of reference as follows:

Ranking Category (1 - 5)	Category Definition
1	Strong Strategic Fit - Proposed service comprehensively meets demand (current, new or emerging) - Fills a gap or gaps in service provision - Significant benefit to the community - Could introduce or enhance services - High risk of service loss or reduction if not funded by GCF - Disadvantage to service users (current / new / emerging) if not funded - Detrimental to the community if not funded - Project is a key service provider and/or key partner in the delivery of services to the community.
2	Good Strategic Fit - Some elements of the proposed service meet demand (current, new or emerging). - Fills a gap in service provision. - Considerable benefit to the community.

	▪ Some impact to the community if not funded by GCF. ▪ Likely risk of service loss or reduction if not funded by GCF. ▪ Disadvantage to service users (current / new / emerging) if not funded. ▪ Project is a valued service provider and/or valued partner in the delivery of services to the community. ▪ Detrimental to the community if not funded.
3	Reasonable Strategic Fit ▪ Provides a benefit to some sections of the community. ▪ Meets some demand (current, new or emerging). ▪ Fills gaps in service provision. ▪ Possible risk of service loss or reduction if not funded by GCF. ▪ Disadvantage to service users (current / new / emerging) if not funded. ▪ Project is a known service provider and/or partner in the delivery of services to the community. ▪ Detrimental to the community if not funded.
4	Some degree of Strategic Fit ▪ Limited benefit to the community. ▪ May duplicate other services. ▪ Possible impact on service users (current, new or emerging) if not funded by GCF. ▪ Detrimental to the community on some level if not funded.
5	Minimal or no Strategic Fit ▪ Does not meet demand for service provision (current, new or emerging). ▪ Unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the community if not funded by GCF other than potential loss of opportunity to introduce new and/or enhance current service provision if not funded.

4.10.4 The table below summarises the allocation of assessments across the Council Family:

Council Family service	No. of applications
HSCP (HI)	83
HSCP (SWS)	61
GL Communities	154
GL Arts	78

GL Sports	30
Education Services	18
NRS – VAW	17
Economic Development	22

- 4.11 Engagement with Chief Executive Department's Communities Team** - the assessment framework incorporated engagement with officers from the Communities Team as a critical sounding board in terms of local knowledge and available ward data. To facilitate this, summary information on each of the applications was shared with the Communities Team and sector specific applications were discussed at three in-person sessions on 16 (pm) and 23 (am/pm) September, where officers from Glasgow Life also participated.
- 4.11.1** This engagement process sought to establish views on the extent to which a proposed project would be considered a local priority, exploring where projects were connected to existing networks, fill a local gap/s in service, present potential overlap with existing local activity and any additional knowledge and information which might be considered relevant for the impact analysis stage. The outcome of engagement with the Communities Team was captured in a template and validated on-line with all officers involved in the process.
- 4.11.2** Ward priority data was also provided by the Communities Team for each of the 23 wards, which was then shared with Neighbourhood and Regeneration Services Neighbourhood Liaison Officers for their comments on potential local/neighbourhood data gaps. This information was considered and reconciled as part of the impact analysis and balanced scorecard process set out in paragraph 5 below.
- 4.12 Engagement with officers who had 'noted an interest'** - As part of the framework, engagement was undertaken with officers from across the Council Family who had 'noted an interest' in the outcome of the assessment of an application/s. Officers were asked to draw upon their knowledge and potential impact of the project applied for and consider the extent to which the project would be considered a funding priority and why.
- 4.12.1** A total of 223 comments from officers across the Council Family were captured and considered as part of the data and impact analysis set out below 5 below.

5. Data and impact analysis by the Oversight Group

5.1 Early considerations by the OG were supported by digital dashboards produced by the Digital Services Team on the applications received and the initial assessment outcomes, including but not limited to –

- Geographical impact
- Theme impact
- Poverty impact
- Equalities impact

Due to the live nature of the assessment process it was agreed that the OG would work with outcome data provided by the grants team as discussions progressed towards final funding recommendations.

