



Glasgow City Council

**Economy, Housing, Transport and
Regeneration City Policy Committee**

Item 2

5th March 2024

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

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**GLASGOW CITY CENTRE STRATEGY 2024 to 2030:
FINAL DRAFT**

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the new City Centre Strategy 2024-30 and provide the findings of the public consultation process.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of the report;
- (ii) Refers the report to City Administration Committee on 21st March 2024 for final approval;
- (iii) Consider the findings from the consultation process which took place from 20 October 2023 to 3 December 2023, and note the updated strategy document and action plan;
- (iv) Note that an annual progress report will be provided to this committee following formal approval of the City Centre Strategy 2024-30 by the City Administration Committee;
- (v) Note that the financial requirement of £5m to support this Strategy noted in the previous report to this committee is likely to be formalised in financial year 2025/26.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

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

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will recall that the draft City Centre Strategy (CCS) 2024 – 2030 was brought to this committee on 26 September 2023 for consideration, before being approved to proceed to public consultation by City Administration Committee on 12 October 2023.
- 1.2 Members will also be aware of the City Centre Strategy (CCS) 2014-19, which was intended to be the first five-year plan in a ten-year strategy to recalibrate the regeneration focus of the city centre towards a more inclusive, sustainable, mixed-use place, with less reliance on single sectors, and one capable of supporting a growing population. Interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the CCS 2024 – 2030 now marks the second five-year phase of the CCS, designed to address the shifts in the contextual landscape observed over recent years.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the public consultation findings and provide a final version of the strategy document for review in advance of the CAC decision.

2 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PERIOD

- 2.1 The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic from March 2020 halted many of the CCS 2014-19 delivery plans and required a different response to the immediate situation. The City Centre Recovery Plan 2022–2024 was subsequently developed and approved by Committee in 2021. This plan focused on business recovery, given the extent and duration of restrictions placed on Glasgow city centre during the pandemic. It has been supported by the establishment of a City Centre Task Force which brought together public and private sector stakeholders with an interest in Glasgow city centre.
- 2.2 As the urgency of the pandemic subsided, consideration moved to the longer-term strategic agenda. All of the major development work was completed as part of the 2014-19 CCS, with some new post-pandemic research and evidence-gathering commissioned over 2021-22 to identify the priorities for the new strategy period. The emphasis will now move to outcome-focused delivery and implementation of those Priority Actions, alongside an updated approach to the City Centre Task Force and overall city centre strategy governance.
- 2.3 The new CCS 2024-30 can be accessed at this link: [City Centre Strategy 2024-2030](#)

3 GLASGOW CITY CENTRE STRATEGY 2024-30

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The draft CCS 2024-30 has been prepared with the expectation of becoming the “plan of plans” for Glasgow city centre and it aims to simplify the strategic landscape by consolidating the highest priority actions from all corporate plans that have a bearing on the regeneration approach to the city centre. The exercise has involved reviewing objectives and recommendations from the work undertaken across the Council family both pre- and post-pandemic.

- 3.1.2 The outcome of this exercise was combined with an engagement process with other Council departments to identify key actions that will be delivered in the city centre from 2024 to 2030. These will come from a wide range of strategies ranging from the City Centre Transport Plan, the Climate & Adaptation Plans, the LHEES, the Economic Strategy, the Glasgow Housing Strategy, and the work recently completed on the Golden Z. The development of each of these strategies has involved extensive stakeholder and public engagement. Consideration was also given to key corporate and national strategies.

3.2 CCS 2024-30 Vision and Structure

- 3.2.1 The vision for the next period of city centre strategy has been developed around three guiding “Pillars”, which can be summarised as follows:
- (i). Magnetic Experience: the development of more compelling reasons to visit, shop and enjoy the city centre which should have the power to surprise and inspire visitors.
 - (ii). Front Door to Innovation: creating opportunities to welcome digital, life sciences, climate science and creative industries into a mix which converges with arts, engineering, and business.
 - (iii). A Place to Live: place-based approach to regeneration which responds to climate issues and respects planetary boundaries. It is inclusive, balanced and connected with amenities to support a growing population.
- 3.2.2 The CCS 2024-30 outlines a number of Priority Actions to be progressed over the planned period which will directly support the Big Moves and Pillars approach and will ensure that resources are targeted accordingly.
- 3.2.3 A summary action plan of all Priority Actions can be found at **Appendix 1** at the end of this report.

