Glasgow Community Food Network
External Evaluation

GLASGOW COMMUNITY FOOD NETWORK

The Lines Between

Glasgow Community Food Network: External Evaluation September 2022

Contents

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Introduction to the evaluation and overview of the Glasgow Community Food Network

Glasgow Community Food Network

1.1. Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) was established in 2017, following an in-depth feasibility study and consultation by Glasgow Local Food Network which concluded that a more formal organisation was required in Glasgow.

1.2. GCFN aims to develop a flourishing food system in Glasgow and now has over 200 members. Its aims, as listed on its website, are to:

Work together to build a healthier food system

Help to reduce Glasgow's food waste

Improve equal access to affordable healthy food for everyone in Glasgow

Ensure that community food organisations are recognised for local, ethical and/or sustainable practice

The evaluation

1.3. In early 2022, The Lines Between were commissioned to evaluate Glasgow Community Food Network, exploring impacts, achievements, challenges and setbacks it has experienced since it was established in 2017. The evaluation aims were to:

- describe the work completed by GCFN to date;

- explore how GCFN has adapted to Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic;

- assess how far the outcomes and milestones listed in GCFN's logic model have been achieved from the organisation's establishment in 2017 up to March 2022;

- make recommendations for the immediate future and aims of GCFN.

1.4. The Lines Between was also asked to complete an in-depth evaluation of the Food and Climate Action project. The evaluation report (a separate document) presents an assessment of the project's progress towards its aims in its first year (March 2021-March 2022), and recommendations to improve monitoring and evaluation processes.

Methodology

1.5.   A three-stage evaluation approach was set out:

Planning and preparation > Fieldwork > Analysis and reporting

1.6.   The evaluation began with a desk-based review of relevant background data and the development of a set of research tools, including a focus group guide, an interview discussion guide and an online survey. These tools were designed to gather data on:

- Activities delivered by GCFN.
- Factors that worked well/less well in the delivery of the GCFN's activities.
- Challenges that the GCFN has encountered.
- The impact of Brexit and Covid-19.
- Views and evidence of the GCFN's impact on community food organisations and the general public.
- Learning points and any areas for improvement in any of the GCFN's activities.
- Future direction, aims and priorities for the GCFN.

1.7.   During the fieldwork stage, one-to-one and small group interviews with a sample of 25 individuals including Glasgow Community Food Network staff, board members, Network members and strategic stakeholders were undertaken. A breakdown is provided in Appendix 3. A survey also was shared among the GCFN network; it received 12 responses from stakeholders. Quantitative data was also collected by GCFN via a poll conducted at a networking event in August 2022, which received 13 responses.

1.8.   The final stage of the evaluation involved thematic analysis of all interviews and quantitative analysis of responses to the survey of Network members.

Delivery and governance of GCFN

1.9.   In the following paragraphs we provide a brief summary of:

- GCFN's structure, governance and evolution since 2017;
- its aims and funding sources
- the Network's aims; and
- the activities delivered by GCFN.

Organisational structure, governance and evolution

1.10. Glasgow Community Food Network is a Community Interest Company, a type of limited company that exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. A board

of directors with eight members leads the organisation. Board members are experts in sustainability and community food, and are well known in the sector.

1.11. From 2017 to 2020, GCFN was led by sessional volunteer directors with no employees. Its focus was on promoting networking between community organisations, undertaking research, and co-ordinating or supporting campaigns to promote community food.

1.12. However, GCFN established the Covid-19 Response project on the onset of the pandemic in 2020. This required the recruitment of paid staff and now, with the emergence of other projects and activities, 15 people work for GCFN. Ten of these are permanent, contracted staff while two are off-payroll directors and three are employed on a sessional basis. Staff include project delivery officers as well as admin and communications support.

Aims and funding

1.13. The Network aims to:

> *"Bring together practitioners and organisations in the private, public and third sectors, along with other interested individuals, to develop a flourishing food system in Glasgow. We work with everyone with an interest in food: chefs and restaurants, farmers and market gardeners, foodbank and soup kitchen volunteers, and anyone else who cares about better food for Glasgow. Bringing together experts by experience, harnessing our collective power and using this to contribute to Scotland-wide policies, strategies, legislation and initiatives can create real systemic change. We want to see a city where high quality, fresh, local, organic, and sustainable produce is available and affordable for all, and where good food is a celebrated part of our culture."*

1.14. GCFN receives a small amount of annual core funding from the Scottish Government, which covers staff, office, management and administration costs. Beyond the core funding, GCFN receives funding from various other funders to finance individual projects and activities. Funders include the National Lottery Community Fund, the Tudor Trust, the Scottish Government, Soil Association, Glasgow City Council and Sustainable Food Places.

Activities

1.15. Over the past five years Glasgow Community Food Network has delivered a wide range of activities. These can be broadly categorised as:

- networking events and activities;

- research and development;

- working with the public sector to inform policy;

- campaigning and information sharing to raise awareness, cascade messages and encourage action in the community; and

- delivery of projects that work directly with members of the public and/or other organisations in the food sector.

1.16. Examples of activities are woven throughout Chapters 2 and 3, and further information can be found in Appendix 1.

Report structure

1.17. This report sets out our findings, and is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 discusses GCFN's impact and progress towards it aims.
- Chapter 3 explores the strengths of the organisation as well as the challenges it faces.
- Chapter 4 presents our conclusions and recommendations.
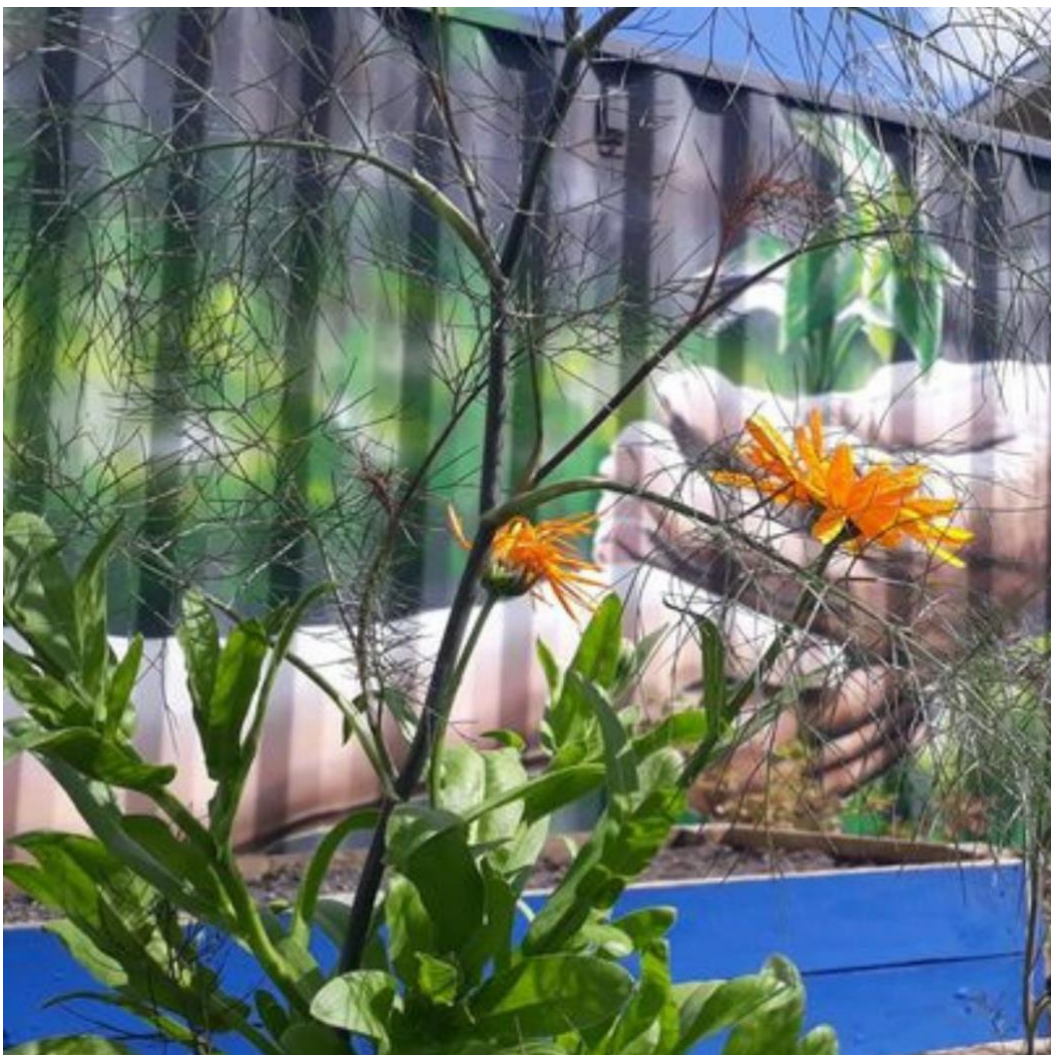
02