5.2 The OG met weekly (twice on-line and three times in-person) from 16 October to 11 November as a focus panel of senior officers representing the services involved in the assessment process. The panel considered outcome data from both the application the assessment processes, to aid formulation of final funding recommendations which best supported:

- the outcome of the assessments against available budget
- options for maximising impact across the city
- funding methodology/formulae to support funding recommendations that will achieve maximum impact city-wide

5.3 The tables below set out some high-level GCF3 data considered by the OG panel during their discussions:

5.3.1 Percentage and value of applications received for each theme

Primary Theme	No. of Applications	Value of Applications	Value as %age of Total
Theme 1 - Supporting Children, Young People & Families	138	£48,872,137.37	33%
Theme 2 - Promoting Culture and Creativity	71	£20,224,965.69	13%
Theme 3 - Developing Community Infrastructure	120	£38,885,268.56	26%
Theme 4 - Improving Health and Wellbeing	122	£36,799,144.77	25%
Theme 5 - Challenging Violence Against Women and Girls	12	£5,205,305.94	3%
	463	£149,986,822.33	100%

5.3.2 Percentage and value of applications on a sector level

Geographic Area	Total amounts applied for	% of total funds applied for
City Wide	£47,222,159.80	31.48%
North-East Sector	£31,492,998.41	21.00%
North-West Sector	£30,148,724.54	20.10%
South Sector	£41,122,939.58	27.42%
GCF total	£149,986,822.33	100%

5.3.3 Of the 463 applications assessed, 209 (45.1%) are from organisations currently funded by GCF2; 254 applicants (54.9%) are from organisations not currently funded by GCF2, as detailed in the tables directly below.

5.3.4 Percentage and value of applications received by GCF2 awardees

Theme	% of bids (based on amount)	No. of applications	Total Funding requested from 01/04/26 - 31/03/29
Theme 1 - Supporting Children, Young People and Families	39%	74	£30,668,033.34
Theme 2 - Promoting Culture and Creativity	9%	21	£7,165,141.40
Theme 3 - Developing Community Infrastructure	27%	61	£21,626,857.79
Theme 4 - Improving Health and Wellbeing	20%	46	£15,695,741.01
Theme 5 - Challenging Violence Against Women and Girls	5%	7	£3,745,907.12
Totals	100%	209	£78,901,680.66

5.3.5 Percentage and value of applications received by non GCF2 awardees

Theme	% of bids (based on amount)	No. of applications	Total Funding requested from 01/04/26 - 31/03/29
Theme 1 - Supporting Children, Young People and Families	26%	64	£18,204,104.03
Theme 2 - Promoting Culture and Creativity	18%	50	£13,059,824.29
Theme 3 - Developing Community Infrastructure	24%	59	£17,258,410.77
Theme 4 - Improving Health and Wellbeing	30%	76	£21,103,403.76
Theme 5 - Challenging Violence Against Women and Girls	2%	5	£1,459,398.82
Totals	100%	254	£71,085,141.67

5.4 The OG panel considered the outcome of the assessment process, starting with the priority ranking applied by Council Family officers, as set out in the table below:

Priority Ranking	No. of Applications	Value of Applications	Value as % of Total
1	123	£ 45,228,486.78	30%
2	158	£ 53,870,137.47	36%
3	131	£ 36,994,947.05	25%
4	33	£ 9,012,564.63	6%
5	18	£ 4,880,786.40	3%
	463	£ 149,986,822.33	100%

5.5 As reported to the WECCE City Policy Committee on [25 September 2025](#) the OG devised a 'balanced scorecard' approach, similar to that used for GCF2, which takes account of the following factors from the assessment process:

- outcome of the assessment
- outcome of the assessment review by Council Family officers
- assessment score
- priority ranking applied by Council Family officers
- SIMD score
- Booster ward score
- considered capacity of the applicant organisation
- outcome of engagement with Communities Team
- outcome of engagement with Council Family officers with a noted interest in the outcome of the assessment
- outcome of final review by the OG focus panel

5.6 The methodology applied by the OG requires applications to meet all of the parameters listed below to be in scope for consideration of funding recommendations:

- Application recommended for funding by the Assessor
- Strategic lead in agreement with the assessor's recommendation
- Priority ranking of 1-3 applied
- Minimum assessment score of 55
- Minimum assessment score of 50 for 'low capacity' applicants
- Minimum SIMD and/or booster ward score of 2.5
- Proposal identified as a high priority through engagement with the Communities Team and wider Council Family colleagues
- Considered a funding priority by the OG focus panel

- 5.7 This process resulted in 188 projects being identified as a GCF3 funding priority, subject to available resources.
- 5.8 The panel also considered applications which had a significant element of core employability related activity from 5 applicant organisations currently funded from GCF2 set out in the table below:

Organisation	Total 2023-26 Award Amount (if applicable)	Total Requested 2026-2029
*Enable (Leading the Way)	£ 155,134	£ 199,654
West of Scotland Regional Equality Council (WSREC)	£ 260,060	£ 532,104
New Gorbals Housing Association	£ 239,375	£ 454,458
The Scottish Drugs Forum	£ 256,485	£ 256,732
Working Rite	£ 450,084	£ 505,411
	£ 1,361,138	£ 1,948,359

*Enable is currently funded through Glasgow Futures

The panel recognised that whilst employability activity hasn't been explicitly excluded from GCF3, it isn't promoted or regarded as activity which directly aligns with GCF3.

