

ITEM No ...6.....

REPORT TO: CITY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2026
REPORT ON: COMMUNITY WISHES UPDATE
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
REPORT NO: 12-2026

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress with the implementation of the Community Wishes approach for Dundee City Council, which was delivered as an expansion to the Community Benefits programme and as part of the Council's Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the information within this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Community Wishes approach was approved on 4 March 2024 (Report 23-2024 approved by City Governance Committee 4 March 2024 refers) and was officially launched in August 2024 for communities to request wishes, and in September 2024 for contractors. The above report noted that a further update would be brought back to City Governance Committee after the first year the scheme was in operation.

4.2 The programme operates by asking communities to put forward wishes they would like to see delivered in their community or to support a local group. These can be wide ranging but typically include support for small installations, maintenance or clean-up projects, materials or volunteering time to complete projects, sponsorship etc. These requests are then moderated to ensure that they can be undertaken e.g. having all relevant consents, and crucially, that they are sought after by the wider community before being published on a public facing website. <https://wishes.dundee.gov.uk/>.

4.3 To run the Community Wishes process the council developed an in-house IT system for processing and moderating requests. As there is no dedicated resource to support Community Wishes, activity is shared across several service areas to deliver wishes. The approach has been specifically designed to ensure the appropriate support and input for these various disciplines are correct and specialist input is provided in line with the requirements of a specific wish.

4.4 Contracted providers are directed to the online portal and can select a wish to fulfil as part of their contractual community benefit commitment. Community benefits should be proportionate to the contract value and Dundee has agreed to specify the delivery of a community wish or other community benefit outcome into contracts, for approximately every £100,000 of spend. The system has been popular with communities with multiple requests being made on the portal, and targeted work to engage contractors.

5.0 PROGRESS TO DATE (DECEMBER 2025)

5.1 There are 56 Community Wishes on the portal, and of those 22 or over a third have been selected for delivery by a contractor. Of these, 13 have been delivered (details below) and 9 are in the process of being delivered.

5.2 Delivered Projects

A summary of delivered projects is provided below with more detail on some of the projects provided in the Case Studies in Appendix 1:

- Feasibility study for Street Soccer (the Change Centre) to develop a community sound studio in partnership with Doof Studios. This has been delivered by Robertsons Construction as part of their East End Campus Contract.
- Forklift Training for two workers from Dundee Bairns allowed the charity to operate its distribution centre for five days rather than three, significantly increasing their capacity. This was delivered by McLaughlin and Harvey as part of their Green Travel Hub Contract.
- Sponsorship of a Parkinsons Football Charity Event for Dundee FC Community Trust, sponsored by Kilmac as part of Robertsons Barnhill Phase 4 Small Works Contract.
- Small Portable Projector for Lead Scotland to allow them to deliver sessions for those who are disabled and/or carers in community venues who don't have access to technology. This project was supported by Legrand Electrical UK in relation to their Contract for the Service and Maintenance of Warden Call Systems.
- Pat Testing for Togs, delivered by Robertsons in relation to their Blackness Primary Small Works Contract.
- The provision of Heras fencing at the change centre to secure some of their outdoor areas, provided by Robertsons as part of their Eastern Primary School Small Works contract.
- A further £5,000 donation to the delivery of the Doof Studio facility in the Change Centre, supported by Robertson in relation to their DCA Roof lighting contract.
- A £1,000 donation to the Dundee Fair Trade Forum to allow them to deliver a challenge fund for local schools to encourage them to undertake Fair Trade activity as part of Fair-Trade Week. This has also been supported by Robertsons Tayside in relation to their Gellatly Street Small Works Project.
- The provision of a new printer for Campy Growers, delivered by Robertsons Tayside as part of their Yeamans Lane small works contract.
- Volunteering including weeding, power washing, repairing planters and fence painting transformed One Parent Families garden, provided by Field and Lawn Ltd, in relation to their City Centre Christmas Decorations contract.
- The provision of a new storage shed for Friends of Clatto and Douglas Community Spaces Group, provided by Robertson Construction in relation to small works contracts at Cragiebarns Primary and Beauly Avenue respectively.
- Support to paint and renovate social enterprise cafe Brawtea provided by Robertsons construction as part of their East End Campus contract.

Pending projects include donation of uniforms to Age Concern volunteers, donations to a parent council run clothes bank and donations to a community foodbank. In addition, there is a steady flow of new requests coming into the system.

5.3 **Lessons Learned** **Engaging with Contractors**

While comparable data on the percentage of wishes delivered from other authorities' programmes is not available, anecdotal evidence shared by other authorities at the development stage suggests that a delivery rate of just over a third of wishes being delivered is considered positive. However, while 59 contractors have registered to the system only 8 have translated this into delivering wishes and of those there has been a high reliance on the larger construction contractors, more familiar with delivering Community Benefit outcomes. The low take up rate could partly be due to issues with the functionality of the system, which is evolving.

There is recognition that more direct targeting is required to highlight the approach to contractors and explain responsibilities. More direct marketing is planned, and work is underway to publicise details of delivered wishes which will hopefully encourage contractors to register and deliver wishes.