4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The public consultation was undertaken between 20 October and 3 December 2023. The consultation was open to the public and all stakeholders through the council’s website, and the survey was extensively promoted through the council’s social media channels and in the press.
- 4.2 The consultation was structured according to the actions within the ‘Big Moves’ approach and the priority actions. The Council received 300 responses in total, including several written responses in addition to the online survey.
- 4.3 Overall, there was strong support for the prioritised actions and the majority found the document easy to read, easy to follow and comprehensive.

5 CONSULTATION FINDINGS

- 5.1 The survey asked if the respondent agreed with the ‘Big Moves’ which sit within the three pillars. The feedback was as follows:
- 5.1.1 **‘Magnetic Experience’**, the majority of respondents supported GCC pursuing the “Big Moves” as follows:
- (i). River - 92% agree

- (ii). Business Economy - 87% agree
- (iii). Connected and Green Places - 83% agree
- (iv). Creative Culture – 79% agree

5.1.2 **‘Front Door to Innovation’**, the majority of respondents agreed that GCC should focus on:

- (i). Property - 91% agree
- (ii). Wellbeing Economy - 86% agree
- (iii). Innovation and Digital – 70% agree

5.1.3 **‘A Place to Live’**, the majority of respondents agreed that GCC should pursue:

- (i). City Centre Living – 78% agree
- (ii). Net Zero – 74% agree

5.2 In addition to the quantitative responses, consultees also had the opportunity to provide qualitative statements about the **priority actions**, and 163 people chose to do so. The comments covered a variety of topics; grouped comments can be found in the Consultation Report attached at **Appendix 2**.

6 RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

- 6.1 While the majority of the consultation responses have been positive, there were opportunities to incorporate some of the feedback received to strengthen the strategy and make it more reflective of the requirements of the general public.
- 6.2 A number of adjustments and additions were made to the text of the document, to address the public’s concerns and suggestions. Notable changes include the strengthening references to circular economy concepts, and further emphasising how the CCS 24-30 represents a unique opportunity to support the just transition. The name of action 3.5 was changed from LHEES to Sustainability to reflect the wide range of actions which will be delivered. The strategy now puts a stronger emphasis on inclusion and diversity, directly addressing issues related to equalities, community safety and prioritising a people-first approach. Furthermore, considerations for opportunities to prosper were expanded to include income maximisation, affordability and ensuring that no one is left behind in the low carbon transition.
- 6.3 The significance of Gaelic culture was acknowledged as a fundamental element in Glasgow’s cultural landscape.
- 6.4 Flood-related points were aligned with the Glasgow Climate Adaptation Plan, with additional references to Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership (MGSDP) and flood risk in the city centre, including specific mentions of Broomielaw and St Enoch.
- 6.5 The vision for a Feminist City, improved walkability, and the prioritisation of all people's needs, as well as the thriving of gender and minority groups, were integrated into the strategy. The city centre's welcoming atmosphere for all ages and demographics was highlighted.

- 6.6 Acknowledgement of the role of universities in the city centre was strengthened, with specific actions outlined under the Cowcaddens District to support the development of the GCU campus masterplan, along with considerations for accessibility.
- 6.7 Additionally, references to edible food areas and growing initiatives were introduced, rounding out the strategy's commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and the well-being of the community.
- 6.8 The Begging Strategy was added to the Plan of Plans page.
- 6.9 A focused Sub-Group in the new CCS 2024-30 governance will ensure that cleanliness in the city centre remains a clear priority.
- 6.10 The City Centre Strategy 2024-30 has been updated on the basis of the points above. An annual review will ensure the document remains agile and adaptive to the need for change in the future.

7 DELIVERY AND GOVERNANCE

- 7.1 The City Centre Task Force (CCTF) will remain the strategic body with oversight over City Centre Strategy. The current structure will be revised into a “hub and spoke” model with a smaller main group into which a number of thematic Sub-Group will report.
- 7.2 The CCTF will be co-chaired by Councillor Angus Millar, City Convener for Climate, Glasgow Green Deal, Transport and City Centre Recovery, and Stuart Patrick, CEO of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, with membership comprising of Sub-Group leads, private sector representatives, senior GCC officers, Ward 10 Councillors, and Scottish/UK Government representatives.
- 7.3 Four Sub-Groups (SG) will meet at least quarterly, comprising of:
 - a. SG1 City Services, Operations and Events
 - b. SG2 City Centre Transport
 - c. SG3 City Centre Infrastructure, Development and Repurposing
 - d. SG4 Evening/Night-time Economy and Hospitality Sectors
- 7.4 Other programmes of work which will contribute to the delivery of the City Centre Strategy, for example work taking place at Sustainable Glasgow around Greening the City, will be reported to the CCTF at appropriate points.
- 7.5 Work is already ongoing with SG2 City Centre Transport which delivered the city's first multi-partner, multi-modal public transport campaign over December 2023 and January 2024, raising awareness of the main public transport options available in the evening and night-time economy. New consumer and business surveys have also been commissioned to understand the pandemic's lasting impact on consumer/business behaviour in terms of supply and demand factors affecting use of the evening/night-time economy and associated transport options.

