



Glasgow City Council

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

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

Contact: Mandy MacDonald Ext: 77744

Item 2

21st April 2026

**GLASGOW CITY CENTRE STRATEGY 2024 to 2030 AND CITY CENTRE
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the progress of the City Centre Strategy 2024 – 2030 (CCS24-30), and the City Centre Strategic Development Framework (CCSDF).

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of the report.
- (ii) Consider the progress made by the CCS24-30 from November 2025 to March 2026.
- (iii) Note the update on City Centre SDF actions.
- (iv) Note that bi-annual updates on progress will be submitted to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee for the duration of the CCS24-30.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

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

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.2 Members may recall that the update for the *City Centre Strategy 2024 - 2030* (CCS 24-30), approved by the City Administration Committee on 21 March 2024, was presented to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration Policy Committee on 22 April 2025.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide the fourth biannual progress update of the new City Centre Strategy, and to also update on the complimentary and additional actions from the City Centre Strategic Development Framework (CCSDF).

2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 The **CCS24-30** serves as the overarching strategy for city centre regeneration until 2030. It is guided by the **City Centre Strategic Development Framework (SDF)** adopted by the Council in May 2021, which sets strategic planning priorities.
- 2.2 The vision is built on three key **Pillars**:
 - 2.2.1 **Magnetic Experience**: Enhancing the city's appeal with engaging attractions and experiences
 - 2.2.2 **Front Door to Innovation**: Encouraging an innovative approach to development, a mix of digital, life sciences, climate science, and creative industries alongside arts, engineering, and business
- 2.3 **A Place to Live**: A sustainable, inclusive, and well-connected approach to regeneration that supports a growing population. The strategy outlines **19 Priority Actions** to drive these goals and ensure effective resource allocation. These action areas also reflect the Feminist City priorities of the City.

3 PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 3.1 The City Centre Task Force (CCTF) and its thematic Sub-Group structure is the strategic body with oversight over the City Centre Strategy, 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. In addition to the Sub-Groups workplans, the CCTF has set out four high priority actions for delivery over 2025 as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Improve the look, feel and experience of the city centre prioritising key transport gateways
 - 3.1.2 Launch a marketing campaign
 - 3.1.3 Improve the transport offering
 - 3.1.4 Night-Time Economy
- 3.2 The four priority actions were progressed as follows during 2025:

3.2.1 Improve the Look, Feel and Experience of the City Centre

- (i) **Hielanman's Umbrella:** Network Rail is delivering a phased programme of improvements at Hielanman's Umbrella focused on cleaning and maintenance, enhanced lighting, and activation of vacant units, alongside new commercial lettings including a licensed premises and a forthcoming restaurant, with Lane 7 set to take over the Platform venue in 2026 to boost footfall. These actions are supported by collaboration with GCC on streetlighting and integration with the Avenues Project, as well as development of a long-term estate strategy covering branding, marketing, and planned preventative maintenance, all underpinned by ongoing partnership working with GCC, ScotRail and BTP to improve safety, visibility and the overall customer experience.
- (ii) **Anderston Station Gateway – Concept Design:** The design process is ongoing and nearing the conclusion of RIBA Stage 3. A meeting has recently taken place with the Accessible and Inclusive Design Forum and further community engagement will take place during the next stage of design. This project will provide an essential link between planned active travel routes to either side of the junction. Early designs focus on lighting, safety, and decluttering the space which includes the removal of the pedestrian bridge to create a more welcoming and coherent environment.
- (iii) **Operational Services:** Glasgow City Council has undertaken a significant strengthening of operational services within the city centre as part of a wider, strategically targeted investment in frontline resources. This programme is designed to enhance the quality, consistency, and responsiveness of the public realm, ensuring that the city centre remains clean, attractive, and welcoming as a key economic, commercial, and cultural hub.
- (iv) A major component of this investment is the introduction of 23 newly established neighbourhood teams, increasing overall operational capacity and improving the Council's ability to respond quickly to emerging issues within the city centre and surrounding areas.
- (v) Within the city centre, we have supported the expansion of a dedicated night-shift cleansing operation, delivering a substantial increase in available resource during evening and overnight periods. This enhanced provision has enabled:
 - Additional mechanical sweeping routes
 - Increased frequency of street litter bin collections, including the creation of new routes
 - Expanded power-washing schedules for Glasgow City Council–managed assets
 - Extended cleaning of key public realm areas, improving standards for morning peak footfall

