



**Glasgow City Council**

**Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities,  
Culture and Engagement City Policy Committee**

**Report by Colin Edgar, Director of Communication and  
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**Item 1**

**26th September 2024**

**Communities Team:  
Service Reform Update**

**Purpose of Report:**

To set out the rationale and progress for service reform transforming the structure, operations and ways of working of the newly formed Communities Team, part of City and Communities Policy and Corporate Governance.

**Recommendations:**

Members are asked to:

- Note the report;

Ward No(s): All

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ✓

consulted: Yes ☐ No ✓

## 1 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 A key recommendation arising from the council family review of the Chief Executive's Department was to examine Community Empowerment Services and identify areas of transformation.
- 1.2 Last year a strategic review, including engagement with Elected Members and the full staff complement, produced a series of recommendations for service reform to take place, which have been progressed and are outlined below.
- 1.3 Significant was the identification of the need for transformational change across service area, to reform and enhance:
  - strategic planning
  - partnership working
  - clarity of purpose and objectives
  - delivery of outcomes, and operational performance
  - organisational design at all levels
- 1.4 Community empowerment is a priority of the Council and the service required transformational change to deliver against expectations, and ensure clear strategic leadership to support local communities and community-based activity. The strategic review and changes to the ways of working paralleled evolving changes across the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership.
- 1.5 To achieve transformational change, reform was initiated with an integration of Communities and Community Justice teams with the current Corporate Policy & Governance team in August 2023, to not only identify efficiencies and savings, but remove silos within the Chief Executive's Department.
- 1.6 As a result, the *City & Communities Policy and Corporate Governance* section was created under the management of the Head of Policy and Corporate Governance, and now sitting within the Director of Communications and Corporate Governance's responsibilities. It should be noted that it was also agreed that Grants and Initiatives team would join Economic Development where a related service reform process was underway. **Appendix A** provides an overview of the responsibilities of the new City and Communities Policy and Corporate Governance section.
- 1.7 To allow the formation of the new section, service reform included:
  - Expanding the role and responsibilities of the Head of Policy and Corporate Governance to reflect new section responsibilities
  - Expanding the role and responsibilities of the previously existing Head of Community Justice to fill the new Head of Communities post
  - Adapting the remits of the senior managers across the team to better integrate the service
  - Putting in place a continuing service reform process to develop a new Communities Team and deliver on priorities identified in the strategic review

## **2 Communities Team Development**

- 2.1 The drivers for change to the team structure and ways of working have been described above, including the need for clear strategic direction, the implementation of Council priorities, team integration and effective management of a community-facing section of the Chief Executive's Department (CED).
- 2.2 In addition to being a key action from the CED council family review, the feedback from the staff forums at the start of the review also illustrated a need for reform of the team, with clarity around strategic direction, role and responsibilities and development of staff.
- 2.3 Feedback from Elected Members highlighted the importance of engagement with communities alongside the strategic re-focus of Community Planning. As a result, the team structure was reorganised to address these issues, meet business needs, create a sustainable team with sufficient management for the future with the resources available, and contribute to the required budget savings and efficiencies to be met by the CED.
- 2.4 Implementation of this phase of the Service Reform continued through direct liaison with Trade Unions and a staff communication plan.
- 2.5 A Communities Team Development Group, with representatives from across all grades and positions, has been set up to assist with bedding in changes.

## **3 Current Areas of Focus for the Communities Team**

- 3.1 Service Reform brought changes to the staffing structure, with some staff leaving through voluntary measures and new staff recruited through internal mechanisms. The full Team cohort is nearly in place and below is an overview of the key areas of focus for the Team as a whole.
- 3.2 **Community Planning**  
The Communities Team supports the work of the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP), bringing together communities alongside public agencies, the third sector, and the private sector, to work to improve the city, its services, and the lives of people who live and work here. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act in 2015 requires the Partnership to publish a plan that sets out our shared priorities for the city, where we plan to make improvements and over time show that we have made these improvements.

A new [Community Plan](#) (the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, or LOIP) was agreed in February 2024, drawing a collaborative commitment to address family poverty and reduce poverty and inequalities in Glasgow's communities.