NRS is also establishing a new approach to managing development activity with officers meeting regularly to share updated information with each other and to create tools which will improve the developer/investor experience in Glasgow. These will be reported through SG3.

- 7.6 All Sub-Groups will be in place with outline project plans ready for consideration by the City Centre Task Force in April 2024.
- 7.7 The approved Priority Actions for the CCS 2024-30 will underpin the Council's city centre workplan and progress will be reported annually to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration Committee. Where individual projects justify it, separate reports will be also brought to this committee for consideration.

8 FUNDING

- 8.1 In the past 5 years the city centre has benefited from significant public sector investment of over £200m including via City Deal, Sustrans, Scottish Government Recovery Funding, and other funds. Over the period of this new City Centre Strategy, funds of over £120m are committed to the Avenues Programme, investment in Clyde Waterfront, and George Square's redevelopment.
- 8.2 The pipeline of development outlined in the CCS 2024-30 also illustrates the private investment flowing into the city centre. While some sectors continue to face significant economic pressures, many are adapting with developers keen to deliver high quality commercial outcomes and bringing substantial investment to the city. The private sector will be critical to the delivery of the city centre vision over the coming years, not least due to their stake in property and site ownership, and the CCS will continue to promote a collaborative and partnership-focused approach to city centre regeneration, particularly through the creation of a dedicated Development team.
- 8.3 To support the phase 1 City Centre Strategy 2014-19, the Council allocated a capital fund of £6.3m to support direct intervention and to lever in other sources of funding to support improvements within the city centre. It is estimated that a fund of up to £5m will be required to support the updated, seven-year strategy. This will be formalised in financial year 2025/26.

9 NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 Following approval at CAC the City Centre Strategy 2024 – 2030 will be progressed as the main action plan for the city centre and will go-live in April 2024.
- 9.2 Annual updates will be provided to this committee and other avenues for Members input will be available via the new governance structure.

10 POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

Financial: As set out in Section 8. The additional capital funding will be built into future capital planning budgets.

Legal: There are no immediate legal issues, and these will be assessed as individual projects are developed.

Personnel: None.

Procurement: Procurement resources will be required to progress individual contracts and related project activity

Council Strategic Plan: The CCS cuts across many areas of service and embeds many of the council's missions and commitments.
 Grand Challenge One – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities.
 Mission 3: Improve the health and well being of our local communities.
 Grand Challenge Two – 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.
 Grand Challenge Three – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow.
 Mission 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned to the city region.
 Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030.
 Grand Challenge four – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities.
 Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

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

The CCS cuts across many areas in terms of accessibility and just transition and thereby embeds many of the commitments of the Council's Equality Outcomes. It is expected that successful delivery of Key Priorities will contribute to achieving Outcome 1 by providing more employment opportunities for a diverse workforce, Outcome 2 which will make our city centre more accessible to all and Outcome 6 by helping to create a more vibrant and attractive

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

city centre with more opportunities for social interaction.

Positive impact: The CCS will improve accessibility through improved physical measures. The initial desktop screening has been completed and will continue to be updated as the strategy develops. The public consultation outputs have been added to the EQIA.

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

Yes, the actions in the CCS are designed to improve access to work and support the provision of new sustainable housing. It will encourage Community Wealth Building and promote environmental enhancements with inclusive growth at their heart. Specific projects in the action plan will be EQIA assessed as required.

Climate Impacts:

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

Theme 2: Just and Inclusive Place
Theme 3: Well Connected and Thriving City
Theme 4: Health and Wellbeing
Theme 5: Green Recovery

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

These will be determined as the Strategy is delivered. The continuing work to develop a climate impact assessment tool will also assist in this.