- (vi) Daytime operations have been strengthened through further deployment of dedicated personnel and the introduction of commercial waste enforcement officers, ensuring compliance with business waste presentation and collection requirements.
- (vii) Our Street Cleansing teams provide a visible presence within the core retail and hospitality areas, reinforcing the Council's commitment to maintaining high environmental standards. Their work is coordinated with Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability Teams to ensure that waste presentation and uplift occur within defined operational windows. A cross-service working group continues to monitor and refine these timings to maximise efficiency and impact.
- (viii) In addition to our Weeks of Action programme, **City Centre Days of Action** have been introduced. These targeted interventions bring together multiple operational teams to focus on priority locations requiring intensified attention. Activities include thematic responses, enhanced public realm maintenance, targeted cleansing, and the removal of discarded traffic management equipment, ensuring that redundant cones, signs, and barriers are cleared quickly to maintain a safe and uncluttered streetscape.
- (ix) A joint day of action took place in partnership with Retailers Against Crime. The objective was to target the city centre's most prolific retail crime offenders through close collaboration with Police Scotland. The focus was on detecting, preventing, disrupting and diverting criminal activity using a coordinated, intelligence led approach. NRS CEOs and CCTV operatives supported the operation by working alongside Police Scotland and monitoring and recording incidents as they occurred.
- (x) Two additional re deployable cameras were installed at Clyde Street near Dixon Street and at Clyde Street near Maxwell Street. The recent investment in public space CCTV, confirmed in the latest council budget, will further strengthen safety measures and support both the daytime and nighttime economy within the city centre.
- (xi) The two-week Commercial Waste Project carried out in December 2025 gathered 80 intelligence logs across the city centre between Merchant City and Finnieston through extended daily patrols. Officers engaged with 57 businesses, with a further 23 requiring follow-up due to closures during patrol hours. Compliance checks identified several issues, including inadequate waste capacity, open bin lids and waste presented outwith designated times, leading to 10 informal advisory letters and multiple requests for contractor guidance. Where businesses failed to provide evidence of a waste contract or did not engage with officers, 9 Section 34 Duty of Care Notices were issued, and one restaurant received a Fixed Penalty Notice for non-compliance. Photographic evidence accompanies the findings.

3.2.2 Launch a Marketing Campaign – Get You In Town

- (i) The Get You In Town city centre marketing campaign initially ran over two phases between mid-September and mid-December 2025, incorporating advertising runs on social media, radio, tv and out-of-home posters, digital screens and bus backs.
- (ii) A evaluation found that campaign materials were made available to a potential audience of 27m people during this time and reached or engaged 1.4m of those individuals. Out-of-home materials had a potential audience of 17m, but the number of people who engaged with the campaign in this way is not quantifiable.
- (iii) Get You In Town is now incorporated into standard city marketing messaging and will run at specific times in the city calendar (eg Get You In Town This Christmas). Work to encourage business take-up to support the longevity of the campaign is also underway.

3.2.3 Improve the Transport Offering

- (i) Increased transport services. Key ask of all operators continues to provide committed opportunities for service improvements. Recently the Subway announced plans for enhanced operating hours, bus operators have introduced additional evening services and Scotrail have increased service frequency in the evenings on many routes.
- (ii) Night Bus Hub Improvements: With bus operators, key night bus hubs have been identified for improved safety, visibility and awareness. Shortlisting of locations being finalised so they can be promoted to the NTE industry.
- (iii) Transport Response to Large Events: During 2025 operators increased capacity and extended running times to support concerts and large events. Collaborative work is continuing to add value and broaden this coordination to cover a wider range of events in 2026, improving the full customer journey.
- (iv) Travel Promotion/Marketing: A priority for 2026 is to work a joined-up multi-operator marketing campaign to highlight city level service availability and safety and encourage public transport travel, particularly in relation to the NTE.
- (v) Data insight sharing, Conversations are underway to put together a database to gain a better understanding of travel patterns, particularly in relation with late evening / night-time transport. Passenger data shared by transport operators will build on the footfall data available on the City Centre Performance Dashboard to help inform commercial decisions by operators.

3.2.4 Night-Time Economy

- (i) An update report was recently issued to City Administration Committee on 12 March 2026.
- (ii) This highlighted a new NTE Vision for Glasgow (“Night Shift: Glasgow”) which has been developed by industry experts (SixTillSix and MAKE Associates), grounded in international best practice and the Purple Flag framework.
- (iii) The Vision is built around five core principles:
 - Improve cleanliness, safety and perceptions of safety
 - Enhance post-6pm transport
 - Create coherent lighting, public realm and wayfinding
 - Protect and grow the cultural, arts, sport and hospitality offer
 - Strengthen leadership, partnership working and policy alignment
- (iv) A detailed Work Plan will follow, structured around SMART principles and shared delivery responsibilities between GCC and partners.
- (v) Indicative action areas include wellbeing and safety measures, better transport, improved customer experience, venue support, and street environment improvements.
- (vi) The report recommends establishing:
 - A Night-Time Economy Officer within the Council
 - A Night-Time Economy Commission, evolving from the current NTESG membership
- (vii) City Administration Committee approved the establishment of a council NTE Officer, as well as the High-Level Action Plan.

