Item 5

17th November 2026

Glasgow City Council

Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee

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

Purpose of Report:

To update Committee 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 Committee:

(i) Note the contents of the report;
(ii) Note the progress made by the CCS24-30 from March 2026 to October 2026;
(iii) Note the update on City Centre SDF actions; and
(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

1.1 Committee 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 21 April 2026.

1.2 This report provides the fourth biannual update on the City Centre Strategy and complementary actions within the City Centre Strategic Development Framework.

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

2.2.3 **A Place to Live**: A sustainable, inclusive, and well-connected approach to regeneration that supports a growing population

2.3 The strategy outlines **19 Priority Actions** to drive these goals and ensure effective resource allocation.

3 PRIORITY ACTIONS

3.1 The City Centre Task Force oversees the City Centre Strategy, and it is co-chaired by Councillor Angus Millar and Stuart Patrick, Chief Executive of Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. Alongside the Sub-Group workplans, it identified four priority actions for 2025:

i. Improve the look, feel and experience of the city centre, prioritising key transport gateways
ii. Launch a marketing campaign
iii. Improve the transport offering
iv. Night-Time Economy

3.2 The four priority actions were progressed as follows during 2026:

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

(i) **Union Street:** Following the fire at the Union Street site in March 2026, a Union Street Recovery Group and a Union Street Political Oversight

Group were established to monitor and support recovery activity. The site clearance and stabilisation works were completed in July 2026 when the site was handed back to owners.

(ii) Since then, Glasgow City Council has delivered two phases of graphic hoardings around the site. The first celebrated Glasgow's role as host city for the Commonwealth Games, while the second introduced civic messaging and provided space to recognise the businesses previously located on the site.

(iii) To support the next stage of recovery, Glasgow City Council, in close collaboration with site owners, appointed O'Donnell Brown to develop a meanwhile use proposal for the site. The design seeks to bring together the city's aspirations for this important gateway location while supporting businesses through the provision of flexible trading pods and a curated programme of cultural activity. The design team has adopted a landscape and arts-led approach, recognising that the curation and animation of the site will be critical to its success during the meanwhile use period.

(iv) In parallel, work is progressing on the brief for the Central Station and Union Street Area Study, with the intention of appointing a multidisciplinary consultancy team Spring 2027. The study will establish a longer-term vision for the area, seeking to transform it from a transitional space into a destination in its own right, underpinned by a strong people-first approach and an enhanced sense of place.

(v) **Anderston Station Plaza**: The RIBA Stage 4 design is nearing its final phase with an online public consultation due to take place from 12th October until 22nd November 2026. Drainage survey, trial pits and traffic signal modelling is now being undertaken before an Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF) Tier 2 funding bid is submitted in December 2026, with construction anticipated to start in Summer 2027. This project will deliver an upgrade to the road crossings on both the off and on ramps providing a segregated cycle route and improved pedestrian connectivity. The station environs will benefit from a focus on lighting, safety, and decluttering the space which includes the removal of the pedestrian bridge, creating a more welcoming and coherent environment.

(vi) **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.

(vii) 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.

(viii) Within the city centre, the expansion of a dedicated nightshift cleansing operation has been supported, 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

(ix) Daytime operations have been strengthened through the deployment of additional dedicated personnel, including Commercial Waste Enforcement Officers. This enhanced resource provides increased capacity to undertake proactive inspections, investigate complaints and take enforcement action where businesses fail to comply with statutory waste management requirements. Particular focus has been placed on waste presentation, storage, collection and disposal arrangements, helping to improve environmental quality and amenity across the city centre.

(x) In addition to our Weeks of Action programme, City Centre Days of Action is continuing. These targeted interventions bring together multiple operational teams to focus on priority locations requiring intensified attention. The most recent activity in Sauchiehall Street has resulted in a short life partnership group focussing on parking and taxi operations.

