

CASH-FIRST IN COMMUNITY FOOD SETTINGS RESEARCH REPORT

Insights from Glasgow

MAY 2024



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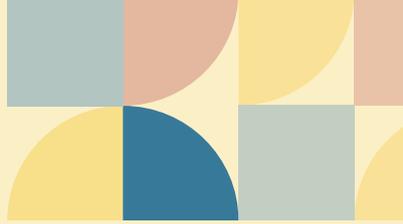


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This report details the findings and recommendations of a research project commissioned by the Glasgow Community Food Network and funded by Scottish Government. The research explored how **cash-first** approaches might be implemented in community food settings. Using qualitative methodologies, we engaged with community food initiatives (CFIs) across Glasgow.

We aimed to understand the awareness and effectiveness of **cash-first** supports, such as support to access advice, the Scottish Welfare Fund and vouchers, within CFIs as well as gauge the readiness of the sector to be involved in city-wide planning to develop **cash-first** as an approach to tackling food insecurity across Glasgow.

We found there is varied understanding of the term **cash-first** and how it might be implemented. Despite this, there was broad support for approaches which put money in people's pockets as well as evidence of lots of existing **cash-first** activity already happening in community food settings. Dignity, choice and control were often considered central to **cash-first** approaches. However, first-hand accounts revealed a panoply of challenges related to funding, resource and overwhelming demand. In addition, we found challenges related to specific experiences, such as for people seeking asylum, the participation and involvement of people with lived experience of food insecurity and the provision of existing **cash-first** supports within CFIs.

There is clearly appetite across the sector to collaborate and work together to develop **cash-first** approaches in the city, with lots of ideas and suggestions provided by research participants, as detailed in the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Increased opportunity for CFIs to develop a shared understanding of *cash-first*** such as through training, workshops, and spaces for conversations
- 2 Exploration of how *cash-first* supports might be implemented in CFIs**, for example, through the development of a variety of 'cash-first in action' profiles or scenarios that reflect the diversity of the sector and the different contexts in which organisations are working.
- 3 Increased opportunities for CFIs to learn about the drivers of food insecurity** and why people may experience income crisis, as well as facilitated opportunities to discuss sector attitudes and beliefs about people who experience food insecurity.
- 4 Improved and increased participatory mechanisms** for people with lived experience of food insecurity to be involved in leading and designing *cash-first* approaches within CFI settings
- 5 Citywide engagement with people with No Recourse to Public Funds** to understand how specific barriers faced can be overcome through the development and investigation of the recommendations laid out in Spotlight 1
- 6 Greater clarity from Scottish Government** on the responsibilities of different actors in implementing *cash-first* approaches, including the role of CFIs, the Local Authority, and Scottish Government.
- 7 For CFIs to contribute toward a *cash-first* approach, they need multi-year and unrestricted funding.** There also needs to be adequate additional resource provided to the sector for developing and delivering *cash-first* supports alongside their core services.
- 8 Place-based and joined up *cash-first* approaches to be established** through the resourced development of local partnerships and networks

INTRODUCTION

Scottish Government has funded four community food networks across Scotland to investigate Cash-First in Community Food Settings. Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) is one of those networks. GCFN has enlisted the services of delve to explore and understand how **cash-first** fits into or could fit into community food settings. This report details the key findings and recommendations from this research as well as four 'Spotlights on Experience'.

Why Cash-First?

In May 2023, the Scottish Government published their new plan – Cash First: towards ending the need for food banks in Scotland (1). This plan details the Scottish Government's human rights approach to tackling food insecurity and has three overarching objectives to improving responses:

- **Strengthen access to cash in a crisis**
- **Integrate money advice to prevent future need**
- **Maximise dignity and choice when food is provided**

The plan is intended to tackle the increasing numbers of people accessing emergency food aid in Scotland, numbers which have been rising, sharply, year on year for over a decade (2). It consists of 9 actions all of which aim to reduce the numbers of people who have to rely on emergency food provision to feed themselves and / or their family. Sitting at the heart of these actions is a **cash-first** approach.

Cash-first

"Ready access to emergency income when someone has no money for food. To prevent future hardship this should be delivered alongside welfare rights and income maximisation and support" (1)

In a **cash-first** approach to food insecurity, access to entitlements or supports which put money in people's pockets are prioritised over referrals to food-based responses, such as food banks or pantries, which are seen as a last resort, as detailed in Figure 1.

Cash First: Ending the need for charitable food aid



Figure 1: IFAN's hierarchy of cash-first supports

This approach has been favoured by anti-poverty campaigners as well as food bank networks across the UK, such as [Trussell Trust](#) and [IFAN](#) (3). There are a number of reasons for this. It has been well documented that experiencing food insecurity is distressing and can have long term negative impacts on both physical and mental health (4, 5). Similarly, studies have found that meeting nutritional, cultural and social needs related to food can be very challenging when having to rely on charitable donations (6). **Cash-first** is thought to reduce some of these potential harms in two key ways.

The first is that people have a better understanding of their own circumstances than services or institutions do, meaning they will know best how to make use of any money received and the second is that it provides people with choice and control over the food they buy, ultimately providing more dignity and autonomy (7, 8).

Helpful information!

In Scotland every Local Authority has the Scottish Welfare Fund. People who are eligible can apply to this for a non-repayable grant when they are experiencing an income crisis.

In addition, food aid providers have long been sounding the alarm about their capacity to meet increasing demand for support, which is currently overwhelming (9). **Cash-first** is an attempt to direct people towards other forms of support, which allow people the freedom to purchase food of their choosing rather than having to access a food bank or another form of food provision.

Why Community Food Settings?

Community food organisations, initiatives and projects support people in a variety of important ways, which often reach far beyond food. Indeed, community food activities can come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Public Health Scotland (10) provides a helpful definition of the types of initiatives which typically fall under community food. Community food initiatives:

are usually third sector organisations that work with or within geographic communities or communities of interest to grow, prepare, supply, sell and/or share affordable, nutritious and sustainable food. Food may be extra to the work of CFIs, or it may be used to meet aims such as tackling isolation or supporting community cohesion

Community food settings can also be trusted places where people seek support, and it is for this reason that they are important in the context of food insecurity and **cash-first**.

Whilst the increasing numbers of people seeking emergency food aid is deeply concerning, these numbers represent only a proportion of people experiencing food insecurity (11) and do not include those who seek support from other places. It is likely that the true scale of need is higher than the story which food bank figures alone can tell us. Similarly, we know that shame and stigma can prevent people from accessing support when experiencing a crisis (4) and that this is particularly acute for people accessing emergency food aid.

Community food settings are an important component of the system of support available to people in Glasgow and Scotland. This is clearly recognised in Scottish Government's Cash-first: towards ending the need for food banks plan. Of the 9 actions detailed, Action 4 is specifically focused on supporting '*wellbeing through community food approaches*' in recognition of the '*clear role*' they have in '*providing person-centred support to people experiencing food insecurity*' (1). For this reason, community food settings have been identified as potential, trusted and supportive, spaces where people may be able to access information and / or direct **cash-first** assistance via welfare rights advice provision, referral pathways or vouchers.

Local context

Glasgow Community Food Network has a broad membership of both organisations and individuals and plays a central role in supporting community food initiatives (CFIs) and organisations across Glasgow. There is a vibrant community food sector in the city which comprises of diverse projects and organisations who engage with people in a multitude of ways.

In 2021, the cross sectoral Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, comprising of Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and GCFN, published its ambitious 10-year City Food Plan for the Local Authority (12). This plan has six interconnected work streams which aim to create:

 ***a food system in Glasgow that is fair, resilient and environmentally sustainable and enables everyone in Glasgow to eat healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate Good Food irrespective of where they live, their income or personal circumstances*** 

There are two workstreams which relate directly to this research: Food poverty – Fair Food for All and Community Food. As part of the Food poverty – Fair Food for All workstream for the plan, there are a number of actions which relate specifically to **cash-first** approaches. This includes developing a coordinated response to food insecurity across the city via robust referral pathways which prioritise advice and **cash-first** options.

GCFN lead many of the actions as part of the Community Food workstream, which includes one focused on developing an ‘online food information hub’ for community food initiatives to access helpful information and advice. In addition, alongside seasonal networking events for organisations to share learning,

GCFN also regularly conducts research into the food system in Glasgow. In 2021, it published its companion report to the Glasgow City Food Plan: [Glasgow, Tackling Food Poverty with a City Plan: Pathways to a Just Recovery](#). This research acknowledged:

-  **The need to develop effective local referral pathways between services to ensure people are able to access their full entitlements and all financial supports.**
-  **Where community food initiatives are responding to income crisis, there is a need for wraparound supports and outreach to other services.**



The research also highlighted that, although 'patchwork', there is a wealth of activity which has already taken place across the city to support households on low incomes and people experiencing income crises. Indeed, there has been a lot of work happening across Glasgow in recent years, which aimed to improve access to advice and information as well as financial supports, such as the Scottish Welfare Fund. This includes, but is not limited to:

Worrying About Money Leaflet

Developed in partnership with advice, food and support providers across the city, [these leaflets](#) detail options available for people when experiencing an income crisis. This includes information about how to apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund and access expert advice.