4 CCS PROGRESS REPORT

- 4.1 Over the next six months, the City Centre Team will continue to progress the actions set out in the City Centre Strategy 2024–2030. However, the recent fire on Union Street was a devastating incident which has caused significant disruption and will have wide-ranging impacts on activity within the heart of the city centre, particularly in relation to business operations, pedestrian movement, and infrastructure.
- 4.2 In response, the City Centre Team will prioritise supporting all aspects of site recovery and business assistance, working closely with internal services and external partners to ensure a coordinated and effective response. A dedicated Union Street Updates webpage has been established to provide timely updates, practical guidance and access to support for affected businesses and stakeholders. Regular updates on recovery activity will continue to be provided to City Centre Taskforce to ensure ongoing dialogue with private sector partners throughout the recovery period.
- 4.3 An internal Union Street Infrastructure & Built Environment Recovery Group has been established to support the recovery phase. Chaired by the Divisional Director, Ben Wilson, this Bronze Group will assume responsibility for coordinating recovery activity relating to infrastructure and the built environment.
- 4.4 In addition, a Union Street Fire Recovery Fund was established to provide targeted financial support to small businesses affected by the fire and its immediate aftermath. Eligible businesses applied for assistance to help stabilise operations, support recovery costs and enable a return to trading as quickly as possible.
- 4.5 Given the current circumstances and the evolving nature of the recovery, several projects in and around the affected area may experience delays or require adjustment in scope, phasing or delivery. The City Centre Team will continue to review programme impacts and will bring forward any significant changes through appropriate governance arrangements as required.

4.6 Magnetic Experience

- 4.6.1 In January 2026, City Centre footfall was 6.8% up on January 2025. The trend of weekends and evenings performing above this average continues, which highlights the new way in which people are interacting in the city centre. This is reflected in the sales figures with an increase of 10.1% in January, including a 8.7% increase in Food & Drink and 21.5% increase in Fashion. It should be noted that Glasgow was ahead of all the comparators (Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds and the GB average).
- 4.6.2 Glasgow has come in first place in Colliers' Top UK Residential Investment Cities Report for the first time, overtaking cities including London, Edinburgh, Manchester and Leeds. The report highlights Glasgow's strong performance in the economics, research and development, property and ESG categories. Rental yields were the joint highest with Belfast at 9.3%. Retail openings in

2025 have strengthened the city's offer and boosted sales in the Fashion sector which had been struggling.

4.6.3 District Regeneration Frameworks (DRFs) Programme

- (i) The Townhead Greening and Connectivity Project focuses on delivering the enhanced connectivity and place projects previously identified by the Townhead DRF. Shrubbery and tree pruning works identified by the community were delivered in December 2025. RIBA Stage 2 is complete, with specific actions now being advanced to RIBA Stage 4. Funding via the GCC Feminist Urbanism Working Group will help deliver a more inclusive re-imagining of the Multi Use Games Area with specific design input from local girls and young women. Construction works on Parliamentary Path are due to start in the summer, and play and landscaping elements are to be delivered in late 2026-27.
- (ii) Having secured funding, the project to create an **Eastern entrance to the Necropolis** is underway. Following consultation, a location has been identified for the new entrance along Firpark Street, and mitigating anti-social behaviour in the area has been identified as a priority. Topographical and Ground Penetrating Radar surveys have been completed. Production of the detailed designs and the planning application are underway.
- (iii) **Cathedral Square Gardens** NRS Property and Consultancy Services (PCS) continue to lead the internal design process, with appropriate delivery programme. The project develops a light touch approach to the enhancement of the gardens, its connections with High Street and John Knox Street Avenues, particularly regarding surface treatments and material consistency. Resourcing and budgetary constraints remain an important factor, with phased delivery to expedite outputs. Stakeholder engagement has been, and continues to be, extensive. Stage 2 Concept Design is nearing completion. Construction is scheduled for 2027.
- (iv) A **Business Improvement District (BID)** is a business-led and business-funded body formed to improve trading conditions within the City Centre. The Let's Go Glasgow BID will be launched on 1st April following a successful ballot in October last year. The private sector will generate new, ring-fenced funds to be spent on additional activities with a focus on clean, safe, empowered and promotion. The new Board members have been voted for and the Council will have a permanent seat on the Board. A recruitment process is underway to appoint a CEO and supporting staff who will manage the BID.
- (v) Progress of **City Centre Improvement Grant Fund (IGF)** was reported to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee on 30 September 2025. This pilot project continues to perform strongly, receiving high levels of interest and supporting a wide

range of projects that contribute to the enhancement of the city centre. Summary details to date are as follows:

