GLASGOW
CITY REGION

2025/26

GLASGOW CITY REGION
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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GLASGOW CITY REGION

Welcome

Welcome to the Glasgow City Region Annual Performance Report for 2025/26.

A decade after the first City Deal funding was announced, Glasgow City Region has graduated far beyond its founding purpose to become one of the UK's economic powerhouses, and stands ready for the next chapter in its development.

It can do so knowing that it has continued to deliver on the projects laid out in that initial City Deal funding. This last period saw construction begin on the £18.3 million Balgray station in Barrhead, the opening of the Renfrew Bridge, and the Govan to Partick Bridge reaching one million crossings - clear evidence of infrastructure connecting communities to jobs, leisure and opportunity.

Progress continues across the £67.4 million Enabling Infrastructure programme, including the start of the Xworks commercial development in Dalmarnock, transforming a brownfield site into 40,000 square feet of flexible office, industrial, manufacturing, and R&D space.

As we move toward completion of the City Deal in 2029, around £280 million of contract opportunities remain, offering further benefits for local businesses and residents.

Our £190 million Investment Zone continues to forge ahead, with formal tax site designation earlier this year helping attract global firms and strengthen the advanced manufacturing sector. Retaining business rates generated across the Zone over 25 years could add up to £162 million to the local economy. This is exactly the kind of financial lever needed to unlock growth and support greater equity across the Region.

We also welcome £50 million Local Innovation Partnerships Funding to boost our thriving Health and Life Sciences sector.

And work we lead on to shape a masterplan for the future of the River Clyde - Europe's largest potential development opportunity - will run to a conclusion later this year.

With a new Scottish Government elected at Holyrood, and recent changes in the UK Government, we are ready to work with both to help us realise the further potential that exists for a more ambitious devolution settlement for Glasgow City Region: powers on economic development, skills, planning and transport devolved to regional level and the integrated funding to enable us to use them with impact.

In my final Annual Performance Report, I am delighted to look back on this decade of achievement in Glasgow City Region – but also impatient, as I know my fellow Glaswegians are, to see us accelerate our position as a generator of economic and social good for Scotland and the UK.

Susan Aitken
Leader of Glasgow City Council and
Chair of the Glasgow City Region Cabinet

Who We Are

Glasgow City Region (GCR) is a partnership of eight local authorities, working with local and national stakeholders to drive Regional economic growth, attract investment, and create opportunities for the Region's population of over 1.9 million people.

Now in its eleventh year, the partnership manages a portfolio of over £2 billion including the £1.13 billion City Deal programme, the £190 million Investment Zone, and the newly integrated Place team - all underpinned by our ambitious Regional Economic Strategy.

Since 2014, our partnership has invested millions in improving transport and connectivity; supported the growth of our innovation economy; leveraged significant private sector investment; and delivered ambitious 5G and enabling technology projects.

The eight partner local authorities are: East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

Glasgow City Council

Inverclyde Council

West Dunbartonshire Council

South Lanarkshire Council

East Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire Council

North Lanarkshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Lannraig a Tuath

sustainable thriving achieving
East Dunbartonshire Council
www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Our Region

Glasgow City Region is a key engine of economic growth for both the Scottish and UK economies. It provides 34% of Scotland's jobs and is home to 30% of its businesses. The Region generated approximately £60 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2023, making it the fourth largest UK Core City Region.

1.9 million
total population – 34.2% of Scotland

£60 billion
total GVA – the **fourth largest** UK City Region outside of London

54.8%
proportion of working-age population educated to HNC/degree level, the joint best rate among UK Core City Regions

71.4%
855,000 individuals in employment

51.8%
of workers employed in high skilled occupations (managers, professionals and associate professionals)

53.9
new business start-ups per 10,000 people, exceeding the Scottish rate of 51.4

What We Do

The Glasgow City Region Programme Management Office works with colleagues across our eight councils, the Scottish and UK Governments, academic, third sector and industry partners, to deliver a series of **strategies and programmes** that drive inclusive, sustainable growth across the Region.

Our **Place** team is focused on planning, development and land use, bringing together local planning authorities and partners to drive growth and regeneration; shape future development; and create a liveable and diverse place for people and wildlife as part of the Region's response to the climate and ecological crises.

Underpinning all of our work is the Region's in-house **Intelligence Hub**, an expert team of economists, data scientists and researchers that provides the evidence and insights that shape our strategies and investment decisions.

We are one of only four areas across the UK to benefit from a strategic partnership with the **National Wealth Fund (NWF)**. NWF colleagues, co-located within the team, provide valuable hands-on support and tailored commercial and financial advice, helping us to translate our ambitions into investable propositions.

Key Strategies, Programmes, Regional Funds and Partnerships

Regional Economic Strategy	City Deal	Investment Zone
Local Innovation Partnerships Fund	5G Innovation Region	Innovation Accelerator
Local Growth Fund	National Wealth Fund	Regional Spatial Strategy
Clyde Mission	GCR Green Network	

Milestones

2025

APRIL
£30m extension announced for the Innovation Accelerator programme

APRIL
Construction starts on the £4m City Deal funded Inverkip project

MAY
Renfrew Bridge, first opening road bridge across the River Clyde, opens

MAY
Govan to Partick Bridge celebrates one million crossings

JULY
GCR announced to receive £30m from the UK Government through the Local Innovation Partnerships Fund (LIPF)

JULY
Construction starts on the £18.3m Balgray Railway Station in Barrhead

JUNE
IA-funded Chemify launches world-leading 'Chemputation' facility in Maryhill

JUNE
Formal confirmation received for the GCR Investment Zone's focus on Advanced Manufacturing

JUNE
Campaign to Make GCR a Living Wage Place celebrates 100 newly accredited businesses