- 5.8.1 Simultaneously, Glasgow Futures has been established by the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) to provide a broad range of targeted and tailored support to those furthest from the labour market or experiencing in work poverty. Glasgow Futures provision includes dedicated support for the target groups associated with the 5 GCF2 funded projects outlined in the table above. This includes 1-2-1 key worker employability and skills support for young people, ethnic minority communities, and individuals with addictions.
- 5.8.2 Furthermore, the LEP is in the process of developing a new outcome-based commissioning framework that prioritises collaboration over competition. With three major contracts ending in October 2026 covering training for work, paid placements, and support for disabled parents, planning is underway to ensure continuity. New grant-funded opportunities will be advertised in January 2026 to address gaps in employer engagement and progression support for work-ready individuals and disabled parents.

This provides opportunity for alignment and integration, and the LEP is supportive of an approach that looks to engage with both successful and unsuccessful GCF3 applicants where employability activity is being delivered or proposed.

5.8.3 In view of Glasgow Futures programme and recognition that demand on GCF3 greatly exceeds available budget it is proposed that the 5 organisations funded in GCF2 are offered funding in 2026/27 only, based on 2025/26 GCF2 funding levels at a total cost of £453,713 to support continuity of service provision while the organisations are invited to seek to engage with the city-wide Glasgow Futures Programme.

5.8.4 For those applicants seeking funding for core employability projects which are not currently funded by GCF2, it is proposed that they are invited to engage with the Local Employability Partnership to explore options for collaboration and potential integration with Glasgow Futures during 2026/27. This would apply to the applicant organisations detailed below:

Organisation	Total Requested 2026-2029
Empower Women for Change (EWfC)	£ 379,374
Apex Trust Scotland Limited	£ 557,498
Jambo! Radio, SCIO	£ 493,393
Move On	£ 169,907
Path Scotland	£ 204,622
	£ 1,804,794

6. Budget and funding recommendations

6.1 Since introducing the Glasgow Communities Fund in 2020, provision of 3-year funding support, unparalleled in any other Scottish local authority, demonstrates a firm recognition by the Council of the valuable work delivered by the third sector in Glasgow.

6.2 Despite the significant immediate and forecast budget pressures, the Council is committed to maintaining support for the third sector on a 3-year basis from 2026-2029. In order to deliver on the commitment of a 3-year package of funding support, it is now necessary for the Council to apply a level of reduction annually, this reflects the budget considerations applied annually to Council's core budgetary provision.

6.3 Based on a starting point of the original 2020 GCF annual allocation of £15,941,191, the 3-year GCF allocation for 2026-2029 has been agreed on the basis of annual 5% reductions applied from 2026/27 as shown in the table below:

Year	Annual allocation	Notes
2026/2027	£15,144,131	Incorporates a 5% reduction on original allocation of £15,941,191
2027/2028	£14,386,924	Incorporates a 5% reduction on 2026/27 allocation
2028/2029	£13,667,578	Incorporates a 5% reduction on 2027/2028 allocation.

6.4 The cost of supporting the 188 organisations identified as a GCF3 funding priority on the basis of the eligible costs applied for totals £70,517,537, which far exceeds available budget. The OG considered the option of only funding applications identified as a high funding priority and with an applied ranking of 1-3, thereby reducing the number of applicants to be supported to 117. However, this outcome was considered to be detrimental to the city, resulting in the potential loss of service provision within many communities.

6.5 To assist with consideration of a funding formula which supports funding provision for the organisations identified as a funding priority, data on the GCF2 2025/2026 allocations and comparison with the 2026/27 requested funding levels from those currently supported by GCF2 was reviewed. This data is set out in the table below:

No. of applicants	% increase of funding in 26/27 compared to GCF2 funding in 25/26	% of total no.
4	Decrease in funding requested	1.91%
38	< the 20% increase	18.18%
166	> than 20% increase	79.43%
136	> than 40% increase	65.07%
103	> than 60% increase	49.28%
80	> than 80% increase	38.28%
58	> than 100% increase	27.75%

6.6 In consideration of the above data comparisons, and drawing on the desire to support the scale of priority activity identified and the aim of achieving a degree of funding stability within the sector, the funding formula set out below enables funding for 193 organisations in 2026/2027 and 188 organisations in the years 2027/2028 to 2028/2029.