(xi) In response to concerns around violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour Police Scotland implemented a dispersal zone within defined areas of the city centre, covering key locations including Central Station, St Enoch Square and Union Street, the power allows officers to direct groups of 2 or more people, suspected of being involved in anti-social behaviour to leave the area for up to 24 hours. Following assessment and consultation the dispersal zone has been extended and will remain under continual review while work continues with partners to address the underlying causes, as well as the immediate issues affecting the city centre. Police Scotland also established Project Sentinel, providing a high visibility operational presence, supported by GCC CEO's and BTP officers, in the heart of the city, alongside ongoing action to tackle drug-related crime, improve public safety and support a welcoming environment for residents, visitors and businesses.

(xii) Through engagement with GCC the BID and Police Scotland two additional CCTV mobile units were installed at Clyde Street near Dixon Street and Clyde Street near Maxwell Street. The recent investment in public space CCTV, confirmed through the Council budget, will further strengthen safety measures and support both the daytime and night-time economy.

(xiii) Targeted commercial waste enforcement activity has also been undertaken across the city centre. A two-week Commercial Waste

Project identified a range of compliance issues relating to waste storage and presentation, resulting in advisory letters, Duty of Care Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices where businesses failed to meet required standards. Follow-up early morning patrols in July 2026 identified further issues associated with overnight waste presentation, including littering caused by uncontained waste and animal disturbance. As a result, enforcement action was taken against 13 businesses. In parallel, officers engaged with waste contractors to improve collection practices and promote best practice measures, including the use of seagull-resistant waste sacks to reduce environmental impacts and improve street cleanliness.

3.2.2 Launch a Marketing Campaign – **Get You In Town**

(i) Get You In Town was developed in 2025 as a long term campaign framework for local Glasgow audiences. It is designed to sit under the ever-popular People Make Glasgow brand providing a strong call to action which encourages footfall into the city centre.

(ii) Following two successful activations in 2025, Get You In Town has been used in 2026 to encourage visitation following the devastating fire in Union Street, as part of the Council's comprehensive business support package.

(iii) Work to encourage business take-up to support the longevity of the campaign is also underway and Get You In Town will be used to activate Christmas 2026.

3.2.3 **Improve the Transport Offering**

(i) Key ask of all operators continues to be that they provide opportunities for service improvements. Recently, the Glasgow Subway recently enacted enhanced operating hours. Additionally, bus operators have introduced additional evening services and Scotrail have increased service frequency in the evenings on many routes.

(ii) Night Bus Hubs Pilot: Through detailed discussions with bus operators and Council Officers, three key locations for night bus hubs have been identified. Improved safety, visibility and awareness will be delivered through marshalling, funded by the BID and GCC, as well as good CCTV coverage and lighting levels. There is an aim to launch on the 23rd of October so that they are in place for the Halloween weekend. Promotion will go out through press releases from GCC and bus operators, the DMO, and engagement with NTE venues. There is an agreement with operators on data sharing to monitor the success of the pilot.

(iii) Transport Response to Large Events: Event organisers and transport operators came together to deliver 2026's major events, including the World Cup, Commonwealth Games, TRNSMT and large concerts at Hampden and the Hydro. Operators increased capacity and extended running times to support events, for example with bus operators running

their night services during weekday Scotland matches. Collaborative work is continuing to broaden this coordination to cover a wider range of events, for instance through the identification of “red days”, when multiple events take place at the same time putting stress on the transport network.

3.2.4 **Night-Time Economy**

(i) *Nightshift: Glasgow* was officially launched at the Arthouse Hotel on 13 July 2026 as a new strategy to support and develop Glasgow's night-time economy. Formal introductions were made by the Leader, Susan Aitken, Cllr Angus Millar, and NTIA Scotland Chair, Mike Grieve, and was attended by more than 70 stakeholders from across the night-time economy.

(ii) *Nightshift: Glasgow* promotes a 6pm to 6am city strategy, recognising nightlife as an essential part of Glasgow's economy, culture, and urban infrastructure. The aim is to create a safer, more vibrant, and better-supported night-time environment for businesses, workers, residents, and visitors.