AUGUST
Consultation opens for Custom House Quay and Carlton Place River Park

AUGUST
City Deal passes Gateway 2, unlocking a further £300m funding

SEPTEMBER
Renfrew Bridge celebrates one million crossings

SEPTEMBER
MGSDP programme shortlisted for the 2025 Nature of Scotland Award

DECEMBER

GCR launches £25m Heat Decarbonisation Fund as part of the Clyde Mission programme

NOVEMBER
GCR awarded £350k through the UK Government Regulators' Pioneer Fund

NOVEMBER
Campaign to Make GCR a Living Wage Place meets year one target of 200 new accredited employers

OCTOBER
GCR announced as part of the National Wealth Fund's Regional Project Accelerator

OCTOBER
Further £20m funding announced for GCR LIPF bringing the total funding package to £50m

OCTOBER
GCR completes work to survey mobile phone speeds at key Glasgow stadiums and venues

DECEMBER
GCR launches £25m R&D fund for Health and Life Sciences projects

2026

JANUARY
GCR launches £20m fund dedicated to expanding laboratory space across the Region

FEBRUARY
City Deal funding allocated for new, cutting-edge commercial space in Dalmarnock as part of the £67.4m Enabling Commercial Space project

MARCH
UK and Scottish Governments formally confirm the GCR Investment Zone tax site at AMIDS and Glasgow Airport

City Deal

Funding: £1.56 billion

Purpose: To drive economic growth across the Region, improving connectivity, unlocking key sites for housing and development and supporting business innovation.

What change will it bring?

Beyond the physical transformation, the public funding has already drawn over £880 million in additional private sector investment, provided contracts worth £186 million to local businesses and generated thousands of jobs and job opportunities for local people.

Progress to date:

Our most established programme, the City Deal is one of the largest in the UK, with over a billion pounds in funding from the UK and Scottish Governments.

The 22 infrastructure projects are spread across the eight council areas and are set to conclude in 2029.

Projects are delivering vital infrastructure, remediation, major new roads and bridges, and are unlocking key sites across the Region for commercial, housing and retail development.

Progress is reported quarterly to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet.

Watch our video for more information.

Programme	Funding	Status
Infrastructure projects (22)	£1.13 billion	All projects underway
Innovation projects (3)	£18.7 million	**Completed**
Skills and Employment projects (3)	£24.6 million	**Completed**

£2.2 billion
additional GVA per annum **(a 4% uplift)**

29,000
additional jobs in the City Region

15,000
construction jobs through the construction programme

19,000
unemployed residents supported

£3.3 billion
private sector investment anticipated

Infrastructure

All 22 infrastructure projects are underway, with 119 sub-projects. There are two Region-wide projects and 20 projects are led by the member councils.

Glasgow City Council

Canal and North Gateway	**7 sub-projects complete** 2 sub-projects pre-construction
Collegelands Calton Barras	**4 sub-projects complete** 2 sub-projects pre-construction
City Centre Enabling Infrastructure Integrated Public Realm (EEIPR)	**4 sub-projects complete** 4 sub-projects under construction 4 sub-projects pre-construction

George Square

The transformation of George Square – the central piece of the EEIPR Avenues programme – started in summer 2025 and is due to re-open to the public in autumn 2026.

The £20 million renovation will create an international-quality space with stone surfaces, more greenery, raised lawns, sheltered seating, lighting, new play and sensory areas, and a new pavement area outside the bars and restaurants on the western side.

It forms a central point of the network of new Avenues being created across Glasgow city centre, which – alongside the complementary Avenues Plus programme – form the biggest transformation of the city centre since the pedestrianisation of Buchanan Street in the 1970s.

Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership (MGSDP)	**8 sub-projects complete** 3 sub-projects pre-construction
Clyde Waterfront and West End Innovation Quarter (CWWEIQ)	**8 sub-projects complete** 1 sub-project under construction 1 sub-project pre-construction

Byres Road

The public realm improvement of Byres Road will create a vibrant urban quarter which connects to the University of Glasgow's expanding campus, including widened pavements, step-free crossings, new protected cycle paths, more greenery, and improved seating.

The first phase (southern half), which completed in July 2024, has already seen a reduction in retail vacancy rates and the second phase (northern half), which started in June 2025, is well underway and set to complete in 2027.

Govan to Partick Bridge

In May 2025, the landmark Govan to Partick Bridge celebrated more than one million crossings since opening in September 2024.

The bridge re-establishes the historic connection between Govan and Partick over the River Clyde, and forms a key part of the active travel route between the University of Glasgow to the north of the river and the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital on the south. It is one of the longest opening pedestrian/cycle bridges in Europe, linking communities, visitor attractions, and key institutions on both sides of the Clyde.

The bridge has received widespread praise including being awarded the Regeneration Award at the Scottish Civil Engineering Awards, and Project of the Year at the Construction News Awards.

East Dunbartonshire Council

Place and Growth Programme	2 sub-projects pre-construction

East Renfrewshire Council

M77 Strategic Corridor	**3 sub-projects complete** 3 sub-projects under construction

Balgray Railway Station

Construction of the new Balgray Railway Station began in July 2025 and is due to open to passengers in September 2026. The new station, on the Neilston line, will provide improved rail connections into Glasgow for the existing Barrhead community and for residents of a number of new housing developments.

The station will also provide direct access to Dams to Darnley Country Park and Balgray Reservoir, and will include an 80-space car park with electric vehicle charging points, and active travel links to the town and to the country park.

Inverclyde Council

Inchgreen	**1 sub-project complete** 1 sub-project pre-construction
Ocean Terminal	**Complete**
Inverkip	**Complete**

Inverkip

The £4 million Inverkip project, which improved the A78, completed in December 2025 delivering new signalised junctions and road infrastructure on one of Inverclyde's busiest roads.

The improvements address road safety issues on a key route while also unlocking the redevelopment of the former Inverkip Power Station site, which is earmarked for up to 650 new homes and projected to create over 500 jobs.