- 73No. applications have been received
 - 20No. have been approved
 - 32No. have been unsuccessful
 - 21No. remain under review
- (vi) Approved projects—ranging from façade improvements and green infrastructure to public-realm enhancements—have strengthened visual amenity, supported placemaking objectives and addressed localised blight. The Minor Improvements element remains particularly well utilised and viable projects will see project spend achieve committed budget allocations.
- (vii) However, whilst the Meanwhile Use Fund has generated considerable demand from businesses, charities and community groups, the limited participation of willing and suitable landlords has hampered effective delivery. Despite these challenges positive examples do demonstrate the scheme’s potential to activate vacant units where conditions allow - such as a partnership enabling Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland to open a new boutique store. The Meanwhile Use programme will continue to be assessed and reviewed towards maximising possible outputs and outcomes.
- (viii) An update on progress of the **Rapid Repairs** pilot project was also provided as part of the Committee report highlighted in item 4.2.3(vi) – as above. We can now confirm that this activity has achieved full allocated budget spend ahead of indicative delivery timescales. While some public realm works remain outstanding, these will be completed through business-as-usual operations going forward. A summary of the most recent project data (16 March 2026) outlines activity progress as follows:
- 626No. jobs raised/identified
 - 531No. jobs completed (i.e. 85% completion)
- (ix) The Rapid Repairs Pilot has demonstrated the value of a rapid-intervention public realm model will be embedded as part of ongoing operations. It provides opportunities to explore how this approach might be mainstreamed at scale considering the respective lessons learned. Similarly, the works completed and data gathered can help to inform future public realm priorities in the city centre, especially any gaps that existing capital programmes are unable to accommodate.

4.6.4 River Corridor

- (i) The City Deal Custom House Quay and Carlton Place project commenced RIBA Stage 4 in September 2025, with design development continuing through Spring 2026. Throughout this period, targeted

engagement with key project interdependencies has intensified, ensuring that emerging design work remains aligned with wider city-centre programmes, infrastructure interfaces, and statutory requirements. This coordinated engagement is directly informing both technical design decisions and procurement strategy.

- (ii) A Planning Application for the masterplan was submitted in Q2 2025/26, with determination anticipated in Q4.
- (iii) Engagement regarding the city centre team is ongoing on the emerging Clyde Mission Masterplan and Working Group.

4.6.5 Tourism and Events

- (i) Significant progress has been made against the Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy, with the positive completion of the first 2-year Tourism Action Plan from April 2024 - March 2026.
- (ii) The estimated economic benefit from delegate spend between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 is £202 million
- (iii) 2024 Tourism STEAM data was announced in September 2025:
 - £2.39bn total direct visitor spend in Glasgow (+1.9% on 2023 and +51.4% on 2022)
 - Over 37,000 jobs in the tourism sector
 - 4.72m total overnight visitors (+20.8% on 2023 and +77.9% on 2022)
 - £1.84bn economic impact from overnight visitors (-3.2% on 2023 and +52.1% on 2022)
- (iv) 2025 Tourism data is due to be announced in September 2026.

4.6.6 Glasgow Life Winter Events

- (i) Glasgow's Christmas Lighting Trail 2025 took place along Sauchiehall Street, Buchanan Street and Argyle Street in Glasgow City Centre, including a total of 5 installations. Local independent artists designed four of these unique installations, with the fifth one being designed by a pupil from Sandaig Primary School who won the Lord Provost's design competition. Following a new business engagement approach 60 businesses shared over 160 events that were taking place within the city centre for inclusion in the marketing campaign along with 4 businesses who provided tailored offers and experiences for the launch of the trail on 20 November, alongside pop-up street performances.
- (ii) A winter events steering group is being established to oversee the planning and delivery of the city's winter events programme across civic, city delivered, commercial and community events. The group will ensure planning aligns with the city's priorities, relating to the city centre,

Glasgow Events and Culture Strategies, Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage, the city's lighting strategy under development and animating the newly re-opened George Square.

4.6.7 Glasgow Life Culture/ Events

- (i) Glasgow will host a round of the 2026-27 UCI Cyclo-cross World Cup at Kelvingrove Park on Sunday 13 December 2026 for the first time in Scotland, attracting teams, media and spectators from across Europe and providing a positive addition to the city's winter events programme. Glasgow Life are working in partnership with British Cycling and Flanders Classic on the delivery, promotion and activation of the event.
- (ii) Celtic Connections 2026 ran from 15th January to 1st February across around 25 venues, presenting roughly 300 events with 1,200 artists and introducing new spaces such as the Citizens Theatre and Tron Theatre. The festival delivered standout moments including the first fully seated music performance at the Emirates Arena and record audiences for a standing show the following night.
- (iii) The Glasgow Film Festival 2026 ran from 25th February to 8th March, showcasing 127 films from 40 countries. The festival opened with Everybody to Kenmure Street, executive-produced by Emma Thompson, and closed with the premiere of James McAvoy's directorial debut California Schemin'. Its Industry Focus programme brought together around 650 delegates and featured the first-ever Made in Glasgow Day, highlighting local creative talent with contributions from industry leaders.
- (iv) The Glasgow International Comedy Festival 2026 will run from 11th – 29th March, featuring 560 shows across venues citywide and welcoming leading comedians from Scotland and around the world. With around 100,000 tickets on sale, the festival will showcase a broad range of comedy genres and continue its "Comedy Connects" programme, as well as The Spirit of Glasgow Award, selected by Sir Billy Connolly, which will once again be presented during the festival.
- (v) WOMAD Glasgow will take place in Kelvingrove Park on the 3rd and 4th July 2026. This will be the first time the event takes place in Scotland. With a capacity of 9,000 a day, it is expected to attract attendees from outside of Glasgow whilst catering for the world music audience in Scotland. Tickets are on sale now with the lineup expected to be teased out in the coming month.
- (vi) Glasgow Life is leading the delivery of the Glasgow 2026 Games Festival, which will include an expanded Merchant City Festival activating the city centre across both Games weekends, alongside a citywide fund supporting community-led cultural, sporting and creative projects in the build up to and during the Commonwealth Games.