Emergency Infant Feeding Support Pathway

This pathway has been developed to ensure that parents of children up to 12 months of age can access financial support in the form of section 22 funds from their Health Visitor or Family Nurse when they have insufficient funds to purchase Infant formula or baby food for their baby. This is provided directly to the family via PayPoint. Funds are provided as part of a wider assessment of the family's needs including referral to financial inclusion services and a range of other services with the aim of addressing the issues the family are experiencing.

Embedded advice

Expert information and advice are often key to supporting people to access their full entitlements and any financial supports available. There are many examples across Glasgow of organisations, projects and institutions embedding advice within their existing services. This includes, within [school settings](#), within healthcare settings, such as [GP surgeries](#) and [maternity services](#), within [bespoke support agencies](#), within food-based initiatives, such as [Thrive Under Five](#), and within [food banks](#), as well as resourced pathways to advice services via [Glasgow Helps](#).



Aims of this research

Given the volume of activity taking place across the city and the demonstrable importance of the community food sector in working with and supporting households, this research sought to understand how **cash-first** currently fits into, or could fit into, community food settings. We aimed to:

- Assess the level of **awareness** of local **cash-first** supports in the sector – do groups understand **cash-first**, do they always / often / sometimes / never make referrals? Do they deliver their own **cash-first** supports?
- Assess the **effectiveness** of **cash-first** referrals from the sector – what are the barriers / opportunities in making referrals / delivering their own supports? Are the outcomes of these interventions different when delivered in community food settings.
- Assess the **readiness** of the sector to participate in strategic partnerships and decision-making on future development of **cash-first**.

What did the research involve?

The purpose of the research was to understand the perspectives of people currently working or volunteering in the community food sector. The data generation took place from February 2024 – April 2024 and consisted of three stages.

1 Survey with community food initiatives across Glasgow

This was conducted to explore understandings of **cash-first** as an approach, to gain knowledge about existing **cash-first** supports available in community food settings and to understand any challenges CFIs may experience when trying to provide **cash-first** supports.

We were also interested in understanding the role which CFIs see themselves as having in responding to food insecurity and any recommendations they might have for how **cash-first** could be implemented as an approach across the city.

Given the intense expansion and diversification of the community food and food aid landscape witnessed during COVID-19 (13), we asked for responses relating to activity over the past three years, from 2021, even where that activity had since ended.

The survey was open for responses from 4th March – 2nd April. We received **47 responses** in total from **37 different CFIs**.

2 One to one interviews with community food representatives in Glasgow

Given the complexity of food insecurity as a problem, we offered all survey respondents the opportunity of a follow-up, one to one interview to discuss **cash-first** in more detail. There was considerable interest in this option, and we were unable to organise a follow-up for everyone who expressed an interest. This was due to the short time scale of the project and very busy diaries of the potential interviewees.

In addition, we purposefully reached out to initiatives which were run and led by people with lived experience of food insecurity. Where volunteers were interviewed, they were given a £20 voucher as a thank you for sharing their time and expertise.

In total we interviewed **12 community food representatives** (3 of whom had lived experience of food insecurity) from a variety of different projects and areas of the city. All of the interviews took place online and were recorded with the interviewee's consent, along with notes of the conversation and key points.

We conducted a thematic analysis (14) to pull out the most important themes across the survey and interview data. We then formulated recommendations based on these themes and discussions with GCFN and key partners.

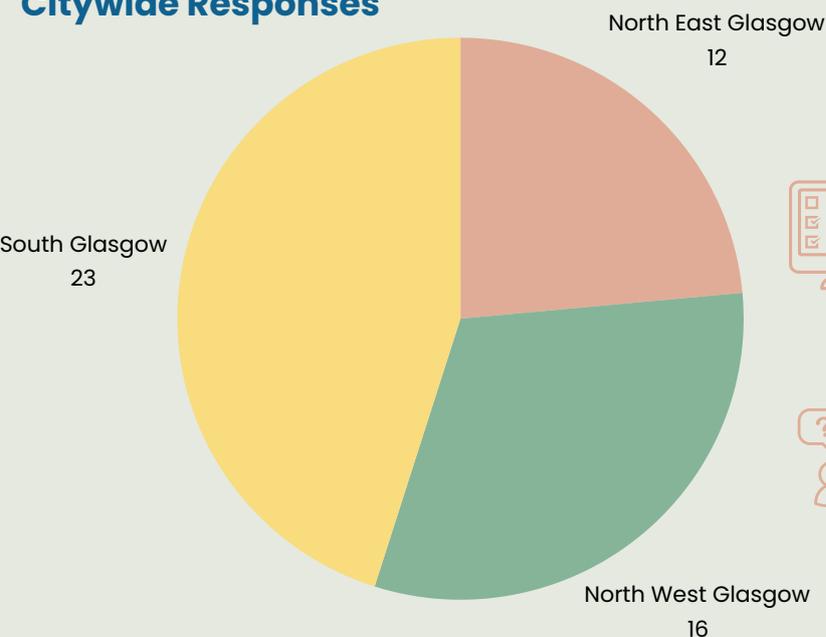
Type of community food initiative	No. of representatives
Food growing, community gardening	1
Pantry or larder	3
Housing Association	2
Community Group	2
Bespoke Support Service	2
Community development project	3

3 Workshop with CFIs to develop and sense check findings & recommendations

As part of the GCFN's standard roster of seasonal networking events, we presented the interim findings of this report and facilitated a deliberative workshop. We invited all of the research participants as well as key stakeholders from across the city who are connected to community food and **cash-first** activity. The event was attended by **33 people**. Their reflections and feedback have been incorporated into this report and further detail of the discussions can be found in Appendix A.

Snapshot of the Findings

Citywide Responses



The survey and interview respondents delivered community food activities across all areas of the city. The majority of respondents were based in **small, medium or large charities (N=29)** with smaller numbers responding on behalf of a **community group (N=6)** or **Housing Association (N=7)**.

The **activity and support** provided by the respondents' organisations and groups spanned across a **matrix of areas** from bespoke family and domestic abuse support to tenancy sustainment, youth groups and place-based community development projects as well as more food-focused pantry or food bank initiatives.

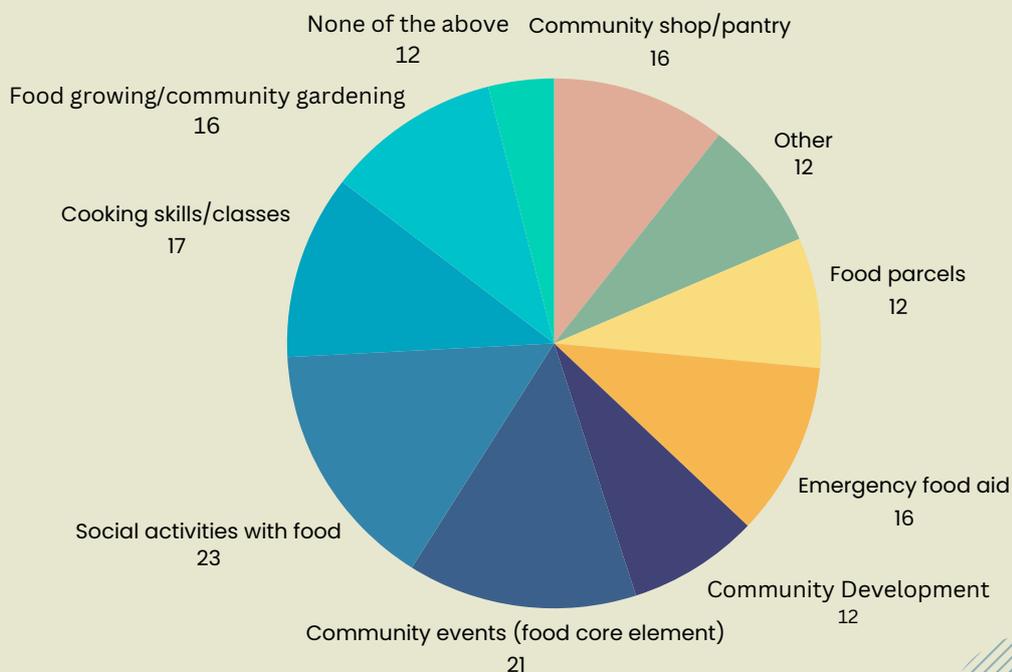
This suggests that community food activities have become a central component to many different **forms of support services** and, as such, the **sector is very diverse**.



Over a third of survey respondents stated they provide **emergency food aid or food parcels**, demonstrating that some CFIs are currently playing **an active role in responding to food insecurity**.



