Item 3

3rd October 2023

Glasgow City Council

Environment and Liveable Neighbourhood Committee

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

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Legal Wall Pilot and GCC Approach to Graffiti and Street Art

Purpose of Report:

To present the proposed legal wall pilot and the development of the GCC approach to graffiti and street art across the city.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee consider the content of the report.

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

1. Background

1.1 The Full Council motion on Street Art Culture from September 2022 here required continued engagement with street artists and street art organisations to consider what more GCC NRS and Glasgow Life can do to support the development of street art culture in Glasgow.

1.2 Street art and graffiti are both forms of visual expression. Street art is typically created with the intention of beautifying public spaces, conveying a message, or sparking thought and reflection. It often includes a wide range of styles and subjects, from murals and stencils to sculptures and installations. Graffiti often prioritises self-expression and may not seek permission from property owners. Graffiti can vary widely in style and content, from simple tags to complex, colourful compositions.

1.3 Street art is more likely to be created with the consent of the property owners or within designated spaces, making it legal in many cases. Graffiti is often created without permission, which can lead to legal issues and can, at times, be considered vandalism. It Is important to note that the distinction between street art and graffiti can sometimes blur what one person considers street art, another may perceive as graffiti. In addition, artists may transition between these categories or combine both elements in their work.

1.4 The development of a Cultural Strategy for Glasgow, led by Glasgow Life, presents a further opportunity to ensure that a diverse range of artforms are supported by the city and enable the contribution of street artists to be recognised.

2. Graffiti Removal Service

2.1 Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability (NRS) continues to implement a targeted approach to the removal of sectarian, homophobic, offensive, racist, and explicit graffiti.

3. Objective

3.1 The objectives of this initiative are as follows:

- Support for street artists: Provide a legal outlet for graffiti artists to express themselves through their artforms, promoting creativity and self-expression within a controlled environment and support existing initiatives, such as Glasgow Life's Artists in Communities programme.

- Foster community engagement: Encourage community involvement by inviting local residents, businesses, and organisations to participate in the development of these areas.

- Enhance urban revitalisation: Utilise the legal graffiti wall as a tool to revitalise urban areas, transforming neglected spaces into vibrant and visually appealing areas that attract visitors, tourism, and economic growth and link with the GCC City Centre Mural Trail.

4. Pilot Proposal

4.1 This proposal outlines the potential establishment of legal graffiti walls across Glasgow, aiming to foster artistic expression, community engagement, and urban revitalisation. The creation of legal graffiti walls in Glasgow to provide a platform for local artists to display their skills and creativity while promoting a positive and inclusive environment.

4.2 As a long-established centre for innovative street art, Glasgow has an opportunity to work with street artists and street art organisations to enhance the urban realm of the city for communities and visitors alike. There is also acknowledgement of an ongoing challenge related to citywide graffiti, in particular the city centre. Therefore, a pilot project to create a series of legal graffiti walls and develop street art culture will be delivered with support from Glasgow Life.

4.3 A 6-month pilot project will be undertaken at two locations in the city centre, Concert Hall Car Park, north side (GCC owned) and Custom House Quay, Clydeside (GCC owned). NRS has already been approached by two arts organisations who will be considered for the pilot.

4.4 The pilot area identified at Concert Hall Car Park will follow the approach set out in sections 7,8 and 9 of this report. After the 6-months period, a full evaluation will be carried out by NRS and Glasgow Life. The scope of the evaluation is detailed at section 11 in this report. Feedback and lessons learned during the 6-months pilot period and from the evaluation will help shape and develop an online toolkit.

4.5 The second pilot area identified at Custom House Quay is an area subject to high levels of graffiti and has in effect been used as an unofficial legal wall for some time. The defined scope of this area will be evaluated, and observations carried out for graffiti/street art which falls within our priority removal guidelines.

5. Online Toolkit

5.1 Upon completion of the pilot, an online toolkit will be developed and will support and guide applicants through a process for creating a legal graffiti wall. This toolkit will be developed in partnership with Glasgow Life, Arts Music and Cultural Venues Team, and will be informed by the learning from the pilot phase of the project. The toolkit will contain all relevant links, advice and guidance for both artists and property owners.

6. Working Group

6.1 A working group will be established to support the legal graffiti walls pilot. The primary objective is to bring together a set of stakeholders, including local artists and city officials. It will determine its own Terms of Reference.

6.2 Membership of the working group will include:

- Cross party Elected Member representation
- Colourways
- Glasgow Life
- GCC NRS
- SWG3
- Independent Artist(s)

7. Maintenance

7.1 Funding required for pre-maintenance or materials required to make the space fit for use can be sought locally by the lead organisation – potentially via Area Partnerships. If required, GCC will provide support to the lead organisation to complete the Area Partnership application. If such an application were unsuccessful, funding would require to be sought from elsewhere.

7.2 During the 6-months permission to use period, the lead organisation will be responsible for maintaining the space. If any major works are required during the 6-months period, then GCC/property owner would be responsible.

7.3 Any graffiti that is outwith the agreed space should be reported to GCC or the property owner.

7.4 GCC owned space will be cleaned/painted prior to handover to the lead organisation**.**

8. Communication

8.1 A communication plan will be developed in conjunction with the working group. Communication channels will include social media, GCC website and community meetings. The aims of the plan are to:

- Increase awareness regarding the legal wall pilot
- Encourage local artists to participate
- Ensure the public understands the guidelines and benefits
- Foster community support and engagement

8.2 The Community Council for the area in which a wall has been identified will be notified of the proposal by the lead organisation. Any objections will be directed to the relevant Neighbourhood Liaison Team and may be rejected, or a new location proposed.

8.3 Communities and artists will be encouraged to work with local arts organisations when developing a proposal and link with Glasgow Life's Creative Communities Programme to help support the process.

8.4 Communities will be able to promote their legal wall space via the GCC City Centre Mural Trail web pages and Glasgow Life campaigns.

9. Evaluation

9.1 As part of the pilot, ongoing monitoring of the two locations will take place for the 6-month period including:

- Graffiti complaints/requests for removal
- Own observations from graffiti removal team
- Environmental Visual Audits will be conducted post, during and after the pilot period to monitor and document the environmental impact on the area.
- Whether the guidance is appropriate, or changes required

9.2 Post-pilot and upon review, a paper will be presented to a future committee.

10. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Yes, to be confirmed

Legal: Yes, to be confirmed

Personnel: Yes, to be confirmed

Procurement: No

Council Strategic Plan: Grand Challenge 4 Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.
Mission 1: Deliver the Clean Glasgow programme, aligning services to local need while supporting communities to take action locally and promote behaviour change

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.	
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	(no significant impact, positive impact or negative impact) None – every group will be affected
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:	Climate plan Theme 3: Well Connected and Thriving City. Improving the public realm to encourage active travel choices.
What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?	As above
Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?	As above

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report N/A	
If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out	

11. Recommendations

11.1 It is recommended that Committee consider the content of the report.