

**Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd
The Highland Council**

**Buidheann Buileachaidh na Gàidhlig – 20 Gearran 2014
Gaelic Implementation Group – 20 February 2014**

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| Agenda Item | 7 |
| Report No | GIG 4-14 |

Highland Homecoming 2014

Report by the Director of Education, Culture & Sport

Summary

This Report provides Members with an update on Highland Homecoming – a suite of events being organised in Highland, in association with EventScotland's national Homecoming 2014 celebrations. Liaison on this initiative is being undertaken between the Gaelic Team, the Council's Events Officer, Tourism Development Officer and PR staff.

The Report contributes to the delivery of:

- The National Performance Outcomes 11 and 13.
- Scotland's National Gaelic Language Plan across its Development Areas on Communities, Arts & Media and Heritage & Tourism.
- The Programme of The Highland Council and its cross cutting commitment to 'the principle of equal respect for the Gaelic and English languages, whilst also recognising the diversity of indigenous language and dialects within the Highland area'.
- The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan.

1. Background

- 1.1 2014 is the second themed year of Homecoming for Scotland; 2009 being the first. Its aim is to reinforce Scotland's position on the international stage as a dynamic and creative Country.
- 1.2 It aims also to extend the benefits and opportunities offered by the Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup and build on the successes of the first year of Homecoming 2009 by presenting a year-long co-ordinated programme of inspirational events.
- 1.3 The programme is designed to support Scotland's events industry, increase visitors to Scotland and generate additional tourism revenue in a celebration of Scotland's past, present and future in the year that "Scotland welcomes the world".

2. 'Highland Homecoming'

- 2.1 As part of these celebrations from 1 September to 31 October, Inverness will play host to a six week series of events and festivals, branded as 'Highland Homecoming'.

3. Funding

- 3.1 A funding package 'Highland Homecoming Fund', has been developed which gives local groups the chance to bid for financial support of between £3,000 - £10,000 to organise a new or enhance an existing event linked to this year's autumn celebrations.
- 3.2 The funding will provide additional support for groups to market their events which will contribute to a key part of Homecoming Scotland 2014's year-round programme of events. The deadline for all applications was 31 January and the decisions will be known in due course.

3. The Events

- 3.1 Events already planned for Highland Homecoming are celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of the world's oldest Highland Games Stadium – the Northern Meeting Park in Inverness; including the staging of the Masters World Championships Highland Games and a Torchlight Procession of the Highland Clans.
- 3.2 The Festival will also highlight established events taking place throughout September and October including the Camanachd Cup Final, the Shinty Hurling International between Scotland and Ireland, the Blas Festival and the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon and Festival of Running.
- 3.3 A flagship event of the Highland Homecoming celebrations is the hosting of the Royal National Mòd and its associated Fringe Programme in the City of Inverness.

4. Gaelic within Highland Homecoming

- 4.1 The aim is to include Gaelic as an integral part of Highland Homecoming events, e.g. that the language is included and is visible in publicity materials, on electronic marketing materials, on banners and posters – basically wherever resources allow the profile of Gaelic to be raised within the series of events.
- 4.2 The Gaelic Team, the Inverness City Ward Management Team, and the Council's Tourism Co-ordinator are liaising on this and the Royal National Mod; and will keep Members apprised of progress.

5. Implications

- 5.1 There are no additional Implications associated with this Report at present.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are invited to agree that Officers ensure that Gaelic has the highest possible profile within Highland Homecoming events; which will form part of Homecoming Scotland 2014.

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 8 February 2014

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