North Lanarkshire Council

A8 M8 Corridor Access Improvements	3 sub-projects pre-construction
Gartcosh / Glenboig Community Growth Area	**Complete**
Pan Lanarkshire Orbital Transport Corridor	**2 sub-projects complete** 3 sub-projects pre-construction

Renfrewshire Council

Glasgow Airport Investment Area	**Complete**
Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside	**Complete**

Renfrew Bridge

The Renfrew Bridge, the first opening road bridge over the River Clyde, opened in May 2025, improving connectivity between communities on both sides of the Clyde, reducing traffic congestion, and serving as a catalyst for economic regeneration. It also enhances access to the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS).

The bridge, which connects Renfrew with Yoker and Clydebank, features a two-lane road with a pedestrian and cycle path, as well as connecting roads, cycling and walking routes – and reached over one million crossings within just four months of opening.

South Lanarkshire Council

Cathkin Relief Road	**Complete**
Greenhills Road	**Complete**
South Lanarkshire Community Growth Areas	**11 sub-projects complete** 1 sub-project under construction 7 sub-projects pre-construction
Stewartfield Way / East Kilbride Town Centre	3 sub-projects pre-construction

East Kilbride Town Centre

The transformation of East Kilbride town centre, part of the overarching Stewartfield Way project, will create a new civic heart for the local community.

The project – which saw significant progress made in early 2026 – will enable 250-300 new homes, create a new Civic Hub community space including arts and leisure facilities, deliver improved streetscape, and include scope for new retail facilities.

The project will enable further investment into the town centre as part of a wider Masterplan for the area which includes a new supermarket, hotel, and leisure opportunities.

West Dunbartonshire Council

Exxon Site Development	Under construction

Exxon

The Exxon Site Development Project, also known as the Bowling Strategic Development Site, is delivering extensive enabling works on the former oil terminal at Bowling, transforming it into a major mixed-use industrial and commercial development. The site is expected to generate £20.6 million in additional private investment and £331 million net additional GVA to the City Region over 25 years.

Work began in early 2025, and in January 2026 a new £5.9 million railway bridge was installed, a key milestone which will open up direct road access to the site.

Regional Projects

Clyde Metro Case for Investment	No sub-projects
Enabling Commercial Space	2 sub-projects under construction 17 sub-projects pre-construction

Enabling Commercial Space

The new £67.4 million Enabling Commercial Space project was approved by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet in February 2025, and will provide funding across the eight partner councils to refurbish existing or to create new commercial and industrial premises.

The programme addresses a well-evidenced shortage of modern, high-quality business space across the Region, which is a key barrier to growth for local SMEs and for inward investment.

The funding is supporting a mix of new build construction, the refurbishment of existing buildings, and enabling infrastructure.

City Deal Outputs to Date

The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) collated by the GCR Programme Management Office provides a summary of the direct outputs from the 22 City Deal infrastructure projects, and the follow-on outcomes delivered by the private sector.

These are reported to the Chief Executives' Group and to Cabinet and shared with the UK and Scottish Governments.

Key outputs to the end of March 2026 are shown below. A detailed report of all outputs can be found in the QPR, which is reported to Cabinet.

Cabinet papers can be found on the Glasgow City Region website.

338,264sqm
blue green infrastructure created

42.5km
new pedestrian routes

33.3km
new cycle routes

17
new junctions / crossings

35.4Ha
new and enhanced public realm

10
new bridges and underpasses (road, rail, pedestrian, cycle)

Community Benefits

The City Deal is about more than just physical infrastructure, it is also about delivering wider social and economic benefits for local communities and businesses.

The Region's Sustainable Procurement Strategy, published in June 2021, ensures that community benefit requirements are built into every major City Deal contract and sets out a consistent and collaborative approach across our eight councils.

As well as community benefit requirements, the strategy also outlines sustainable procurement approaches, setting out how procurement decisions benefit local businesses. This includes maximising the share of City Deal contracts awarded to local businesses and SMEs.

Community Benefits Hub

Launched in September 2024, the Glasgow City Region Community Benefits Hub is the first regional wish list system of its kind in the UK, connecting suppliers with local community groups.

More than 400 Community Groups have submitted 500 Requests for support. 207 of these were delivered or in progress at the end of June 2026 - worth over £244,000 and 1,500 hours of volunteer time - from the donation of goods and equipment, and support for local events, to financial support for local food pantries and volunteer time for community centres and outdoor spaces.

> **"The benefit of the Hub is that it's really easy to use. It connects community groups with corporate sponsors and brings in that funding and support that's really crucial to deliver projects like [our community garden]."** - Gareth James, Chair of St Kevin's Parent Council

Community Benefits secured to the end of March 2026

383
jobs and apprenticeships

224
qualifications

£235k
financial support for communities

61
non-financial activities for communities

£186m
of Tier 1 contracts awarded to local companies

Over £85m
awarded to SMEs

Investment Zone

Funding: £190 million | **Follow-on investment and income: £462 million**

Purpose: To boost the local advanced manufacturing sector.

What change will it bring?

Glasgow City Region's Investment Zone is being shaped to boost three local, high-growth Advanced Manufacturing sectors – space, semiconductors and maritime – identified by the Region's Intelligence Hub as sectors of the local economy which offer the greatest opportunity for growth.

On the back of the government funding, it is set to generate a further £300 million initial investment from the private sector and to support 7,000 to 10,000 jobs.

The Investment Zone programme includes:

- Six ambitious projects,
- a dedicated tax site at AMIDS and Glasgow Airport, confirmed in March 2026 by the governments, and
- supporting initiatives on skills, business support and an innovation investment fund – to ensure the benefits of the Investment Zone are spread across the Region and provide long-term resilience of jobs and local supply chains.