5.4 **Development Requirements**

As would be expected with any newly implemented process, there have been some challenges, namely in relation to the online system, staff training and moderation process. While extensive planning was undertaken prior to implementation, there are lessons learned which are being taken forward. These are currently being addressed and include:

- **System Improvements**

Multiple improvements have been identified to make the process work more efficiently. These are being actively worked through with IT colleagues.

- **Staff Training**

The agreed approach in Dundee is that responsibility for different elements of the programme spread across several staff, including community officers for moderation, expert panel members for checking and procurement category officers for contractor allocations. Training is being planned to take account of lessons learned in the first year.

- **Confusion on the Scale of Projects**

The Procurement Reform Act provides the justification for requiring contractors to deliver community benefit activity, including community wishes. It sets out that requests should be proportionate to the size of contracts. Community Wishes are intended to be small in nature to ensure proportionality, with larger projects encouraged to be split over multiple requests or referred to more appropriate sources of support. The interpretation of 'small' has caused some confusion and has been addressed through the production of more detailed guidance for communities' staff based on learning from other areas and where required the use of AI to assess the scale of project requests. We have also learned that most works proposals have benefited from a feasibility stage to fully identify their requirements. New guidance will encourage this to be considered as a first step.

- **Improved Guidance and Communication**

While rejection reasons have been built into the system there is an identified need to review and improve information and guidance for communities and contractors regarding what can and cannot be supported. New communities' guidance will help this.

Works Projects in Council Buildings

A potential risk around wishes which would include works which may be Construction Design and Management (CDM) applicable has been identified. Particular concern has been raised in relation to Council owned or leased properties. This has required the development of an additional process which is currently being integrated into the wider programme. This will ensure that no works activity can take place within a Council leased

building without the permission of the lease holder, or for Council operated buildings without the involvement and approval of the relevant property officer.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

6.1 The development group continues to work to improve the programme and address issues. Priorities are:

- To integrate additional requirements into the assessment process to take account of departmental advice on works and council owned, leased or operated projects. (March 2026)
- To produce improved guidance for communities and contractors. (March 2026)
- To undertake training with communities and procurement staff. (March 2026)
- Proactively encourage contractors to pick up wishes through targeted programmes, contract management and marketing to explain the Community benefits approach to contractors. (March to May 2026)
- Develop improved mechanisms to better report on the outcomes of Community Wishes, including improvements to the portal and more formal reporting to Local Community Planning Partnerships on wishes delivered. (June 2026)
- Community Wishes will be reported annually as part of the Annual Procurement Report.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 This report highlights the successes and challenges experienced in the development and delivery of a Community Wishes approach for Dundee in its first year. It acknowledges the activity delivered and committed to, which will result in benefits to the communities of Dundee, the additional value secured from contracted provision and contribution to Community Wealth Building. It also recognises the challenges of delivering such an ambitious programme within existing resources, acknowledging the contribution of staff from across the organisation and recognising the need to further improve and streamline the process.

8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

APPENDIX 1 - CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1 - Dundee FC Community Trust: Parkinsons Walking Football Event



Kilmac Limited provided £1,000 in Sponsorship funding to Dundee FC Community Trust to support them to deliver a launch event for their Parkinsons Walking Football event. This was targeted at people of all abilities who had been affected by Parkinsons and was intended to provide exercise and an opportunity for social interaction. This initial event has led to the development of a weekly Parkinsons Walking Group at the Change Centre. This contribution was delivered as part of Robertsons Barnhill Phase 4 Small Works Contract. David, a participant of the programme said:

'I thoroughly enjoy it and wouldn't miss it. I know the exercises are getting harder and harder, but I am managing to do them. It just the fact of being here and doing this, its unbelievable I would recommend to anyone.'

To see more about David's story, please see here: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/17PuzkRVtI/>

Case Study 2 - Fair Trade Forum



Robertson Tayside selected a project proposed by Dundee Fair-Trade Forum, when selecting their community wish in relation to their Gellatly Street Small Works Contract. The Fair-Trade Forum Dundee had asked for sponsorship of £500 to help them repeat a previous small grants project they had run in Dundee schools in 2023 to help celebrate Fair Trade Fortnight. Robertsons were so impressed by their proposal that they agreed to provide £1,000 in sponsorship to run the 2025 programme which was also supported by Scotmid. Fairtrade Fortnight 2025 took place between 22 September to 5 October 2025. Primary, secondary, college and youth groups were invited to apply for grants of £50 for Primary and youth groups and £50 plus £50 in Scotmid Vouchers for secondary schools and colleges and universities. Seven Schools participated including Sidlaw View Primary, Harris Academy and St Paul's. Sally Romily, Secretary of the Fair-Trade Forum said:

'The message of this project was that making a small switch to Fair Trade supports farmers and producers in protecting the future of some of our most loved food and the planet, we are thankful to Robertsons and Scotmid for supporting us to run this initiative'.

