



Glasgow City Council

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

Item 3

19th November 2024

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

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CITY CENTRE RAPID REPAIRS PROJECT (PILOT)

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the development of the City Centre Rapid Repairs Project, and to consider the proposal to pilot the scheme.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of this report and note the intention to launch a Rapid Repairs pilot project in the city centre for one year
- (ii) Refer the report to City Administration Committee for final approval
- (iii) Note that a progress report will be provided to this committee at the end of the pilot year to report on outcomes and proposed next steps

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Glasgow City Centre Strategy 2024 – 2030 (CCS) was previously presented to the Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee on 5 March 2024, prior to approval by City Administration Committee on 21 March 2024.
- 1.2 The CCS is the overarching regeneration plan for the city centre. To achieve this, the CCS takes cognisance of a range of strategies including the Glasgow Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027, City Development Plan, Climate Plan, and the Housing Strategy, amongst others.
- 1.3 The CCS is based on three pillars which are intended to address the current challenges facing the city centre:
 - **Magnetic Experience:** the development of more compelling reasons to visit, shop and enjoy the city centre, with the power to surprise and inspire visitors
 - **A Place to Live:** place-based approach to regeneration which responds to climate issues and respects planetary boundaries, and which promotes and inclusive, balanced and connected urban centre with amenities to support a growing population
 - **Front Door to Innovation:** the creation of promotion of opportunities to welcome digital, life sciences, climate science and creative industries into a mix which converges with arts, engineering and business
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an outline of the scope and aims of the pilot Rapid Repairs project for the city centre, after which the report will be presented to the City Administration Committee on 5 December 2024.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The CCS 2024-30 has incorporated findings from several post-pandemic reports commissioned by the Council and the City Centre Task Force, including *Glasgow City Centre Property Market Recovery and Support Interventions* by Ryden, the Scottish Cities Alliance work on *City Centre Residential Growth* with Savills, and the *Golden Z* report by Stantec. The findings from these reports informed the development of the CCS Priority Actions.
- 2.2 Priority Action 2.3 of the CCS relates to the establishment of a Development Team, with a number of objectives to support development, including a focus on blighted land and property in the city centre. This has partly related to ongoing feedback from the commercial sector in the city centre - relayed consistently across the various business engagement events delivered by GCC and partner agency teams to inform the CCS - around the “look and feel” of the city centre. Persistent concerns have also been raised about the walking routes taken by potential inward investors, from the key transport hubs to the commercial and financial districts.

- 2.3 In addition, perceptions of a lower-quality look and feel city centre have also been supported through recent consumer surveys undertaken by the Council. When further analysing these views, it is helpful to understand that a “low quality look and feel” can encompass a wide range of matters outwith general cleansing services, from vacant units to stickers on bins, poor quality pavements, antisocial behavior, and greenery on buildings.
- 2.4 The CCS 2024-30 has introduced a range of new measures to react directly to this. Members will be aware of two grant funds recently considered by this Committee which will provide grant support for meanwhile use and minor improvement projects that support the objectives of the CCS. The new governance structure of a City Centre Task Force and four thematic Sub-Groups includes a group covering City Operations which has developed a new action plan to help improve perceptions of the city centre.
- 2.5 However to directly target the issue of poor quality public realm outwith funded programmes like the Avenues and Bus Partnership projects, a more innovative approach is required to enable a relatively rapid response to smaller-scale but higher-impact streetscape issues. Accordingly, the City Centre Rapid Repairs Pilot has been developed as a direct response to this matter.
- 2.6 The scheme is a new approach to public realm management, and it will operate in addition to any planned maintenance works being undertaken by the Council. It may cover maintenance, or small public realm improvements. For this pilot project, money has been taken from developer contributions generated through the planning process for maintenance and provision of public realm. Interventions will be monitored to ensure compliance with the relevant policies. Further information on developer contributions can be found at the following link: [Open Space Strategy - Glasgow City Council](#)

3. PROJECT SCOPE

- 3.1 Actions under this Rapid Repairs pilot will primarily target the public realm (e.g. carriageway and footway remedial works) in commercial areas of the city centre. Priority areas will include zones around transport hubs and stations, and principal routes in and around office areas and key retail destinations. **Appendix A** provides the city centre boundary in which projects must be located to be eligible for support.
- 3.2 Interventions will primarily focus on areas of concern raised by development/investment stakeholders which may otherwise affect perceptions of place, thereby impacting inward investment and regeneration opportunities.
- 3.3 Eligible activities will relate to public space only. The scheme is about improving the streetscape – it will not cover private land or property.
- 3.4 Due to resource limitations and high demand across the city, graffiti removal will only be actioned for offensive cases, in which case removal will take place within five days.

