



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Report by Councillor Letford, Council Business Manager and City Convener for Democratic Renewal

Contact: Anne Connolly Ext. 75678

Item 13

13th June 2019

Options for Open Government Partnership

Purpose of Report:

This paper responds to the Council motion of 13 December 2018 and provides options to join the Open Government Partnership.

This Open Government paper was considered by the General Purposes City Policy Committee on 28 May 2019, where the recommendations were agreed for consideration and approval by City Administration Committee.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

- Note the potential expansion of the Open Government Partnership Local Programme in 2019 and the previously published criteria for application; and
- Approve the recommendations agreed by General Purposes City Policy Committee to:
 - Formally register an interest with the Open Government Partnership in the expansion of the Local Programme;
 - Join the United Cities and Local Governments' Community of Practice on Transparency and Open Government;
 - Begin to prepare a submission based on our current governance in readiness for the programme's expansion;
 - Engage with other European cities that have been through the process to learn from their experiences, using our existing contacts in Eurocities; and
 - Further engage with COSLA and the Scottish Government – informing them of the Council's approach to Open Government.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No

consulted: Yes No

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In December 2018, Council noted the work of national government on Open Government and determined that Glasgow would embrace this theme as set out in the Corporate Procurement and Commercial Improvement Strategy 2018 to 2022 mission statement to ‘provide sector leading procurement that supports the delivery of high quality, sustainable and resilient public services using innovation, efficiency, openness and transparency.’ Reflecting on the findings of the Council's external governance review and recognising the Open Government Partnership principles of openness, transparency, accountability and participation, Council committed to investigating the options for Glasgow to formally join the Open Government Partnership.
- 1.2 Open Government was a key recommendation in the ‘Review of Governance and Accountability Arrangements in Glasgow City Council’ conducted by Colin Mair and considered by Council in September 2018. The report highlights that “Open Government is a good way of pulling together all the strands of this review and linking them to the new Council’s ambitions to be world class in city governance”. An Open Government agenda in Glasgow City Council will contribute to the implementation of the Review’s recommendations and action plan, and, joining the Open Government Partnership would provide international support and expertise in achieving our Open Government priorities and commitments.

2.0 Open Government Partnership at a National Level

- 2.1 The Open Government Partnership is an international initiative that provides a platform for open government to develop reforms and secure concrete commitments from governments that:
- promote transparency;
 - empower citizens;
 - fight corruption; and
 - harness new technologies to strengthen governance.
- The partnership was launched in 2011 by 8 founding governments, including the UK, and now has 75 member countries with over 2,000 commitments made. Both the UK Government and Scottish Government are signatories to the OGP and have national action plans in place.
- 2.2 Scotland is a member of the Open Government Partnership through a pilot programme opened up in 2016, to what the programme refers to as, sub national governments. The first Scottish Open Government National Action Plan was submitted in December 2016 as part of this pilot.
- 2.3 In January 2019, Scotland published its second Open Government Action Plan - the [Scottish Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2018-2020](#) contains five commitments:
- Financial and Performance Transparency;

- Providing a framework to support systemic change in Scottish Government to improve the way people are able to participate in open policy-making and service delivery;
- Improvements to the way information and data are used;
- Improving the accountability of public services; and
- Transparency and participation in Scotland as the UK exits the European Union.

2.4 COSLA Leaders agreed COSLA's involvement in the development of the Scottish Open Government National Action Plan in June 2018, and COSLA are now represented on the Open Government Ministerial Steering Group. Glasgow City Council worked with COSLA and North Ayrshire Council in September and October 2018 to shape local government actions for the National Open Government Action Plan, and discuss the potential for an Open Government agenda and learning in Local Government.

3.0 Open Government Partnership at a City Level

3.1 The Local Programme also invites local levels of government such as federal or devolved governments, including cities, to join the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and develop action plans. The Programme was expanded in early 2018 with a limited call for expressions of interest for five additional participants in this part of the Programme. The successful areas included only one city, Lasi in Romania. The other successful areas were: Basque Country (Spain); Kaduna State (Nigeria); Nariño (Colombia); and South Cotabato (Philippines). At least eight other cities including Messina, Rio de Janeiro, Santa Fe, Tallinn and Valencia applied but were unsuccessful. Through Eurocities we have connections to a number of these cities, and it may be helpful to engage with previous candidate cities to learn from their experiences in having been through the application process.

