



Glasgow City Council

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

Report by Kevin Rush, Director of Regional Economic Growth

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Item 2

30th May 2024

Glasgow Communities Fund – Progress and status update

Purpose of Report:

To provide an update on both the implementation and the review of the Glasgow Communities Fund (GCF) 2023-2026.

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to note:

- progress to date on the implementation and review of the second phase of the Glasgow Communities Fund;
- highlights from engagement with funded projects on the GCF Performance Monitoring Framework in **Appendix 1**;
- highlights from the GCF Mid-Point Review monitoring data in **Appendix 2**; and
- a report on the outcome of engagement undertaken with third sector stakeholders on the Glasgow Communities Fund in **Appendix 3**.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Glasgow Communities Fund (GCF) was introduced by Glasgow City Council in October 2020. The Fund provides a programme of grant funding support to third sector organisations to deliver on the aims of the Fund, being:
- Building the skills, capacity and resilience of individuals and communities
 - Supporting activities and services that enable and empower communities to become involved in the social, economic, and cultural life of the city
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people with protected characteristics
- 1.2 The current phase (two) of the Fund provides a programme of 3-year funding from 2023-2026. It funds 220 organisations to deliver a diverse range of activity programmes at a city-wide and local level.
- 1.3 This report sets out the progress to date on (a) the implementation of the GCF and (b) the review and planning for a potential future phase of the GCF.

Background

- 1.4 The 3-year GCF programme from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 was allocated on a geographic basis as follows:-

Geographic Area	% Share	GCF Funding allocation (2023 - 2026)	Annual Allocations
City Wide	30.00	£14,797,072	£4,932,357
North-East Sector	25.93	£12,790,354	£4,263,451
North-West Sector	20.38	£10,053,757	£3,351,252
South Sector	23.69	£11,682,390	£3,894,131
GCF total (2023 – 2026)	100.00	£49,323,573	£16,441,191

- 1.5 In addition to the sector allocations above, £6,548,169 of funding was ringfenced to support Financial Inclusion and Legal Support activity delivered by organisations within the Glasgow Advice and Information Network (GAIN), over the three-year funding period.
- 1.6 The operational framework for the implementation of the current phase of the GCF was approved by the City Administration Committee on [4 August 2022](#) and further endorsed by the Committee on [12 January 2023](#)

- 1.7 Funding decisions on the city-wide and sector recommendations were approved as follows:-

Sector	Date	Approving Body
City-Wide	12 January 2023	<u>City Administration Committee</u>
North West	19 January 2023	<u>North West Sector Partnership</u>
North East	19 January 2023	<u>North East Sector Partnership</u>
South	20 January 2023	<u>South Sector Partnership</u>

- 1.8 Grant award packages were issued to successful applicants in January 2023 and organisations were asked to submit a revised delivery proposal in line with grant levels awarded. 88% of organisations reported no required adjustments on proposed delivery outcomes set out in their original applications, only revised programme costs.
- 1.9 All GCF applicants were signposted via Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services (GCVS) to the Council's capacity building partners who had devised a bespoke framework of support in response to the demand for GCF. Capacity building partners initially focused support on unsuccessful applicants and those who worked with clients with protected characteristics.
- 1.10 Unsuccessful applicants to the Fund were provided with individual feedback on their applications on 28 February 2023, further follow-up feedback, including meetings, were provided in response to individual requests.

2.0 Progress with GCF in 2023/24

- 2.1 In April last year, funded projects received a welcome communication from the grants team, providing key information, including support from and contact with the grants team, progress visits, review and development of the GCF Performance Monitoring Framework, and the review of the current phase of the Fund.
- 2.2 A further communication was sent to projects in May from their named grants team contact officer, providing information on the contact officer's role and the support available from them.

Performance Monitoring Framework

- 2.3 In June and July last year, officers from the grants team met with Council family lead officers to consult on alignment of GCF project activity and on the development of the GCF Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF).
- 2.4 In line with the Council's commitment to work collaboratively with GCF stakeholders, GCF funded organisations were also consulted on the proposed PMF, and asked about suggestions and improvements that could

be taken forward in the development of the framework. To facilitate the consultation, a survey link was open from 20 July until 15 August, it allowed all responses to be anonymous. An overwhelming **81% of the 220 funded organisations responded** to the survey.

- 2.5 **94% of the survey respondents supported the proposed PMF** which included the introduction of a Mid-Point Review, essentially a ‘temperature check’ on progress with the funded projects over the first six-months to the end of September. A report on the survey results and analysis were shared with stakeholders in October, together with a high-level summary of the key points from the survey.

Committee is asked to note the high-level results from the PMF consultation as set out in **Appendix 1**.

- 2.6 Following positive feedback as set out above, a Mid-point Review survey opened up to organisations on 9 October and closed on 6 November. 100% of funded organisations submitted returns which have been reviewed by the team and will inform monitoring discussions with funded projects.