The governance arrangements for the GCPP were also refreshed to ensure a focus on problem solving an effective escalation of decision making. This refreshed structure provides an effective forum for the Child Poverty Pathfinder and other areas of the Council to bring issues and opportunities for collaboration by exception.

A new Performance Framework for the LOIP, which will incorporate the Child Poverty work as well as elements of the work of the Communities Team is now being created alongside city partners.

### **3.3 Area Partnerships**

Local community empowerment remains a priority of the Council and its partners, in part realised through Area Partnerships. Communities Team staff work with Area Partnerships to prepare Ward Plans and engage local views on how the focus on the Community Planning commitment to address Family Poverty evolves locally. These local plans will identify Council as well as partner contributions and will be reflective of community needs.

### **3.4 Community Councils**

The new Communities Team supports Community Councils, both in terms of the local authority's statutory responsibility, as well as to ensure Community Councils are empowered to serve as a representative voice of their communities. Each Community Council has a named Communities Support Officer, as well as being supported from the Team for development needs.

### **3.5 Community Justice Partnership**

Community Justice Glasgow's focus on the Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan, is an important Communities resource. The Improvement Plan is wide reaching, with four specific Improvement Plans, all of which impact on communities.

The Team works closely with statutory (as set out in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016) and other partners including a range of 3rd Sector services. The Community Justice Team has also given support to improving outcomes in relation to partnership working in the 4 Corners area of the City.

### **3.6 City-Wide Engagement Forum**

For the last two years, officers have been supporting an informal city-wide community engagement working group, comprising of council officers and the community and third sector. One of the challenges for the group has been the volume and depth of engagement (from consultations to more co-productive methods) coming out from the council to communities.

The service reform has highlighted the need and the opportunity to take a joined-up approach to this. A function of the team is to look at internal community engagement requirements and practice across the Council, with the aim of co-ordinating engagement practice and finding ways to work together, so that we can make better use of our resources and make participation easier for communities. .

### **3.7 Neighbourhood Infrastructure Improvement Fund**

Two community engagement prototypes were developed to support local input to the allocation of the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Improvement Fund in Wards 3 Greater Pollok and 9 Calton. This was a further phase of the Participatory Budgeting approach for the City, with an increased scale and monetary value.

The prototypes allowed Area Partnerships to make decisions on how the Fund is spent based on the opinion of as many citizens as possible within the two identified wards. The intention has always been to learn from the pilots and expand the offer to other areas across the City.

Between June and October 2023, the partners carried out engagement within Calton and Greater Pollok. A total of 600 new ideas were identified by local residents over a three-week period, with 950 final votes and 41 new ideas being funded. A detailed report on the process undertaken is available, covering the design stage, implementation, lessons learned and recommendations. The recommendations are wide ranging and ambitious, considering the resources required and the timescales.

The new GCC/family Community Engagement Working Group have agreed to use the NIIF as a test project to develop better ways of working collaboratively across the council in engaging communities and avoid duplication of engagement themes.

## **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 The Communities Team took on its latest staff in August 2024, and there is only one post still to fill.
- 4.2 The Team continues to develop and engage, with mechanisms to ensure the development continues to meet expectations. Development mechanisms include:
  - Quarterly meetings with the Area Partnership Chairs, to communicate developments and enable an informed and iterative approach to development
  - An internal, team Development Group, with input across the whole of the Team to plan and progress necessary steps in the evolution of the Service Reform
  - An internal Communications Plan, to ensure the whole of the Team are engaged and alert to developments

## **5 Policy and Resource Implications**

**Resource Implications:**

<i>Financial:</i>	None
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Procurement:</i>	None

**Council Strategic Plan:**

GRAND CHALLENGE FOUR – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities

MISSION 2: Run an open, well governed council in partnership with all our communities

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Yes, Service users are provided with information accessible to them on services provided by the Council Family
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	It is potentially increasing awareness and access to
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.</i>	Voter turn out and civic engagement are often weakest in the most socio economically deprived areas of the city when cross related to local <a href="#">Poverty levels</a>

