



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Item 3

23rd March 2023

**Report by Councillor Richard Bell, Depute Leader of the Council,
City Treasurer and Convener for Financial Inclusion**

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**CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLANNING PARTNERSHIP: WHOLE FAMILY
WELLBEING FUND PLAN**

Purpose of Report:

To provide the City Administration Committee with an overview of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF), the criteria and guiding principles, proposed plan for the allocation of resources and governance arrangements.

Recommendations:

Members of the City Administration Committee are requested to;

- a) note the overview of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, including the purpose of the Fund;
- b) approve the acceptance of this funding from Scottish Government;
- c) note the successes to date in relation to prevention and early intervention activity, the emerging plan for the use of the Fund and the criteria and guiding principles that will inform allocation;
- d) approve the recommended governance of the Fund, including delegated authority to GCC's Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Finance and;
- e) note the submission of an annual performance report alongside updates on the use of funding to the relevant Committee.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1 Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

1.1 The Scottish Government's £500m Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) was established in 2021/22 to transform the way that family support is delivered. Specifically, these funds will be invested over the lifetime of the Parliament to ensure that families can access seamless, person-centred holistic support wrapped around their individual needs.

1.2 The agreed outcomes of the WFWF are;

- Improved family wellbeing;
- Reduced inequalities in family wellbeing – between the most and least disadvantaged communities;
- A reduction in families requiring crisis intervention – achieved through a shift in investment to prevention and early intervention; and
- A reduction in the number of children and young people living away from their families.

The core requirements of the WFWF approach set out that;

- services are designed with children, young people and their families' needs at the centre;
- all families know how to, and are able to access multi-sectoral, holistic, whole family support;
- the workforce is empowered and supported to provide family-centred holistic support through a cross sectoral commitment to collaboration and innovation; and
- A collaborative, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach to funding, commissioning and delivering family support is used.

1.3 Achieving this model of support requires a significant shift in investment towards early intervention and prevention. By doing this, we will address the persistent failure demand that results in a focus on crisis intervention; an ineffective and unsuccessful approach for both our families and our services.

1.4 WFWF is provided in recognition of the multi layered actions required to deliver this transformational change in approach. The funds will be used, in the first instance to;

- Build transformational capacity across staff;
- Test new system approaches to family support; and
- Scale up existing transformative and effective approaches in line with the National Principles of Holistic Whole Family Support (Appendix 1).

1.5 An initial tranche of funding to support this work has been made available to local authorities to hold and manage on behalf of the local Children's Services Planning Partnerships (Glasgow's Children's Services Executive Group). An allocation of c£19m over 4 years has been offered to Glasgow and it is proposed

that Glasgow City Council formally accepts this and the associated grant conditions.

2. Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Criteria & Guiding Principles

2.1 The provision of WFWF to local authorities comes with specific criteria that will govern both how the resources are used and the process by which decisions on funding are made. This criteria includes ensuring;

- planning and decision-making is collaborative;
- decisions are based on an assessment of local need;
- alignment to children's rights and appropriate consultation with children, young people, families and existing local providers;
- funding is not used to replace or substitute funding for existing services;
- commissioning and procurement of services supports the outcomes of the funding; and
- monitoring and reporting can contribute to the evaluation of the funding.

2.2 The funding criteria specifically highlights that these resources are an investment in **transformational change** and cannot therefore be used to fund existing 'business as usual' activity. Where existing innovative practice is identified and agreement made to 'scale up', the WFWF must only be used to support the additional activity.

2.3 In addition to the criteria above, the WFWF has a set of clear guiding principles for the use of this resource known as the '*National Principles for Holistic Whole Family Support*'. These are listed below and described in full at Appendix 1.

- a) Non-stigmatising
- b) Whole Family
- c) Needs Based
- d) Asset and community based
- e) Timely and sustainable
- f) Promoted
- g) Take account of families' voice
- h) Collaborative and seamless
- i) Skilled and supported workforce
- j) Underpinned by Children's Rights

3. Glasgow Context – successes so far

3.1 Glasgow's city and partnership working can already evidence strong successes as a result of prevention and early intervention activities. A specific focus on system change in relation to looked after and accommodated children has seen dramatic improvements in service delivery across Children's Services. Examples of the impact achieved to date include;

- A consistent reduction in the number of children in formal care, from 1,413 children and young people in 2016 to 965 at the beginning of lockdown, and 687 currently; a reduction of 726 (51%);