Additional benefits to the local economy of up to £162 million will also come to the Region through the retention of additional non-domestic rates generated within the Investment Zone over 25 years, across the tax site and two additional designated locations. This will be re-invested into supporting the three high-growth sectors as well as local skills and jobs.

Find more information here: glasgowcityregion.co.uk/investment-zone

Watch the overview film

The Sub-Sectors and Projects

Space

Funding: £36.9 million

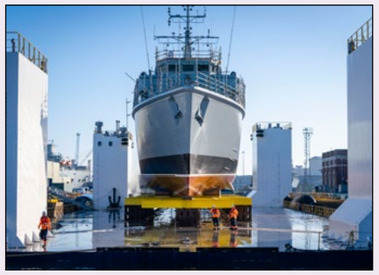
Outcomes:

Strengthening the Region's thriving space sector. Glasgow City Region is a world-leader in satellite manufacturing and is the second largest supplier of small satellites in the world after California, with around 30 companies in the Region.

Projects

Spacecraft Advanced Manufacturing and Testing Centre (Skyrora): boosting rocket-building capacity and providing additional launch capacity for more rockets to go into space, many of which carry satellites.

Platform for Scaling Responsive Space Systems Research, Innovation & Manufacturing (PRISM) (University of Strathclyde): a collaboration of 20 partner organisations delivering new, advanced infrastructure to support growth in the space sector and enhance our capacity to manufacture satellites, and supporting collaboration across government, industry and academia.



Maritime

Funding: £20 million

Outcomes

Embedded in Glasgow's industrial history, the local Maritime sector will continue to grow rapidly with a focus on new technology and innovation.

Projects

Maritime Supply Chain Innovation Centre (Malin Group): supporting the remediation of a brownfield site in Old Kilpatrick to enable the initial development of the Marine Technology Park, where the centre will be based. The development and associated infrastructure will include open-access facilities, shared resources, and critical maritime infrastructure, providing a space to support local Maritime R&D, SMEs and supply chains.

Semiconductors

Funding: £65.9 million

Outcomes

Strengthening Glasgow's position as a key player in the global semiconductor industry, through up-scaling local manufacturing and creating a leading capacity in advanced semiconductor packaging that is unmatched anywhere in the UK.

Projects

Laser Supply Chain and Advanced Packaging (University of Glasgow): establishing a world-class open-access semiconductor facility, with end-to-end infrastructure, to enable increased commercialisation and prototyping capability in advanced packaging.

National Centre for Advanced Semiconductor Packaging (NCASP) (University of Strathclyde): establishing a national centre for manufacturing at scale of advanced semiconductor devices such as photonics and power electronics. The open-access facility will support companies to grow and collaborate and boost the local supply chain.

Advanced Manufacturing Capacity for Sensor Technology (Neuranics) (University of Glasgow): establishing industry-led semiconductor sensor technology and commercialisation capability focused on magnetic sensing.

Smart and Connected Social Places Programme

Through our Smart and Connected Social Places Programme, Glasgow City Region is using 5G and advanced wireless technology to keep people safe, well and better connected in their homes and local communities.

As one of 11 UK Government-funded **5G Innovation Regions**, we led a series of pilots using digital connectivity to improve lives and transform public services, with a one-year funded extension granted in March 2025.

Projects involved the use of environmental sensors to monitor conditions associated with damp and mould in social housing, enabling landlords to identify issues earlier, respond more quickly and reduce repair costs. The programme is also improving connectivity by helping vulnerable residents use smart speakers to stay in touch with family and friends, access support services and provide an essential lifeline in the event of an emergency.

Building on the success of early trials, funding was secured to extend the **Barrhead Housing Smart Homes Project**, expanding the deployment of sensor technology to additional homes across East Renfrewshire. The project is helping tenants better manage energy use, identify environmental risks and improve wellbeing, while demonstrating a scalable model for wider adoption across the social housing sector.

In November 2025, Glasgow City Region secured **£348,000** through the UK Government's **Regulators' Pioneer Fund** to develop practical guidance for the safe and lawful deployment of sensor technologies in social housing and care settings. The project will help address regulatory barriers and support the wider adoption of innovative technologies.

Work is also progressing to improve mobile connectivity across the Region, including at major venues. As part of Scotland's largest mobile connectivity study, Glasgow City Region mapped mobile phone coverage street-by-street using sensors installed on bin lorries. The data is now available through a free mobile coverage checker, enabling residents and businesses to compare network performance and identify the best mobile provider for specific locations, while helping the Region work with mobile network operators to target investment and address coverage gaps.

The benefits are already being seen, with independent analysis by Ookla in 2025 indicating that Glasgow recorded the fastest median 5G download speeds of any major UK city, as well as the highest levels of 5G network consistency, outperforming Birmingham, Manchester, London and Edinburgh.

Watch our video for more information.

Innovation

One of the 14 programmes set out in the Region's Economic Strategy, the innovation programme spans a wide range of projects and initiatives which work together to grow our innovation economy, attract investment, and build lasting partnerships with business, universities and government.

Innovation Action Plan

The Region's Innovation Action Plan was published in November 2023, building on the work of the Region's Innovation Accelerator and the strong partnerships that this developed. Co-produced with Innovate UK and Scottish Enterprise, it sets out a coordinated approach to draw on current Regional strengths and provides a strategic focus which will support the growth of the Region's innovation clusters.

Progress in the last year included targeting investment to help address the infrastructure and skills needs of key clusters, including work with Invest Glasgow and other partners to attract investment into the Region and create a strong, collaborative innovation investment proposition

Innovation Accelerator

Funding: £43 million

Glasgow City Region was one of three UK regions selected by the UK Government to share £130 million in funding as part of the Innovation Accelerator (IA) programme, which sought to boost and drive substantial private sector investment into the local innovation economy.