(iii) The former City Centre Task Force NTE sub-group will transition to a new independently constituted Night-Time Economy Commission and will continue to be chaired by Mike Grieve.

(iv) Glasgow City Council has committed £100,000 to support delivery of the strategy, including funding Scotland's first full-time Night-Time Economy Officer to lead delivery of the strategy. Interviews are due to conclude in the first week of October, with the appointment in place before the end of November.

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. The following section provides a short update for each of the 19 Priority Actions outlined by the City Centre Strategy 2024-30, structured under each of the three pillars.

4.2 Magnetic Experience

4.2.1 Half-year data for the first 6 months of 2026 show a small decline in footfall (-2.9% in the City Centre as a whole), although the rate of decline has been slowing down consistently since April. Footfall performance has been very strong in the Commercial district, which includes the IFSD and Barclays Campus, at +9.2%. The trend of weekends and evenings performing above average continues, which highlights the new way in which people are interacting in the city centre. International footfall has also been particularly strong at +13.3%. Sales were also slightly under last year’s levels (-1.7%) but well ahead of comparator cities (Edinburgh, Manchester and Leeds) and the UK average. The sales profile has changed, with a decline in customer numbers but an increase in spend per customer. The Fashion sector, which

was struggling in 2025, has been driving sales up this year (+8.3%), boosted by retail openings in 2025 which have strengthened the city's offer.

4.2.2 **District Regeneration Frameworks (DRFs) Programme**

(i) The **Townhead Greening and Connectivity Project** focuses on delivering the enhanced public space and connectivity projects previously identified by the Townhead DRF. Work on resurfacing the entire Parliamentary Path is due to start in January 2027, with additional landscaping scheduled for early 2027. A Place in Childhood are working with local children and young adults to reimagine the MUGA and create a more inclusive play facility. Additional improvements will also be made to the existing young children's play area.

(ii) **Eastern entrance to the Necropolis:** after extensive survey work and a structural review of the perimeter wall undertaken, a final location for the gate was chosen. The detailed designs were completed, and the planning application was submitted in September 2026.

(iii) **Cathedral Square Gardens:** 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. An informal play / sculptural element is being considered as part of the renovation.

(iv) The **Let's Go Glasgow Business Improvement District (BID)** commenced operations on 1 April 2026 following a successful ballot. The BID is delivering a five-year programme of business-funded investment aimed at improving the cleanliness, safety and vibrancy of the city centre. The BID is governed by a Board representing a range of sectors, with the Council holding a permanent seat. In June 2026, Sean Murray was appointed as the BID's inaugural Chief Executive and is leading delivery of the business plan. Initial activity has included the introduction of a dedicated Clean Team, safety initiatives and promotional campaigns to support businesses and enhance the city centre environment.

(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:

- 91No. applications have been received
- 30No. have been approved
- 53No. have been unsuccessful
- 8No. remain under review

(vi) Approved projects—ranging from façade improvements and green infrastructure to public-realm enhancements and public art—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 – examples include Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland's new boutique store on Trongate, Collective's Sculpture Park at 522 Sauchiehall Street. More Meanwhile Use applications are currently being reviewed with expected positive outcomes. The Meanwhile Use programme will continue to be assessed and reviewed towards maximising possible outputs and outcomes.

(viii) Some of the applicants who were unsuccessful did not meet the eligibility criteria for the grant, e.g. projects outside the city centre boundary, funding requested to cover revenue rather than capital costs. Other projects did not align with the objectives of the City Centre Strategy and more generally could not demonstrate a benefit to the city centre in terms of increased footfall and reduced blight and anti-social behaviour (e.g. internal alterations to businesses, potential benefit too small or localised). Some applications did not progress as the applicants did not have the means to deliver the projects. Some of the unsuccessful applicants were redirected to Business Support as their projects may have been eligible for other grants and support.