- An 82% increase in the number of Health Visitors across the City, from 150 in 2016 to currently now 249; in tandem with Family Nurse Partnership;
- An 82% reduction in the admissions of children under 5 into care since 2016 (105 in 2016 to 19 in 2022);
- A 79% reduction in placement moves within Formal Care; from 355 in 2016 to 75 in 2022;
- Preventing Admissions into Formal Care from an average of 32 per month in 2016 to 8 per month in 2023; and
- A reduction in the number of young people placed out with the city, from 789 in 2016 to 389 in March 2023, consequently, ensuring where possible care can be provided in the city and children can remain close to family, school and friends.

This initial transformation phase focused on intensive support for children, young people and at the threshold for child protection and those with higher levels of need requiring significant interventions. Work continues to drive further improvements across these services and to learn from the innovative approaches adopted to secure these.

4. Glasgow Proposed Approach

- 4.1 Agreement on the use of the WFWF rests with the Children's Services Executive Group (CSEG) in Glasgow. This Partnership has therefore undertaken extensive consultation with public and third sector stakeholders to agree how best to build on progress made to date. Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) also helped to facilitate a third sector event to inform the focus for the next transformational phase for the WFWF.
- 4.2 Stakeholders highlighted the excellent work already underway across the city. However, there was an overwhelming agreement that the lack of seamless pathways of support fueled a risk of duplication and inefficient use of resources. There was also unanimous agreement of the gaps in support for children, young people and families at lower thresholds of need, where prevention and early intervention can be particularly effective. Three strands of work have therefore been identified as the foundation themes of the WFWF plan;
 - Developing the capacity of universal services to identify whole family needs at an earlier stage;
 - Building capacity to support families to engage with co-ordinated support at an earlier stage; and
 - Developing a practice model for family support, taking to scale the learnings from the Glasgow Intensive Family Support Service.

- 4.3 Stakeholders were in strong agreement of the potential transformative impact of targeting the 0-5 years population and that this should also include working with families at the prenatal stage. This will ensure support is available to families at the earliest point. The development and implementation of activities in this area provides significant opportunities to test and secure whole system change.
- 4.4 Operating alongside this, Glasgow is also working with Scottish Government as one of only two Pathfinders funded through the '*Best Start, Bright Futures - Child Poverty Action Plan*'. The Pathfinder has collaborated with city partners to identify radical new ways of working to meet the challenging child poverty targets set for Glasgow. The dual focus for the Pathfinder is to both reduce child poverty levels whilst also identifying system changes that will prioritise prevention and early intervention.
- 4.5 As well as implementing a practical 'test of change' that provides improved access to person-centred support, the Pathfinder is also focusing on tackling the system barriers that impact on optimal service delivery. These have been identified as data, funding and commissioning, and accountability and culture. Challenging these barriers will inform and guide new ways of working that will ultimately underpin prevention and early intervention actions.
- 4.6 The need to share learning and to collaborate across the Pathfinder and the WFWF activities is clear. This is particularly so given the shared ambition to move from a focus on crisis intervention amongst those with a high level of intensive need to universal prevention and early intervention. On this basis, shared governance arrangements have been established to maximise the impact of these innovative programmes.

5. Governance

- 5.1 A dedicated Senior Officers Group has been established to provide corporate and strategic direction in relation to both the WFWF and Child Poverty Pathfinder transformation agendas. This group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council, and comprises the Chief Officer of the HSCP, the HSCP Chief Officer for Finance and Resources, Executive Director of Financial Services (GCC), and the Executive Director of Education (GCC).
- 5.2 Accountability for the WFWF has been conferred by the Scottish Government to the Children Services Executive Group (CSEG). The CSEG is therefore responsible for overseeing the development and collective agreement of the detailed use of these funds. It will undertake the necessary processes to allocate funding as well as report on both expenditure and outcomes achieved. The Terms of Reference and membership of the Children's Services Executive Group will be refreshed to incorporate this extended role.
- 5.3 The detailed allocation of WFWF will be undertaken by the CSEG, using the principles of GCC's recently agreed 'Cost of Living Crisis Funding' process. This was developed with Internal Audit using learning from the pandemic to facilitate timely and flexible funding allocations, whilst maintaining

the appropriate levels of rigour, control and governance required for the stewardship of public funds.