'Other' activities provided tended to be **providing supermarket or pantry vouchers** or **providing activities** through Glasgow City Council's Holiday Food Programme



Advice

Pathways and support to access welfare rights advice were available at many of the CFIs represented in this research.

Signposting, i.e., telling or showing someone how to access welfare rights services, was the most common activity with over half of the CFIs (N=25) stating they do this. In addition, around a third (N=14) distribute Glasgow's Worrying About Money leaflet.

Referral pathways also appear to operate between many of the CFIs and the wider system of support, with over a third (N=16) stating they refer to welfare rights and over half (N=22) who refer to wider support agencies.

Embedded advice workers exist in just under half (N=20) of the CFIs surveyed, suggesting that money advice is already being delivered alongside community food activities.

It was recognised by some interviewees that the waiting time for appointments with welfare rights advisors can sometimes be lengthy, thanks to a lack of resource and high demand. In addition, where respondents were based in larger organisations, such as Housing Associations, it was sometimes unclear whether advice services were accessed via the community food activities or different pathways.

Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF)

There appears to be different levels of knowledge and awareness of the SWF.

- Around **half (N=21)** of survey respondents stated they **help people to apply** to the fund and /or **signpost** to it (**N=18**).
- There was some uncertainty about the SWF, with a small cohort (**N=7**) stating they would **not feel confident** telling someone about it or that they **did not know what the SWF** was (**N=6**).
- There were also some respondents who stated they **did not have the sorts of conversations** where the SWF might come up (**N=8**).

In addition, **one** interviewee highlighted a perceived increase in '**knock backs**' from the SWF, i.e., people being refused a grant. This was also attributed to a lack of resource and high demand.

Vouchers

Providing vouchers alongside community food activities appears to be happening in many of the CFIs surveyed.

- Over **half (N=24)** stated they provide vouchers for people struggling to afford food or for other essentials, such as fuel (**N=21**).
- Voucher provision appears to be short-term and ad hoc. This support is only available as and when funding allows.

In addition, CFIs reported purposefully not promoting vouchers as this leads to overwhelming demand, which is impossible to meet, and can be very difficult for volunteers and staff to manage. Providing pantry vouchers in place of supermarket vouchers was also highlighted as problematic thanks to long queues, restricted opening hours and limited stock.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

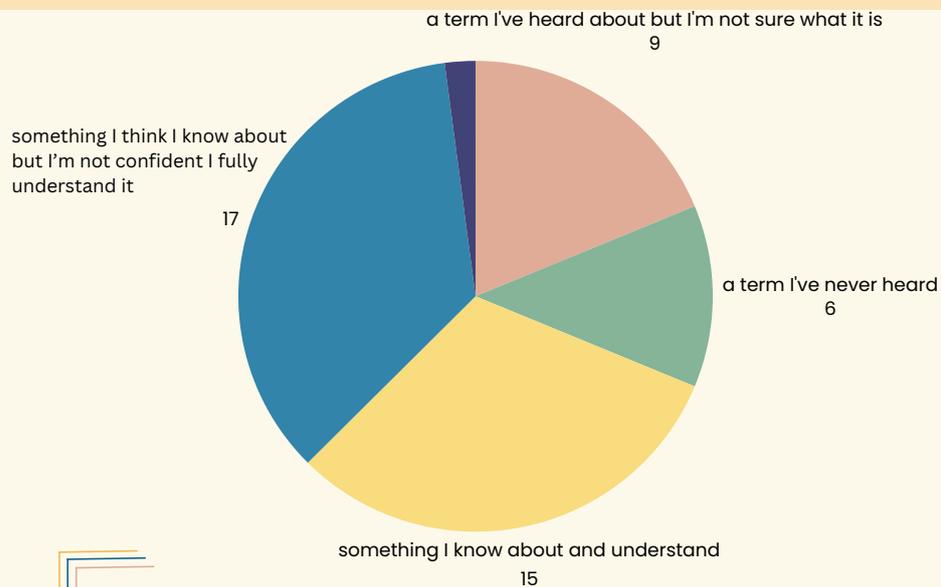
The findings shared here demonstrate that CFIs are already playing an important role in responding to food insecurity. This includes through the provision of emergency food aid but also through the delivery of **cash-first** supports. However, there appears to be different understandings of what **cash-first** means as a term and in practice. In addition, the narratives and experiences of respondents suggests there are some significant challenges for CFIs when trying to implement **cash-first** supports as part of their community food activities. The findings have been organised thematically and will be discussed in turn:

- **Cash-first: different understandings across the sector**
- **Varied support for cash-first as an approach**
- **Lots of activity, lots of challenges**

Cash-first: different understandings across the sector

There was varied awareness and understanding of the term **cash-first** across the interview and survey data with the pie chart indicating responses to the question, **cash-first** is...

Just over a third of survey respondents stated it was a term they knew about and understood. Indeed, there was general uncertainty on the meaning of the term across the majority of the participants. For some people, **cash-first** implied that CFIs would be expected to distribute physical money to people:



I don't really know what "cash-first" means. Would organisations be giving money to people? **Survey Respondent 1**

I think there needs to be more discussion about the fears that many of us have about a cash first approach - such as holding large amounts of cash and taking that to events etc. **Survey Respondent 8**

Whilst others were concerned that **cash-first** meant that that CFI workers had to become fully trained in welfare rights:

If staff are needing to do training or whatever on cash-first approaches or all the different benefits involved, you also can't expect people to do that research and investigation for free as well. Say if we were to say to all our [CFI workers] 'could you now just make sure you know everything inside out about the benefits system', they'd say 'I just don't have time for that in my week'. Interviewee 11

Some also provided contradictory narratives about their understanding of **cash-first** as an approach. For example, one survey respondent stated that their organisation 'does not promote **cash-first** approaches' even though they provide key **cash-first** supports, such as welfare rights advice and food and fuel vouchers, suggesting the term is not clearly understood, even by those who are involved in its implementation.

Many research participants understood **cash-first** to be "putting more cash in people's pockets" and, often understood **cash-first** as a movement towards "dignity and choice" but were often unsure about how this would work in practice. Indeed, some interviewees viewed **cash-first** as primarily a Scottish Government or Local Authority initiative and not something which CFIs, or other frontline services, would necessarily be involved in the delivery of.

The research participants that appeared to be most aware and had the highest level of understanding of **cash-first** were those that had recently looked up the term or who had attended **cash-first** specific workshops and conferences. However, even within this cohort, there continued to be uncertainty about what **cash-first** means in practice within CFIs, stating they understood it "conceptually" but were confused as to what implementation would look like in CFI settings.

Overall, the data suggests that there is no, current, shared understanding of **cash-first** as a term or as an approach amongst CFIs. The variation in narratives and understandings suggests that there is work to be done to develop a sector-wide understanding of the term and what this might mean in the context of CFIs.

Recommendation 1

Increased opportunity for CFIs to develop a shared understanding of **cash-first such as through training, workshops, and spaces for conversations**

Varied support for cash-first as an approach

There was varied support expressed by research participants for **cash-first** as an approach to tackling food insecurity. This variation in opinion related to both the approach in general but also to how **cash-first** might be incorporated within CFIs.

Across the data, a majority of research participants expressed strong support for **cash-first** as a response to food insecurity.

'cash-first' is an essential way to give people dignity and choice

Survey Respondent 2

For some, their support for **cash-first** as an approach was related to the perceived positive, financial benefit for their project. For example, a number of fee-paying CFIs, such as pantries, were supportive of a **cash-first** response partly because it would mean that people would be able to pay their membership fee and, therefore, support the longevity of the project.

However, there was also some opposition, as well as concerns raised about how it would work in practice. Although in the minority, some people disagreed with **cash-first** in principle and for one initiative this was directly related to role of local and national government, which they believed should be limited:

Government intervention into food provision is the polar opposite of everything we believe should happen **Survey Respondent 4**

This belief sits in stark contrast to the messaging and campaigning for **cash-first** as a response to food insecurity (as detailed in Figure 1 above), which regularly calls for better and more Government intervention in tackling food insecurity via the provision of adequate social protection systems.

Dignity and Choice

Where CFIs were in favour of **cash-first**, dignity and choice appeared to be central to their support for this approach. Often, this was directly related to responses which provide people with actual money, which they can spend how they choose.

This was emphasised by interviewees with lived experience of food insecurity who reflected that if **cash-first** approaches were available, they “would give you freedom” from services that can “make you feel so worthless...and disgusted with yourself”, particularly if this means access to secure employment with a “good wage”.