The programme initially funded 11 innovative local projects from 2022 to 2025, with a one-year extension and additional funding supporting seven of the projects in 2025 to 2026.

It also included the establishment of an industry-led Innovation Accelerator Partnership, with a key focus on the Region's three Innovation Districts and their anchor higher education institutions – the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde.

The overall portfolio of projects across GCR leveraged co-investment at a ratio of 2.5:1 – well above the Treasury's expectation of 1:1 – with even more expected in coming years. At its conclusion, the programme had created more than 300 jobs, 42% of the project spend had gone to local suppliers in the Region, and almost 250 companies had been engaged.

Work on the programme also enhanced existing collaborations and led to the publication of the Regional Innovation Action Plan. As a result, innovation is now also a key workstream of the Glasgow Economic Leadership (GEL) board.

In recognition of the scale and depth of the Regional innovation eco-system and GCR's track record for delivery, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) pre-selected GCR for further investment through the Local Innovation Partnerships Fund.

Over the next year, this focus will shift towards a specific cluster growth plan.

Find out more

Local Innovation Partnerships Fund

Funding: £50 million

Announced in July 2025, the Local Innovation Partnerships Fund (LIPF) is supporting local innovations in science and technology, driving investment in local innovation strengths, and supporting triple-helix partnerships between civic institutions, business, and universities.

Following extensive stakeholder engagement, the Region's LIPF programme is focusing on the Health and Life Sciences sector – specifically Pharma, Bio Pharma, MedTech and Diagnostics.

This focus reflects GCR's position at the intersection of two of the UK's fastest-growing clusters – Health and Life Sciences and Digital Enabling Technologies – with recognised strengths in AI, sensors and quantum computing.

The programme will include £25 million for commercialisation of Research and Development (R&D) activities, £20 million to meet a shortfall in laboratory space, and £5 million for a complementary skills programme.

A draft portfolio, led by the GEL Innovation Group, recommends a series of R&D projects which include venture building, private sector investment, and supporting commercial pathways into the NHS. It also sets out a series of lab space projects, and a skills programme which will open up careers in the sector for Glasgow City Region residents.

Subject to Cabinet and UKRI approval, the programme will provide an integrated series of activities which help to establish GCR as one of the world's leading locations for the development of new medicines, diagnostics and health technologies, with a particular focus on tackling complex chronic diseases prevalent in the West of Scotland.

Find out more

Place

Our dedicated Place team leads on and supports a number of programmes which impact the economic, physical, environmental and social landscape of the Region, with work focused across four strands.

Clyde Mission

Clyde Mission is a national development priority focused on transforming the River Clyde corridor, led by Glasgow City Region.

Watch the overview video

The Strategic Masterplan will shape future regeneration and investment along the River Clyde and provide a blueprint to make the Clyde an engine of sustainable and inclusive growth.

Following a programme of stakeholder engagement in early 2026, a draft masterplan was considered by Cabinet and relevant partners in spring 2026. In June a public consultation was launched to enable members of the public to provide feedback and ideas on the proposed priorities within the draft masterplan. Once the feedback is incorporated, the masterplan will be finalised later in the year for final approval.

Launched in December 2025, the Heat Decarbonisation Fund offers capital grants to support the clean energy transition for projects along the River Clyde corridor. The first grant, £1.18 million for Strathclyde Country Park Watersports Centre was approved in May 2026, with further funding rounds to be announced.

Supporting Activity and Guidance

The Place team also supports a number of other programmes and themes including the Investment Zone (p.20), the Clyde Metro project, and the UK Government's AI Growth Zones, as well as other areas such as housing, land, green belt and minerals.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Work is underway to develop a **Regional Spatial Strategy** which will provide a coherent approach to long-term spatial choices and support the councils and other stakeholders to work together on strategic issues including investment and strategic developments, large-scale climate adaptation, and the creation of better places for people and nature. Discussions in early 2026 brought together the councils, partners and the new Regional Spatial Planning Sub-Committee to shape the strategy's scope. Workshops in autumn 2026 will explore the shared place ambitions and priorities.

Sustainable City Region Programme

The GCR Green Network includes initiatives that play a critical role in the Region's response to the climate and ecological crisis.

The **Nature Networks** project is mapping and expanding interconnected habitats across the Region, creating connected wildlife corridors and active travel routes for the Region's residents and reversing biodiversity loss.

Peatland restoration projects spanning several hundreds of hectares have also been completed including at Duchal Moor in Inverclyde and work continues through **Climate Ready Clyde** to deliver climate adaptation projects across the Region, enabled by £200,000 funding from the Scottish Government.

Working with various partners, the team established the **River Kelvin Catchment Partnership**, which will deliver interventions that enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, reduce flood risk and address climate resilience.

Clyde Climate Forest has planted four million trees across Glasgow City Region in its first four years of operation, including community planting at Cathkin Braes as part of the Glasgow 850 celebration.

The Intelligence Hub

The Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub is a multidisciplinary team consisting of economists, data scientists and policy researchers. Now in its seventh year, the team continues to find new ways to understand and address our socioeconomic challenges, while building on the Region's strengths.

The Hub's work spans a wide range of activity, from analysis and research to business case development, programme evaluation and partnership working.

Data Analysis and Policy Research

Economic Briefings: the team produces monthly briefings which provide a snapshot of the latest economic data and trends, research, and analysis. Bespoke briefings have also been produced on topics including AI, US tariff impacts, and Unpaid Care.

Anyone wishing to receive these updates can subscribe to the mailing list.

Member Authority Support: the team has developed research to support the member authorities including town centre socioeconomic baselines for South Lanarkshire Council and sectoral analyses as part of growth opportunities for Inverclyde Council. This work is supporting economic development activities and the evidence base to support the creation of Local Development Plans.