GCFN's impact and progress towards outcomes and aims

Introduction

2.1.   This chapter explores Glasgow Community Food Network's impact and progress towards its outcomes and aims. The Network's logic model, developed in 2017, includes a wide range of intended activities, milestones and outcomes. These are encapsulated in the four aims listed on GCFN's website (as noted in Chapter 1); this chapter is structured around those headings.

Working together to build a healthier food system

2.2.   There was a clear consensus among evaluation participants that GCFN has been successful in promoting joint working between organisations with the aim of building a healthier food system in Glasgow. It has done this both by bringing community organisations together and by acting as a conduit between the community and public sectors. There are two features of this work to enhance community organisations' ability to work together and for the sector to influence food policy and strategy, which are discussed in more detail below.

- Bringing community organisations together to share learning and work in partnership
- A conduit between the community sector and statutory bodies

Bringing community organisations together to share learning and work in partnership

2.3.   Interviewees and survey respondents identified GCFN as crucial in bringing community organisations together. Delivering networking events and projects that have involved community organisations working together has helped to achieve this. Glasgow Community Food Network has:

- helped community organisations to ensure that they are working in a co-ordinated and cohesive manner to build a healthier food system, avoiding duplication of effort;
- allowed community organisations to share learning;
- helped to identify opportunities for community organisations to deliver projects together;
- enabled community organisations to support each other's campaigns and lobbying activities.

> *"I think the co-ordinating role of having that organisation there that can support local organisations on the ground… it's very important not to duplicate things and not to spread your resources too thin."*

> *"It became a place for networking, a place for sharing learning, a place for coming together, and also for supporting each other."*

2.4. All 13 respondents to GCFN's poll rated the Network as four or five (on a scale of one to five where five means 'a lot') when asked about the extent to which it has enabled information and knowledge sharing as well as collaboration between community food projects in Glasgow.

2.5. For example, Food for Good project involved a coalition, led by GCFN and Community Transport Glasgow, which offered local community organisations support with food supplies and logistics including transport, delivery and storage during the pandemic. The Food and Climate Action project is working with five partner organisations across the city, each of which hosts a member of staff employed by the project.

2.6. An interviewee from an organisation which is lobbying Glasgow City Council to allocate more land for allotments noted that making a presentation at a GCFN networking event had helped to gain more support for their campaign – *"they gave us an outlet"*. Another said that the report on the Covid-19 Response project was helpful for *"campaigning and policy work, raising awareness and increasing knowledge of the food environment"*.

A conduit between the community sector and statutory bodies

2.7. Glasgow Community Food Network has acted as a conduit between the community sector and public sector organisations. Although GCFN was keen to emphasise that they do not seek to replace the voice of individual community organisations, its involvement in discussions and working groups with statutory bodies and membership of groups such as the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership[1] has enabled the community sector to have *"a seat at the table"* and *"a collective voice"* when new policies and strategies are being developed and delivered. One example mentioned by many interviewees was the development of the Glasgow City Food Plan.[2]

> *"I think in terms of having that united and collected voice, I think they've done an amazing job."*

> *"All of us from the public sector, the local authority and NHS, we recognise trust and value them as an equal partner, that bring to the table really, really important insights into what is happening and what needs to happen to improve things."*

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[1] The Glasgow Food Policy Partnership is a group of public, private and community sector organisations that are working together to work towards a fairer, healthier, more sustainable and resilient food system - http://goodfoodforall.co.uk/.
[2] http://goodfoodforall.co.uk/home/glasgow-city-food-plan

2.8.   Just over three quarters of respondents to GCFN's poll rated the Network as four or five (on a scale of one to five where fives means 'a lot') in terms of its impact in being an effective conduit between the community sector and statutory bodies (10, 77%). All but one (12, 92%) rated GCFN as four or five on the scale when asked about how well it has been the collective voice of community food projects in Glasgow.

2.9.   Interviewees from statutory bodies observed that GCFN makes it easier for them to engage with the community sector. GCFN provides a single point of contact with the community sector when the public sector wishes to find out more about community-based activity, identify where organisations may need support, or to involve community organisations in project delivery.

2.10. A notable example of this is the Covid-19 Response project, when GCFN was crucial in rapidly mobilising the community sector to support the city's response to the pandemic.

> *"The Community Food Network was round the table from the outset… if the Community Food Network hadn't existed, I don't think it would have happened in the same way, because there wouldn't have been a single third sector representative body to go to, and they might have drawn on different organisations."*

2.11. Another example was given by an interviewee from a statutory body who said that they asked GCFN to provide information about grassroots activity in Glasgow to help with a national mapping study. If GCFN did not exist, they would have had to contact hundreds of organisations individually to gather the information. The Glasgow Free Food Map (illustrated in Figure 2.1)[3], developed in partnership with Glasgow City HSCP, is another example. It provides details of emergency food support services; GCFN played an important part in the development phase and is now responsible for keeping the Map up to date.

Figure 2.1: Glasgow Free Food Map

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[3] https://www.urbanroots.org.uk/freefood/
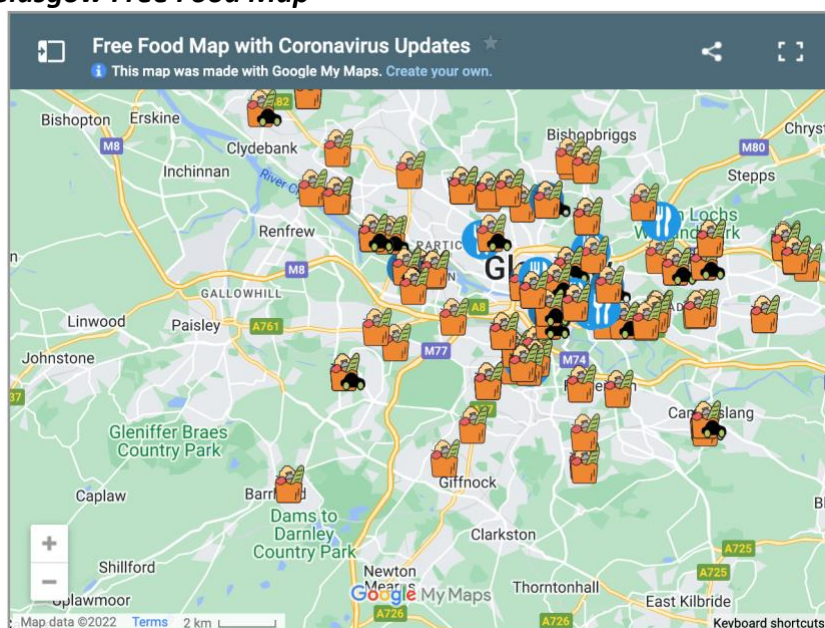
2.12. Some interviewees noted that the extent of this community sector involvement with the statutory sector is not common in other areas of Scotland. There was a view that this is allowing organisations in Glasgow to work together, across different sectors, to achieve their shared aim of creating a healthier food network.