3.2 From our initial engagement with the Open Government Partnership, it is anticipated that this part of the programme will be re-opened for applications later in 2019. This would be Glasgow's opportunity to formally request to join the Open Government Partnership.

Eligibility Criteria and Decision Making Process

3.3 There is currently no guidance available on the 2019 application process. Based on the 2018 application process, we would meet the minimum eligibility criteria of having a population of at least 250,000 and being within a participating OGP country. In addition to this minimum criteria, applicants were required to:

- Demonstrate commitment from the political leader to advance government reforms in an OGP Action Plan, and fully support the delivery of such commitments as part of the local government's function;
- Have necessary staff who can dedicate time to engage in the OGP process, including the development and implementation of commitments in collaboration with civil society;

- Have a demonstrated track record of, or commitment to, open government; for example through open data, civic engagement, access to information, budget and fiscal transparency, or participatory policy making;
- Express interest in receiving direct support from OGP to co-create commitments and advance their open government reform efforts;
- Have experience of working positively with local civil society and a commitment to protecting civic space and engaging constructively with citizens outside government; and
- Have a willingness to share experience and insights with peers.

3.4 From what we know from the 2018 process, applications were scored on a high, medium, low/unclear grade, for each criteria and those achieving a score of 80% and above were shortlisted for the programme. The OGP Selection Committee review all shortlisted applicants and reach consensus on the finalists to be invited to join the Local Programme. Given the potential for short timescales in any 2019 application process, it would be beneficial to begin scoping an OGP Local Programme submission guided by the 2018 criteria above, in preparation for any programme expansion later in 2019.

3.5 The OGP usually launch any Local Programme expansion with a call for expressions of interest, and all that is required at that point is a letter of interest from the Leader of the Council and a few endorsement letters from city partners.

4.0 Engagement on Open Government

4.1 The Chief Executive's Department have contacted the OGP to express an interest in the OGP Local Programme. The OGP's Programme Associate has welcomed this interest from Glasgow, and indicated that the OGP are keen to expand the programme significantly in 2019. They highlighted that the new OGP Local Strategy will be presented at the next OGP Global Summit in Ottawa, 29-31 May 2019. Following consideration of this report, Glasgow City Council may wish to formally register an interest with the OGP in the expansion of the Local Programme.

4.2 The OGP have encouraged Glasgow to join the UCLG Community of Practice on Transparency and Open Government. The Community of Practice is a group of local and regional governments interested in joint solutions, learning opportunities, and exchanging approaches on issues of Open Government (further information is available on the UCLG Community of Practice [website](#)). The key benefits of joining would include peer to peer networking, awareness raising and knowledge exchange, and capacity building on Open Government at a local level, and, promoting the role of local and regional government in the achievement of sustainable cities and regions. We would recommend joining the Community of Practice, if Glasgow wish to take forward an Open Government agenda and formally join the OGP Local Programme.

4.3 Further engagement with COSLA and the Scottish Government on the Open Government agenda is required as part of the next phase of Glasgow bidding to join any new OGP Local Programme in 2019.

5.0 Policy and Resource Implications:

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	No specific financial implications identified
<i>Legal:</i>	No specific legal implications identified
<i>Personnel:</i>	No specific personnel implications identified
<i>Procurement:</i>	No specific procurement implications identified

Council Strategic Plan: *A Well Governed City that Listens and Responds:* The council has open and transparent decision making.

Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods: Citizens and neighbourhoods can influence how services are developed and budgets spent.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22</i>	There is no direct contribution to the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22, however the Open Government agenda would support the ethos on participation and empowerment.
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	No significant equality impacts identified at this stage – this should be reviewed in the development of Glasgow's Open Government commitments and action plan.
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.</i>	No specific impact on socio-economic disadvantage

Sustainability Impacts:

<i>Environmental:</i>	No significant environmental impacts identified
<i>Social, including Article 19 opportunities:</i>	No significant social impacts identified

Economic: No significant economic impacts identified

Privacy and Data Protection impacts: No significant privacy or data protection impacts identified

6.0 Recommendations

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