How great would that be if someone could give you something beyond a bag of messages? If someone had done that for me when me and my ma were really really struggling...Interviewee 8

This idea was echoed by other participants who viewed cash-based responses, which put money in people’s pockets, as enabling people to make decisions to address the often complex, and multiple, challenges that they face in accessing food:

I think cash-first would enable people to address the barriers that are a priority at that given moment. We see voucher systems, often of high value, being too specific to address food insecurity. What’s the use of an Aldi voucher if you can’t afford the bus there, for example. Survey Respondent 23

In addition, **cash-first** was thought to reduce, or even remove, the specific issues some people face when accessing food-based responses to food insecurity. For example, being turned away from emergency food supports due to being an asylum seeker, having to rely on supports which operate with restricted opening

hours and / or require referrals as well as the difficulty of meeting dietary needs via charitable donations or surplus/ waste foods. Having access to money, in these accounts, provided dignity in being able to choose “culturally valued” foods or foods for specific diets or preferences as well as being able to access food at any time:

I know some people say ‘if they’re hungry, they’ll eat it’ but lots of kids have really specific diets....Kids will open the cupboard and the kids go ‘why are you buying this? Oh, you’ve been to a pantry’ and the Mums are really embarrassed by this

Interviewee 4

[we] often get emergency calls on a Friday afternoon, so stressful getting help for the weekend

Survey Respondent 15

*The issue that families I am working with are facing is the fact that the support (i.e., food banks) is limited, and once support is exhausted families don't have anywhere to turn for help. Some families also mentioned that Pantry services are limited and unless you queue for hours before opening then there aren't many items for them to purchase. **Survey Respondent 35***

So, like some of these food bank[s]... you go there, they ask you for like [an] ID Card, your status, some of the pantries they do, some of the food banks they do, if you don't have status....they say ‘ok no you are not eligible for this food’...We have seen all this stigma happening in society

Interviewee 5

Although less frequent, the research data also revealed some opposing narratives around the increased ‘choice’ which **cash-first** might provide for people experiencing

food insecurity. Some participants expressed concern over people's capacity to 'make the right choices', and this weakened their support for **cash-first** as an approach:

I'm not 100% sure about Cash first approach, but is there a chance that they would be used to buy takeaways so money would not go as far as intended or used on alcohol or cigarettes? Or abused and sold to others at a discount so that the money was used for substance abuse. **Survey Respondent 15**

Others stated they were "100% behind it" as a response to food insecurity but there could be "mishaps" because "you don't know what people would be spending the money on", and this, as above, was related to the potential purchase of alcohol, tobacco or takeaways. This perception of service providers was something that our interviewees with lived experience of food insecurity were acutely aware of, and one which they experienced as both harmful and a regular occurrence:

If someone actually came and gave you cash, then that would be even better, that's someone treating you with respect because the amount of people we've heard say 'oh no don't give people money, they'll go and buy fags and buy drink or they'll go buy things that you wouldn't approve of... [poverty] is people's lifestyle choices bla de bla', but that is a thing that's banded about **Interviewee 7**

Cash-first within CFIs

The research data demonstrated a variety of support of **cash-first** specifically within CFIs. Many responses suggested that CFIs are ideally placed to be involved in the implementation of **cash-first** approaches:

Community Food initiatives are well placed to deliver a cash first approach

Survey Respondent 18

Community Food Projects could become a gateway to delivering essential support on behalf of local and national governments to effectively tackle the [root] causes of poverty.

Survey Respondent 18

Community projects can often hear the stories of people first, can be trusted by people

21

[Cash-first fits] into a community setting by allowing flexibility of choice, more dignity and autonomy and sustainability in terms of reducing reliance on unpredictable donation

Survey Respondent 39

I think different food projects have different roles and models, but often are responding to those with immediate and urgent need for food (and fuel, and other barriers to food security).

Survey Respondent 23

However, there were some concerns raised about the practical implementation of **cash-first** within CFI settings:

We have no idea how this would work

Survey Respondent 44

For some, this related to concerns about consistency, and the perceived patchwork of availability of **cash-first** supports across the city, which:

could potentially widen existing disparities if certain individuals or groups have greater access to financial resources than others

Interviewee 1

One research participant stated that in some areas in Glasgow “you can’t move for community food projects” and in others “there’s none” which could result in a “postcode lottery” when it comes to accessing **cash-first** supports within CFIs.

This concern around inconsistency in access was echoed in relation to different population groups, notably for people seeking asylum who are often ineligible for many **cash-first** supports. Linked to this, some people were concerned that implementing **cash-first** approaches would mean “getting rid” of some CFI’s, which would be “damaging” for the sector and result in a loss of available support for people, support which reached far beyond the provision of food:

Organisations like this [food banks] in the community are very important. They go there not only for food but for like to talk to people. If you’re going to end food bank[s] there’s going to be this kind of problem...people go there to socialise, it’s not about food. Like in the case of myself, when I was living in Govan, I was not needing food, but I wanted people to talk to...these food banks, sometimes they have positive things and sometimes they have negative. So the positive thing is then like you can meet people in food banks talk to them, they are very important for society. **Interviewee 5**

A minority of survey respondents explicitly stated that **cash-first** approaches were not appropriate for CFIs (N=3). This appears to relate to different ideas about the roles and responsibilities for organisations and institutions across the system of support. For example, one survey respondent stated that CFI’s currently have “too much of a role” in responding to food insecurity and that they “should be informing policy and being supported to work towards system change. I do not believe they should be propping up a broken system”.

This view of “propping up a broken system” was also reinforced by survey, interview and workshop participants who saw the overwhelming demand for their services as a result of failing statutory services, with CFIs’ current role one of filling “in the gaps where the state is failing to fulfil its duty”.

On the whole, the scale of the work supporting people experiencing complex food insecurity across CFIs is evident as is the clear demonstration of support to end these experiences for all. Dignity and choice are key to research participants’ support of **cash-first**, as are prioritising responses which provide people with actual money to spend how they choose. However, not everyone is supportive of **cash-first**. Concerns emerged related to how the money will be spent, the role of CFIs and whether this approach will be easily implemented within CFI settings, which are currently attempting to fill gaping holes in state provision.

Recommendation 2

Exploration of how cash-first supports might be implemented in CFIs, for example, through the development of a variety of ‘cash-first in action’ profiles or scenarios that reflect the diversity of the sector and the different contexts in which organisations are working.

Recommendation 3

Increased opportunities for CFIs to learn about the drivers of food insecurity and why people may experience income crisis, as well as facilitated opportunities to discuss sector attitudes and beliefs about people who experience food insecurity.

Recommendation 4

Improved and increased participatory mechanisms for people with lived experience of food insecurity to be involved in leading and designing cash-first approaches within CFI settings.