> *"It's not like they're lobbying from the outside, which is often where the third sector find themselves."*

2.13. Overall, the consensus was that GCFN is a valued organisation that helps to co-ordinate activity in the community sector and link community work with the public sector. One interviewee provided a metaphor of GCFN as the hub of a bicycle wheel:

> *"If you take the analogy of food growing as a bicycle wheel, at the centre of that holding all the spokes together is Glasgow Community Food Network, they are integral to the success of food growing in the city… they draw an awful lot organisations, who may have been quite disparate and disjointed previously, together as a cohesive group who seek action and all sorts of things to do with food, not just food growing but food supply chains, food poverty, supporting community meals, etc. They really are a decent grassroots organisation that are really beginning to make an inroad in Glasgow on food systems and long may it continue."*

Community food organisations are recognised for local/ethical/sustainable practice

2.14. Efforts by Glasgow Community Food Network to bring the community and public sectors together has enhanced community organisations' profile and reputation with public sector organisations. GCFN's communications officer has played a key role in this work, by raising awareness of the role and contribution of their community sector members.

2.15. Evidence of recognition includes comments from staff in public sector bodies who view community organisations as "equal partners" as well as steps taken by public sector partners to include the community sector in service and policy delivery. The Glasgow City Food Plan is an important example of GCFN's valued position. As well as contributing to the development of the policy, GCFN was allocated responsibility for delivering some aspects of the plan. This demonstrates recognition among the public sector of the community sector's strengths and the contribution it can make to establishing a healthier food system and in tackling food poverty.

> *"I think to be to have that recognition in the partnership and within the City Food Plan, I think is amazing within a pretty reasonably short amount of time."*

2.16. GCFN's social media activity also helps to stimulate links between community organisations as well as enhancing awareness of their work more widely. To illustrate its reach, GCFN has 2,566 Instagram followers, 1,655 likes of its Facebook page and 1,906 followers on Twitter. It has made over 3,000 tweets since May 2017 and in September 2022 alone received nearly 3,300 visits to its profile page. Two examples of GCFN tweets are overleaf.

Thread

Glasgow Community Food Network
@GCFNetwork

1/ Last but not least, we're looking back on our So Yo
Wanna Be A Grower event from our
#FestivalOfGrowing in our reflection in
#DemandForLand so far.

Held on Fri 24/06, we were lucky enough to host som
brilliant groups who shared their infinite wisdom on al
things growing.

10:00 AM · Jul 3, 2022 · threadcreator.com

1 Retweet   2 Likes

Tweet

Glasgow Community Food Network
@GCFNetwork

Donna, #FoodClimateAction Community Activator fo
the West, spoke with the BCC earlier this month to
discuss building confidence in the kitchen and where
we can look for meal inspiration.

Listen 👉 bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0…

@TNLComFundScot
@GlasgowEcoTrust
#FoodClimateAction

bbc.co.uk

Reducing food waste

2.17.   A few interviewees said GCFN's activities have a positive impact on food waste in Glasgow.

> *"GCFN have certainly engaged with waste strategy officers within Glasgow City Council and to find inroads to not only the food waste side of things, but also things like green waste that are arising from our parks operations and to get them into the composting and processes to support the agroecology, and the approaches that we are trying to take within the city. So the food waste is a big part of that and reducing that food waste has been a key area of their work."*

2.18.   While the survey attracted a fairly small response rate of 12, respondents provided some favourable feedback, with five (42%) reporting GCFN has achieved this outcome to a small extent and one (8%) to a moderate extent (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Glasgow's food waste is reduced (n=12)
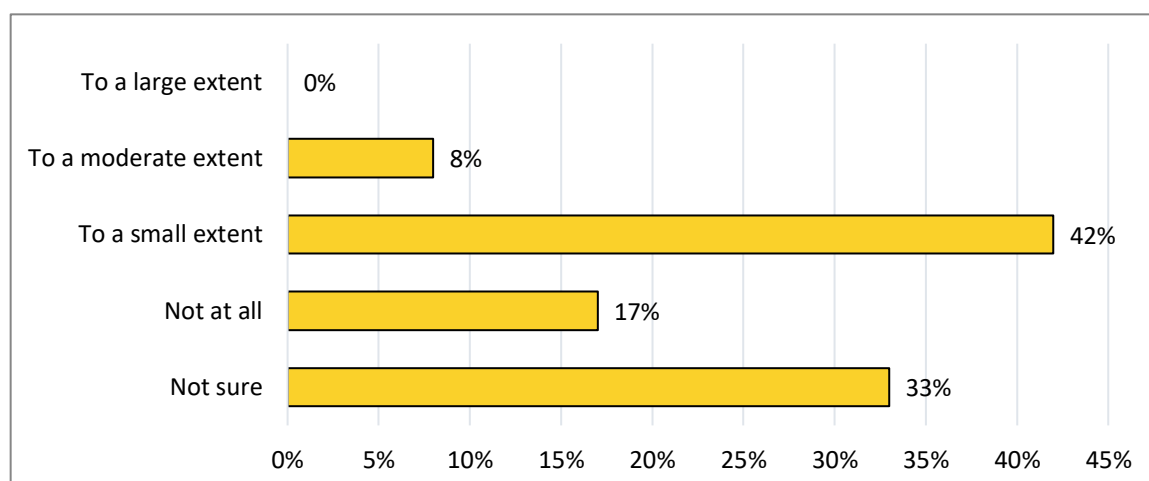
2.19.   Overall, however, there is limited evidence about GCFN's impact on food waste. This is a very ambitious outcome with potentially many different contributory factors. Some interviewees felt it is too early to measure progress towards this long-term goal. Others, however, identified a lack of data to measure this outcome.

2.20.   There is perhaps a need to review and strengthen GCFN's monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that data is collected to measure progress towards all its intended outcomes. This is an issue we discuss further in the next chapter.
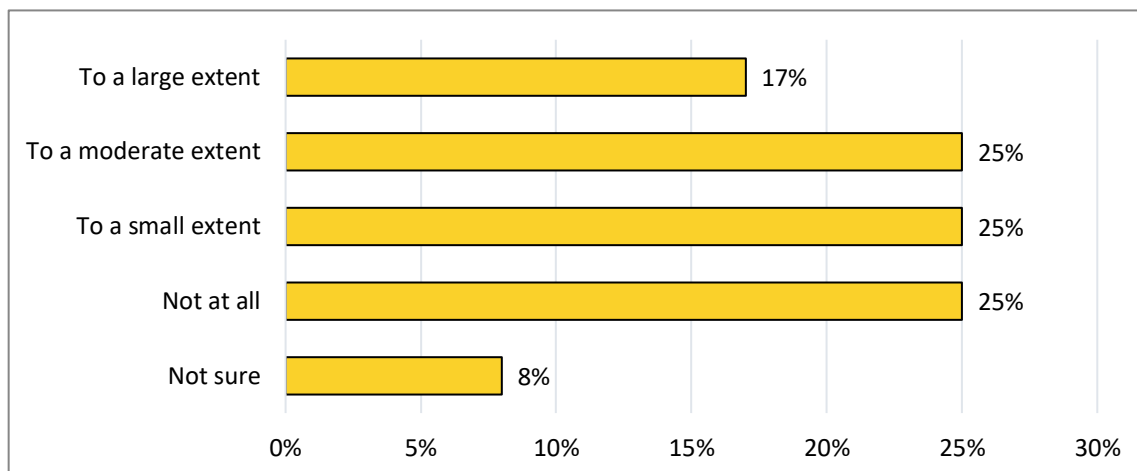
Improving equal access to affordable healthy food

2.21.   Many evaluation participants shared examples of GCFN's help for people to access healthy food. Most notably, the Covid-19 Response project was praised for ensuring that disadvantaged people could access healthy food during the pandemic. Interviewees felt GCFN's role was crucial here both in terms of directors' knowledge of the funding landscape to leverage funding for the project; and in using GCFN's contacts to co-ordinate the community sector's response to the pandemic and to form relationships with partners from the public sector.

