



Glasgow City Council
City Administration Committee

Item 5

14th September 2023

Report by Councillor Richard Bell, Depute Leader and City Treasurer and Convener for Financial Inclusion

Contact: Martin Booth, Ext: 73837

2022/23 COST OF LIVING CRISIS SUPPORT FUND

Purpose of Report:

To update Elected Members on the detailed funding allocations made through the 'Cost of Living Support Fund' in 2022/23 and advise of an identified underspend. The paper seeks approval of the proposed alternative use of these funds and details that a full report on the impact of the entirety of the 'Cost of Living Support Fund' will be provided prior to the end of the calendar year.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the allocations made from the 'Cost of Living Support Fund 2022/23';
- Notes the identified 'Glasgow Fuel Support Project' underspend;
- Approves the proposed use of the underspend outlined at section 4.5;
- Notes that an update on the detailed allocation of this underspend will be brought back to Committee; and
- Notes that a further paper detailing the impact of the 'Cost of Living Support Fund 2022/23' in its entirety will be brought to this Committee prior to the end of the calendar year.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Any Ordnance Survey mapping included within this Report is provided by Glasgow City Council under licence from the Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function to make available Council-held public domain information. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey Copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey mapping/map data for their own use. The OS web site can be found at <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk> "

If accessing this Report via the Internet, please note that any mapping is for illustrative purposes only and is not true to any marked scale

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper restates for Elected Members details of support provided to citizens in relation to the cost-of-living crisis. In particular it outlines the projects that were resourced through the 'Cost-of-Living Crisis Support Fund' allocated in the Council's 2022/23 budget. Furthermore, the paper highlights an identified underspend and seeks approval for the proposed alternative use.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council set its budget in 2022/23 during one of the most challenging economic periods in recent times. Individuals and citizens were, and still are, struggling to manage the dual impact of both the pandemic and the historically high rates of inflation. This impacts all our citizens but is felt particularly keenly by those already living in low-income households who are experiencing the deepening of existing inequalities.
- 2.2 GCC has restated its commitment to supporting individuals, households and communities most vulnerable to the effects of the cost-of-living crisis. This is an urgent organisational priority, with actions to tackle this at the forefront of our refreshed Strategic Plan 2022-27 and resources allocated as part of the Council's budget for a specific 'Cost-of-Living Crisis Support Fund'. This Fund, totalling £3m, was administered across three Council services; Chief Executive (£2,200,000), Financial Services (£550,000) and Neighbourhood & Regeneration Services (£250,000).

3. Cost-of-Living Crisis Support Fund Allocations

- 3.1 Detail of the awards made for the 'Cost of Living Support Fund were previously provided to Committee on 4th August 2022, 1st September 2022, and 23rd February 2023.

Name	Organisation	Amount
<u>Financial Inclusion Support Officers in Schools (FISO)</u> In person benefit and money advice to parents, accessed through schools across the city. Access to broader support is also provided using referrals to Glasgow Helps.	GEMAP Scotland Money Matters CAB Consortium and GCC Customer and Business Services	£500,000
<u>Income Maximisation Project</u> Financial inclusion and employability support for lone parents.	One Parent Family Scotland (OPFS)	£150,000
<u>Community Support Service</u> Provision of immediate practical assistance for citizens engaging with Glasgow Helps and supporting broader connections to local community and third sector organisations.	Urban Fox (on behalf of VSNEG)	£75,000

<u>Community Support Service</u> Continuation of the existing service for a further three months into 2023/24 (April-June).	The Halliday Foundation	£25,000
<u>Financial Inclusion for Families with a disabled parent(s) and/or child(ren)</u> Dedicated welfare rights officers to support families with a disabled parent and/or child to navigate the complexity of the system and support benefit claims and representation at appeal tribunals.	Glasgow Disability Alliance & Differabled	£76,666
<u>Access to Financial Inclusion Services for Disabled Family members</u> Provision of additional support to one parent families with a disabled parent/carer or child/ren.	One Parent Families Scotland	£75,000
<u>Making a House a Home</u> Support to those fleeing violence and then setting up a new home with items to be purchased not covered by the SWF to 'make a house a home'.	Aberlour, The Daisy Project, Glasgow East Women's Aid, Glasgow Women's Aid, Hemet Gryffe, Women's Support Project	£200,000
<u>Making a House a Home</u> Continuation of the existing project which has demonstrated strong demand from this particularly vulnerable group into 2023/24.	Aberlour, Assist, The Daisy Project, Glasgow East Women's Aid, Glasgow Women's Aid, Hemet Gryffe, Women's Support Project	£50,000
<u>Glasgow Fuel Support Programme</u> Provision of energy advice including support for fuel write offs, negotiated debt arrangements, arranging meter switching and heating upgrades as well as issuing fuel vouchers to eligible families in Glasgow.	The Wise Group (GHEAT)	£1,000,000

<p><u>Greater Easterhouse Covid Recovery Programme</u></p> <p>Easterhouse is recognised as the most impacted place in Scotland by Covid-19. This project provides targeted support through the Easterhouse Housing & Regeneration Alliance to address issues around poverty, jobs and health inequalities.</p>	<p>Blairturnnock Housing Association</p>	<p>£50,000</p>
<p><u>Fruit Pilot in Primary Schools</u></p> <p>Build on successful pilot to provide fruit as a mid morning snack in both Primary and Secondary schools, these funds will continue this into 2022/23</p> <p>Approximately 60,000 pupils will have access to free healthy options, removing the financial burden from parents.</p> <p>The project also supports citizens to make better food choices with links to Scotland's Good Food Nation Bill.</p>	<p>GCC Financial Services</p>	<p>£550,000</p>
<p><u>City Makers Programme</u></p> <p>Work with long term unemployed city residents who will form City Makers Teams across the city. This will provide a range of neighbourhood improvement services identified and directed by NRS. Eligible participants will be identified by Jobs Business Glasgow.</p> <p>This will provide high quality training and work experience alongside the delivery of visible and sustainable improvements across the city.</p>	<p>GCC Neighbourhood & Regeneration Services</p>	<p>£250,000</p>
		<p>£3,001,666</p>

3.3 The allocation of funding to these projects came with a requirement to provide monitoring returns that demonstrated outcomes secured. A full report detailing these, and the impact made will be provided to Committee prior to the end of the calendar year.