Health Modelling: an embedded researcher has joined the Hub as part of the UKRI-funded Policy Modelling for Health (HealthMod) project. They are working with policy makers and academics to produce evidence supporting policy decisions that intervene on the economic determinants of ill health and health inequalities.

Supporting Programme Development

City Deal: the Hub continues to provide analysis to support the Glasgow City Region PMO to oversee the development of the City Deal programme, from business case reviews to GIS mapping.

Foundational Economy: using the evidence base gathered over the past three years, the Hub worked with partners from across the Region to develop a proposal for a Foundational Economy pilot. The team continues to work with the PMO and Glasgow City Council to roll out the pilot and will conduct an evaluation of the programme.

Inverclyde – A Regional Priority: the team has conducted a range of analysis looking at intraregional economic disparities. This work was central to the decision to make Inverclyde a Regional priority. Working with the PMO and Inverclyde Council's employability team, the Hub has contributed to the design of a place-based programme to address economic inactivity due to ill-health in young people.

Labour Market Study: the Intelligence Hub has commenced a study looking at how the Region's labour market operates. This work will include a series of interim outputs covering rates of no qualifications, quality of labour in the Region, and future labour market demand conditions, with an overarching report produced at the end.

Investment Zone: the Hub provided economic analysis and insight to support the development of the Investment Zone. This role has now evolved to supporting the business case development and evaluation.

GCR Place: the Hub supports the GCR Place team across a range of tasks. This includes creating data and tools to help identify Strategic Employment Land, updating dashboards and apps such as the Housing Land Audit, and providing guidance and data for Clyde Mission.

Other RES Programmes: the team continues to provide analysis to support the development of the Regional Economic Strategy programmes.

Business Case Development and Economic Modelling

The Intelligence Hub's economic model was developed in-house to quantify the economic impact of development programmes. The team has continued to use this model to support local authority, Regional and partner teams to understand the potential impact and value-for-money of development projects.

Project and Programme Evaluation

ExtendPlus: members of the team carried out an evaluation of the ExtendPlus project, part of the Regional Economic Strategy's Green Business Support Programme, assessing the programme's effectiveness and impact.

City Deal GRIP: the Hub will play a prominent role in the City Deal's Gateway Readiness Improvement Plan (GRIP), carrying out consultation with project managers and stakeholders to evaluate the benefits generated by City Deal investment in individual projects.

Sistema Big Noise: the Hub contributed to the evaluation of Sistema Scotland's Big Noise programme, including producing an updated cost-benefit analysis and highlighting further measures which would help to improve future evaluation.

Partnership Working

Over the past year, the team has worked in partnership with a wide range of organisations to support evidence-led decision making including Glasgow Airport; the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde; the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; the Improvement Service; Glasgow Life; and the Ayrshire Growth Deal.

UK Government Local Growth Fund

Funding: £60.9 million

Purpose: Supporting regional economic growth through business support, skills, employability and capital investment programmes.

What change will it bring?

Over the next three years, GCR's Local Growth Fund programme will build on the priorities of the Regional Economic Strategy, complement other strategic interventions across the Region, and support our aspirations towards Regional empowerment. GCR's allocation of £60.9 million over three years will be delivered across four new programmes. This three-year allocation is broadly equivalent in cash terms to a single year (the current year) under the previous UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), representing a substantial reduction in revenue funding.

Progress to date:

The proposed Local Growth Fund Investment Plan for the Region was submitted to the UK Government in May 2026. The proposed Investment Plan sets out GCR's intention to fund Regional projects that will drive economic growth and enable strategic decision-making, across both Revenue and Capital Allocations.

Revenue

Funding for year one was approved by Cabinet to support the eight councils to deliver established Business Support, Skills and Employability interventions, enabling a continuity of provision from previous SPF allocations. Recommended revenue allocations for years two and three (2027/28 and 2028/29) will support the developing Regional Empowerment agenda. Final funding recommendations will be presented towards the end of the calendar year when detailed Regional Empowerment proposals are due.

Capital

Capital funding will build on established activity, with the development of wider regional strategic activity of scale planned for the second half of the timeframe. Following an Expression of Interest call to the member authorities for Regional projects of scale, the following approach has been put forward: Enhancement of the established Enabling Commercial Space Programme (£20 million); Regional Projects of Scale (£20 million); Net Zero Transition Funding (£2.5 million).

Regional Economic Strategy

Launched in December 2021, our Regional Economic Strategy (RES) was developed in partnership with our eight councils, government partners and agencies. It sets out an evidence base for our economy, the future challenges we face, the opportunities we must grasp and where we need to prioritise our resource.

An updated Action Plan which takes account of the changing economic, social, and political environment was agreed at August 2024 Cabinet and sets out high-level actions to support delivery.

The Regional partners' commitment to transforming the economy and addressing key challenges can be seen in a vision and three interlinked missions.

Vision

By 2030, Glasgow City Region will have the most innovative, inclusive and resilient economy in the UK.

Mission 1

By 2030, the Region will have the most inclusive major city-region economy in the UK.

Mission 2

By 2030, the Region will have the most productive major city-region economy in the UK.

Mission 3

By 2030, the Region will have the most advanced city-region economy in the UK in the race to net zero and climate resilience.

The RES Programmes

The RES includes 14 programmes with progress on delivery provided at the Glasgow City Region Cabinet.

1. **Glasgow City Region City Deal** (see p.10)
2. **Innovation Programme** (see p.24)
3. **Investment Programme** (see p.20)
4. **Clyde Mission** (see p.26)
5. **Sustainable City Region Programme** (see p.27)
6. **Clyde Metro Programme**

Supporting the scoping and delivery of Clyde Metro, a fully-integrated mass transit network across Glasgow City Region.

Led by SPT, the project is currently at Case for Investment (CFI) Stage 2 involving development of the Programme Business Case and supporting workstreams.