4.2.3 **River Corridor**

(i) The City Deal Custom House Quay and Carlton Place project is progressing through RIBA Stage 4 detailed design. Positive engagement continues with key infrastructure stakeholders to resolve outstanding project interfaces and inform the design, procurement strategy and delivery programme.

(ii) Planning approval has now been secured for the Custom House Quay and Carlton Place masterplan. This represents a significant project milestone and enables the team to progress the detailed design and associated preparations for delivery.

4.2.4 **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. The 2026-2028 action plan is now live.

(ii) The economic benefit from delegate spend between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 was £207 million

(iii) 2025 Tourism STEAM data was announced in September 2026:

- **£2.74bn** total direct visitor expenditure in Glasgow (+14.4% on 2024 and +16.6% on 2023)
- Over 41,000 jobs in the tourism sector
- **4.91m** total overnight visitors (+4.1% on 2024 and +25.7% on 2023)
- **£1.96bn** economic impact from overnight visitors (+6.6% on 2024 and +3.3% on 2023)

4.2.5 **Glasgow Life Winter Events**

(i) Glasgow Life is working with Glasgow City Council and the newly formed Destination Glasgow and Business Improvement District on Glasgow's Christmas in 2026 to utilise a Team Glasgow approach in promoting the full city centre festive offer, for City brand integration and Business integration. The reopening of George Square will give the opportunity to redefine Christmas as welcoming and accessible to all:

- Glasgow will be positioned as a place to enjoy multiple magical experiences this Christmas (come in more than once).
- A carefully constructed marketing & comms campaign will celebrate the whole city offering across all of the festive season.
- Messages will encourage people to feel that George Square, at the heart of the city, belongs to them and they are welcome to visit.
- Marketing will target segmented audience groups.

(ii) Key features of Glasgow's Christmas will include:

- **George Square** - Sir Walter Scott light installation sponsored by the BID The Good Times Christmas Village will provide F&B in the west of the square. New lighting infrastructure will provide enhanced lighting features across the Square.
- **City Centre Lighting Installations** will be displayed at five key spots across the city from 19 November**,** with interactive buttons at 3 of the locations will be activated by the public to make a temporary visual change to the installation.
- **Glasgow's Winter Wonderland at St Enoch** - Friday 6 November – Sunday 27 December, with Christmas Food and Drink offer, Fair ground rides and Artisan Gifts
- **Glasgow's Winter Wonderland at Glasgow Green** - Friday 6 November – Sunday 27 December - Christmas Food and Drink offer, Fair ground rides, Artisan Gifts, Ice Skating (20 November – 3 January), Sanat's Grotto (20 November – 24 December) and Christmas Circus (21 November – 3 January)

(iii) Glasgow's Robin provides a visual link to both festive tradition and Glasgow's heritage through the Glasgow crest and Coat of Arms. It will be used as a unifying thread across the Christmas programme, through the marketing, projections, city dressing and on-street activations. An

integrated marketing campaign which supports businesses and wider Christmas offering will be developed, supported by a collaborative approach with the Business Improvement District to engage and integrate businesses in the Christmas experience and promotion.

4.2.6 **Glasgow Life Culture/ Events**

(i) Over the period since the last update, the following announcements and events have taken place:

- Glasgow has been chosen to host, for the first time, the **SPAR European Cross Country Championships.** The event will be free to attend and be hosted within Bellahouston Park in December 2027.
- **Ramadan** – welcomed over 300 people for city's first Civic Open Iftar at the City Chambers as year one of the city's Ramadan events.
- **Glasgow Short Film Festival** attracted audiences of over 3,580 and delivered a very successful industry event, further boosting Glasgow's credentials as a city of film. The event has two prestigious awards – the Scottish Short Film of the year which was won by Klarissa Webster for 'Each to their own world' and The Bill Douglas award for International Short Film which was won by Elisabeth Subrin for 'Manal Issa, 2024'.
- **Glasgow International –** the 11th edition of Scotland's biennial festival of visual art took place 5-21 June, featuring 120 artists in 74 exhibitions, projects and events across 35 different venues with 36 partner organisations.
- **Glasgow Mela**, Scotland's biggest South Asian festival, which is completely free to attend, took place on 5 July at Kelvingrove Park with over 21,000 attendances. A key focus was artist development, with 15 new commissions premiered at the festival. Of the 127 artists programmed, 97 were based in Scotland and 69 performed at Glasgow Mela for the first time.
- **Merchant City Festival -** an expanded festival took place over two weekends, from 24 July to 2 August, to coincide with the Commonwealth Games with total attendances of 120,000. Programming included roaming street theatre performances, Street Food Zone and Bar, market, workshops and exhibitions.
- **Glasgow – the world's biggest week of piping** profiles the city's two flagship piping events with enhanced profiling via the creation of a new single online destination.
- **Glasgow International Piping Festival – Piping Live!** The 23rd edition took place 9-14 August with over 25,000 attendances. Highlights included the Big Band Parade; festival site at National Piping Centre and various performances, workshops, Come & Try sessions. In a first the National Piping Centre secure funding from the Expanded Festivals Fund, which enabled the organisers to create three unique collaborations that will take place during the Festival as part of a strand called Ceol Nua, featuring the music of Phillip Glass and experimental piper Erwan Kervec, one of which will be a world premiere.

- **World Pipe Band Championships -** The 2026 Championships saw 35,000 attendances across the two days, with more than 8,000 pipers and drummers. 211 bands from 14 countries took part including 59 overseas bands. 2026 winners were Simon Fraser University from Canada – the first time in 17 years and the first band outside UK to win in over a decade. Video of winning band went "viral" with strong engagement.
- In a first, Piping Live! and World Pipe Band Championships worked together to announce 2027 dates at this year's events including tickets on sale. The "Worlds" Grade 1 seats on sale, for the first time immediately post-event, sold out the sellable capacity within 24 hours.

(ii) Commonwealth Games Glasgow 2026 was a major success, demonstrating the city's ability to deliver world-class sport at pace through its existing venues while connecting the Games meaningfully with communities across Glasgow. The Games attracted 630,000 visitors across all sports, city live sites and festival activity. Over 11 days, athletes from 74 nations and territories competed in 215 medal events spanning 10 sports and six Para sports, with the Games' compact, venue-led model praised as a new blueprint for the Commonwealth Sport Movement.

(iii) Glasgow Life also led delivery of the ten-week Glasgow 2026 Festival, the programme included an expanded Merchant City Festival across both Games weekends and high-profile commissions including Turner Prize winner Jasleen Kaur's *Superstructure*, a trail of eight weathervane-like sculptures along the River Clyde exploring its histories of trade, industry and empire, and *The Glasgow Rose* by Emer Tumilty with NEWSUBSTANCE, which transformed the Finnieston Crane into a striking symbol bringing together Glasgow's engineering and artistic heritage. Together, the programme showcased Glasgow Life's distinctive contribution: using major events to animate the city, support creative ambition and ensure communities could participate in and benefit from the Games.

(iv) In September, **Glasgow Doors Open Days Festival** took place from 17 – 20 September, featuring over 150 events with a theme of Glasgow Goes Out: The Places That Made Us. The programme featured exclusive building openings, family-friendly events, walking tours and heritage experiences and the opportunity to explore places, venues and spaces not usually open to the public.

(v) **Sonica**, the biennial festival took place 24 September to 4 October, showcasing over 170 artists and musicians from 22 countries across the globe, featuring cutting-edge audiovisual art, visionary performances, installations and immersive experiences across iconic Glasgow venues.