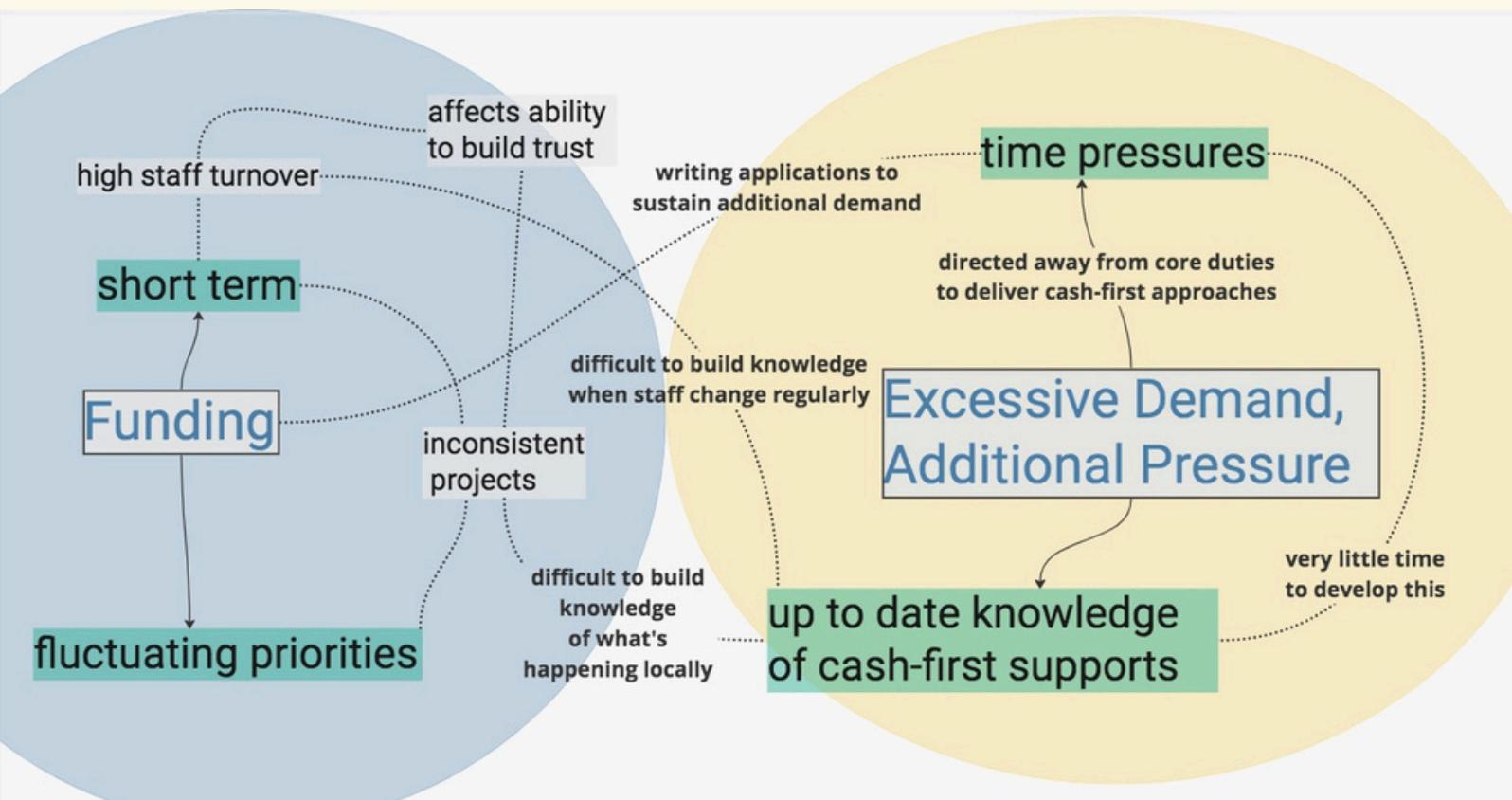
Recommendation 5

Citywide engagement with people with No Recourse to Public Funds to understand how specific barriers faced can be overcome through the development and investigation of the recommendations laid out in Spotlight 1.

Lots of activity, lots of challenges

Given this research only captures the activity of a proportion of CFIs, it is unable to paint the full picture of **cash-first** approaches across Glasgow. However, it is able to provide a snapshot of current delivery, which reveals diversity in approach across the sector. CFIs are facilitating access to advice in a variety of ways, this includes via embedded welfare rights workers, signposting to advice services as well as active referral pathways to this form of support. Alongside this, half of the CFIs surveyed stated they actively support people to apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund. In addition, although short-term and ad hoc, the provision of vouchers for food and fuel appears to be a regular part of the work of some CFIs.

Many participants shared their aspirations to offer increased **cash-first** approaches. However, they also highlighted a myriad of interconnected challenges that prevent or reduce their ability to do so. A map illustrating the complex interconnectedness of these is below followed by a discussion of the key challenges:



“It all comes back to funding, doesn’t it?”

Funding challenges were reported by the vast majority of research participants. Indeed, all challenges associated with **cash-first** appear to interconnect with funding.

The dream is unrestricted funding but it’s so hard to come by. You work with what there is. You apply for funding for a specific person or a specific post. If it was unrestricted funding for 5 years then gosh, we could do so much more **Interviewee 11**

In addition, there was a clear recurring message across the research data that these challenges would need to be responded to by local or national Government if CFIs are to be involved in the delivery of **cash-first** approaches in an effective and sustainable way.

Research participants highlighted that the funding available to them was often short-term, and this in turn, equalled short-term projects. This was described as affecting CFIs ability to offer consistent community food activities with reliable pathways to accessing **cash-first** supports, as well as inhibiting the ability to provide direct assistance:

We have been serving free lunch every day for several months – however the funding for this runs out at the end of March.

Survey Respondent 2

We learned organisations struggle with short term funding. Many organisations don’t have the resources to employ someone qualified to provide financial advice or have the consistent knowledge of signposting. Many rely on volunteers.

Survey Respondent 47

The biggest challenge is accessing enough funding to run food related projects. **Survey Respondent 28**

Short term funding was also reported as resulting in high staff turnover and staff time being spent completing funding applications:

even 1 year [in] and staff are looking for funding for their own jobs or moving on **Interviewee 11**

Fluctuating priorities and changing agendas of funders was also reported as a key challenge which affected the ability to offer consistent **cash-first** support and sustain partnerships to strengthen this support:

Accessing funding to provide cash first approach for food/fuel vouchers. Finding capacity of partner org to work with us allowing an application for fuel support. **Survey Respondent 21**

Central to why funding challenges would impact on the sector's ability to offer **cash-first** supports was the idea that the work of CFIs is fundamentally relational and built on trust:

If the funds are really only short term it doesn't give a lot of financial security to continue and for these kind of projects there's a lot of relationship building that happens that takes time **Interviewee 11**

[short-term funding] really disrupts things....the worst thing is if a staff member changes it takes a lot to rebuild with a whole new person... continuity I've found is really really important - what they offer, time they're open, so people come to know **Interviewee 11**

This relational aspect was viewed as even more important when having conversations about money. This was thought to be a "touchy" subject, and one where "you really have to know the right time" and do the "relationship building" first and foremost. This perhaps, in part, explains why a small cohort of respondents (N=8) reported 'not having those kinds of conversations' with the people they work with.

Excessive Demand, Additional Pressure

The overwhelming demand for services appeared to be a consistent challenge across the research data:

demand and need exceed resources **Survey Respondent 28**

Many participants reported that they began providing increased or additional food related projects due to the identified need and that demand for this support has since continued to increase. For some, this has resulted in either a direct move away from their core priorities or significant strain on their ability to continue to deliver these:

At the moment, it is very much an emergency response to the demand that has increased significantly since covid and failed to die back down. Organisations are generally just trying to meet this demand as best they can, given their limited resources, for example we originally provided community growing and community meals, however have had ourselves thrust into the unfortunate position of being seen as an organisation that can provide people with emergency food, this has meant that supplying people with emergency food has taken up a lot of our energy and resources despite not having dedicated staff to the role. It means our response to food insecurity isn't adequately meeting the needs or dignity of participants.

Survey Respondent 37

For some respondents, introducing **cash-first** supports in the form of vouchers alongside welfare advice placed such a demand on their organisation that they had to take the “*very difficult decision*” to cease the offer due to being “*absolutely overwhelmed*”. Respondents also reported feeling additional pressure to seek the funding needed to sustain these **cash-first** supports, whilst working in a context of stretched budgets and general lack of financial resource:

[The] demand for funding is so high... it takes it's toll, it's resource heavy

Interviewee 4

The biggest challenge is the volume of people now looking to access support and the lack of financial support from the Scottish Government of Local Authority to help address the issue. As a Housing Association we are facing trying to meet a growing demand from our own resources which are already under pressure due to central services being cut and us having to step into the breach.

Survey Respondent 11

Over 6 months as a Fuel Bank referral partner, we issued 315 fuel vouchers. If we conservatively say each voucher takes 15 minutes to process that is 78 hours of staff time. If you take the hourly rate of our Welfare Rights Advisor the cost to the organisation would be £1,474.00

Interviewee 3

The impact that this overwhelming demand has on staff and volunteer time was a common thread across the data. Research participants routinely highlighted lack of time as one of the key challenges in providing **cash-first** support, given how “time consuming” it was to both deliver and resource:

*Time and Money. I am the sole employee and even with incredible volunteer and trustee backing, I can't always deliver what I would like to. Our service is increasingly needed, due to economic factors and local housing developments that have been completed. The amount of time we can dedicate to individuals has dropped. There's also a lack of funding for our model of emergency food aid at the moment. **Survey Respondent 25***

*Making sure our staff - including a high percentage of volunteers - know about and understand other agencies for signposting/further referrals. **Survey Respondent 22***

Having access to up-to-date knowledge and resources about national and local **cash-first** supports was strongly desired by many respondents, however having access to this information was made difficult for CFIs due to the impact that this has on staff time:

*Apart from distributing the 'Worrying about money' leaflet, we struggle to provide other in-depth support to our community. Staff do not have capacity to do more training and develop their knowledge to be able to signpost particularly accurately. We have previously applied for funding for a part time benefits advisor but weren't successful. **Survey Respondent 27***

*We don't have enough staff/ training to provide this kind of support to people **Survey Respondent 46***

Additionally, many CFI's reported not having the physical space to have confidential conversations about money. This was seen as an essential resource that affected whether or not they were able to implement **cash-first** approaches:

I mean, we just don't have the space **Interviewee 1**

Partnership working and a co-ordinated joined-up approach were identified as desirable steps for enabling resource and information sharing as well as reducing the demand and pressure on CFIs.

It would be good to have more collaboration with other services and exchange more ways to offer support

Survey Respondent 39

Ability to provide temporary support with a robust partnership with organisations offering more specialised long-term support.

Survey Respondent 21

Community food projects should be one strand of a joined up approach to address the cost of living crisis

Survey Respondent 11

The challenges facing the sector are complex and interconnected. Short-term and piecemeal funding, increasing demand and a chronic lack of time and resource mean that the delivery of **cash-first** supports in CFI settings is very challenging to both implement and maintain. However, even with the difficulties experienced when trying to implement and / or deliver **cash-first** supports, CFIs have ideas and suggestions for how **cash-first** approaches might be developed, and how any challenges overcome.