4. Glasgow Fuel Support Project

4.1 The Glasgow Fuel Support Project was introduced to mitigate the dramatic rise in fuel costs as average household bills rose by up to 54%. The UK Government had introduced an Energy Bills Support Package that provide universal support as well as assistance that was targeted at vulnerable groups. This included those on disability benefits, pensioners and those on means tested benefits. The Glasgow Fuel Support project was specifically targeted at

families based on our local data analysis at the time. This indicated further assistance would be required for those families at risk of, or already experiencing child poverty. On this basis, a specific campaign was developed to offer both financial support with fuel costs, through the issue of a voucher, but also access to bespoke advice and assistance to minimise future costs.

- 4.2 Demand for this offer, which commenced in October 2022, was initially high, particularly in January and February 2023. However, the growing range of UK and Scotland wide supports provided direct to citizens, as well as funds accessible through financial inclusion service providers, and a fall in average wholesale energy prices have all contributed to a significant decline in demand for this offer. Whilst referrals reached 2,650 in January, levels began to fall in March 2023 with only 117 in May and June combined. This represents a 97% reduction in demand.
- 4.3 This declining demand has meant that to date, 50% of the budget has been spent on this project, leaving a balance of £500,000. The stabilising landscape in relation to energy costs, coupled with the increasing variety of supports now available, suggests that despite the intention to target vulnerable families, the continued provision of this project would not represent best value for money.
- 4.4 The work around the Child Poverty Pathfinder and the response to the cost-of-living crisis has demonstrated further the need to tackle childhood and wider poverty aggressively and radically. Recent consultation with families across the city, conducted by Glasgow Council for Voluntary Service (GCVS) as part of the Glasgow Promise Project, provides valuable insight to the current challenges faced by families. This provides insight that, whilst still experiencing the negative impact of the cost of living crisis, the cost of energy was *not* presenting as the most pressing need. Given this, it is proposed that the remaining funds from this project be reallocated.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the remaining funds continue to be targeted on family support, building on the partnership working that has developed across the Child Poverty Pathfinder and the Children's Service team. More specifically, it is recommended that the available funds are used in two ways;

- 1) £200,000 should be allocated to the IJB to invest further innovative Children Services initiatives such as cash first solutions for families. This will ensure that families can be supported much earlier, preventing the need for crisis intervention. This approach is commensurate with the implementation of Christie principles. The significant investment in areas such as Health Visitors (and indeed the Family Nurse Partnership) and the availability of a cash-first resource, utilised at the right time has secured a sustained reduction in children under 5 admitted into formal care. To date of the **650** children and young people who are in formal placements, remarkably only **84 (12%)** are under 5. Admissions of children into care under 5 in the city has **reduced** from 105 admitted in 2016 to 19 in the year ending 2022; an 82% reduction. Moreover, at the beginning of April 2022, there were **95** children in our formal care under 5 years old. In August 2023, there is **84**; a reduction of 11 and 11%. This is more than a marginal gain and illustrates the effectiveness of the early

help, earlier intervention and preventative measures taken across the partnership and city over the last 16 months. Research continues to highlight and reinforce that the biggest impact on family breakdown is poverty and inequality. Intervening early and with greater flexibility and trust demonstrates that when the conditions are favourable families have the necessary resources to not only survive but to thrive. This additional funding will make a significant contribution to achieving this. The evidence is now clear that early help and cash first for families is what they are asking for and what they need.

2) **£300,000** should be allocated to the Child Poverty Pathfinder to invest in activities aligned to the outcomes of the Glasgow Promise Project consultation. This consultation, which was undertaken using the Scottish Service Design Approach, engaged children and families in in-depth engagement to understand the issues and approaches that matter most to them. It is proposed that the Child Poverty Pathfinder works directly with GCVS' Service Design team to scope further the articulated needs of children, young people and families, investing in appropriate supports. This approach will ensure that investments made work in partnership with Glasgow Helps and form part of the development of the No Wrong Door model currently being established in the city. A further paper will be brought back to Committee with details on the services before the end of the calendar year.

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	None
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	None, these awards will be managed within existing staffing resources.
<i>Procurement:</i>	There are no new procurement implications arising from the report

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Yes. The proposal supports Outcome 3 – Service users are provided with information accessible to them on services provided by the Council Family particularly, those who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion.
<i>What are the potential equality</i>	No significant impact, positive impact or negative impacts identified at this stage

impacts as a result of this report?

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

These projects will have a positive impact on addressing socio-economic disadvantage. Funded organisations will provide appropriate advice and support to citizens that will assist to improve their financial position.

Climate Impacts:

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

Yes. Climate Theme 1 Communication and Community Engagement and Climate Theme 2 Just and Inclusive Place

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

None

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

Yes.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

None

6 Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the allocations made from the 'Cost of Living Support Fund 2022/23';
- Notes the identified 'Glasgow Fuel Support Project' underspend;
- Approves the proposed use of the underspend outlined at section 4.5;
- Notes that an update on the detailed allocation of this underspend will be brought back to Committee; and
- Notes that a further paper detailing the impact of the 'Cost of Living Support Fund 2022/23' in its entirety will be brought to this Committee prior to the end of the calendar year.