> *"There was a lot of food delivery going on during the last two years, specifically delivering fresh and healthier food."*

2.22.   In addition, at a GCFN networking event in May 2021, members reported that the Network was helping to achieve better access to healthier food more generally, as well as enhancing connections with locally-grown produce.

2.23.   Eight survey respondents (67%) reported that Glasgow Community Food Network is helping to improve equal access to affordable healthier food to at least some extent, but 25% (3) said this was only 'to a small extent' (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Everyone in Glasgow has improved equal access to affordable healthier food (n=12)

2.24. In data collected by GCFN, just over three-quarters of poll respondents (10, 77%) rated GCFN as four or five (on a scale of one to five where five means 'a lot') in terms of helping to enable equal access to affordable, good healthy food.

2.25. Similarly, nine respondents to TLB's survey (75%) agreed that GCFN is empowering people and communities to make healthier, sustainable food choices to at least some extent, although the largest proportion (42%, 5) reported this was achieved only 'to a small extent' (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: People and communities are empowered to make healthier, sustainable food choices (n=12)
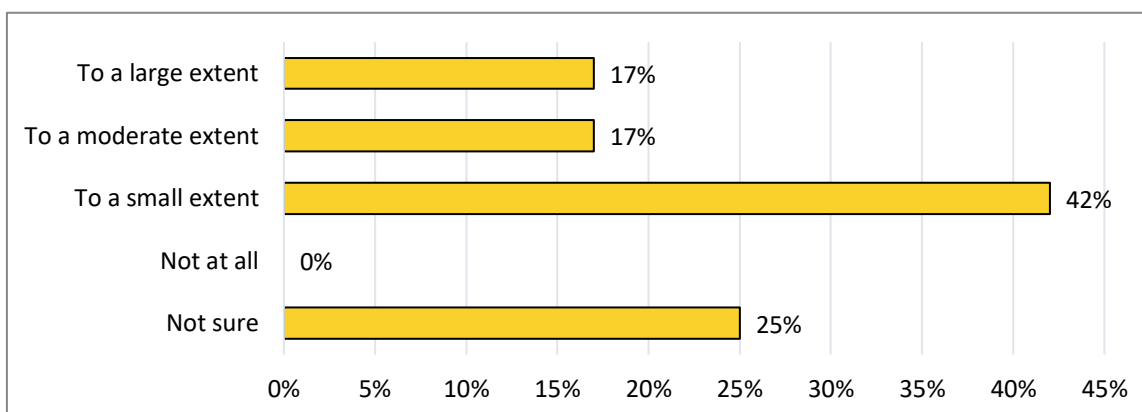
2.26. One interviewee pointed to a new project starting with Castlemilk Law Centre and the East End Food Bank whereby fresh food will be added to food bank packages and welfare advice will be made available to food bank users. Another example is the Glasgow Free Food Map, which provides important information for people looking for emergency food provision.

"I don't think you can underestimate how valuable the Free Food Map is in terms of what difference that makes to families, particularly vulnerable families. As the cost of living crisis really kicks in, that will be an invaluable resource."

2.27.   There are also examples in the Food and Climate Action project, where Activators are empowering and enabling local people to take action to improve the availability of locally-produced, healthier food.

2.28.   However, there was also a view that, while Glasgow Community Food Network has helped members of the community to access food during the pandemic and is helping link disadvantaged members of the community with emergency food provision, more work needs to be done to support access to *affordable* food more widely.

2.29.   Overall, there is a lack of data in relation to this outcome. Again, this is a long-term outcome where it is perhaps too early to observe an impact, but this may indicate a need for GCFN to review and enhance its monitoring and evaluation processes to collect robust evidence of this ambitious outcome.

Chapter summary

The evaluation has gathered extensive evidence of GCFN's positive impact in a networking sense. It has brought community organisations closer together with each other. It has also improved the link between the community and public sectors, which has enhanced community organisations' role in policy development and delivery.

There are also examples where GCFN is helping to reduce food waste and to improve equal access to healthier food. However, there is a lack of robust objective data to evidence progress towards these outcomes, and this is a challenge that we discuss further in Chapter 3.

03

GCFN's strengths and challenges

3.1. This chapter summarises the strengths of Glasgow Community Food Network and key challenges facing the organisation.

Strengths

3.2. Evaluation participants highlighted the following as key strengths of GCFN's:

- The passion and expertise of the staff and board members
- Positive working relationships with public sector and community organisations
- Agility and ability to make things happen quickly
- Bottom-up approach
- Policy relevance

Passion and expertise of staff and board

3.3. Evaluation participants had strongly favourable opinions of GCFN's directors and staff members. The passion, dedication, skills, experience and contacts in GCFN's team were identified as key strengths.

> *"Everybody in the organisation, they're so lovely, and an absolute pleasure to work with. And really committed… they hired some really, really great staff with a lot of experience."*

> *"That is one of the big strengths of the organisation… that the people who are involved in it really believe in what they're doing… they're pushing forward trying to make things better across Glasgow, and beyond… They're really impassioned about making things better."*

3.4. One public sector interviewee spoke of GCFN's infectious enthusiasm and its positive impact on the organisations it works with and on efforts to build a healthier and more sustainable food system in Glasgow.

> *"Our community food colleagues are so passionate and so enthusiastic, and they're so committed to what they're doing, that it's infectious. I think they add a little bit of zing or sparkle to what we're trying to do as a city and I don't think we would be making progress as much as we are if they weren't round the table."*

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Relationships with public sector organisations

3.5.   Chapter 2 includes evidence of Glasgow Community Food Network's successes in fostering relationships with public sector organisations. These relationships are an important strength. It is clear from stakeholder feedback that GCFN is well-respected among public sector partners and works closely and effectively with these organisations. Another example of joint working with the public sector is the Sustainable Food Places Co-ordinator. This staff member is employed by GCFN but is based at Glasgow Centre for Population Health and funded by the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership.

3.6.   This close relationship helps to promote effective joint working and has allowed the community sector to achieve a greater role in policy development and service delivery than might otherwise have been possible.

Partnership working with community organisations

3.7.   GCFN's strong working relationships with community organisations was highlighted by evaluation participants. Community organisations come together to share learning and identify opportunities for joint working through GCFN which interviewees valued.

3.8.   There are also examples where GCFN has worked in partnership with community organisations to deliver projects and these were described as having worked well. For instance, a 'host organisation' model was used with the Covid-19 Response and the Food and Climate Action projects. This has involved locating individual workers employed by GCFN at community organisations in different areas of Glasgow. Working with host organisations enabled GCFN to reach communities across Glasgow, tapping into host organisations' contacts and resources, and allowing host organisations to benefit from GCFN's contacts and resources too.

Agility and ability to make things happen quickly

3.9.   This is perhaps a strength more of the community sector in general than GCFN specifically, but a few interviewees from public organisations noted that they appreciate working with GCFN because they can make things happen more quickly than in the public sector.

> *"Working within statutory means that some things don't happen quickly. Having a key partner like GCFN that is bringing together other organisations as one can really make things happen quickly and you can respond quicker, which is really important, and has been a really great thing about having GCFN there."*

3.10.   Interviewees noted that if the public sector has pots of funding available to use, GCFN can help to utilise that in the community sector, where organisations are often able to establish new projects more quickly than in the statutory sector.