6.7 For those funding priority applications submitted by organisations currently funded in GCF2, a tiered percentage increase has been applied based on the 2025/26 award level, with a condition of funding that the grant cannot be used for any ineligible costs identified as follows:

The level of % threshold increase compared to GCF2 award	% increase from 2025/26 GCF2 award
Over 100% increase	5%
3% - 99% increase	3%
Less than a 3% increase or if lower amount requested	Amount requested

- 6.7.1 For priority applications not supported in GCF2, grant would be offered on the basis of a maximum 60% contribution towards the costs applied for, after any ineligible costs have been deducted.
- 6.7.2 This funding formula provides all identified priority applicants who are funded in GCF2 with a minimum 3% increase on 2025/2026 funding levels, with the exception of 8 organisations:
- 2 of which applied for less than GCF2 2025/26 funding award;
 - 1 has applied for ineligible costs,
 - 1 receives the maximum £200k award; and
 - 4 requested less than a 3% increase resulting in being awarded funding at the level requested.
- 6.7.3 Overall, this results in all but 4 of the applicants receiving more than they currently receive under GCF2 in Year 1.
- 6.7.4 In order to maximise the available budget and offer support to as many projects as possible, and based on experience of managing GCF2 and UK Shared Prosperity Funding, both of which have resulted in slight underspends, the programme is over committed by less than 1% of the total budget of £43,198,633. All projects will be closely monitored and as underspends are identified these will be applied to reduce and eradicate the overcommitment.
- 6.8 Committee is asked to:
- a) approve the GCF3 programme recommendations from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029 set out in Appendix 1; and
 - b) note the applications not recommended for funding following assessment in Appendix 2.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment of the GCF3 process has been undertaken and can be found [here](#). The assessment sets out considerations and improvements incorporated in the process and outlines the next steps in relation to the monitoring process for the Fund. This will be developed in collaboration with the GCF3 OG and in consultation with third sector and equalities partners.

- 7.2 Although extensive support was provided to applicants, as presented under section 3.5 of this report, the Council will do further work with unsuccessful organisations, particularly from the Black and Minority Ethnic community. A model of engagement developed through the Council's Business Support programme that brought forward the Social Innovation Challenge fund, will be used to support underserved communities in the city.

8. Programme Management and development

- 8.1 Grant offers and standard Conditions of Funding will be issued to successful applicants in December 2025 for the funding amounts set out in Appendix 1. In most cases, awardees will be required to complete an updated project budget template and revised project delivery plan to reflect the level of contribution from GCF3, this is in line with established GCF process.
- 8.2 Unsuccessful applicants will be given formal confirmation of the outcome of their GCF application as soon as possible after funding decisions are made. Unsuccessful applicants will also be provided with feedback on their application assessment early in 2026.

Capacity support

- 8.3 Unsuccessful applicants will be given access to targeted, equitable, and sustainable capacity-building support through partner organisations, aligned with the following priority areas:
- **Equity and Inclusion** - Prioritising organisations serving protected characteristic groups and to mitigate service disruption for vulnerable communities.
 - **Organisational Sustainability** - Supporting business continuity, financial resilience, and exit planning to prepare organisations for future funding opportunities.
 - **Capacity and Capability Development** - Enhancing governance, HR, funding strategy, and impact measurement.
 - **Partnership and Referrals** - Facilitating cross-sector partnerships and referrals to alternative services and funding streams.
- 8.3.1 In light of the level of demand for GCF 3, the Third Sector Capacity Building Operational Group (membership includes GCVS, CEMVO, CEIS, Volunteer Glasgow and Glasgow Life) is currently working on a programme of support that will be rolled out following funding decisions. This programme will include:
- **Bespoke Help:** For example, advice on business planning, restructuring, and funding strategies.
 - **Workshops and Webinars:** For example, thematic sessions on governance, HR, and service redesign.
 - **Resource Packs:** For example, toolkits and guides on sustainability and exit planning.

- **1-to-1 Coaching:** For example, intensive support for high-risk organisations or those supporting clients with protected characteristics.
- **Referral Support:** For example, assistance in accessing other services or funding streams.

8.3.2 It is anticipated that support will be delivered based on a tiered priority system:

- P1: Existing GCF recipients unsuccessful in GCF3, serving protected groups
- P2: Existing recipients awarded less than requested
- P3–P5: Successful applicants with capacity-building conditions (varying deadlines)
- P6: Unsuccessful new applicants (sub-priority for those serving protected groups)

8.3.3 The delivery model being developed in collaboration with Third Sector Capacity Building Operational Group (TSCBG) and specialist advisors is expected to focus on a tiered support framework, as follows:

Tier 1: Intensive support for organisations at risk of closure.