4.6.8 Infrastructure Programme

- (i) a City Centre Coordination Group has been established, acting as a Senior Officers Working Group reporting to the Infrastructure Board, and is presently focussed on the creation of a city infrastructure programme. Data sets now identified and collated; budget 2026-27 and all remaining capital infrastructure spend profiles to be GIS mapped. On going discussion on how best to interrogate the information. Seeking to create a model that will recognise opportunities and constraints across the city.
- (ii) Current Public Realm Delivery Programme:
- **People First Zone** – Work is underway on Ingram Street and Queen Street to give more space and priority to people. Installation of planters with trees and greenery, with increased pedestrian space, and a raised table crossing constructed at the junction of Queen Street and Ingram Street. The work has been carried out utilising an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which will be in place and monitored for the next 18 months.
 - **Gordon Street Gateway Project** - The public realm works have reached RIBA Stage 2 design, with public and stakeholder engagement now complete. The project was due to progress immediately to RIBA Stage 4, with construction scheduled to commence in January 2027. However, following the recent fire at Union Corner, the project timescales are currently under review.
- (iii) **Prioritisation Matrix of Public Realm** within the city centre. A matrix was utilised to identify public realm interventions beyond the Avenues, and the findings were presented to the Infrastructure Board to agree the prioritised list. The following streets were approved to be taken forward to RIBA Stage 4 design:
- Bothwell Street
 - Union Street
 - Jamaica Street
 - Dundas Street / Dundas Lane
 - John Street
 - Martha Street
- (iv) **Co-ordination of Look and Feel**
- The current Public Realm Design and Maintenance Guide is being updated. To provide a design code for internal and external stakeholders on all aspects of streetscape design.
 - Informal play opportunities are being identified within the city centre to support the delivery of the Open Space Strategy. As part of the Townhead Greening and Connectivity project the MUGA is being reimagined focused on creating a more inclusive play and socialising environment for all. A sculptural structure titled “Gallus” has been commissioned to introduce multi-generational play and seating to the Cathedral Square Gardens project.
 - The city-wide Lighting Strategy is being procured. This will provide overarching parameters for the provision of light across the city. An

action plan for the City Centre and River SDF areas will be developed identifying the opportunities for architectural and artistic lighting as well as improved municipal lighting.

4.6.9 Greening the City

- (i) Short-term greening - a budget of £275k was approved to support a number of greening projects across the city centre. Funding allocations were made to the following projects:
 - NRS Arbor Operations were contracted to undertake a survey utilising the Ezytreev Tree, TPO and Asset management system. To create a “near” complete dataset / inventory of the tree assets for which the Council is responsible for within the city centre.
 - Tree replacement programme at locations where trees have been badly damaged beyond viability and/or died. Locations included Buchanan Street, Ingram Street, Sauchiehall Street and on Cathedral Precinct.
 - Design of street tree and rain garden intervention on Bath Street.
 - Planters and associated trees purchased for the People First Zone proposals on Ingram Street and Queen Street.
 - To support the appointment of an Officer to progress the action plan of the Carbon Sequestration and Tree Management Working Group for the whole city.
- (ii) A City Centre Greening Action Plan will commence this financial year and will build upon the work delivered to date and take forward greening opportunities highlighted through the DRFs and those identified through the emerging GBI Strategy.
- (iii) The City Centre SDF action for a City Centre Green-Blue Infrastructure Strategy is being progressed by NRS, to create a strategic network across the city centre. This strategy will build on the vision of the Avenues to 'green the grey' of the city environment to and define a strategic network of GBI across the city centre that may include rain gardens, pocket parks, play and amenity spaces, green roofs and street trees. GIS mapping is exploring areas of deficit and opportunity for GBI interventions to inform preparation of an implementation Plan. A workshop, involving relevant stakeholder agencies (such as NatureScot and Scottish Water), is envisaged in the coming months to inform the Plan and prioritise interventions.