Recommendation 6

Greater clarity from Scottish Government on the responsibilities of different actors in implementing cash-first approaches, including the role of CFIs, the Local Authority, and Scottish Government.

Recommendation 7

For CFIs to contribute toward a cash-first approach, they need multi-year and unrestricted funding. There also needs to be adequate additional resource provided to the sector for developing and delivering cash-first supports alongside their core services.

Recommendation 8

Place-based and joined up cash-first approaches to be established through the resourced development of local partnerships and networks

LIMITATIONS

There are, of course, lots that this research cannot provide detail on. Whilst we sought some perspectives of people with lived experience of food insecurity, these perspectives were in the minority, a limitation it is important to recognise. Understanding how **cash-first** supports, such as accessing advice services or being supported to apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund, are experienced by people who are struggling to afford food must be the next step in developing **cash-first** approaches across Glasgow. In addition, it is important to note that this research is not representative of the whole community food sector across the city, nor is it representative of all of the ongoing and varied work to support people experiencing food insecurity.

We specifically engaged with the community food sector because they are an important component of the system of support. However, there are many different actors whose perspectives and roles are also important, this includes advice services operating across the city, the Scottish Welfare Fund team within Glasgow City Council and wider support services who support people when they are experiencing a crisis. Understanding these perspectives will also be integral to any future **cash-first** work in Glasgow.

CONCLUSION

This research provides a helpful snapshot of some of the activity already happening to implement **cash-first** approaches in community food settings as well as first-hand accounts of some of the challenges currently being experienced in the sector.

The data here reveals that there is varied understanding of the term **cash-first** and how this approach might be implemented in community food settings. Despite this variation, there was broad support for the approach in principle, with many CFIs viewing it as providing more choice, dignity and control for people experiencing food insecurity. However, although in the minority, there were some concerns raised about how people might spend money, with some assumptions being made about the lifestyle choices of people who experience food insecurity. These service-level assumptions and stereotypes have been highlighted in other work with people who experience food insecurity (including those interviewed for this research project),

who highlighted 'if there was one thing they would change, it'd be how they're treated by organisations, and that they'd like to be treated like people' (15).

We found that, even though **cash-first** is not well understood as a term, there is already a wealth of **cash-first** supports available in CFIs. This ranged from signposting towards advice services and the provision of food and fuel vouchers to support to apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund and in situ welfare rights workers. There is clearly a huge effort being made by CFIs across the city to support people experiencing food and income crisis in a variety of ways.

However, challenges experienced when trying to deliver **cash-first** supports were multiple and significant. Access to funding, information and resources were routinely highlighted as key issues for CFIs when supporting people experiencing food insecurity, which was severely exacerbated by overwhelming and increasing demand. We found that even with these challenges, CFIs were motivated and interested in learning more about how **cash-first** could be better implemented within their various models of support. This suggests that CFIs are well placed to be involved in city-wide and place-based planning to develop **cash-first** approaches.





SPOTLIGHTS ON EXPERIENCE

SPOTLIGHT 1



“It has to be inclusive”: cash-first when you are seeking asylum

Research participants with lived experience of the asylum process and organisations that primarily work alongside people seeking asylum reported that asylum seekers face unique challenges and are not eligible for many **cash-first** approaches. They highlighted the “[I]ack of financial supports available for people in the asylum process” and some of the difficulties people experience related to accessing finances:

I'm not sure how it will work for asylum seekers who are often subjected to invasive bank account monitoring by the home office. Any source of 'income' can result in a person's claim being denied. So there would need to be a robust system and agreement for this. Also many asylum seekers do not have bank accounts so there are limited ways that they can receive cash remotely

Survey Respondent 45

We spoke with a person with lived experience of the asylum process, who shared their account of experiencing food insecurity and accessing services and support in Glasgow. This experience highlights some of the unique challenges which people seeking asylum face. They highlighted the length of time that someone can be in the asylum process and the limits which are placed on receiving any income.

Asylum seekers, they have a lot of restrictions accessing cash....they [UK Government] want to create [a] hostile environment for people in asylum so that's why it's very hard to give cash to those kind of people

Because of this, it is common for asylum seekers to share their skills and expertise via volunteering, and often within CFI settings. However, on being reimbursed for volunteering expenses, this causes difficulties and risk:

I've been in [the] asylum [process] for 11 years and just recently I've been granted Leave to Remain...We are not allowed to have cash [at] our disposal. Any time they give me cash I have to sign a document at my own risk...I could be in trouble for that

It was also recognised that it is difficult for CFIs to understand the asylum process and the day-to-day realities for people who are seeking support:

[organisations] have no idea how [the] UK asylum seeker system works... some people they are shocked, some people they don't know nothing about [how the] UK asylum process takes place...Like myself, if I tell people that I've been in the asylum process for 11 years, they don't believe me.

For people seeking asylum to be included in more **cash-first** approaches, this interviewee shared some suggested recommendations, based on their own experience in Glasgow:

UK Government restrictions on asylum seekers accessing cash to be lifted

For me the change that needs to happen is lifting restrictions on other people's lives. That's it. Giving freedom, like giving equality to anyone living in society regardless of their status, or their immigration, or their nationality, or race, or religion, anything, just like equality

For interim solutions be developed while there are still restrictions placed on asylum seekers.

On noting that legislative change such as lifting these restrictions as being “very challenging” and that they “can take a very long time”, the research participant felt strongly that an interim solution would need to be considered and developed such as vouchers “rather than not include [asylum seekers] at all... so they can access food”

For organisations working alongside asylum seekers to be involved in the development and delivery of this approach

Involving those kinds of organisations is very very helpful because they know people in the community who are destitute and who are... in need of help, so involving those kind of community organisations for me, is the best thing

Awareness raising across CFIs on the unique challenges faced by asylum seekers and ensuring that asylum seekers have equal access to current provision and support

It appears that access to food, not just cash, can be limited for people seeking asylum. As demonstrated by the interviewee’s experience of being told at a food bank and a pantry that they were not eligible to receive food:

You can understand but they don’t explain nothing. ‘Why are you asking me for my immigration status?’ Some of them [food banks and pantries], they said it’s part of their rules, there are certain people they are not included in that list.

SPOTLIGHT 2



Cash-first practice within CFIs with a dedicated Welfare Rights Advisor: an example from North-West Glasgow

Whilst this research has revealed some concern and uncertainty about how **cash-first** would be delivered in CFI settings, it also demonstrates that CFIs are already offering **cash-first** supports as part of their day-to-day activities. This spotlight details one example of **cash-first** in practice, alongside the challenges faced in implementing this approach.

A small community development charity in the North-West of Glasgow with the core aim of increasing social capital and social connectedness in the area reported that:

Cash-first is an essential way to give people dignity and choice. Currently we make referrals to the food bank and food pantry and the feedback we receive suggests people often find this extremely limiting and undignified.

They also believe that CFIs “should be at the forefront - but we should be properly funded and equipped to be able to respond to the challenges of food insecurity.”

The community food activities offered at their space include:

- Breakfast Club
- Community Meals
- Lunch clubs
- Food growing
- Small inhouse pantry of surplus foods
- Food vouchers

The **cash-first** approaches currently being offered:

- Welfare advice via a dedicated Welfare Advice and Support Worker
- Food and fuel vouchers
- Supporting people to access wider services
- They also provide referrals to the food bank and vouchers to use in the pantry.

Of note is their ability to offer varied community food-based activity reaching a wide variety of people, being able to offer a confidential space to have conversations about money, having an internal welfare rights advice provision and having relationships with the local food bank and pantry: all identified as challenges to offering **cash-first** supports by some other CFIs. It is also important to note that offering **cash-first** supports were described as a recurring cycle and not a one-off intervention:

People who start to realise that there's a limit to what support we can give come back here anyway, so even if we can't provide the support we need related to food or whatever it is, they keep coming back, so those conversations that often involve food or not having access to food do take place a lot

The figure below provides an overview of their **cash-first** approach in action.



Figure 2: an example of **cash-first** in action

This CFI also provided insights on the key challenges they face on implementing a **cash-first** approach and their aspirations related to a **cash-first** approach.

Their reported **key challenges**:

- **the “huge demand” for their welfare rights service** and vouchers and the impact this has on staff’s wellbeing
- **having access to up to date resources** on **cash-first** supports and other local provision for frontline staff
- **staff being taken away from the activity or task** that they are “*actually funded to do*” and that meet the core aims of their organisation. This presents a logistical challenge and adds to the pressure on staff
- **having to stop some of their community food activities** due to lack of funding: “*Without the draw of a free lunch, it’s another barrier to making that [cash-first supports] happen*”.
- **staff have “a year or two” of funding** left to continue their roles

Their reported **aspirations** related to **cash-first** approaches

- **to increase the involvement of people with lived experience** of food insecurity through, for example, Participatory Action Research
- **to be involved** in research, collective action, and influencing policy related to food insecurity

SPOTLIGHT 3

Cash-first practice within CFIs: a partnership approach example from North-East Glasgow

This research has revealed that there are particular challenges related to being involved in a **cash-first** approach when a CFI has no internal welfare rights advice provision. This spotlight details one example of a partnership response to **cash-first** when this is the case, and the challenges that have also been faced in implementing this approach.