New governance arrangements introduced in 2025 established Cabinet as CFI stage Clyde Metro Project Sponsors. And the agreed PLACES x Clyde Metro programme will quantify the place and development impact of the investment to build a more holistic investment case for future stages.

7. Housing Retrofit Programme

Making homes in the Region warmer, more energy efficient and to reducing carbon emissions by accelerating the installation of energy efficiency measures and clean heat systems (retrofitting).

The GCR Home Retrofit Strategy and Action Plan (2025-28) was approved in February 2025.

A review by GCR of the impact of the Scottish Government's Area Based Scheme Grant Funding prompted changes to internal processes across the member authorities, and the Housing Retrofit Delivery Group continued to engage with the Scottish Government in developing the Heat in Buildings Bill.

8. Future Skills Programme

Addressing key skills needs and building a pipeline of future-ready skilled workers across the Region, with a focus on sectors and occupations facing skills and workforce challenges.

Activity in the past period has spanned planning, environmental health and maritime skills, alongside ongoing engagement with the Scottish Government on Regional skills devolution.

Local Government Skills: Planning Graduate Apprenticeship

As part of work to address local government skills shortages, GCR focused on supporting the recruitment and retention of planning professionals.

GCR worked with the University of the West of Scotland to establish a new Planning Graduate Apprenticeship Programme, including a two-year conversion course, to offer a pathway into the planning profession that allows students to earn while studying.

The programme launched its first cohort in February 2025, on the two-year conversion course, followed by a four-year undergraduate course which began in September 2025. A third cohort is due to start in September 2026.

Building on this model, a similar route is being explored for Environmental Health professionals, a profession facing similar challenges, including talks with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, HR and Environmental Health leads across the member authorities.

Maritime Skills

The Scottish Government is supporting the development of a Maritime Skills programme for Glasgow City Region with a grant of over £1 million. Designed in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, the eight councils, six colleges and industry partners, the programme will build a pipeline of skilled workers for the maritime sector across a range of targeted interventions.

One of these interventions is the establishment of the Working Optimisation on the River Clyde Group, which has worked with BAE Systems to help create and fund a structured entry route into Trade Operative roles – a new entry-level job. This has already seen 11 candidates successfully complete a four-week course at Glasgow Clyde College and go on to start a probationary period with BAE Systems. A second cohort commenced in February 2026.

9. Economy and Health Programme

A range of initiatives from fair work and pay, to place-based investment, recognising that a healthier population supports a stronger, more inclusive economy – and vice versa.

Launched in November 2024, the campaign to Make Glasgow City Region a Living Wage Place seeks to uplift incomes for some of the Region's lowest-paid workers. With year one targets achieved, a refreshed Action Plan supports year two activities, including a targeted focus on the retail, hospitality and care sectors.

In January 2026, in partnership with The Good Economy, Place-Based Impact Investing work was launched. Focused on diversifying and broadening funding sources, this work addresses local challenges and builds on the Region's strengths. A final report to Cabinet in May 2026 sets out recommended next steps.

GCR grant funding supported a scoping exercise for a regional 'multibank' model to distribute surplus quality goods, building on the successful model in Fife. The new multibank approach for GCR launched in June 2026.

The Economies for Healthier Lives' Capital Investment Health Impact Assessment toolkit was piloted across a number of key Regional and local authority-led projects, and a final evaluation report completed in January 2026.

Making GCR a Living Wage Place

In December 2025, the campaign to Make Glasgow City Region a Living Wage Place surpassed its ambitious year one target of 200 new Living Wage accredited employers in the Region, uplifting wages for almost 2,000 workers.

Backed by Living Wage Scotland and supported by local leaders and key employers, the campaign involves working closely with businesses, local authorities and third sector organisations to drive Living Wage accreditations. This includes the work of a dedicated Action Group of employers and partners.

The campaign has now entered year two with a focus on securing a further 200 new accreditations and ensuring that 2,500 workers receive a pay uplift to the real Living Wage.

10. Inclusive Economy Programme

Driving a stronger and more resilient GCR economy by supporting an inclusive Regional economy.

The programme's current focus is on support for the Foundational Economy (FE) – the everyday services such as care, public transport, and retail that are essential to daily life. This work is underpinned by research from the Intelligence Hub which highlighted that the FE makes up over 60% of jobs and 40% of businesses within GCR and covers a significant proportion of low paid jobs in the economy.

Ongoing activity includes the development and delivery of a Foundational Economy Challenge Fund, initially focused on Early Learning and Childcare in Glasgow City.

Foundational Economy Challenge Fund

Supported by analyses by the Region's Intelligence Hub, Glasgow City Region and Glasgow City Council launched a pilot Challenge Fund for the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) sector in early 2026, building on learning from Greater Manchester. The Fund aims to help ELC providers to develop their own new and creative ways of tackling key challenges faced by the industry.

The nine successful bids will receive financial support and access to expertise, including a peer networking community of practice, as they deliver their projects over 12 months.

The intention is to extend the Fund to other sectors within the Foundational Economy, based on the learning from the pilot.

11. Green Business Support Programme

ExtendPlus supported local SMEs to measure and reduce their carbon emissions.

Concluded in 2025, 288 Carbon Baseline Reports and 345 business referrals were completed with an evaluation of the project carried out by the Region's Intelligence Hub.

12. Electric Vehicle and Infrastructure Programme

In December 2025, we launched one of the largest procurement exercises of its type in the UK to boost the number of Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points by more than 3,000 across the Region.

This will eventually appoint a private sector Charge Point Operator over a period of 20 years to install new charge points in local authority owned car parks and on-street locations, and to take over management of the existing network of 600+ local authority owned charge points. The contract will widen access to EV charging across the Region, including in areas less attractive to the private sector, supporting a more just transition to zero emission transport.

Five suppliers were short-listed from the Invitation to Participate which closed in February 2026, with the Invitation to Tender expected to be published in August 2026.