4.2.7 **Infrastructure Programme**

(i) Infrastructure Plan is progressing with 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** – Works were fully completed on Ingram Street and Queen Street in August.
- **Gordon Street Gateway Project** - The public realm works have reached RIBA Stage 2 design, however following the fire at Union Street, project timescales are currently under review.
- **Bothwell Street** - procurement exercise is underway.
- **Buchanan Street**- regrouting and review of street furniture and greening is underway
- **St Vincent Place –** as part of the decluttering programme, the removal of BT boxes and WC block is complete with repairs to lighting and street furniture ongoing.

(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 used to agree a prioritised list. The following streets were approved to be taken forward to RIBA Stage 4 design:

- Bothwell Street
- Union Street – delayed to be part of Union Street Area Study
- Jamaica Street – delayed to be part of Union Street Area Study
- Dundas Street / Dundas Lane – phase 2
- John Street – phase 2
- Martha Street – phase 2

(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.

4.2.8 **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, Cathedral Precinct and south of Cathedral Square Gardens.
- New trees / raised beds being designed and implemented on Bath Street and Bothwell Street.
- A new Officer is now in post to progress the action plan of the Carbon Sequestration and Tree Management Working Group for the whole city.

(ii) Work on a Green-Blue Action Plan is under way which brings together existing green and green-blue infrastructure activity. NRS will coordinate a strategic network to green the city centre. GIS mapping has identified gaps and opportunities for potential measures like rain gardens, green roofs and street trees. Interventions will be prioritised with partners, including NatureScot and Scottish Water.

4.2.9 **Cultural and Heritage**

(i) Work continues on the Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District, a flagship City Centre Strategy and Golden Z project. The £350,000 National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Exploration Phase concluded in January 2026, producing an Area Action Plan and priority interventions. A further £2.35 million NLHF award, supported by £400,000 of existing Council capital funding, will deliver the 2025–2027 Proof-of-Concept phase. This includes early works at McLellan Galleries and the Cameron Memorial Fountain, shopfront and building improvements, interpretation, reuse feasibility work and community-led cultural activity. Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Life will deliver the programme, demonstrating culture-led regeneration, sustainable reuse and alignment with Net Zero 2030 and the Property Repurposing Action Plan.

(ii) **Creative Supercluster:** GSA and RCS are developing a proposal for a creative enterprise space within the Culture and Heritage District. GCC and Glasgow Life have committed to supporting the next steps of this programme, once proposals have been brought forward.

4.2.10 Creative Supercluster: **Front Door to Innovation**

(i) EY's UK Attractiveness Survey ranked Glasgow fourth among UK cities outside London for foreign direct investment projects in 2025 with international investors placing the city third outside London for planned future investment. More broadly, Glasgow remains one of Europe's leading large cities for attracting foreign direct investment, with fDi Intelligence ranking the city among the top performers for FDI strategy in 2025.

(ii) Glasgow's innovation economy continues to strengthen, underpinned by a technology ecosystem valued at £5.6 billion, representing 2.4x growth since 2020 and placing Glasgow among the top 10 UK tech hubs, according to the Glasgow Tech Ecosystem Report. The city has produced 130+ university spinouts valued at £1.1 billion, with more than half founded since 2015 and over 70 operating in deep tech and life sciences. Since 2025, Glasgow startups have attracted £300 million in venture capital investment, with particular strengths in health, AI and deep tech technologies, accounting for around 50% of all VC funding raised. In parallel, the Scottish Deep Tech Report identifies Glasgow as one of Scotland's foremost deep tech centres, with internationally recognised capabilities in quantum technologies, semiconductors, photonics, space technologies and life sciences.

4.2.11 **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. Linked to this growth, HSBC's Innovation Banking have appointed a new Regional Coverage Director for Scotland and Northern Ireland who will be based in Glasgow.

(ii) Stakeholder Engagement: Participation across government, industry, and international networks expanded with GCID supporting visitations from the Scottish Government, Office for Investment, DBIST, 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 from the Scottish Government to create and host the first Scottish Spinout Summit, a first of its kind investment summit within the UK.

(iii) 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 to coincide with GCID's annual report. 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.