4.6.10 Cultural and Heritage

- (i) Progress continues on the development of the Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District (SSCHD), a flagship project within the City Centre Strategy and the Golden Z Vision. In January 2026, the 18-month Exploration Phase funded by a £350,000 award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) concluded, resulting in a comprehensive Area Action Plan and a set of priority interventions to guide heritage-led regeneration along Sauchiehall Street. In December 2025, £2.35 million

was awarded through the NLHF Heritage Places Programme to support delivery of the Proof-of-Concept phase (2025–2027), which will advance early capital works, strengthen partnership arrangements, and test delivery models to inform future phases of the initiative. This phase includes initial conservation and activation of key heritage assets such as McLellan Galleries and the Cameron Memorial Fountain, pilot shopfront improvements, enhanced interpretation at civic landmarks, and a programme of community-led cultural engagement and archiving. Match funding of £400k has been identified within existing GCC capital allocations, with delivery to be taken forward jointly by Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Life under the terms of the NLHF Grant Agreement. The SSCHD forms a core demonstrator for the City Centre Strategy, supporting culture-led regeneration, sustainable reuse of historic buildings, and alignment with wider city objectives including Net Zero 2030 and the Property Repurposing Action Plan.

- (ii) **Digital Creative Cluster:** A new microsite has been developed as part of the Visit Glasgow website to highlight all of the cultural organisations and breadth of activity in the District. It wraps in the cultural offer for visitors as well as an area for nights out and dining and education. The site can be accessed through [Visit Glasgow](#). A promotional video for the District has also been commissioned.
- (iii) **Creative Supercluster:** GSA and RCS are working with GCC Economic Development and Consultancy Services as well as Glasgow Life to test an approach for a creative enterprise hub for the city within the Culture and Heritage District.

4.6.11 Front Door to Innovation

4.6.12 Glasgow is among the top three fastest-growing tech investment hubs in the UK. The actions below will allow Glasgow to maintain its position as the number one large city for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

4.6.13 Innovation and Digital

- (i) HSBC's UK innovation review 2025 ranks Glasgow 7th in the UK for attracting the most venture capital investment into startups. Additionally, analysis by the Financial Times, Statista and Sifted ranks the Royal Academy of Engineering Enterprise Hub, which has its Scotland Hub based within the Glasgow City Innovation District, as the UK's leading accelerator for spinouts and startups.
- (ii) **Stakeholder Engagement:** Participation across government, industry, and international networks expanded with GCID supporting visitations from the Scottish Government, Office for Investment, DBT, Treasury Select Committee and DSIT into the Glasgow City's innovation economy. This stakeholder engagement reinforces Glasgow City's position as a key innovation hub. Regionally, GCID supported the Scottish Government's tech sector and industrial transformation work, contributed to the development of Glasgow City Council's International Strategy, and

strengthened its role within Glasgow Economic Leadership group through its support and participation of the Financial and Business services workstream. Internationally, GCID hosted delegations from Belgium, Tennessee, and global universities, while participating in Cambridge Tech Week as well securing funding create and host the first Scottish Spinout Summit.

(iii) GCID Venture Studio: The Glasgow City Innovation District Venture Studio ('Venture Studio') was launched in July 2024 and aims to develop and support innovation-driven enterprises based within Glasgow City through tailored interventions. The work of the Venture Studio is delivered under four distinct pillars:

- Challenge: pushing boundaries and tackling real-world problems.
- Make: turning ideas into tangible products.
- Innovate: supporting businesses and individuals to accelerate development and refining business concepts.
- Impact: scaling up business and maximising economic influence.

To date, the Venture Studio has been funded by Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) provided through Glasgow City Council (GCC); and partner funding from both Scottish Enterprise (SE) and University of Strathclyde. Following the successful completion of Phase 1, Phase 2 (completing end of March 26) continues to deliver under the four Pillars with a focus on the need for:

- Stronger SME engagement within the GCID;
- A broader spread of markets and industry sectors to be engaged; and
- Increased inclusivity and a clearer demonstration of GCID's social contribution.

(iv) Impact Measurement – Innovation Metrics: In partnership with Glasgow City Region's Intelligence Hub, an Impact Measurement template has been produced for the Innovation District which provides a growth indicator for innovation within the City Centre. A report will be produced annually. Supporting this development, GCID have now joined the Global Institute of Innovation Districts to gain a deeper understanding of how Innovation District's globally capture and report their impact.

(v) Glasgow Tech Week: Planning and delivery of Glasgow Tech Week 2025 was a major success, that showcased the city's growing technology and innovation ecosystem. The programme has built significant momentum, with more than 40 events held and over 80 partner organisations participating from across Glasgow and beyond. The week featured a wide range of themes – from HealthTech to Digital Transformation and investment – and generated strong engagement across industry, academia, and the public sector. The enthusiastic response from partners and the vibrant atmosphere throughout the week highlighted Glasgow's reputation as a dynamic hub for technology,

collaboration, and innovation. Recognising that the month of May has become a crowded space in Scotland for tech conferences, Glasgow Tech Week 2026 will now take place in September 2026.