A wide range of activities including Fair Trade Themed Scavenger Hunts and a Quiz at Harris Academy, Fair Trade Learning weeks linked to the United Nation Development goals and arrange of fair-trade taster sessions and tuck shops. Feedback is currently being gathered and the activity identified as making the biggest impact and will be awarded a further £100 of Scotmid Vouchers to support more Fair-Trade Activity.

Case Study 3 - Dundee Bairns



Mclaughlin and Harvey, chose to deliver a wish from Dundee Bairns as part of their Green Travel Hub contract. Dundee Bairns, a local charity, provides essential support to families living in poverty in Dundee including support with bedding, essential toiletries and other items families require. They often respond to emergency referrals for support but had an issue in accessing all of their stock on some days as not all of their warehouse staff were trained to use the forklift. Through Community Wishes they were able to have two additional staff trained to use the forklift, organised and funded by Mclaughlin and Harvey. This has made a real difference to their organisation. Dee Pearce Business Manager noted that:

'Now we are in a much better position to quickly fill referrals and continue to expand our operations. Thank you for supporting us'.

Case Study 4 - Doof Studio



Robertson Construction Tayside have supported several wishes requested by Street Soccer at the Change Centre, Dundee with their exciting plans to convert a redundant changing room into a bespoke Music Studio for community use. The “Doof Studio” is being delivered in partnership with Hannah Laing and Turn the tables.

Robertson have supported the Community Wish raised through DCC’s portal to provide Feasibility and Business Case support for the works. This included partner meetings with Turn the Tables, an onsite survey of the conversion space and meeting with DCC Building Control. They provided formal design of the space via one of their in-house Design Managers and fully supported the submission of a Building Warrant application, which was subsequently approved. In addition, they have further supported the Change Centre with a charitable donation to contribute toward the project and will look to assist with the delivery of works as the project progresses.

Robertsons have indicated that Supporting the Doof Studio project has had a really positive impact on their team. It has strengthened our relationship with local organisations like Street Soccer, Turn The Tables and Dundee City Council, and it has shown how we can work together to deliver something that benefits the whole community. It has also allowed staff to use our skills in a meaningful way, from the very early stages of planning through to design and support for delivery. It has allowed our team to work closely with partners on something that goes beyond construction and helps to improve opportunities for people in the local area.

Kyle Fraser Social Enterprise Manager at Street Soccer indicated:

“We were blown away by your financial contribution and providing expert support and advice through the DCC Dundee Wish Scheme (feasibility study) for the doof music studio. This studio will serve as a transformative space, providing a creative outlet for young people and adults in areas of deprivation”

Case Study 5 - Lead Scotland Dundee Learning Project



Legrand Electrical, contractor for the Repair and Maintenance of Warden Call System is a part of a large global group. They noted that the creation of the Community Wishes system has helped them enormously with choosing a local charity which aligned with their values and reminded them the importance of supporting grass roots charities. They have indicated that they would look to use the wishes system again.

The Lead Scotland Dundee Learning Project works with adults over 16, resident in Dundee, who identify as disabled or are a carer, and supports them to learn new skills such as literacy, numeracy, digital skills, volunteering and more. They also offer tailored learning sessions to small groups at local accessible community venues. Our services are free, person centred and confidential. They were seeking a small portable projector to allow them to deliver their programme in spaces which don't have access to technology. This programme is intended to increase people's digital confidence, stay safe online and help them to better manage their own health and wellbeing through using digital platforms. Amy O'Reilly, Learning Services Manager, Lead Scotland, noted the impact this had had on their group:

"Having the projector has had a huge positive impact on our ability to reach more people in the community to help them achieve their learning goals. Before we were limited to using venues or only attending groups who had their own projector in place, or we had to use alternatives like printed handouts which was a huge barrier and not accessible or inclusive. Now our answer is always yes! Thanks again to Legrand Electrical for the kind gift and thank you to the Community Wishes Team."

**Case
Study
6 Braw
Tea**



Robertsons Construction already had an established relationship with local social enterprise Cafe Braw Tea, having previously worked with them on an employability support programme. Braw Tea use their cafe as a base for delivering support and training to a range of women in the city including those who are refugees, have health issues, those who are unemployed and struggling to get back into employment and those who are socially isolated.

Braw Tea put a community wish on the portal requesting help with painting as part of a wider renovation of the Cafe. Robertsons were happy to help bringing in local contractor Angus Dec to support the painting, which required scaffolding to reach high roof spaces and beams something the cafe would not have been able to afford to do on their own.

Cafe founder Jackie McKenzie says:

"I was delighted when they got in touch with me...When I put the wish up there, I thought nobody would pick it up because it's such a big job. I'm really chuffed. It looks so much fresher, cleaner and more modern. Now I feel like it fits our ethos of doing local, seasonal food from scratch."

Kris Sparks, pre-construction director at Robertson Construction Tayside said

"Braw Tea provides a safe, supportive space for women in the local community. The condition of the building was holding that back. Through Dundee City Council's Community Wishes scheme we were able to step in and help out with the support of our supply chain. A simple intervention like this can have a real impact for volunteers, staff and customers. It is good to see the space brought back into use in a way that reflects what the cafe stands for."



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