



**Glasgow City Council**

**Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of Financial Services**

**Contact: Robert Emmott Ext: 73837**

**Item 3**

**25th March 2026**

## **Common Good Fund: Budget 2026-27**

### **Purpose of Report:**

To present the draft Common Good Fund budget in 2026-27.

### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the proposed budget for 2026-27 assuming no change to the existing use of the Common Good Fund.
- Agrees the proposed use of the capital of the Common Good Fund in 2026-27 if a viable scheme for a civic fireworks display for £100,000 is identified, and
- Agrees that the proposed budget for 2026-27 is recommended to the City Administration Committee.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

#### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On 7 May 2014, the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee agreed to a review of the existing Common Good Policy arrangements. On 19 November 2014, the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee noted the revised policy and agreed to recommend this policy to the Executive Committee. This policy was approved by the Executive Committee on the 5 February 2015. It covered a number of areas relating to common good including budget setting and identification of common good assets. This report is primarily focussed on the setting of the budget for 2026-27 however it also provides an update on the identification of common good assets.
- 1.2 Since the policy was implemented, title deeds have been examined when there is a proposal to sell, lease or otherwise change the use of a property to establish the common good status of the title to the property. In addition, Legal Services have employed legal students through the Council's Summer Internship Programme to assist with a targeted review of selected titles. As a result of this work, in the region of 1000 titles have now been examined. This work contributed to the draft Register of Common Good Property which was published in 2019 implementing the duty on the Council set out on s.102 of the Community Empowerment (S) Act 2015. The consultation period which followed did not result in any changes to the register. The Council has a duty to maintain the register and any additional common good properties which are identified through the continuing review of the titles will be added to it. There have been no additions to date. The Council also has a duty, in terms of s.104 of the 2015 Act to consult when it is planning to dispose of common good property or to change its use. Details of all consultations are published on the Council's website.
- 1.3 In terms of budget the policy set out that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will consider the budget annually and make recommendations to the Executive Committee for their consideration for the following year. The Executive Committee agreed as part of the 2014-15 budget, that the budget objective will be to balance the revenue budget without any requirement for a draw from the capital of the Common Good Fund for ongoing operational expenditure, without impinging on the ability of the Council to offer civic hospitality and for this to be achieved during the term of this Council.

## **2. Use of Common Good Fund**

- 2.1 The Common Good is the ancient patrimony of the former burghs with additions, which have taken place from time to time. The most concise statement of the administration of the Common Good Fund is contained in a judgement by Lord Kyllachy – "The Common Good is corporate property and falls as such to be administered by the Council – and applied by them for the benefit of the community in such manner as, and using reasonable judgement as, they think proper".
- 2.2 Currently the Common Good Fund primarily meets the cost of civic ceremonies and hospitality. However, the funds could reasonably be applied to a wide range of uses as long as they meet the criteria outlined in 2.1. The budget has been prepared on the basis of use in 2025-26 and taking into

account the decision of the Executive Committee as outlined in paragraph 1.3 above.

2.3 As part of the Common Good Fund budget approval for 2025-26 City Administration Committee agreed the following:

- (i) reviewing the policy on anniversaries so they are generally marked by a commemorative gift, and events held only by exception;
- (ii) reviewing spend and approval limits;
- (iii) exploring how equalities monitoring data on those accessing civic hospitality can be gathered and recorded; and
- (iv) reserving a sum of around £100,000 for the delivery of major civic events, including an annual civic fireworks display, to be explored in conjunction with Glasgow Life

2.4 Officers undertook a review of these proposals with the main focus on the ability to deliver a civic fireworks display for around £100,000. There was engagement with officers in Glasgow Life and NRS to determine if an alternative to the previous event at Glasgow Green could be identified for the reduced sum of £100,000. At this time an alternative has not been identified however alternative options are still being considered. As this work is not yet concluded the sum of £100,000 is not committed in the 2026-27 budget. However if a viable option does emerge for delivery in 2026-27 then this would be funded from the Common Good Fund capital with options for recurring expenditure considered in the 2027-28 budget.

2.5 Regarding points (i) and (ii), the current practice is that the offer of civic hospitality is aligned to the anniversary of 50 or 100 years with centenaries generally granted a higher level of hospitality. Consideration was given to recognising only centenary events however it was noted that this would have the effect of excluding some newer organisations in the city who may be more representative of society now than one hundred years ago. In addition, there is budget capacity to continue with the current approach.