4.2.12 **Wellbeing Economy**

(i) Following extensive engagement with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), bespoke data for Glasgow City Centre residents and labour market has now been developed and is being sense checked by colleagues in Economic Development. This data relies on a great degree of estimation therefore checking of the data integrity is required.

(ii) The data will explore hourly pay for the city centre labour market, the real living wage, breakdown of part-time and full-time employment and proportion of underemployed graduates for example. Further update and details of the analysis will be available for the next report.

4.2.13 **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.53 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 launched in October as a dedicated section in the Invest Glasgow platform, aligning with the city's wider investment and regeneration messaging. It showcases development opportunities and lessons learned from completed retrofit projects, while providing a direct route to the Council's Development Team.

(iv) The second *Developing Glasgow* event took place on 8 October 2026, attracting representatives from the development, investment, finance and property sectors. Keynotes, presentations and a panel discussion explored city centre opportunities, market confidence and investment.

The event concluded with a call to action and a record of participant commitments.

(v) On 3 September 2026, the Visioning Glasgow: Public Art event brought together architects, artists, cultural organisations, developers and public-sector representatives at Adelaide Place. Keynotes, case studies and a workshop explored how public art can strengthen place, identity, inclusion and economic development, and how partners can support greater investment. A follow-up workshop will help define the key pillars of a city-wide Public Art Strategy and identify potential pilot projects.

(vi) *Advocacy*: The Development 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. CBRE have completed a business case which will be used to approach Scottish an Government to advocate for the use of a fund.

(vii) Glasgow continued to play a prominent role within the British Council for Offices (BCO) during 2026, hosting the BCO Scotland Awards at the Hilton Glasgow and helping to showcase excellence across Scotland's commercial property sector. Glasgow projects were particularly successful, securing four of the seven regional awards, with BDP Studio PwC at Aurora and the Health Innovation Hub winning in their relevant categories. The awards highlighted Glasgow's strengths in workplace design, sustainability, retrofit and innovation, while demonstrating the city's ability to deliver high-quality office environments that meet evolving occupier needs. Glasgow also played a key role in co-hosting the BCO Summer Conference with Edinburgh, providing delegates with an opportunity to experience the breadth of Scotland's commercial property market, development activity and investment opportunities through a programme of events, networking and site visits.

4.3 A Place to Live

4.3.1 City Centre Living

(i) The Council continues to work with public, private and third-sector partners to grow and diversify the city centre population. Current activity focuses on bringing vacant and underused buildings back into use, particularly upper floors and former commercial premises in Sauchiehall Street, Blythswood and the Central district. Analysis is identifying properties suitable for housing-led redevelopment, including complex sites requiring major refurbishment, conservation or heritage-led regeneration.

(ii) Station House at St Enoch Square, being progressed by West of Scotland Housing Association, remains an important affordable housing pilot and has secured planning consent. A dedicated stakeholder group continues to support coordination between the project team and relevant Council services. The project is progressing towards construction, subject to resolution of the remaining statutory approval requirements.

(iii) The Council, City Property and Wheatley Group are progressing the conversion of former commercial properties at 79 Trongate and 9 Duke Street. Resolution of the title issues now allows the proposed property transfers and conversions to proceed.

(iv) Further work is continuing to test the feasibility of additional residential repurposing opportunities, including potential affordable and mid-market housing projects. This includes engagement with building owners, housing providers and development partners, as well as consideration of the substantial viability gap that can arise between the cost of converting older commercial and historic buildings and the value or level of housing funding available. The Council is also exploring emerging funding and investment mechanisms that could help unlock viable projects.

(v) The City Centre Living programme will continue to focus on translating identified opportunities into deliverable projects, working across Housing, Planning, City Property and City Centre Regeneration and with external partners. This includes aligning potential projects with the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, addressing statutory approval and ownership issues, and developing appropriate funding and delivery models for complex building conversions.