- 3.5 The expectation is that this scheme will target relatively compact areas and not entire streets. An average street block is likely to be the maximum scale of area supported, and an intervention at that scale will require forward planning, design work, and therefore longer timelines than those proposed in section 3.9 of this report. The scheme is predominantly intended to provide a fast response to smaller areas that appear neglected or which exhibit poor-quality public realm features that are undermining investment opportunities in the target areas outlined in 3.1 above. This may include: repairs or replacement of pavement slabs, street furniture, bollards, lighting, stickers/flyposting, street washing, and/or other measures that improve the key routes and spaces highlighted in this report.
- 3.6 Larger projects will require significantly greater budget than that allocated to this pilot. Accordingly, there is a separate exercise being undertaken by NRS City Centre Regeneration officers to identify the next phase of public realm priorities in the city centre. This will review the gaps that existing funding programmes like City Deal, Sustrans and Bus Partnership are unable to accommodate. Only areas which have no planned investment through these funding programmes will be eligible for support through this Rapid Repairs project.
- 3.7 There will be scope for developers to make additional contributions should there be a demand for improvements to larger areas through this initiative. There are different ways in which such contributions may be made and there are some restrictions; accordingly, any such proposals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. For example:
- (i) Voluntary contributions may not be used for any statutory obligations that developers are subject to
 - (ii) Subsidy control provisions should be adhered to; any works/improvements undertaken by the Council should not be to the benefit of individual entities or a select group of entities and an assessment of this should be with each contribution
 - (iii) Council committee approval may be required for large contributions
 - (iv) Another option could be for the developer to procure and deliver the associated works, however if this was reliant on a Council contribution, it would have to be treated as a grant and would therefore be subject to committee consideration and approval
- 3.8 The delivery of associated works will be sourced from existing internal service provision. Where this is not possible appropriate external support may be required. This will be undertaken through the use of pre-existing framework contracts to negate any requirement for new procurement.
- 3.9 The intention is for an agile approach to be employed when processing requests for action, with key decision points as follows:
- (i) Stage 1 review of service request eligibility: Up to **5 days**
 - (ii) Development Team decision on service request: Up to **10 days**
 - (iii) Delivery of service request:

- a. **Urgent/Life or Limb:** Up to **5 days** from completion of Development Team approval
 - b. **Non-urgent:** Up to **28 days** from completion of Development Team approval
 - (iv) Response to customer: **Up to 14 days** of original service request
- 3.10 It is proposed that the project be trialled as a one-year pilot. The total funding available for the pilot year is £400,000, which is comprised of £200,000 CCS capital funding and £200,000 from Developer Contributions for public realm, generated in the city centre. The Developer Contributions allocation will require approval from the City Administration Committee and this request will be included in the associated report seeking approval for this project.
- 3.11 As noted above in 2.6, the contribution of Developer Contributions to this project has been made from the maintenance component of the contribution. This is different to the provision of new public realm. Accordingly, the use of Developer Contributions within this project will be closely monitored to ensure all expenditure is in line with the relevant policy.
- 3.12 An evaluation will be undertaken by the project team at the end of the pilot year and the key findings will be reported to the EHTR committee on completion.

4. PROJECT APPROACH

- 4.1 The pilot project will be coordinated by the NRS City Centre Regeneration Group (CCRG) with support from NRS Roads Operations who will manage the implementation of all improvements whether undertaken by internal services or external contractors.
- 4.2 Proposals for improvements can be made by business/commercial stakeholders and Council Services using the City Centre Strategy mailbox: citycentrestategy@glasgow.gov.uk . The CCRG will undertake initial review to assess eligibility against the project objectives. Eligible projects will then be submitted to the GCC Development Team for approval; this will be progressed by written procedure to ensure quick turnaround.
- 4.3 If the Development Team confirm support, the CCRG will then request support from NRS Roads Operations who in turn will advise whether internal or external services are to be utilised for the specific proposal. This will determine precise timescale and cost. Once the timescale and cost is agreed between NRS Roads Operations and CCRG, the intervention will be formally instructed. The

intention is to achieve the timelines for delivery as outlined above in section 3.9, although larger proposals may require longer periods for delivery.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 After Committee have considered and approved the pilot scheme, the project will be promoted through the usual media channels as well as via business networks including the City Centre Task Force.
- 5.2 The project is expected to go live in January 2025. It will undergo three-monthly internal reviews to ensure that all potential opportunities are being taken in respect of maximising improvements with the available funding.

6. POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Existing CCS capital funding and Developer Contributions
<i>Legal:</i>	There are no legal implications
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Procurement:</i>	External service provision to be explored as appropriate

Council Strategic Plan:

Specify which Grand Challenge (s) and Mission (s) the proposal supports. Where appropriate the relevant Commitment can also be listed.

- **GRAND CHALLENGE TWO – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens**
 - 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 with 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

- MISSION 3: Enable staff to deliver a sustainable and innovative council structure that delivers value for money

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

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

Enhancements to the public realm improve access and increase active travel opportunities, especially for those with mobility issues. Measures to encourage inward investment bring associated employment opportunities.

- Outcome 1 – Contributing to continued and inclusive economic success and a dynamic, world class city
- Outcome 6 – Developing liveable neighbourhoods for all, regardless of mobility or income

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

Positive impacts are anticipated. An EqIA screening process can be implemented if deemed appropriate once next steps are agreed.

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

As noted above, interventions to enhance the public realm can indirectly bring associated socio-economic benefits.

Climate Impacts:

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

Enhanced public realm indirectly encourages the positive use of public space, thereby promoting active travel and general inclusivity:

Climate Plan Theme 1: Communication and Community Empowerment

- Aim: To foster participation and collaboration.

Climate Plan Theme 2: Just and Inclusive Place

- Aim: Ensure that the transition to a net-zero society is a catalyst for building a fairer, healthier, prosperous, resilient, and greener city for all.

Climate Plan Theme 3: Well Connected and Thriving City

- Aim: Support decarbonisation of transport systems by helping to improve infrastructure for walking, cycling, wheeling, and reducing the need to travel.

Climate Plan Theme 4: Health and Wellbeing

- Aim: To support equitable access to good quality open space and green infrastructure in the city.

Climate Plan Theme 5: Green recovery

- Aim: Supporting improved infrastructure for walking, cycling and remote working.

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

The measures outlined in this report are not anticipated to have any direct climate impacts.

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

This is not anticipated in any significant way.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Project scope does not involve the collection of personal data, so no impacts are expected.

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

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of this report and note the intention to launch a Rapid Repairs pilot project in the city centre for one year
- (ii) Refer the report to City Administration Committee for final approval
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APPENDICES:

- **Appendix A:** City Centre boundary map

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