Committee is asked to note the highlights from the Mid-point Review data as set out in **Appendix 2**.

- 2.7 Annual Monitoring Returns covering 2023/24 are currently out with projects for completion. The survey link opened on 26 April and will close on 28 June 2024. A full report on the annual monitoring data and analysis will be available in September 2024.

- 2.8 The current PMF includes a commitment that organisations would receive a progress visit from their monitoring officer at least once annually. Due to operational pressures and capacity, the team was only able to undertake 88 progress visits during 2023/24. Committee is asked to note that capacity within the grants team has now been enhanced as a result of developments outlined in paragraphs 2.9 – 2.11 below.

Service Reform

- 2.9 In May 2023, a review of Community Empowerment and Equalities commenced as part of the wider review within Chief Executives, under the Council Family Review. One of the conclusions of the Community Empowerment and Equalities review was that the work of the Grants and Initiatives team aligned to the work of Economic Development, in particular the Funding and Monitoring Team.
- 2.10 The Grants and Initiatives team transferred to Economic Development in June 2024 and a service reform was undertaken within Economic Development to accommodate the transfer. The service reform considered the roles and responsibilities of both the Grants and Initiatives and the Funding and Monitoring teams, concluding in the proposal of a new team

structure that would enable a more streamlined approach to service delivery across the two functions.

- 2.11 A new Grants and Monitoring team structure was approved in December 2023 which introduced enhanced capacity within the team. From June 2024, a dedicated team of 5 Monitoring Officers will support the delivery of the Performance Monitoring Framework for the GCF and Glasgow's Holiday Programme. The monitoring frameworks will include enhanced support and contact with funded projects, together with a commitment to meet with every funded organisation 'in-person' at least once annually.

3.0 GCF Review

- 3.1 The Council has committed to reviewing the current phase of the GCF and to build learning from the review into the planning and design of any future phase of the Fund. Integral to the review is hearing from stakeholders' experiences of the Fund, those include -
- Third sector organisations and partners
 - Elected Members
 - Community representatives
 - Council Family Strategic Leads

Third Sector organisations

- 3.2 Officers worked with colleagues from GCVS on devising the approach to consulting with third sector stakeholders. This involved a combination of on-line engagement sessions which were hosted by GCVS and a follow-up consultation survey.
- 3.3 Three on-line workshops were held on 27 October, and 1 and 2 November 2023 where officers **heard directly from 72 organisations** about their experience of the Fund over the last 18 months.
- 3.4 As a follow-up to the sessions, officers sought to gather wider feedback through an online survey which focused on the 4 key areas covered at the engagement sessions, as set out below: -
- Communication and Engagement
 - Programme Design
 - Application Process
 - Timescales
- 3.5 The anonymous survey was open from 14 December 2023 until 19 January 2024. It was sent directly to the 220 GCF funded organisations by the grants team and issued to the wider third sector via GCVS's networks. A total of **119 organisations responded to the survey**.

- 3.6 **Appendix 3** provides a detailed report on feedback from the 3 on-line engagement sessions and feedback and analysis from the wider consultation survey. It includes an action plan, outlining feedback that will be considered in the planning, development and design of any future phase of the Fund. The report will be shared with all GCF funded organisations and wider stakeholders.
- 3.7 The results of the third sector workshops and on-line survey **indicate support for many aspects of the GGF framework together with acknowledgement that improvements that have been delivered** during the current phase of the fund, particularly in relation to communication and engagement. **Suggestions for further improvements** have been captured in the action plan found in section 8 of the report.
- 3.8 Officers are extremely grateful to all who took time to attend the sessions and/or complete the survey. The valuable feedback and analysis will be used to help inform and develop any future phase of the Glasgow Communities Fund.
- 3.9 Prior to engaging directly with third sector organisations, as set out in the paragraphs 3.2-3.8 above, officers met with representatives of the Glasgow Third Sector Interface (GTSIN) on 3 October 2023 to get their views on the proposed approach and timescales for the GCF review. This was a positive meeting, providing officers with valuable insight and suggestions to take forward in the approach to the review.

In January 2024, GTSIN issued an open letter on behalf of their committee members setting out a number of issues and suggestions that they wish to be considered in any future design of the Fund. This welcome input will be considered as part of the ongoing review process.

Community and third sector representatives

- 3.10 In October 2023, officers sought to engage with community and third sector representatives who had been involved in the GCF Sector Review Panels. Officers wanted to learn from their experiences of the Sector Review panels and hear suggestions for improvement that could be considered for any future phase of the GCF.
- 3.11 On 6 November, officers from both the Grants and the Communities teams met with some community and third sector representatives involved in the Sector Review Panels. This session was positive and informative, discussion focused on the themes which had emerged at the session, as below:-
- Programme Design
 - Assessment Process
 - Sector Review Panels
 - Role of the Community / Area Partnerships

- 3.12 Discussion notes from the session were shared and agreed. The issues and ideas from the session will be taken forward by officers from the Grants and Communities teams. In particular, officers will consider how local community needs can be captured and factored into any future GCF framework. A follow-up discussion will be organised with stakeholders as part of the ongoing review process.

