GLASGOW COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP
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Item 4

6th September 2022

Glasgow Community Planning Partnership
Strategic Partnership

Report by Fiona Moss, Head of Health Improvement and Equalities
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Connect and Flourish: A Socially Connected Glasgow Strategy

Purpose of Report:

This report presents the cities first strategy to address isolation and loneliness, launched as part of the Maximising Independence programme on the 23rd June 2022.

Recommendations:

The Strategic Partnership is asked to:

a) Note the contents of the report

1. Purpose

1.1 This report presents the cities first strategy to address isolation and loneliness, launched as part of the Maximising Independence Programme on the 23rd June 2022.

2. Background

2.1. In the summer of 2021 Impact Funding Partners (IFP) were commissioned to lead the development of a socially connected strategy for Glasgow. This commission built on an earlier Glasgow Health Inequalities Commission on mental health and isolation and the Socially Connected Scotland strategy launched in 2019. The commitment to develop a strategy was also generated from the considerable challenges of the pandemic on our ability to stay connected to others reported to us through events hosted by Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services.

2.2. IFP's used a design process developed by the V&A Dundee to ensure inclusive engagement in the design and delivery of the strategy. The V&A team worked with the strategy steering group to utilise a planning process that required them to better understand and articulate the problems that need to be solved, from the people who experience the issues, prior to wider engagement. Over 40 groups representing the whole spectrum of the Equality Act 2010 and hard to reach groups across the city where approached and contributed to the design process, including involving their members in clarifying what questions would work best to enable participants to contribute on the issues they felt were critical.

2.3. Through this development five key questions were finally adopted for all the interviews, as shown in Diagram 1. Interviews were undertaken by staff and volunteers in the forty projects that acted as intermediaries to connect with residents building on the trusted relationships they already had.

Diagram 1: Five questions of enquiry used in the interviews

1. What does the word community mean to you?
2. What does being connected to your community currently look like?
3. Are there activities that you do that make you feel connected to your community?
4. Is there anything that holds you back from feeling connected to your community?
5. If you had a magic wand, what might you like to be available in your community that would make you feel connected and included?

2.4. Members from 26 communities of interest were able to be included in the process including older people, BAME communities, people with a disability and disabled people, Women, LGBT, New Scots as well as people experiencing homelessness,

mental ill health, communities of place and other communities of interest e.g. students. This enabled a very broad range of perspectives to formulate the strategy.

2.5. This is our first strategy of this kind, and Glasgow is the first Community Planning Partnership (CPP) and Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in Scotland to take this step.

2.6. The Strategy was launched at an on-line event on the 23rd June. The event was attended by contributors, agencies and community planning partners and Scottish Government colleagues, with 68 attendees. The strategy has also been presented to key strategic groups in the city and is being scheduled for a forthcoming Glasgow Community Planning Partnership Executive meeting.

3. What people shared

3.1 The strategy captures feedback directly through the embedded short video links provided by some of the contributors, as well as quotes from others.

3.2 People felt this was an important matter to discuss and to address, and that being connected was fundamental to their own well-being and ability to cope.

3.3 There were five areas identified as key in supporting good connections and reducing loneliness:

1. Volunteering, jobs, study and community roles (automatically creating opportunities for people to engage, interact and socialise with others)
2. Having organised activities and places to come together
3. Having the ability to connect with other people online to stay in touch or find out what is going on around them
4. Having a support network of friends, family or groups that can help
5. Having access to good transport links

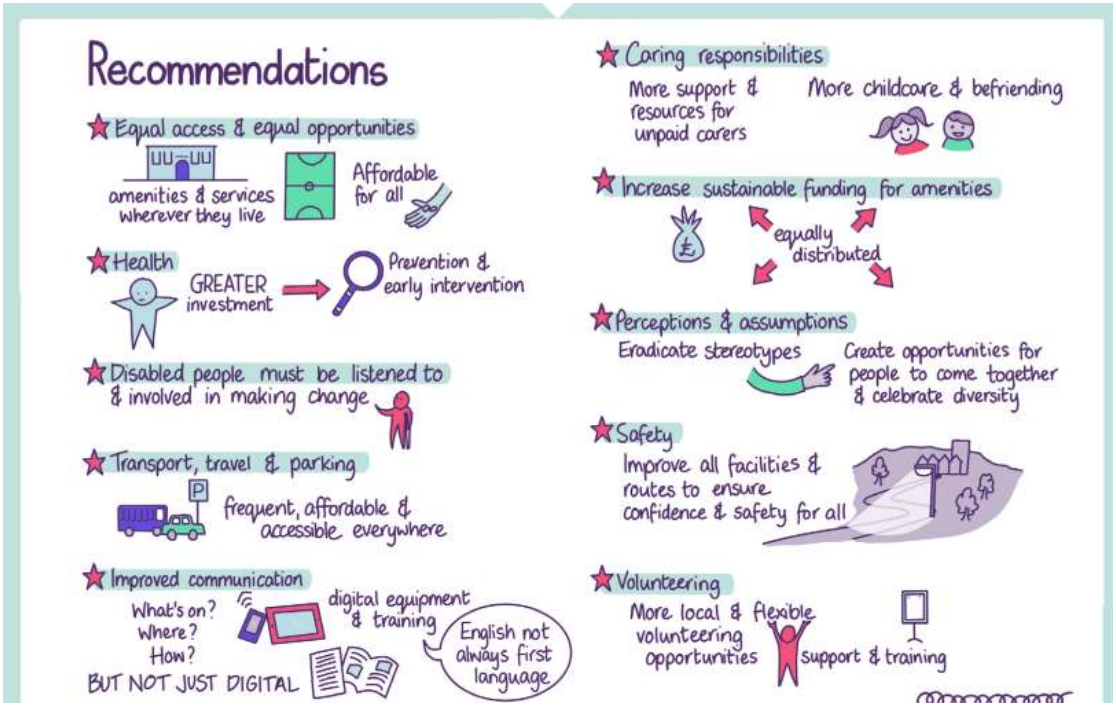
3.4 The 143 residents who were interviewed often talked about the difference between announcements/policy and what was happening for them and those they knew, with people noting the many barriers they face to stay connected. People offered a wide range of experience on how things could be improved and these were shaped into the ten recommendations contained in the strategy.