A small SCIO in the North-East of Glasgow with a variety of food related initiatives views their “value” in “being a connector or a gateway” to “cost of living support services”. They utilise their “leverage to bring these groups in and help people” through a partnership approach across a wide variety of services:

We’ve developed quite strong partnerships with what I would call cost of living support services so like Citizen’s Advice, like Home Energy Scotland, like Queens Cross’ Financial Wellbeing Team, The Wise Group, Scottish Fire Service, Social Security Scotland, so we’ve developed these really effective, good partnerships with these organisations and they kind of attended sporadic pop up style events at the pantry and now what we’re doing is we are sort of getting these groups in almost every week to come and to support our members because as I say...food insecurity is the symptom of a much deeper kind of structural poverty.

Due to not having internal welfare rights provision, this CFI co-ordinates and creates space for a range of external agencies to be present at their pantry so that members who do require **cash-first** supports have more streamlined access to this:

We don’t chat directly to people about it [money] because we’re not the ones that can provide additional support people but we’re very aware that people need additional support and that’s why we bring in these groups and basically just say you know, speak to them speak to these guys, speak to CAB, get the help that you need

Initially “sporadic pop-up style events” and therefore not necessarily a consistent resource available to pantry members, these are now coordinated to a monthly schedule and so members have the information on when external agencies will be present in advance, including **cash-first** supports.

This organisation has a ‘for profit’ element to their food project through their cafe: their community food activities (i.e. not-for-profit food initiatives) offered at their space include:

- a food pantry, member of The Scottish Pantry Network, open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- community meals, externally funded, twice per week

The **cash-first** approaches currently being offered:

- welfare advice via external agencies present at the pantry with availability dependent on the monthly schedule of support from external agencies
- signposting and referring to external agencies
- supporting people to access wider services

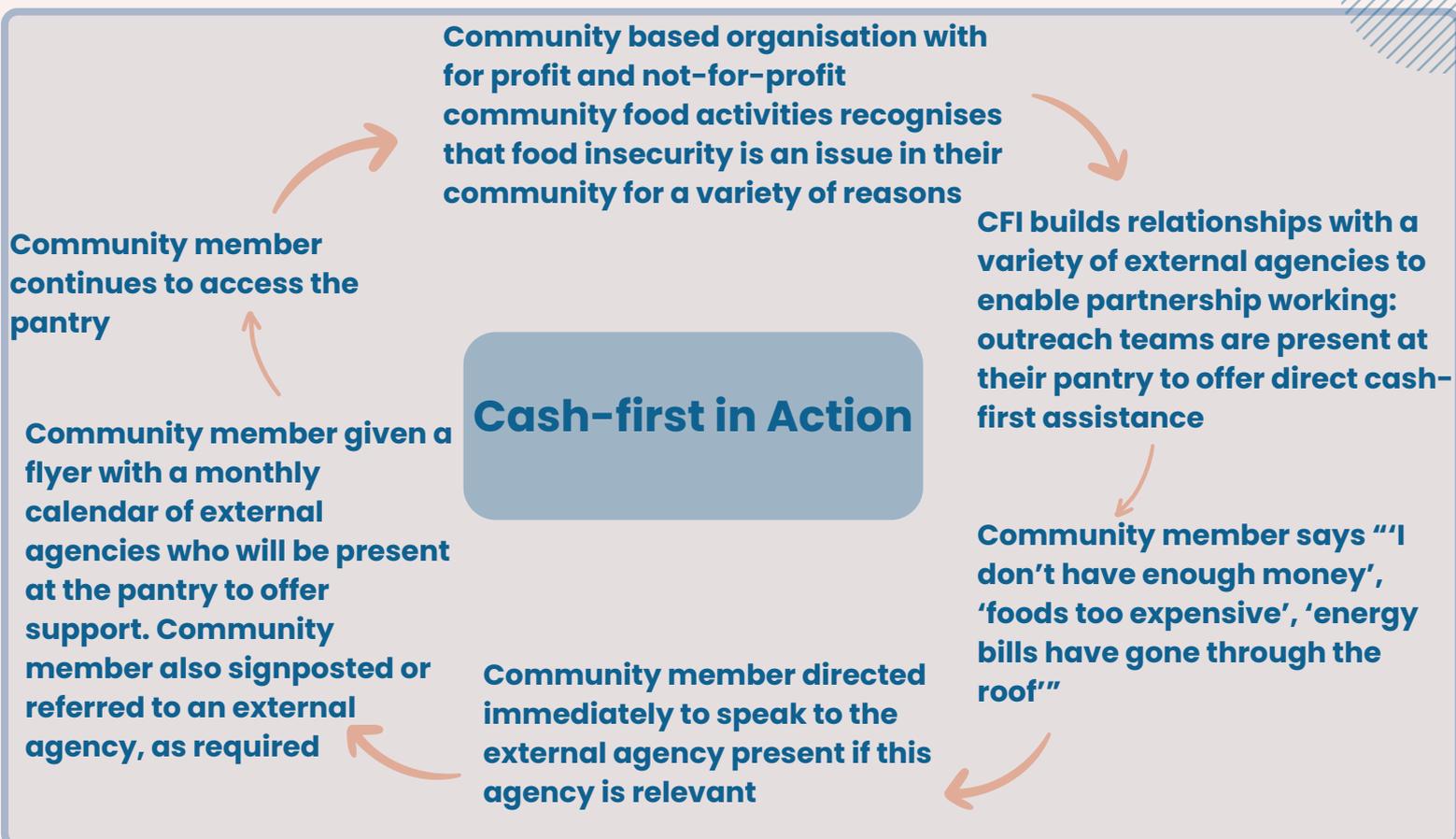


Figure 3: an example of **cash-first** in action

Their reported key current challenges

- **the intensity of demand** when external agencies have vouchers

The last couple of times we've had Home Energy Scotland, they've given out almost £10,000 worth of fuel vouchers, they are inundated...I was like oh wow, this is intense

- **insufficient resources to tackle the problem** and funding needed to enable more direct support:

if the expectation is that we do more with the same resource, it's not going to work

- **having access to up to date knowledge:**

Lack of knowledge of the specific issue a person is experiencing. People present at the Pantry Hub who are in very difficult and complicated situations, which we are unable to deal with but feel duty bound to help.

- **"Stretched capacity"** such as the time and resource to coordinate external agencies that offer **cash-first** supports, which they aren't funded to do:

Food Projects like ours are frequently the only point of contact for people who are in need of support. This stretches our capacity. We are not funded to provide this type of support.



SPOTLIGHT 4

Involving people with lived experience of food insecurity: “having an actual understanding of how people are living and not just thinking you do”

Ensuring that the voices of people with lived experience of food insecurity are heard in both policy spaces and frontline responses is an established goal for institutions, organisations and projects across Scotland. From 2016 onwards, Scottish Government has made commitments to engage with people with lived experience of food insecurity in designing responses to tackle this issue. This is continued in the most recent **cash-first** plan with Action 8 stating ‘we will continue to listen to the direct experience of people’ (1).

In addition, GCFN advocated for ‘*bottom-up development with local people taking ownership over how their local areas are developed*’ as part of the city-wide food plan.

For this reason, we asked all survey respondents: *If you work with people who experience food insecurity, how do you involve them in your project / organisation?*

The responses revealed a multitude of understandings about what ‘*involving people*’ means in the context of CFIs. A small group of respondents (**N=8**) stated that they involved people in the **decision-making** of their organisation, and this tended to mean membership on boards and steering groups or on specific forums, such as an ‘*experts by experience group*’:

*This is ongoing work for us. We currently have people with experience of food insecurity on our board and among our volunteers. **Survey Respondent 23***

Although for some of this cohort, it was unclear how people with lived experience of food insecurity were involved in the governance of the CFI with some stating that ‘*everyone involved has an opportunity to take part in making decisions*’ but providing no detail on the mechanisms or pathways to this involvement.

For the most part ‘*involving people*’ was characterised as providing activities for people to join, such as cooking or social clubs, asking for adhoc feedback, or, most commonly, having people with lived experience in volunteering roles.