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

Yes. The CCS contain projects that support public transport (including opportunities to explore synergies with Clyde Metro), modal shift, greening, retrofit and repurposing of building stock.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

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

No

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

N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of the report;
- (ii) Refers the report to City Administration Committee on 21st March 2024 for final approval;
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Enclosures: Link to [City Centre Strategy 2024-2030](#)

12 Appendix 1: City Centre Strategy Action Plan

Table 1: CCS 2024-30 Action Plan

Pillar	Action	Outputs 24-25
1 Magnetic Experience	1.1 Avenues Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sauchiehall Precinct and Cambridge Street, Argyle Street West, Holland Street and Pitt Street
	1.2 George Square Redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning consent February 24 Statue strategy and funding
	1.3 DRFs Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and feasibility work for Townhead Green Areas and Parliamentary Path, Cathedral Gardens Greening the City Centre: mapping, delivery plan
	1.4 River Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Custom House Quay finalise feasibility study Coordinate City Centre Quay Walls activity
	1.5 Visitor Marketing, Tourism and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Athletics Indoor Championships 2024 Glasgow Events Strategy 2036 launch Winter Events Strategy continued development Merchant City Festival – continued development Facilitating connections and alignment of events with city centre priorities and partners to drive economic and social impacts Glasgow Tourism Strategy launched Oct 2023 2-year Tourism Action Plan Jan 2024-Dec 2026 going live in Feb £135m economic benefit Jan – Dec 2023 from Business Events
	1.6 Cultural and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HLF application for Sauchiehall District Development of Sauchiehall Cultural and Heritage Quarter
	1.7 Retail Capacity Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of changing commercial property occupancy trends to monitor and respond to property sector needs and demand

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement to establish user requirements • Monitor condition / type of floorspace and promote with agents to matchmake retailers/F&B/leisure operators • Reflect results in spatial policy
	1.8 Evening & Night-Time Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post pandemic business and consumer research • Public transport campaign • CCTF Sub-Group action plan
	1.9 People Friendly City Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design PFZ development to RIBA Stage 3 • Undertake engagement exercise with key stakeholders on the design • Finalise the technical design as part of RIBA Stage 4 with a view towards construction (RIBA Stage 5)
2 Front Door to Innovation	2.1 Innovation and Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the further development of the city's two Innovation Districts, particularly through a £1.8 million award from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund • To work with Glasgow City Region on the delivery of the 11 Innovation Accelerator projects, which are funded by Innovate UK through to 31 March 2025, and seek legacy benefits from the programme in relation to key sectors • To support the implementation of the city-region innovation action plan and progress associated business development and funding opportunities with partners.
	2.2 Wellbeing Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding Fair Work First principles – this will have a positive impact on city centre business by creating and maintaining good, fair and well-paid jobs in the City that encourages diversity, sustainability and good employment practices for local people; • Implement recommendations from the Just Transition Action Plan that includes improving connectivity justice, creating liveable neighbourhoods, and developing the circular economy. • Improve digital connectivity and inclusion in the city.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a system for citizen engagement that can be embedded in service and policy design, potentially including future design of city centre initiatives.
	2.3 Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Sites Assessment • Comparative City Analysis • Pro Development City Centre Narrative and Comms Plan • Stakeholder Management Mapping & Planning • Establish peer group • Develop a Legal Powers Toolkit • Identify Financial Incentives & Potential Funding Streams • Public Realm Stewardship • Meanwhile Use
	2.4 Repurposing Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options assessment on disposal strategies with partners • Exploration of and advocacy on tax changes to support repurposing (NDR, VAT etc) • Office to residential conversion pilot • Inform Glasgow Guidebook
3 A Place to Live	3.1 Greening the Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map DRFs recommendations on green spaces and overlay with Tree Action Plan • Develop delivery program
	3.2 Infrastructure Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the findings of the Council's city-wide Infrastructure Audit (currently being prepared to inform City Development Plan 2) as it relates to the City Centre. • Develop recommendations to address gaps.
	3.3 Local Community Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murals • Contemporary art trail • Footfall counters • High Street Reference group

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begging strategy • Busking • Dressing the city • Good Food Glasgow
	3.4 City Centre Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver CCLS: Vision 35 priorities • Conversion to affordable housing pilot
	3.5 Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero Routemap • Glasgow's Climate Plan • Heat decarbonisation / Renewable energy generation • EV Strategy – Concession arrangements • GCC Carbon Management Plan

13. Appendix 2: Public Consultation report

13.1 The [City Centre Consultation Report](#) can be accessed through the link.