> *"The flexibility, adaptability and speed of response that is available to GCFN is key in the city."*

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Bottom-up approach

3.11.   Glasgow Community Food Network's 'bottom-up' approach, with the involvement of grassroots community organisations from the outset, was another strength identified by interviewees. One explained that a previous attempt to establish a similar network, led by the NHS, had been unsuccessful because it was seen as 'top-down'. By taking a more 'bottom-up' approach, the Network has been successfully established and is now seen as an important part of the food landscape in Glasgow.

> *"So [it was decided] if we were going to have a Community Food Network in Glasgow, it would need to be owned by, in all senses of the term, the community food sector, and it would need to be something that they valued, that met their needs, and that they trusted. It wasn't something that the public sector had imposed on them."*

Policy relevance

3.12.   Interviewees highlighted that GCFN's work contributes to several Scottish Government policy priorities, including food security, health and social inequalities, the cost of living, health and wellbeing, climate change, sustainability and skills and employability. There were some suggestions that GCFN should continue to build on this relevance to make the case for funding to funders.

Challenges

3.13.   Evaluation participants reflected on the challenges posed by Covid-19 and the UK's exit from the EU, and difficulties related to the organisation's internal development.

Covid-19

3.14.   The Covid-19 pandemic created several significant challenges. GCFN and its member organisations had to adapt quickly to the sudden restrictions on face-to-face contact and the challenges this posed for working together as a team and for delivering services to the community. The Network had to pause all its existing activities, including networking

meetings, as a result, although contact was maintained with and between Network members via social media channels.

> " *"Building trust and relationships during that period was very challenging… it was very stressful working online."*

3.15. However, GCFN acknowledged that the pandemic also catalysed aspects of organisational development. It made the directors realise that GCFN could provide vital support services in the pandemic by co-ordinating the community food sector's work to distribute food to vulnerable people. This led to the Network's first experience of project delivery with the Covid-19 Response project.

> *"The pandemic was almost the making of us in many ways."*

3.16. Interviewees from statutory bodies reflected that the Covid-19 Response project helped to establish positive working relationships between the community and public sectors, especially in health and social care. These have been maintained and led to further opportunities for joint working beyond the pandemic.

> *"With what was a very difficult time during the pandemic, there have been personal and professional relationships built up there that will continue."*

3.17. In addition, GCFN was praised for considering staff members' wellbeing during the pandemic. For example, workers had all the equipment they needed to work comfortably from home. The directors and staff also scheduled regular online meetings and, when restrictions allowed, face-to-face contact among team members.

> *"We found ways of lifting people's spirits and getting them to spend time working together and improving relationships and all that."*

EU exit

3.18. Stakeholders were unable to comment extensively on the impact of the UK's exit from the EU on Glasgow Community Food Network because so much focus has been placed on the pandemic recently. However, a few acknowledged that Brexit is also contributing to food and labour shortages and that much of GCFN's work is addressing these challenges.

> *"Brexit, I don't know if much has changed because most of the work that's been doing has been kind of in the light of the pandemic, and that's just kind of all been smooshed together. It's both resulted in food shortages and people going hungry."*

3.19. One noted that Brexit has placed more focus on local food systems, and that this provides added impetus to GCFN's work to promote a sustainable food system.

> *"It's certainly switched the paradigm to a much more local food-based process. And that's where GCFN comes in the forefront and where their strength comes."*

Challenges related to organisational development

3.20. One of the most significant challenges for GCFN was the rapid transition from being unstaffed to staffed. This transition was stimulated by the Covid-19 pandemic, when GCFN identified its scope to help co-ordinate the provision of emergency food for vulnerable people.

> *"So within the space of a year, we went from zero staff members to 16. So there was a big overhaul of governance, finance systems, and lots of stuff that we just didn't have, that we weren't set up for at all, but that we had to do quite quickly, to get in place like HR… that very much became the focus of us as directors to make sure that all of that was in place, and that we were doing what we're meant to do, legally speaking."*

3.21. To illustrate the scale of this transition, GCFN's turnover increased fivefold between 2019-20 and 2021-22.

3.22. Interviewees praised the way that GCFN had been able to achieve such a complex transition in a short space of time, especially when this challenging process was undertaken during a pandemic.

3.23. However, there was also recognition that this has led to several challenges for the organisation related to:

- developing the policies and processes required of an employer;

- ensuring directors and staff have the skills necessary to fulfil the organisation's responsibilities as an employer;

- establishing effective lines of management, responsibility and accountability;

- setting a clear strategic direction;

- ensuring adequate funding;

- reviewing and enhancing monitoring and evaluation processes; and

- developing adequate IT systems.

3.24.   It is important to note that GCFN has engaged an independent consultant to provide training on organisational governance and the board has set up working groups to address some of these issues. Key challenges are detailed below.

Developing policies and processes

3.25.   When it became an employer, Glasgow Community Food Network had to develop several policies and procedures that are required of employers such as codes of conduct, a staff handbook and a payroll function. Interviewees reported that this process is now complete but was challenging and very time consuming for staff and directors.

> *"A lot of time was spent putting processes for GCFN in place... really basic processes like policies and HR things and leave reports and handbooks and things like that that ideally should have been there before the team were employed."*

Skills as an employer

3.26.   It is important to emphasise that evaluation participants were, on the whole, extremely positive about GCFN and the skills, expertise and approach of its directors and staff.

3.27.   Interviewees, however, noted that, understandably given the speed of and challenges associated with the transition, GCFN still has two key issues that need addressed in its role as a staffed project delivery organisation:

- Human resources: some interviewees felt that GCFN might benefit from some support as an employer. Staff reported that they felt well supported but there were some suggestions that the organisation might need some help to ensure its HR function is provided effectively and to ensure that robust support and supervision arrangements can continue.

- Project management: there were some examples of confusion caused by unclear timescales and lack of delegation causing some issues.

Lines of management, responsibility and accountability

3.28.   Some evaluation participants identified challenges related to the non-hierarchical nature of the organisation. While this approach has many benefits, including opportunities for staff development, some interviewees described uncertainty around lines of management, responsibility and accountability. This can cause challenges in driving activity forward, making decisions and obtaining approval or sign-off at project milestones.

> *"The organisation aims to be a non-hierarchical organisation, which I think is admirable and good, but also brings its own challenges to ways of working, sign off being a major one."*

> *"I think the non-hierarchical structure of the organisation is itself quite a big challenge, particularly after they've taken on more staff, there's been uncertainty around lines of decision making, and responsibility, and moving things forward, getting signed off that kind of stuff… I think that's the biggest challenge for the organisation really – who's responsible for what? I think there's still uncertainty."*

3.29. A few interviewees suggested a need for an operations manager to be recruited. This person would have responsibility for maintaining an overview of all GCFN activities and providing sign off and support for staff responsible for delivering projects on a day-to-day basis. However, interviewees acknowledged that additional funding would be necessary to finance the role.

Strategic direction

3.30. There is some uncertainty among evaluation participants about GCFN's organisational and strategic direction. This feedback indicates there is a need for a clearer strategic direction for the organisation to guide all its activities.

> *"There is no strategic approach to project development from GCFN… there is a need for a much more strategic mission statement and vision that is really clear then everything they do practically needs to relate to that mission and if it doesn't then someone else should do it."*

3.31. At a project level, there is perhaps a need to establish clear parameters for projects and to ensure that they contribute to the organisation's overall strategic direction. Just now, some evaluation participants felt that some projects are quite loosely defined, leading to uncertainty among staff about which activities to prioritise.