- 5.4 This innovative practice has generated a keen interest amongst Scottish Government colleagues eager to test this as the process to determine detailed funding allocations for the city. The approach is entirely consistent with the WFWF guidelines requiring a *'flexible approach to commissioning and procurement to ensure responsive delivery based on family needs'*.
- 5.5 The Cost of Living Crisis Funding process will be amended to meet the specific requirements of the WFWF. It will use the agreed priority actions outlined in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 as the broad investment priorities identified in collaboration by the CSEG. Additionally, as per the provisions for delegated authority, recommendations for funding will be considered by GCC's Chief and Executive and Executive Director for Finance (GCC).
- 5.6 An annual performance report detailing the outcomes of the WFWF will be submitted to the Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities, Culture and Engagement City Policy Committee (WECCE) alongside updates on the use of funding.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Funding is provided directly by the Scottish Government to undertake preventative and early intervention actions. This will ultimately facilitate more effective use of funding and reduce crisis intervention spending.
<i>Legal:</i>	Normal legal processes and procedures for Glasgow City Council will be followed.
<i>Personnel:</i>	Existing staffing resources will initially be used to establish a Programme Team. Leadership support will be provided by the Senior Officers Groups and CSEG.
<i>Procurement:</i>	The procurement process will meet all legislative requirements, and article 19 of the UNCRC.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Organisations successful in securing WFWF will be expected to address any barriers to participation experienced by children, young people and families with Protected Characteristics, and to adhere to the Council's monitoring process, which will include equalities data.
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What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

An EQIA has been undertaken on the HSCP children's services transformation programme ([EQIA Children's Services Transformation Programme 2022 - 25](#)), and this will be updated to ensure that the support being made available through this funding is compliant.

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

A key outcome of the WFWF is to reduce inequalities between families. Work is ongoing in the areas of universal income maximisation services, assistance with living costs, and expansion of digital inclusion programmes, and to address poverty and inequalities.

Climate Impacts:

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

In developing the range of community based, local neighbourhood supports, and reducing escalation to more specialist services, it is anticipated that children, young people and families will have less need to travel out with their local area to access (citywide) services, thereby potentially reducing carbon emissions associated with car and taxi usage.

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

Reduced carbon emissions due to reduced need for transportation or shorter journeys to attend services out with children, young people and families' local area.

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

It is likely that the availability of these additional/expanded neighbourhood services will contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target due to reduced reliance on cars and taxis to attend appointments.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

All organisations who are successful in their application will require to adhere to privacy and data protection guidance, in line with standard contracting processes.

4 Recommendations

Members of the City Administration Committee are requested to;

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National Principles of Holistic Whole Family Support

a) **Non-stigmatising**

Support should be promoted and provided free from stigma and judgement. Services should be as normalised as accessing universal services.

b) **Whole Family**

Support should be rooted in GIRFEC and wrapped around about the whole family. This requires relevant joint up with adult services & whole system, place based, preventative addressing inequalities.

c) **Needs Based**

Support should be tailored to fit around each individual family, not be driven by rigid services or structures. It should cover the spectrum of support from universal services, more tailored support for wellbeing and intensive support (to prevent or in response to statutory interventions). Creative approaches to support should be encouraged.

d) **Asset and Community Based**

Support should be empowering, building on existing strengths within the family and wider community. Families should be able to 'reach in' not be 'referred to' Support must be explicitly connected to locations that work for local families and the community, such as schools, health centres, village halls and sports centres.

e) **Timely and sustainable**

Flexible, responsive and proportionate support should be available to families as soon as they need it, and for as long as is required, adapting to changing needs.

f) **Promoted**

Families should have easy, well understood routes of access to support. They should feel empowered to do so, and have choice about the support they access to ensure it meets their needs.

g) **Take account of families' voice**

At a strategic and individual level, children and families should be meaningfully involved in the design, delivery, evaluation and continuous improvement of services. Support should be based on trusted relationships between families and professionals working together with mutual respect to ensure targeted and developmental support.

h) **Collaborative and seamless**

Support should be multi-agency and joined-up across services, so families don't experience multiple 'referrals' or inconsistent support.

i) **Skilled and supported workforce**

Support should be informed by an understanding of attachment, trauma, inequality and poverty. Staff should be supported to take on additional responsibilities, and trusted to be innovative in responding to the needs of families.

j) **Underpinned by Children's Rights**

Children's rights should be the funnel through which every decision and support service is viewed.