Tier 2: Targeted consultancy and coaching for high-impact risk organisations.

Tier 3: Universal workshops, webinars, and written resources.

8.3.4 To monitor the outcomes of the support being provided, a framework will be set up to track organisation engagement, outcomes, and feedback through an agreed centralised methodology. This data will be used to refine support offers and identify emerging needs/trends. All partners will report on the above on an agreed basis to TSCBG and GCC Grants Team.

8.3.5 It is anticipated that ongoing programmes will be developed in collaboration with partners and other funding bodies throughout the funding period of the GCF3 to create a robust framework for providing capacity building support to third sector organisations in Glasgow.

8.3.6 In addition to the capacity building support programme detailed above, the Grants and Monitoring team will work with the capacity building partners to develop a bespoke programme of support for equalities organisations to assist them complete stronger funding applications.

GCF3 Performance Management Framework

8.4 The GCF3 Performance Management Framework (PMF) will be reviewed in collaboration with a focus group of GCF3 funded organisations and in collaboration with the GCF3 Oversight Group. This process will begin in January 2026.

8.4.1 It is intended that the PMF will be developed in alignment with the GCF3 themes, supporting and enabling information sharing, knowledge and

connections across the Council Family and the wider GCF3 community. It is anticipated that this will be supported by the development of digital dashboards during the course of 2026.

- 8.4.2 It is intended that the PMF theme-based data will provide an opportunity to review areas of activity currently funded in GCF3 ahead of any potential future iteration of the fund. The areas of activity across the city identified by the GCF3 OG as potentially in scope for review across during GCF3 include ESOL provision across the city, out of school and afterschool provision, neurodiversity in children and adults, mapping of community facilities and integration networks.

Grants Management System

- 8.5 The Economic Development Division is implementing a new Grants Management System in 2026. The new system will support the delivery of the GCF3, Glasgow's Holiday Programme and the Division's Business Growth team. It is expected that the new system will provide opportunities for other funding programmes to be delivered through the system.

- 8.5.1 For GCF3, the new system will present opportunities for collaboration and information sharing across the Council Family which GCF3 stakeholders and funded organisations will be able to access. GCF3 funded organisations will be phased on to the new grants system from May 2026. Organisations will be fully supported to integrate with the new system on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the GCF3 programme.

- 8.5.2 Further, it is anticipated that the new grants management system could support opportunities for collaboration and information sharing amongst the funding and third sector partners represented on the Funders in Glasgow group. This will be explored with the GCF3 OG and the Group in 2026.

9. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Outcomes will be maximised through targeted use of resources and joint working and resourcing with partners. The Recommendations of this report are within existing budget and provide a commitment over 3 years.

Legal: The grant awards will be subject to terms and conditions to be concluded in consultation with the Director of Legal and Administration

Personnel: No direct personnel issues

Procurement: There are no procurement implications

Council Strategic Plan: This proposed programme of activity funded by the Glasgow Communities Fund supports the Council's Strategic Plan, specifically Grand Challenge 1:
Mission 1 – end child poverty in our city using early intervention to support families;
Mission 2 – meet the learning and care needs of children and their families before and through school;
Mission 3 – improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities; and
Mission 4 – support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

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

Yes, the proposal has the potential to impact on the Council Equality Outcomes in relation to the following improvement aims:
Improve economic outcomes for people with Protected Characteristics; and
Improve access to Council Family services by people with protected characteristics.

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

No impacts identified at this stage.

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

It is anticipated that future funding recommendations will have a positive impact on third sector jobs, skills, local communities, social and community cohesion

Climate Impacts:

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

It is anticipated that future funding will contribute to the continuing regeneration of Glasgow with many of the supported projects also led by local communities and community organisations

What are the potential climate

It is anticipated that future funding recommendations will have a positive impact

impacts as a result of this proposal? on third sector jobs, skills, local communities, social and community cohesion

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? No contribution to Glasgow's net zero carbon target at this time

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts: No privacy or data protection impacts identified.

10. Recommendations

10.1 Committee is asked to:

- note the application process and the assessment framework supporting the GCF3 recommendations;
- approve the GCF3 programme of recommendations as set out in Appendix 1;
- note the applications not recommended for funding as set out in Appendix 2; and
- agree, in terms of Standing Order No 30 (7), that these decisions will not be subject to the call-in process for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.5.