(vi) The CCSDF promotes a masterplanning approach to neighbourhood regeneration, particularly where it is needed to coordinate a complexity of development issues. On 1st October 2026, City Administration Committee approved the North Laurieston Masterplan, that was produced by New Gorbals Housing Association (NGHA) and the Council working in partnership. The Masterplan establishes an overall vision for a transformed, liveable North Laurieston that capitalises on its spatial uniqueness; including its riverside setting, historic character, urban connectivity and City Centre 'South Bank' location.

(vii) The masterplan will guide the nature of future development in North Laurieston and promotes: the redevelopment of vacant gaps sites and underutilised land; adaptive restoration of vacant, particularly heritage, buildings (including much of Carlton Place) to bring them back into positive use; modification of the streetscape to reduce car traffic dominance and improve the walking/wheeling experience, and proactive neighbourhood management to improve the maintenance and ongoing condition of land and buildings. A Steering Group, with officers from the Council and NGHA, reporting to the Place Board and Council Committee as required, has been set up to deliver the masterplan's proposals.

4.3.2 **Sustainability**

(i) **Net Zero Routemap**: A report was published and shared with the Net Zero Committee November 2024. Findings were reviewed and outputs were considered and incorporated into the new version of the Climate Plan.

(ii) **Glasgow's Climate Plan**: Glasgow's Climate Plan 2026 – 2030 was approved by the City Administration Committee and published in May 2026. The revision includes both mitigation and adaptation actions,

retains the target of a net zero carbon city by 2030 and includes an annual Carbon budget. Progress will be reported to the Climate & Sustainability Board and Net Zero and Climate Progress City Monitoring Committee.

(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 (the "Model for Climate Investment"), including the city centre which is a primary indicative heat network zone. Updates on the LHEES and the Model for Climate Investment will be presented to the Net Zero and Climate Progress City Monitoring Committee before the end of 2026.

(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 actions and progress is reported to the Climate & Sustainability Board, responsible for oversight of the CMP3 and annually to the Net Zero and Climate Progress City Monitoring Committee 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.

4.3.3 **Local Community Projects**

(i) The **City Centre Mural Fund** continues to receive enquiries and applications with potential projects being progressed as business as usual subject to funding availability and other relevant considerations.

(ii) The challenges associated with noise nuisance generated from **busking and street performing**, and how the council responds to related complaints from local residents and businesses, are well established. In addition to existing partnership working with organisations such as Police Scotland, efforts to evolve the existing operational Steering Group into a more formal Short Life Working Group continue to be progressed. Most recently, discussions with Glasgow Life have taken place towards exploring a more cohesive and strategic approach within their Music Policy remit (e.g. as part of Glasgow's UNESCO City of Music accreditation). Similarly, engagement with the busking community is also being explored via the Musicians' Union and Equity.

(iii) **Good Food Glasgow** launched at an initial site in Broomielaw in April 2026 under the title of 'Good Times Markets'. Reception has been positive and the site continues to be enhanced in line with the Concessionaire's programme of activity. Proposals for a second site in St Enoch Square remain in development, and project support is also being utilised as part of this year's winter plans for George Square.

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.

POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

Financial:	There are no immediate financial implications.
Legal:	There are no immediate legal issues, and these will be assessed as individual projects are developed.
Personnel:	None.
Procurement:	Procurement resources will be required to progress individual contracts and related project activity.
Council Strategic Plan:	The CCS cuts across many areas of service and embeds many of the council's missions and commitments. Grand Challenge One – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities. Mission 3: Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities. Grand Challenge Two – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens. Mission 1: Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work. Mission 2: Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy. Grand Challenge Three – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow. Mission 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned to the city region. Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030. Grand Challenge four – Enable staff to deliver

	essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities. Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.
Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:	
Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 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

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that Committee:

(i) Note the contents of the report;
(ii) Note the progress made by the CCS24-30 from March 2026 to October 2026;
(iii) Note the update on City Centre SDF actions; and
(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.