- (vi) Glasgow city centre continues to demonstrate its growing relevance as a hub for innovation and high-value economic activity. Hitachi Energy has chosen 110 Queen Street as the location for its new UK Engineering Centre of Excellence, due to open in early 2026, creating around 90 skilled jobs in engineering and project management to support critical upgrades to the UK's electrical grid for net-zero. At the same time, Glasgow City Council has approved a 99-year lease for Sustainable Ventures to transform The Lighthouse into a major base for climate-tech growth, providing space and support for emerging green-innovation companies. Together, these investments highlight the strong confidence that global firms and innovative enterprises place in Glasgow as a dynamic, future-focused city centre in which to locate and grow.

4.6.14 Wellbeing Economy

- (i) GCC Economic Development has met with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to begin developing a suite of indicators tailored to Glasgow's city centre. These will provide detailed insight into labour-market conditions at a granular level, including vacancy rates, job types, pay levels, labour demand and job turnover. As this level of data requires bespoke analysis, it will take time to produce; once received, it will be used to inform targeted engagement with city-centre businesses and support a deeper understanding of local economic dynamics.
- (ii) The brief for developing employability indicators specific to the city centre has now been formally established with the ONS. This work will strengthen the evidence base needed to design measures that build resilience in the city-centre labour market. In parallel, an employer-engagement network is being created to coordinate activity around key areas of opportunity, with the city centre identified as one of the priority focus areas.

4.6.15 Development Team

- (i) A cross-service *Development Team* (DT) has been set up to focus resources on maximising development opportunities.
- (ii) *Strategic Sites Assessment*: several vacant and blighted sites in private ownership across the city centre have been highlighted through the Golden Z report as requiring targeted intervention. Each of these key sites are being assessed in terms of ownership, policy context, strategies, project opportunities, planning applications, pre-planning applications, site constraints and opportunities. 49 sites are currently being monitored by the DT, through regular communications with site owners, developers and agents. The tracker has been updated to

provide a Red, Amber, Green scoring as sites progress. 28 of the sites are either in pre-planning or have had planning permission approved.

- (iii) *Develop Glasgow website*: The Develop Glasgow website has been reviewed by external consultants Arup, who bring extensive expertise in creating investment-focused platforms such as Opportunity London. The site, with a predicted early summer launch date, will be hosted as a dedicated section within the Invest Glasgow platform to ensure full alignment with the city's wider investment and regeneration messaging.
- (iv) The *Developing Glasgow* event, took place on 1 April 2026, this has brought together around 80 leading figures from the development, investment, finance, and property sectors to help shape a confident and collaborative future for Central Glasgow. The event featured keynote contributions from industry partners, an overview of city centre opportunities, and a facilitated panel discussion exploring how to drive market confidence and accelerate investment. The session concluded with a call to action, capturing key insights and commitments from participants to support a stronger, more investable city centre.
- (v) In February 2026, more than 70 architects and built-environment professionals convened at Adelaide Place for *Visioning Glasgow – A Call to Action*, an interactive workshop facilitated by the Scottish Futures Trust in partnership with the Glasgow Institute of Architects and RIAS, with support from Glasgow City Council. The session marked the launch of a new platform to shape early thinking for the post-2030 City Centre Strategy and to develop a refreshed narrative for Central Glasgow. Through keynote inputs—highlighting Glasgow's strong international cultural visibility and the opportunity to strengthen its economic and investment profile—and a series of structured collaborative exercises, participants generated bold ideas, sketches, enabling moves and strategic insights focused on confidence, creativity and European identity. All outputs have been curated for publication on a dedicated online platform *Partnership Working - Glasgow City Council*, temporarily hosted on the GCC website with a view to migrate to the GIA platform. This workshop represents the first step in a continuing, collective effort to build a confident, imaginative and investment-ready vision for Central Glasgow.
- (vi) *Advocacy*: The Development Sub-group continues to explore future funding opportunities and assess viability gaps associated with developing heritage buildings, particularly the conversion of upper floors from commercial to residential use. This work also applies to wider city-centre redevelopment across key sites identified over time. The Sub-group is collaborating with GIG to investigate the creation of an Impact Fund, designed to stimulate investment and development by leveraging innovative financing from both the public and private sectors.
- (vii) The British Council for Offices (BCO) Conference coming to Glasgow and Edinburgh in Summer 2026 will present a unique opportunity to spotlight the evolving office sector in both cities, showcasing innovation,

investment potential, and the role of workspace in driving urban regeneration to circa 700 delegates from the built and natural environment. There will be three walking tours for delegates in Glasgow centred around Merchant City, the IFSD and new developments such as Barclays campus. It is hoped that Glasgow will prepare a pitch document for a future conference to be based fully in Glasgow within the next 3-5 years.