4. Flourish and Connected Strategic Recommendations.

4.1 The recommendations are the solutions given by all those that contributed but they also gave a strong message that people must be involved in the implementation for it to be successful. Representatives from each individual community of interest, identity and place *"must be around the table to co-design the actions, implementation and monitoring".*

4.2 Ten far reaching recommendations are made in the strategy (http://hdl.handle.net/11289/580331), as themed in Diagram 2. These are not reflective of the accountabilities or jurisdiction of any individual agency, but reflect the breadth of action required to create a more socially connected city.

Diagram 2: Recommendation themes



4.3 Each recommendation contains more detail on suggested actions that could be taken e.g. looking more closely at the human library concept, instigating more intergenerational activity etc.

5.0 Next steps

5.1 Follow-up discussions are taking place with the most relevant stakeholders for each recommendation to consider the best ways to progress e.g. GCC Transport Strategy team to consider how best to present the strategy and work with the transport infrastructure.

5.2 The expectation is that over the next three to four months the strategy is shared and the collaborative means to progress each theme is determined. It is expected that this might involve some existing partnerships working with some of the groups and residents engaged in the strategic process and others, and/or that some collaborations may need to be created for this purpose.

5.3 More immediately GCHSCP have now committed to continue the Well-being for Longer Glasgow fund for the period 2023/25 (£1.16m), which focuses on mental well-being and a process will commence in the autumn to enable two year awards to be made by the end of the calendar year for grants that average around £26,000 per year.

5.4 A further commitment has also been made for another Social Winter Well-being Fund for 2022/23, for the provision of small grants to local charitable organisations to undertake additional activities to mitigatio the isolation experienced by many over the winter period. Last year 74 third sector organisations received grants of between £500 and £2,900 and provided activities to 7494 beneficiaries including the examples below;

- **Headway Glasgow** supported 42 individuals by staying in contact via Zoom. This included running a writing group, creative groups, and brain injury discussion groups online throughout the winter period.
- **Blackhill/Provanmill Lunch Club** were able to welcome 15 new members to their lunch club as well as organise a bus trip to Arrochar for a meal. Volunteers were not forgotten, with a wellbeing afternoon

> "I have to admit that I was struggling during the Christmas period as I'm separated and basically had no-one to talk to so when Joe and Wullie took me for a couple of lunches at the Spoon café it helped me a lot and I met some other guys there and we decided to meet up ourselves too and this has been a godsend for me."

- **DIFFERabled Scotland** were able to offer gatherings across Glasgow for parents and carers of children and young people with various additional needs, mainly autism. The sessions provided people with an opportunity to meet other parents in similar situations, in a relaxed environment. New friendships were initiated and crucial peer support relationships formed.
- **Gilded Lily Inspiring Enterprise** ran Expressive Arts programmes. In total 21 women attended sessions which included drawing and painting self-portraits, landscapes, clay sculptures and photography. The positive effect of the classes was evident in the feedback, with 75% of the women feeling more confident and 75% of the women feeling less isolated after taking part, feeling that they had made genuine connections. Many have stayed in touch with the project and each other.
- **Good Morning Service** provided support calls to 70 older people in their community in the morning and evening between Dec-March'22. The calls were made by befrienders at pre-arranged times so that people knew when to expect them. The calls were timed to fit in with other services that people were accessing, such as "Tuck In". The calls provided a 'friend on the phone', bringing light and laughter, emotional support when needed, and reassurance throughout winter. The additional evening calls were enabled through the funding.

> "My son died just before Christmas and being able to come into the club and get the support I needed has been brilliant."

5.5 It is anticipated that over a hundred organisations can be supported this year and consideration is being given to how the grant process can learn from the feedback received as part of strategy formation.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 The Strategic Partnership is asked to:

a) Note the contents of the report