3.32. There was widespread agreement among interviewees and survey participants that tackling food poverty should be the main focus of GCFN's work. This could be wide-ranging, encompassing efforts to improve accessibility to food among disadvantaged communities but also considering other factors that contribute to food poverty such as the welfare benefits system and ideas to alleviate poverty such as a universal basic income.

3.33. Some interviewees stressed the importance of defining more precisely what is entailed with being a member of GCFN. While some members may prefer to have more passive involvement, for example, receiving a newsletter and/or attending occasional networking events, others may wish to get more involved in GCFN activities through, for example, contributing to policy development or taking part in joint projects. There was also a suggestion that GCFN could do more to help organisations identify issues where they could collaborate and co-ordinate their work to ensure they are working cohesively towards shared aims.

3.34. Others spoke positively about the Food and Climate Action project and agreed that climate change and sustainability should be a priority for GCFN. These interviewees felt this work should encompass issues like food growing, urban agriculture and promoting locally-produced food.

Funding

3.35.   Glasgow Community Food Network relies on external funding. It currently accesses core funding from the Scottish Government and a combination of funding from various funders to finance individual projects. The funding tends to be short-term – two or three years typically – and this creates challenges. Not only are funding applications a time-consuming task for directors and staff, but the short-term nature of the funding contributes to staff turnover if individuals leave the organisation when a funded project finishes. This results in a loss of knowledge and experience.

Monitoring and evaluation

3.36.   GCFN has encountered some challenges with to monitoring and evaluation. As noted in Chapter 2, evaluation participants provided positive feedback about GCFN's impact but this was often anecdotal. Some noted that there is a lack of robust and objective evidence of GCFN's impact, particularly in terms of reducing food waste and improving equal access to affordable healthier food.

> *"They've not been as good as they could have been as an organisation in measuring impact."*

3.37.   Another challenge with monitoring and evaluation is that some of the GCFN outcomes are very ambitious, difficult to measure and challenging to attribute to the activities of any one organisation, sector or project.

3.38.   Some interviewees also commented that the outcomes are focused on the long-term and it will not be possible to evidence their achievement until sometime in the future.

IT systems

3.39.   There was a feeling among a few interviewees that GCFN's cyber security arrangements should be reviewed to ensure the systems and packages used are fit for purpose and meet all relevant data protection legislation.

Chapter summary

GCFN has many important strengths but also faces some significant challenges, most notably stemming from the organisations recent rapid growth. Our conclusions and recommendations for leveraging its strengths and overcoming some of the challenges are set out in the final chapter.

04

Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

4.1.   This chapter draws together the findings from our evaluation and presents our conclusions. Twelve recommendations are put forward for consideration, presented under thematic headings; a full list of recommendations is provided in Appendix 4.

GCFN's networking role is key

4.2.   Glasgow Community Food Network is well-respected and valued by community organisations across Glasgow. Interviewees and survey participants were clear that GCFN is crucial in providing opportunities for community organisations to share learning and to take part in collaborative working. There are examples of GCFN fostering strong partnership working in the sector, not least in GCFN's engagement with local host organisations in the Covid-19 Response and Food and Climate Action projects.

> **Recommendation 1:**
>
> We recommend that GCFN continues to build on the strong partnerships it has built with community organisations and look for further opportunities for joint working with existing and new partners in the community sector.

4.3.   The relationship GCFN has built with public sector bodies is also crucial. While keen to point out that it does not seek to speak *for* community organisations, GCFN has enabled the community sector to have a collective voice and to influence policy development in partnership with public sector organisations, not least in the development of the Glasgow City Food Plan. Representatives of public sector organisations view GCFN as a valued single point of contact with the community sector, making it easier for them to gather information about activity in the community sector, and to engage community organisations in service delivery and policy development.

4.4.   Interviewees from the public sector were unanimous in their praise of the Network and its influence in enabling the public and community sectors to work together effectively in partnership to promote a healthier food system in Glasgow.

> **Recommendation 2:**
>
> GCFN's relationship with and reputation among public sector organisations is a key strength. It is important that the Network continues to nurture these relationships to ensure that the community sector continues to play an important part in policy development and delivery.

Skilled, passionate and dedicated staff and directors

4.5.   A common theme throughout the evaluation was the skills, passion and dedication of Glasgow Community Food Network staff and directors. Strongly favourable feedback about GCFN's people includes positive working relationships both within the organisation and between GCFN and its external partners and stakeholders. This is a key strength of the organisation.

A challenging funding landscape

4.6.   GCFN operates in a challenging funding landscape, common across the community sector as a whole. Short-term funding of two or three years is the norm and this causes problems for staff retention. Valuable skills and experience leave GCFN with any staff member who moves from the organisation because their post can no longer be financed.

4.7.   However, interviewees commented on the relevance of GCFN's work to several important and high profile local and national policy priorities and this could help when developing future funding applications. Attempts to develop a healthier food system ties in with many different policy priorities, including climate change, health and social inequalities, employment and the response to the current cost of living crisis.

4.8.   There could also be scope for the organisation to explore other forms of revenue generation, with one suggesting the possibility of charging Network membership fees as another way of raising income. Another possibility would be to explore the possibility of statutory partners, which appear to have a positive view of GCFN, providing funding to support the Network and enhance its sustainability.

Recommendation 3:

We suggest that GCFN continues to emphasise the importance and relevance of its work and tap into local and national policy priorities to make the case for funding from different funders and streams. GCFN directors were praised for their knowledge of the funding landscape, but a horizon scanning exercise may be beneficial to identify the funders with a focus in the areas that GCFN contributes to, and to develop a strategy for developing proposals for projects that can fit with GCFN's and funders' priorities. An interviewee suggested seeking meetings with high profile funders like the Robertson Trust, William Grant Foundation and the Scottish Funders Forum more widely to explore opportunities for funding and how GCFN activities can align with funders' priorities.

Recommendation 4:

It may be beneficial for GCFN to explore the possibility of statutory partners, which appear to view GCFN as an important partner, providing funding to support the Network and enhance its sustainability.

Recommendation 5:

While GCFN's knowledge of the funding landscape was praised by some interviewees, and skills in developing funding applications were not in question, it may be beneficial to ensure that staff and directors have adequate time to seek funding as well as any support required with this role.

Recommendation 6:

It may be beneficial for GCFN to co-ordinate shared funding applications with other community organisations. This would help to make best use of resources and expertise across different organisations, both in terms of bid writing and project delivery.

Recommendation 7:

GCFN could explore alternative methods of generating income other than funding applications, such as a Network membership fee or modest charges for organisations to attend GCFN events. This, however, would need to be carefully considered, and the membership consulted before any changes take place.

Covid-19 – a challenge but *"the making of"* the organisation

4.9.   The Covid-19 pandemic caused significant challenges as a result of the disruption to face-to-face service delivery and meetings. However, interviewees praised Glasgow Community Food Network for its response in ensuring that staff members had the necessary equipment to work from home, and in ensuring there was regular contact between staff. They also maintained an element of networking activity via social media.

4.10. While Covid-19 was disruptive to GCFN, it was also, in many ways, *"the making of"* the organisation. The pandemic prompted GCFN to co-ordinate the community sector's emergency response to Covid-19, and ensured that vulnerable members of the community had access to food.

4.11. This was the Network's first experience of direct project delivery, and meant that GCFN underwent a radical transition during the pandemic. Almost overnight, it transformed from an unstaffed organisation led by a board of directors focused largely on networking and campaigning, to an organisation with a staff of eight focused on delivering a crucial service at a time of unprecedented societal upheaval.

A continuing learning curve

4.12. While GCFN deservedly received great praise from evaluation participants for completing such a challenging transition so rapidly and effectively during a pandemic, there is no doubt this involved a steep learning curve for staff and directors. The organisation had to develop the policies and processes required of an employer very quickly, and this process was understandably challenging and time consuming. While recognising the achievements involved in this, evaluation participants were clear that this learning curve is not complete and there remain several issues related to organisational development that GCFN must address.