Elected Members

- 3.13 Elected Members will be consulted on strategic aspects of any potential future phase of the Fund during May-June 2024. Feedback from Elected Members, together with feedback from other key stakeholders, will inform considerations around the design and framework of any future GCF.

Council Family Strategic Leads

- 3.14 Officers will engage with colleagues from across the Council family, including those directly involved in the GCF assessment process where possible. Officers will liaise with Council family lead colleagues in May 2024 on the best model for engaging with their respective teams during June 2024. Feedback from Council family colleagues will be particularly valuable in discussions around planning and design of any future assessment framework for the Fund.

Potential indicative GCF Timetable

- 3.15 The indicative timetable below has been/will be shared with stakeholders as part of the stakeholder engagement process:

Timeline	Dates
18 Month review period	June 2023 – September 2024
1 st Phase of Stakeholder Engagement	October – December 2023
Distil and analyse reports and learning	December 2023 – June 2024
2 nd Stage of stakeholder engagement	August 2024
Framework approved	October/November 2024
Application Process	January – March 2025
Assessment Process	March – August/September 2025
Recommendations made	October/November 2025
Go Live	1 April 2026

An update on progress with the GCF review will be available in September 2024.

Funders in Glasgow Group

- 3.16 Officers have been working with colleagues from the National Lottery Communities Team to explore opportunities for effective partnership working between stakeholders in the Glasgow grant funding landscape.
- 3.17 To take this forward, an initial meeting was held with grant funding partners on 25 April 2024 where a draft Terms of Reference for a “Funders in Glasgow” group was agreed. A further meeting is planned for July 2024 which will include wider representation from funders.
- 3.18 It is hoped that this collective will explore ways to work more efficiently and help to maximise impact and reduce duplication of services across the city.

Learning and Celebration Event

- 3.19 The Council plans to celebrate the Glasgow Communities Fund and promote the valuable impact of services delivered by the third sector across the city. Further, the Council is keen to promote learning and information sharing amongst GCF funded organisations and partners.
- 3.20 In the GCF survey to third sector stakeholders, respondents indicated strong support for such a ‘learning and celebration’ event/s hosted by the Council. Ideas about how and where such an event/s could be delivered were offered, with the majority of respondents supporting a city-centre event together with smaller local events.
- 3.20 In response to the positive feedback received, the Council intends to host a GCF Learning and Celebration event in the city-centre during September 2024. An oversight group is being established to lead on discussions around planning and engagement for the events, it is intended that the oversight group will include input from third sector partners. Discussions around planning for local events will be undertaken with colleagues in the Communities team.

4. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Outcomes will be maximised through targeted use of resources and joint working and resourcing with partners
<i>Legal:</i>	No new legal issue
<i>Personnel:</i>	No direct personnel issues
<i>Procurement:</i>	There are no procurement implications

Council Strategic Plan: This proposed programme of activity funded by the Glasgow Communities Fund supports the Council's Strategic Plan, specifically:-
Grand Challenge 1 – Mission 1 – “End child poverty in our city using early intervention to support families”; **Mission 3** – “Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities; and **Mission 4** – “Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant”.
Grand Challenge 2 – Mission 3 – “Raise attainment amongst Glasgow’s Children and Young People”.
Grand Challenge 4 – 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, the proposal has the potential to impact on the council Equality Outcomes in relation to the following improvement aims: Improve economic outcomes for people with Protected Characteristics; and Improve access to council Family services by people with protected characteristics.
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	No impacts identified at this stage.
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.</i>	It is anticipated that future funding recommendations will have a positive impact on third sector jobs, skills, local communities, social and community cohesion

Climate Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	It is anticipated that future funding will contribute to the continuing regeneration of Glasgow with many of the supported projects also led by local communities and community organisations
<i>What are the potential climate</i>	It is anticipated that future funding recommendations will have a positive impact

<i>impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	on third sector jobs, skills, local communities, social and community cohesion
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<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	No contribution to Glasgow's net zero carbon target at this time
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Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:	No privacy or data protection impacts identified.
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5. Recommendations

Committee is asked to note:

- 5.1 progress to date on the implementation and review of the second phase of the Glasgow Communities Fund;
- 5.2 highlights from engagement with funded projects on the GCF Performance Monitoring Framework in **Appendix 1**;
- 5.3 highlights from the GCF Mid-Point Review monitoring data in **Appendix 2**; and
- 5.4 a report on the outcome of engagement undertaken with third sector stakeholders on the Glasgow Communities Fund in **Appendix 3**.