13. Commercial Land and Property

Supporting new commercial property and land development through work to bring Vacant and Derelict Land (V&DL) sites back into use, energy efficiency analysis of commercial and industrial premises, and the creation of economic dashboards for GCR's largest town centres.

Work continues on the Strategic Employment Locations Study, which will contribute to Local Development Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy activities, and a draft report was considered by the Regional Economy Planning Group in April 2026.

14. Inverclyde

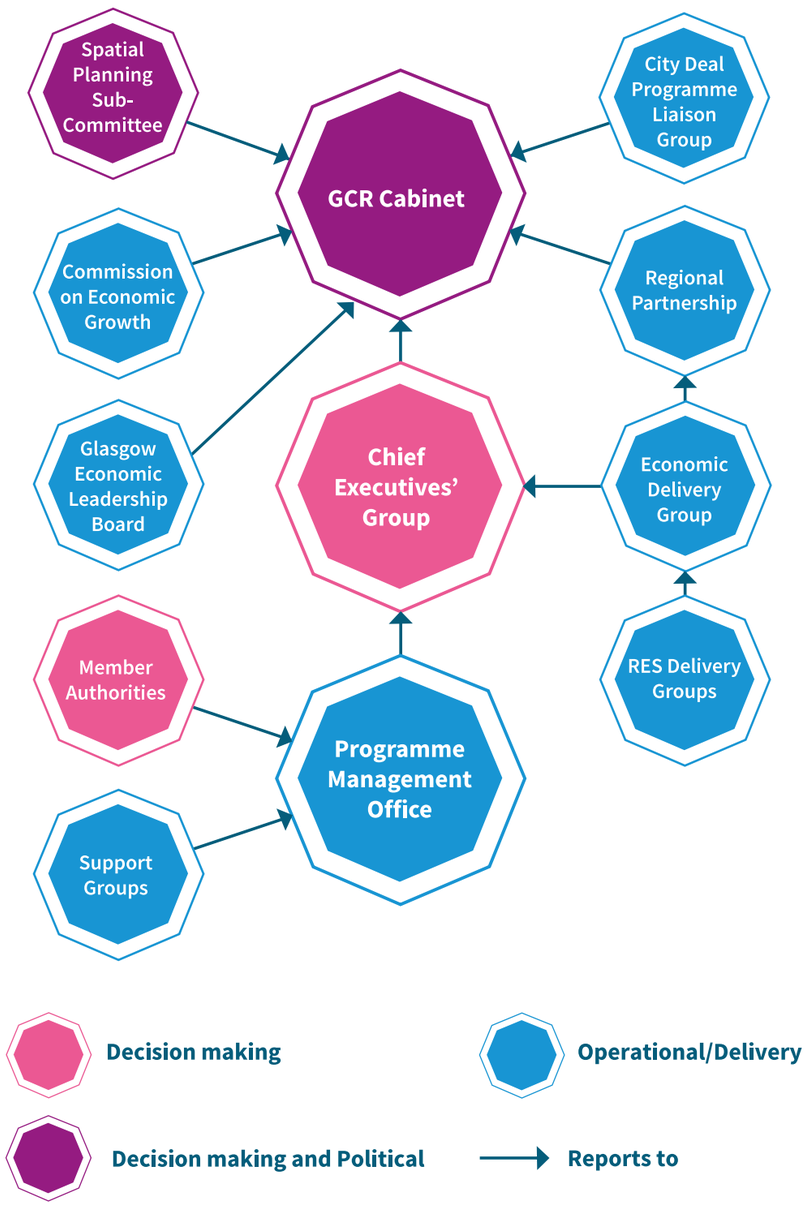
In February 2025, Cabinet approved the inclusion of a new programme for Inverclyde, following a review by the Intelligence Hub of Inverclyde's economic performance which identified a case for designating Inverclyde as a Regional priority.

Working with Inverclyde Council, the GCR Hub and the PMO co-designed a targeted intervention to address economic inactivity due to ill-health among young people, with a costed proposal agreed in December 2025. Inverclyde Council is now seeking funding for delivery, with the GCR team continuing to provide co-design support.

Governance

Glasgow City Region is underpinned by formal governance agreements and ongoing scrutiny. Full details of the governance and structures are available on the GCR website.

Full audited accounts are reported to Cabinet annually and publicly available as part of the published Cabinet papers.



Outlook for the year ahead

Glasgow City Region is in great shape.

With over ten years of the City Deal under our belt, we continue to maintain a track record of delivery which now stretches beyond infrastructure into work to boost key sectors of growth within our innovation economy, place-making, 5G and digital, activities to drive a more inclusive economy such as our local Living Wage campaign and collective Regional investment plans for government funding.

Our political partnership is established and working well. We have steered a steady trajectory in our scope and funding – particularly over recent years – and now manage a portfolio of over £2 billion.

We are among a select few UK regions to benefit from a partnership with the National Wealth Fund and to have been granted an Investment Zone (£190 million) and Local Innovation Partnerships Fund (£50 million).

The Region is underpinned by a strong Programme Management Office and a dedicated in-house Intelligence Hub that provides the data and insight to support key policy and funding decisions, and to allow us to better understand our local economy and the areas we must focus on to achieve our ambitions.

All of this, along with the work underway this year with councils and wider partners to scope and shape our specific asks from government for further powers and funding, prove that we are ready and able.

We welcome the signals from the UK Government around acceleration of devolved powers. Together with the promised changes in legislation by the Scottish Government, this will give us the final levers we need to place us on an equal standing with other UK cities and regions that benefit from greater powers and levels of funding.

Ultimately, enabling us to make more decisions and targeted funding at a local level will position us to do all of the things we need to do, and at greater pace, to support and grow the local economy and to address long-standing issues of poverty and inequality.

Kevin Rush

Director of Regional Economic Growth