4.13. Glasgow Community Food Network has already accessed consultancy support with organisational development and has developed internal working groups to take forward key pieces of work. However, it is clear that this needs to continue to be a priority for GCFN to safeguard the organisation's future. The feedback received through this evaluation suggest the priorities are to:

- set a clear strategic mission statement for the organisation, and then prioritise activities and projects that contribute to this;

- ensure directors and staff have the necessary HR and project management skills to manage and support a team of skilled staff and to deliver complex projects;

- review IT systems to ensure they are appropriate and in line with all relevant regulations; and

- consider the need for an operations manager or similar role to have an oversight of and co-ordinate all of GCFN's activities and to provide clear and unambiguous lines of management, responsibility and accountability.

Recommendation 8:

We suggest that it would be beneficial for GCFN to address the organisational issues listed above as a priority, seeking support as necessary from organisations such as SCVO and GCVS. We understand that this evaluation is the first step in helping GCFN to make short-, medium- and long-term plans. GCFN members discussed their views of activities they would like to see GCFN undertake at a networking event in August 2022, and it is important GCFN take this into account when planing the future.

Ambitious outcomes and monitoring and evaluation

4.14.   While there was clear evidence from interviewees and survey participants that GCFN's intended outcomes to bring organisations together and to achieve recognition for the community sector had been achieved, the picture is less clear in terms of its other key outcomes – reducing food waste and improving equal access to affordable healthy food. There is no doubt that some evidence that points towards this, however, much of this was anecdotal and there appears to be a lack of robust data that demonstrates achievements of these outcomes.

4.15.   It is also important to note that these are very ambitious aims and, given their complexity and the multi-layered factors that influence food waste and access to healthy food, difficult to attribute to any one service or intervention. They are also long-term changes involving attitudinal shifts in society, which are notoriously difficult to achieve and evidence.

> **Recommendation 9:**
>
> It would be beneficial for GCFN to review its monitoring and evaluation processes and plan a process that gathers the evidence necessary to demonstrate progress towards all of its key outcomes. We suggest there would be value in engaging with participants in GCFN activities, past and present, to obtain their views about the impact of GCFN's work on them and their communities. Host organisations could support this process and help to identify potential participants and the most appropriate method(s). It will also be important to gather feedback from key stakeholders and partner organisations on a regular basis.
>
> **Recommendation 10:**
>
> When assessing the most appropriate methodologies to use, this could include consideration of online surveys, interviews, and/or discussion groups (possibly with the provision of catering and reimbursement of transport and/or childcare costs to facilitate involvement). There are many resources available to help community organisations plan monitoring and evaluation approaches. The resource provided to the Food and Climate Action project by the National Lottery Community Fund to support its monitoring and evaluation processes is comprehensive and clear, and we would recommend this as a starting point.
>
> **Recommendation 11:**
>
> Whichever methods are selected, it will be important to ensure that evaluation processes are not onerous for staff and that there are adequate time and resources allocated to monitoring and evaluation.

> **Recommendation 12:**
>
> GCFN has very strong relationships with local partners including Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Centre for Population Health and Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership. We recommend that GCFN explore with these partner organisations any data they may already be collecting related to GCFN's aims, such as indicators of food waste and access to healthier food. While this may not provide definitive proof that GCFN is the cause of any positive changes, it could be valuable data that, when combined with qualitative feedback gathered from project participants, stakeholders or partners, could be used as an important indicator of GCFN's success.

Final thoughts

4.16. Overall, interviewees and survey participants were strongly positive about Glasgow Community Food Network. It is a valued partner in efforts to create a healthier and more sustainable food system in Glasgow with effective, valued relationships in the community and public sectors. The Covid-19 pandemic prompted a rapid transformation into a staffed project delivery organisation and this, understandably, created significant challenges. These have been navigated admirably but some areas for development remain to ensure that GCFN continues to develop and extend its positive impact on Glasgow's food system.

Appendix 1: Additional details of GCFN activities

Networking
Seven networking events have been held since 2020. These have covered various topics such as commuinity gardening, fair access to food and the response to the pandemic. These events have enabled community organisations to meet and share learning.

Research and development
GCFN's membership provides access to a wealth of information and views about community food activities. This helps GCFN to undertake robust research and evidence-gathering about the sector. For instance, during the pandemic GCFN published a report on tackling food poverty in Glasgow which explored various issues including the universal basic income, food banks, the experience of asylum seekers and Glasgow's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The report concluded with recommendations for the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and community sector with the aim of tackling food poverty and creating a more resilient local food system.[4]
Similarly, Roots to Market was a partnership between GCFN and Propagate.[5] Published in 2018, the first Roots to Market report[6] explored the potential for developing Glasgow's local food economy. Utilising funding from Sustainable Food Cities,[7] GCFN worked with partners to achieve progress against most of the Roots to Market recommendations. For example, the Glasgow Grower's Cooperative was established and GCFN worked with Glasgow City Council on the issues of food procurement, food insecurity and food waste.
GCFN also responds to requests from the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and other public sector organisations when they require information about topics such as activities taking place in the community sector or support needs among community organisations.

Working with the public sector to inform policy
GCFN's participation has been requested by various working groups within Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership and the Scottish Government. Notably, GCFN's chairperson currently chairs the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, a multisector organisation aiming to make the food system in Glasgow more sustainable, healthy and equitable.
In addition, the Glasgow City Food Plan[8], which aims to achieve a food system in Glasgow focused on food justice, was developed by a team comprising GCFN, Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership, and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

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[4] https://glasgowfood.net/assets/documents/GCFN_FoodPoverty_27012022.pdf

[5] https://www.propagate.org.uk/

[6] https://glasgowfood.net/assets/images/roots-to-market-FINAL-low-res.pdf

[7] Now known as Sustainable Food Places - https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/

[8] http://goodfoodforall.co.uk/home/glasgow-city-food-plan

Campaigns
GCFN has co-ordinated and/or supported various campaigns in the community food sector. For example, its Food and Climate Action project includes a campaigning strand, focused on COP26. Meanwhile, the Veg Cities campaign aims to promote locally-produced food and involves the Chefs' Challenge whereby restaurants are presented with a box of locally-grown food, with a prize presented to the chef judged to have created the best dish with the produce.

Project delivery
GCFN began delivering projects during the Covid-19 pandemic. These include initiatives that work directly with community organisations, statutory bodies and/or members of the community to promote a healthier food system in Glasgow. Projects include the following: **COVID-19 Response project:** GCFN received funding from the Scottish Government and Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver the COVID-19 Response project, which involved working with groups and organisations across the city to provide food to communities during the pandemic. Local Community Response Officers were employed by GCFN to identify support needs for third sector organisations and communities in the areas of Food & Income, Refugee and Asylum Seekers and Supply of Food. In addition, action research exploring food insecurity in the city and identifying recommendations for sustainable measures and solutions was delivered through this project.[9] **Food for Good Glasgow:** This was a coalition of food professionals, social enterprises and organisations which was established at the beginning of the pandemic with the aim of taking action to tackle the impact of coronavirus on food security. The coalition, led by GCFN and Community Transport Glasgow, offered local community organisations support with food supplies and logistics including transport, delivery and storage. Through funding from the Scottish Government, Food for Good Glasgow was able to buy in bulk from local suppliers and offer over 20 community food organisations a stable supply of locally grown fresh organic fruit and vegetables and some dry and tinned options. **Glasgow Seed Library:** A collaborative project, instigated by Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) and the Centre for Contemporary Arts Glasgow (CCA). It is owned by the growers of Glasgow and invites people to share and 'borrow' seeds. **Food and Climate Action:** As a response to the climate emergency, this two-year project funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, is currently GCFN's major focus. It takes a multi-faceted approach to tackling climate change including exploring opportunities for urban agriculture in Glasgow, facilitating events about food systems at COP26, delivering food system and climate change education, and hosting food and climate cafes across the city.