For interviewees with lived experience of food insecurity it was paramount that they were involved in decision-making. For two representatives of a small grassroots community food initiative with lived experience of food insecurity, it was imperative that there were clear routes for people to influence, and lead, any decision-making related to rolling out a **cash-first** approach at both a local and national level:

[People with lived experience of food insecurity] need to drive it forward and include the people that are impacted by it and explain how they actually feel **Interviewee 7**

If we can influence policy and highlight how people really need this dignity back **Interviewee 7**

In these accounts, people with first-hand knowledge of the challenges, complexities and trauma associated with food insecurity needed to be present in order to bring crucial expertise and input to spaces where *'collective knowledge in the community' was being built*. They gave an example of a local network that they are members of and highlighted that through being included and participating in this, it not only gave them *"information"* that they then signpost people to when they're *"out in the streets"* but also meant they were part of local decision making such as partnership funding proposals and consultations. In having this localised and joined up approach, people with lived experience can also share their expertise to evolve and improve existing decision making and responses.

In addition, participatory approaches involving people with lived experience of food insecurity were seen as important in ensuring responses and supports available for people in crisis reflected “*the way people are actually living*” and the daily realities of struggling to afford food:

[workers] can patronise you...one of [them] was absolutely ridiculous, [they] were like ... '[pantry members] really like queueing'... which was so twice removed from reality **Interviewee 7**

It's about understanding that poverty impacts the whole person and how it actually makes you feel **Interviewee 8**

The data in this research suggests that whilst there are current opportunities to support the day to day running of CFIs, opportunities and pathways to participating in decision-making and project design are much more limited. This appears to suggest the voices of lived experience are not currently influencing CFIs in the significant or powerful ways advocated for by GCFN.

Indeed, the accounts shared here demonstrate that increased participation of people with lived experience of food insecurity is needed to shape and better inform any **cash-first** approaches, policies, collective knowledge and attitudes towards people living in poverty.

Appendix A

Cash-first in Community Food Settings: Workshop with CFIs & wider stakeholders

Cash-first in Community Food Settings: Workshop with CFIs & wider stakeholders

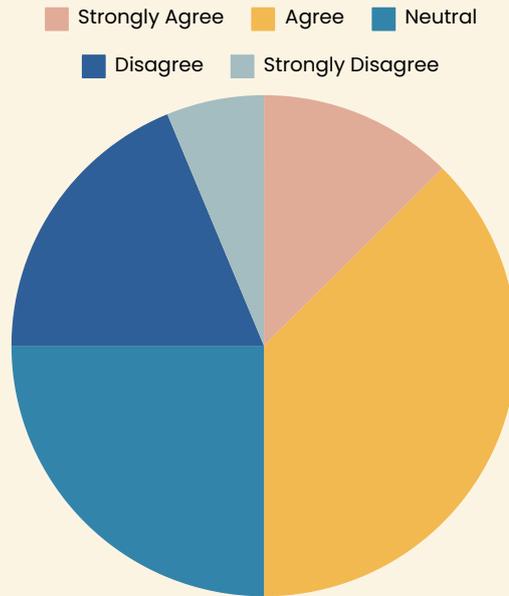
On 26th April, as part of GCFN's standard schedule of networking meetings, we hosted a 2-hour workshop. The aim of the workshop was to do some collective thinking around some of the challenges associated with implementing **cash-first** approaches in community food settings as well as any recommendations for developing these across Glasgow. This appendix provides a synopsis of the event and discussions.

The workshop was attended by 33 people representing a variety of different organisations and projects, detailed in the table.

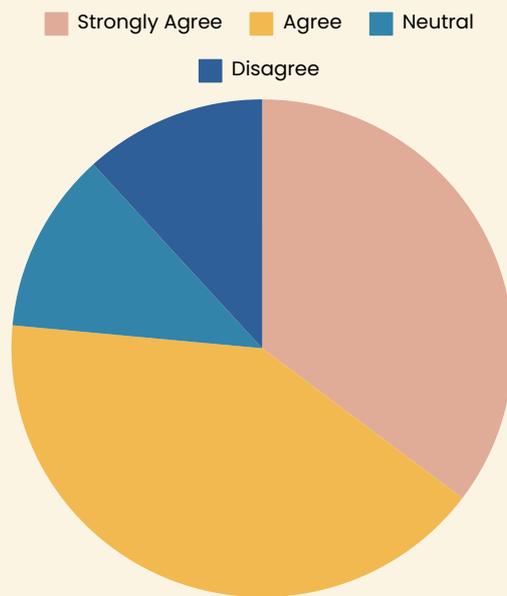
We presented an overview of the project and shared some of the key findings from the research. We wanted to gauge both understanding of and support of **cash-first** as an approach to tackling food insecurity. To do this we asked attendees to place themselves on a scale in response to the following statements:

Representative of...	No. of people
Individual	5
Food growing / community gardening	1
Community Group	2
Network / Campaigning Organisation	5
Food Bank	1
Community Development Project	4
Advice Service	1
Health Service	5
Local Authority	1
Other (unspecified)	4

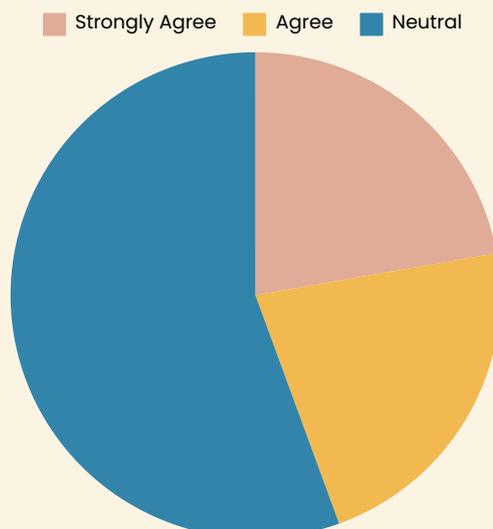
Cash-first is a term generally understood in my area of work



I can see how cash-first could be applied in community food settings

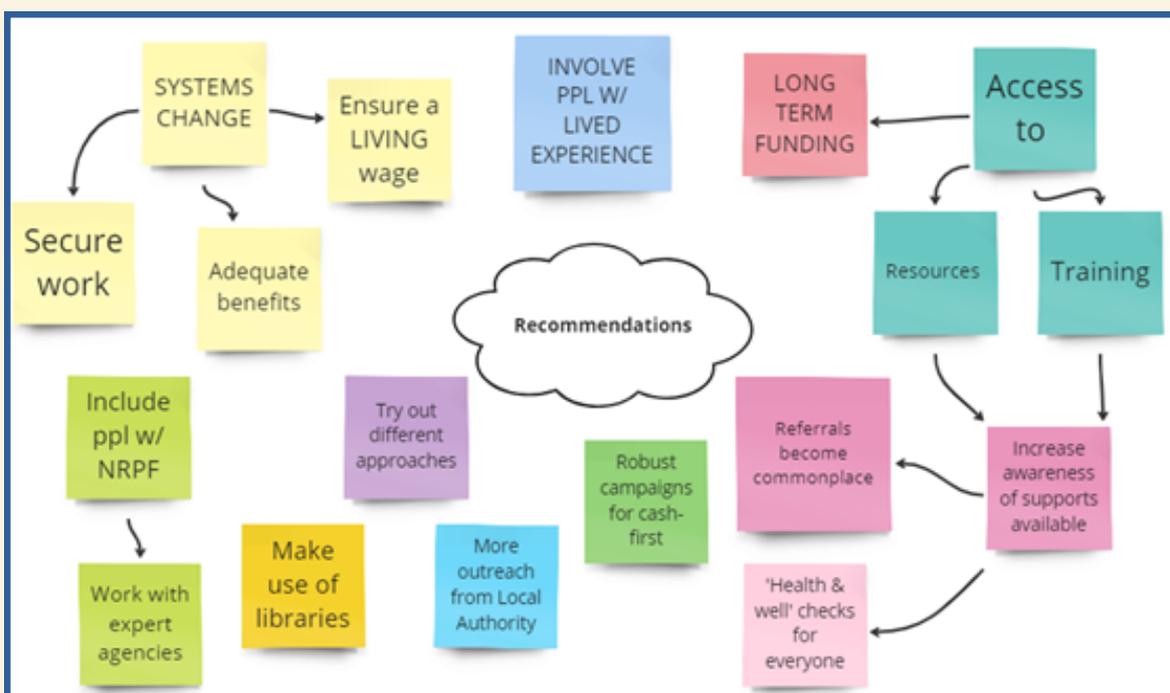


I can see how cash-first could work as an approach to ending the need for charitable food aid



We then broke out into small groups to consider the challenges which CFIs might face when trying to implement **cash-first** approaches and some of the recommendations each group would make for any future work across Glasgow. Many of the attendees' reflections and ideas mirrored the findings and thoughts from our research participants. It is clear there is a great deal of interest across organisations in evolving and improving responses for people experiencing food insecurity.

Below is a collection of the discussion and key points from each discussion:



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Thank you to all research participants who contributed to ongoing learning about *cash-first* in community food settings in Glasgow.

Special thanks to those with lived experience of food insecurity who generously shared their time and expertise with us.

This research was conducted by Paddy McKenna and Anna Baillie of **delve**, a partnership of freelancers working across the UK on a wide variety of projects.

delve.

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