**Climate Impacts:**

<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	No direct impacts noted at this time
<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	No direct impacts noted at this time
<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	No direct impacts noted at this time

**Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

No data protection impacts noted

**6 Recommendations:**

Members are asked to:

- Note the report;

## **Appendix A –**

### **Summary of the integrated Communities & City Policy & Corporate Governance section's responsibilities**

- **Strategic Planning** - leading the development of the council strategic plan to implement the council's vision, supported by a governance and performance framework that ensures clear accountability, tracks delivery, manages dependencies and informs the work of policy and scrutiny committees.
- **Policy Development and Coordination** - leading and contributing to a range of policies, programmes and initiatives that deliver council's ambitions and commitments at regional, city and - following integration - community level and so removing existing silos that currently impede effective partnership working across the CED
- **Governance and Performance** - designing and implementing a governance framework to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan at all levels of council activity, including one performance management framework which will bring the performance monitoring required for the Community Planning Partnership and local structures such as Area Partnerships into an efficient and transparent process
- **Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee** – coordinating and taking responsibility for the reporting of performance papers and other papers as appropriate to the scrutiny committee
- **Business Planning** – designing and implementing annual business planning for services and ALEOs. After integration using this process to assist Area Partnerships in their business planning to ensure an outcome focused approach with clear Action Plans to be delivered are produced
- **Risk Management** - ensuring that strategy development and its delivery is informed by risk management to support better decision making and future strategic planning. Implementing the outcome of the Corporate Governance Review to elevate risk management throughout the council's management structures
- **City wide Engagement** - leading and advising on significant engagement and consultation in the city, such as the budget and climate action, or emerging issues in the Strategic Plan. This includes the Household Survey, budget consultation and one off Citizen Assemblies
- **Open Government** - driving and supporting the council's award winning approach to open government and implementing the annual action plans as required. This approach will be enhanced by the use of one governance and performance structure to bring further transparency to council bodies and activities at local level
- **Equalities** - leading the development, engagement and co-ordinated delivery of the council's equality outcomes, ensuring equality is embedded in governance arrangements and leading on the development of equalities policies through relevant working groups, WECCE and CAC as required. Integration will remove resource duplication in this areas and bring working groups such as the Slavery Legacy Cross Party Working Group into the responsibility of one, coordinated equalities resource.



- **Consultations and Inquiries** - leading on the coordination and governance for local and national consultations and inquiries including the current Covid Inquiry
- **Gaelic Language Plan** – implementing the plan in line with the council's strategic priorities and statutory responsibilities
- **National organisations** - nurturing and maintaining strong working relationships with national partner organisations, such as COSLA, the Scottish Government and SOLACE
- **Community Planning Partnership** – supporting the Partnerships work and structures to ensure that its activities and ways of working result in the city's missions being embedded and acted upon. Ensuring the partnership has a laser focus on delivery and relaunch a refreshed defining mission for the next period to support this
- **Community Engagement** - leading on the implementation of community engagement principles to ensure the team is the first port of call for communities, and create ways of working to enable regular liaison with other council officers and partners who are undertaking engagement
- **Capacity Building** – being a resource to support communities and community organisations to promote awareness of funding or resource streams in the council and elsewhere, working with key partners to build their capacity to do so and where relevant apply for different council initiatives
- **Citizen Participation** – leading the support of Community Council and Area Partnerships structures and activities to deliver communities' priorities in line with the Strategic Plan, including informing the funding decisions they make, particularly in order to allocate the NIIF fund through a participatory budgeting model.
- **Community Justice** - Integral to the arrangements established through legislation is the planning and delivery of local Community Justice services on a partnership basis. Glasgow's partners have a statutory requirement to work in partnership to reduce reoffending. Community Justice Glasgow has established a reputation locally and nationally for its work and leadership in the broad justice sphere. Joining the integrated team will provide the opportunity for a re-focus on current governance arrangements and challenge existing levels of duplication.
- **Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities, Culture and Engagement City Policy Committee** – lead on the development and implementation of the workplan for the committee and its sub-groups following a review of the terms of reference, remit and workload to ensure it is governed appropriately.