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[9] Glasgow Community Food Network (2021). 'Glasgow, Tackling Food Poverty with a City Plan', https://glasgowfood.net/assets/documents/GCFN_FoodPoverty_27012022.pdf

Fruit & Veg Bulk Buying: During the pandemic GCFN partnered with Community Transport Glasgow (CTG) to provide a steady supply of fresh fruit and veg, dried foods and other staples to dozens of community organisations across the city.

Glasgow Free Food Map: A free online, and easily accessible resource for anyone experiencing food insecurity. Hosted by Urban Roots but maintained by GCFN, it is regularly updated with information on opening times and types of food support available, and acts as a pipeline to more holistic support services.[10]

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[10] https://www.urbanroots.org.uk/freefood/

Appendix 2: Additional quotes from evaluation participants

"*I think their impact there has been important because the third sector voice is there in all the decisions we make about what we're doing around developing a more sustainable, more equitable, healthier food system in Glasgow.*"

"*Having a third sector voice at the table, who is a core partner has been really valuable.*"

"*Through our partnership with the Community Food Network and the local authority, we now have a Glasgow City Food Plan that is a whole city Integrated Food Plan, reporting to no one body, but reporting to the community planning partnership.*"

"*I would certainly say it's one of the strongest partnerships I've got and I am very cognisant that there is no way that I would actually be able to deliver the aims of the action plan, without the support and collaborative partnership working with GCFN… great credit to GCFN for being one of the drivers within that process.*"

"*Having an organisation that you can go back to like the Glasgow Community Food Network, and start to look at what's going on here, what's going on there, how can we assist with that? How can we support that? That to me is kind of crucial.* "

"*Where there are, for example, new NHS-led initiatives, and because the Community Food Network exists, they're much more likely to involve local community food organisations, or at the very least, the perspectives of the community food sector, in the new initiative than it would have done previously.*"

"*I think the report produced at the end is actually really good at kind of doing that celebrating of what third sector organisations have done to kind of stop people starving.*"

Appendix 3: Breakdown of evaluation participants

Breakdown of evaluation participants

The table below sets out the number of interviewees who participated in the evaluation, by role.

Evaluation participants by role

Role	Number consulted
GCFN board members	6
GCFN staff	11
Network members	3
Strategic stakeholders (including staff from local authority, HSCP)	5
Total	**25**

In addition, a survey was shared among the GCFN network. This received 12 responses from stakeholders, as set out in the figure below.

Survey respondents by role (n=12)
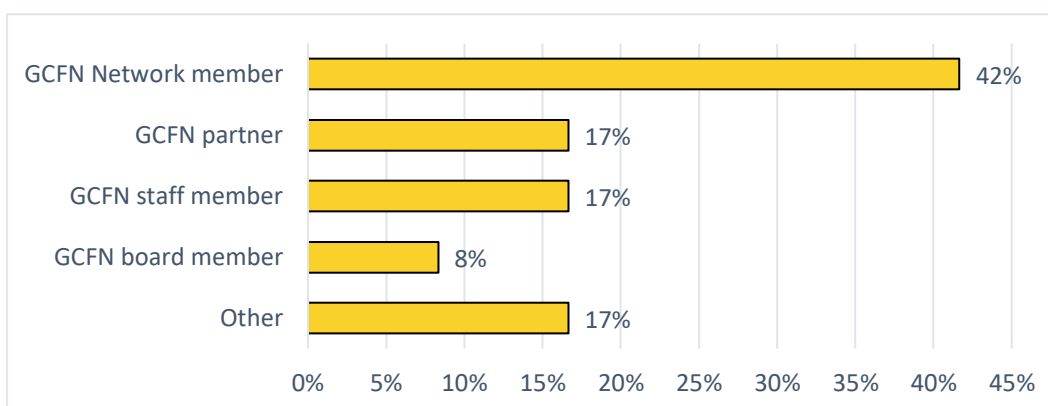
Appendix 4: Full list of recommendations

Networking

Recommendation 1:

We recommend that GCFN continues to build on the strong partnerships it has built with community organisations and look for further opportunities for joint working with existing and new partners in the community sector.

Recommendation 2:

GCFN's relationship with and reputation among public sector organisations is a key strength. It is important that the Network continues to nurture these relationships to ensure that the community sector continues to play an important part in policy development and delivery.

Funding

Recommendation 3:

We suggest that GCFN continues to emphasise the importance and relevance of its work and tap into local and national policy priorities to make the case for funding from different funders and streams. GCFN directors were praised for their knowledge of the funding landscape, but a horizon scanning exercise may be beneficial to identify the funders with a focus in the areas that GCFN contributes to, and to develop a strategy for developing proposals for projects that can fit with GCFN's and funders' priorities. An interviewee suggested seeking meetings with high profile funders like the Robertson Trust, William Grant Foundation and the Scottish Funders Forum more widely to explore opportunities for funding and how GCFN activities can align with funders' priorities.

Recommendation 4:

It may be beneficial for GCFN to explore the possibility of statutory partners, which appear to view GCFN as an important partner, providing funding to support the Network and enhance its sustainability.

Recommendation 5:

While GCFN's knowledge of the funding landscape was praised by some interviewees, and skills in developing funding applications were not in question, it may be beneficial to ensure that staff and directors have adequate time to seek funding as well as any support required with this role.

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Recommendation 7:

GCFN could explore alternative methods of generating income other than funding applications, such as a Network membership fee or modest charges for organisations to attend GCFN events. This, however, would need to be carefully considered, and the membership consulted before any changes take place.

Learning

Recommendation 8:

We suggest that it would be beneficial for GCFN to address the organisational issues listed above as a priority, seeking support as necessary from organisations such as SCVO and GCVS. We understand that this evaluation is the first step in helping GCFN to make short-, medium- and long-term plans. GCFN members discussed their views of activities they would like to see GCFN undertake at a networking event in August 2022, and it is important GCFN take this into account when planing the future.

Outcomes and monitoring and evaluation

Recommendation 9:

It would be beneficial for GCFN to review its monitoring and evaluation processes and plan a process that gathers the evidence necessary to demonstrate progress towards all of its key outcomes. We suggest there would be value in engaging with participants in GCFN activities, past and present, to obtain their views about the impact of GCFN's work on them and their communities. Host organisations could support this process and help to identify potential participants and the most appropriate method(s). It will also be important to gather feedback from key stakeholders and partner organisations on a regular basis.

Recommendation 10:

When assessing the most appropriate methodologies to use, this could include consideration of online surveys, interviews, and/or discussion groups (possibly with the provision of catering and reimbursement of transport and/or childcare costs to facilitate involvement). There are many resources available to help community organisations plan monitoring and evaluation approaches. The resource provided to the Food and Climate Action project by the National Lottery Community Fund to support its monitoring and evaluation processes is comprehensive and clear, and we would recommend this as a starting point.

Recommendation 11:

Whichever methods are selected, it will be important to ensure that evaluation processes are not onerous for staff and that there are adequate time and resources allocated to monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendation 12:

GCFN has very strong relationships with local partners including Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Centre for Population Health and Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership. We recommend that GCFN explore with these partner organisations any data they may already be collecting related to GCFN's aims, such as indicators of food waste and access to healthier food. While this may not provide definitive proof that GCFN is the cause of any positive changes, it could be valuable data that, when combined with qualitative feedback gathered from project participants, stakeholders or partners, could be used as an important indicator of GCFN's success.