2.6 Finally, regarding point (iii) and how equalities data could be gathered on the organisations benefitting from civic hospitality. Practically this would have to be provided by the organisation awarded hospitality and could either be related to their full membership or based on those that attend the event. However, no further action has been taken to date.

### **3. Budgeting for Common Good Expenditure**

3.1 The Policy reflects the continued commitment to maintain the overall capital value of the Common Good Fund over time. Since March 2009 the Fund has grown from £13.4 million to £20.0 million at March 2025.

3.2 During 2024-25, the net worth of the fund decreased by £0.880 million. This was mainly due to an increase in the value of investments of £0.385 million offset by net expenditure of £1.265 million from the revenue budget.

3.3 In line with the budget objective shown at section 1.2 above, it is anticipated that the total income expected to be available in 2026-27 from investments, commission and rents will be sufficient to cover the total expenditure.

- 3.4 At period 10 2025-26, the level of Civic Hospitality budget uncommitted for the year is £41,185 indicating a likely underspend on this budget during 2025-26.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 includes a proposed draft budget for 2026-27. This reflects the Executive Committee decision by including a prudent estimate of the expected realised gain on investments. If in any year, the net expenditure in the Fund results in an overall net expenditure position, then the expectation would be that the budget would be set to recover the value of the Fund over the medium term. Equally, this approach may enable the Fund to continue to grow over time, for example if realised or unrealised investment gains exceed those in the approved budget.

#### 4. Budget Changes

- 4.1 It is proposed that Gross Expenditure increases to £818,000 with Civic Hospitality increasing to £446,000, to reflect inflationary cost increases. The Miscellaneous Charges budget of £274,000 is detailed below:

|                                          |          |
|------------------------------------------|----------|
| Ruffer annual fees                       | £170,000 |
| Food provision and stationery            | £4,000   |
| Accounting support and audit fee         | £23,000  |
| Legal cost for ongoing title deed review | £77,000  |
| Total Miscellaneous Charges              | £274,000 |

- 4.2 It is proposed that the property costs budget is increased to £98,000 due to inflationary cost increases. This revised estimate will ensure there is a provision for the necessary refurbishment costs and water charges of unoccupied properties.
- 4.3 The budget for commission income received from Glasgow City Council's Financial Services in direct relation to Civic Hospitality has remained at £43,000. The rental income has increased to £339,000 and Investment Income & Realised Gains increases to £436,000, reflecting a prudent estimate of the expected return on investments.

#### 5. Policy and Resource Implications

##### Resource Implications:

|                                |                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Financial:</i>              | Financial Implications are outlined in the paragraphs above                                                         |
| <i>Legal:</i>                  | No legal implications                                                                                               |
| <i>Personnel:</i>              | No personnel implications                                                                                           |
| <i>Procurement:</i>            | No procurement implications                                                                                         |
| <b>Council Strategic Plan:</b> | Common Good impacts positively on the mission to Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant |

## **Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify.*

No specific equality related outcomes

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

No significant impact, Common Good is administered by the Council and applied for the benefit of the community

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

## **Climate Impacts:**

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

No direct support

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

Impact deemed as neutral

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

No specific contribution

## **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

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

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the proposed budget for 2026-27 assuming no change to the existing use of the Common Good Fund.
- Agrees the proposed use of the capital of the Common Good Fund in 2026-27 if a viable scheme for a civic fireworks display for £100,000 is identified, and
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## Appendix 1

### GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL COMMON GOOD DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2026/27

#### EXPENDITURE

| Budget for<br>2025/26 |                                | Draft<br>Budget for<br>2026/27 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| £000                  |                                | £000                           |
| 438                   | Civic Hospitality              | 446                            |
| 95                    | Property Costs                 | 98                             |
| 273                   | Miscellaneous Charges          | 274                            |
| <b>806</b>            | <b>TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE</b> | <b>818</b>                     |

#### INCOME

| Budget for<br>2025/26 |                                    | Draft<br>Budget for<br>2026/27 |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| £000                  |                                    | £000                           |
| 500                   | Investment Income & Realised Gains | 436                            |
| 43                    | Commission                         | 43                             |
| 263                   | Rental Income                      | 339                            |
| <b>806</b>            | <b>TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL INCOME</b>   | <b>818</b>                     |
| <b>0</b>              | <b>DIRECT NET INCOME</b>           | <b>0</b>                       |