4.7 A Place to Live

4.7.1 City Centre Living

- (i) Collaborative work continues with key partners to expand the supply of suitable and affordable housing within Glasgow's city centre. Particular emphasis is being placed on the repurposing of vacant upper floors along Sauchiehall Street and within the wider Blythswood and Central districts, where opportunities for residential conversion are most prominent. Work is continuing to determine the feasibility of particular sites for conversion into Housing and further investigative work for affordable housing continues across specific sites on Sauchiehall Street and neighbouring areas, emerging opportunities on Argyle Street, other plots at St Enoch Square, and prominent buildings such as The Lion Chambers.
- (ii) West of Scotland Housing Association has secured planning consent for Glasgow's affordable housing pilot at St Enoch Square and aims to begin construction later this year. A stakeholder group has been established to enable direct dialogue with officers and support the timely resolution of any issues which arise. In addition, good progress is also being made on the joint initiative between GCC/City Property and the Wheatley Group to convert two former commercial properties on Trongate and Duke Street into affordable homes.
- (iii) The Housing (Scotland) Act 2025 received Royal Assent on 6th November 2025 and establishes a new rent control framework requiring local authority assessments to take place by May 2027. Exemptions for Build-to-Rent and Mid-Market Rent properties are set out in forthcoming 2026 regulations, alongside capped increases in designated Rent Control Areas and further guidance due later in 2026. A full update was provided to this committee on [27th January 2026](#).
- (iv) The City Centre SDF advocates a greater use of masterplans to stimulate and coordinate the neighbourhood regeneration of priority neighbourhoods in need. The A masterplan for North Laurieston (is being produced by New Gorbals Housing Association in partnership with the Council). The masterplan aims to address urban decay and repopulate reinvigorate the neighbourhood North Laurieston and realise its potential as a thriving and reinvigorated neighbourhood and new 'south bank' to a

period of statutory public consultation and subsequent referral to Committee for approval as part of the City Development Plan.

4.7.2 Sustainability

- i. **Net Zero Routemap:** A report was published and shared with the Net Zero Committee November 2024. Findings are being reviewed and outputs will be considered in the new version of the Climate Plan.
- ii. **Glasgow's Climate Plan:** the Annual report was presented to Net Zero Committee November 2024 and an updated version considering outputs from the Net Zero Routemap will be provided to Committee in April 2025.
- iii. **Heat Decarbonisation/Renewable energy generation:** Glasgow City Council published its Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) in November 2023. The LHEES has a strategic focus on the deployment of district heating as a mechanism of addressing heating-based emissions and fuel poverty across Glasgow. The extent of the opportunity within the sites identified in the LHEES is now being investigated with a view to developing a commercial model capable of delivering district heating in Glasgow, including the city centre.
- iv. **GCC Carbon Management Plan:** The *Carbon Management Plan 3* was approved by the City Administration Committee in March 2024. A working group is managing the 27 actions and progress on the first year of implementation has been reported to the Climate & Sustainability Board, responsible for oversight of the CMP3. The plan is intended to be adaptive and additional actions, or sub-actions, will be incorporated into the Plan as suitable GCC and ALEO projects are identified.

4.7.3 Local Community Projects

- (i) The **City Centre Mural Fund** continues to receive enquiries and applications, and an outline programme of potential projects has been collated for 2026/27 – subject to funding availability.
- (ii) GCC continue to work with an operational Steering Group of project partners including Glasgow Life and Police Scotland towards mitigating noise nuisance from **busking and street performing**. Enhanced signposting, public facing communications and engagement are being explored to support existing reporting and operation models.
- (iii) **Good Food Glasgow** is due to commence project delivery in Broomielaw in April 2026 and activity will be monitored. A second site in St Enoch Square is currently being scoped.

5 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 5.1 City centre performance monitoring is assessed at macro level through the open dashboard which can be accessed [here](#). This dashboard tracks a range of quantifiable indicators that provide an ongoing record on some key themes: people movement, spending, tourism, and development. This is a free resource for anyone to access. Improvements and developments to the dashboard are ongoing.
- 5.2 Additional data sources will continue to be explored as they become available, reported to committee, and new indicators will be incorporated into the dashboard where appropriate.

6 POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	There are no immediate financial implications.
<i>Legal:</i>	There are no immediate legal issues, and these will be assessed as individual projects are developed.
<i>Personnel:</i>	None.
<i>Procurement:</i>	Procurement resources will be required to progress individual contracts and related project activity.

Council Strategic Plan:	<p>The CCS cuts across many areas of service and embeds many of the council's missions and commitments.</p> <p>Grand Challenge One – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities.</p> <p>Mission 3: Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.</p> <p>Grand Challenge Two – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens.</p> <p>Mission 1: Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work.</p> <p>Mission 2: Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy.</p> <p>Grand Challenge Three – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow.</p> <p>Mission 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned to the city region.</p> <p>Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030.</p> <p>Grand Challenge four – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities.</p> <p>Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.</p>
--------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? 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 city centre with more opportunities for social interaction.

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

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

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of the report.
- (ii) Consider the progress made by the CCS24-30 from November 2025 to March 2026.
- (iii) Note the update on City Centre SDF actions.
- (iv) Note that bi-annual updates on progress will be submitted to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee for the duration of the CCS24-30.