

**Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd
The Highland Council**

**Buidheann Buileachaidh na Gàidhlig – 28 den Chèitean 2015
Gaelic Implementation Group – 28 May 2015**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**Gaelic Language Plan 2012-16
Theme 2 - “What we will do for Gaelic in Education” - Implementation Report**

Report by the Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This Report provides Members with an update on the implementation of Gaelic Language Plan 2012-16 Theme 2 “What we will do for Gaelic in Education”. It provides information on a wide range of local and national level initiatives.

The Report contributes to the delivery of:

- Scottish Government National Performance Outcomes 3, 4, 5 and 16.
- The National Gaelic Language Plan Outcomes: Home & Early Years and Education: Schools & Teachers
- 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; and
- The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan.

1. IMPLEMENTING GLP THEME 2: WHAT WE WILL DO FOR GAELIC IN EDUCATION

1.1 Theme 2 has five Strategic Commitments.

Strategic Commitment 1 - We will contribute to national strategic partnership initiatives, and policy formulation for Gaelic Education.

Strategic Commitment 2 - We will ensure that Gaelic Education is factored into strategic Highland Council Education reviews and assessments

Strategic Commitment 3 - We will create partnerships to establish a professionally organised, well-resourced and sustainable 0-3 Gaelic Early Years sector.

Strategic Commitment 4 - We will develop 3-18 Gaelic Education and increase the number of Gaelic Learners in schools.

Strategic Commitment 5 - We will work with partners to review the learning materials and learning resources provided to support Gaelic Education.

1.2 Outlined below is an overview of implementation work across these.

2. Implementation Actions

2.1 Strategic Commitment 1 - We will contribute to national strategic partnership initiatives, and policy formulation for Gaelic Education.

2.2 The Council's Gaelic Development Manager is the first line contact for all Gaelic Policy and Strategic issues for the Highland Council. The Head of Education and the Gaelic Development Manager represent the Council on Bòrd na Gàidhlig's (BnG) **National Gaelic Education Strategy Steering Group (NGESSG)**. The Gaelic Development Manager represents the Council on the Scottish Government's **Management Review Group (MRG)** overseeing the Scheme of Specific Grants for Gaelic Education; and is currently **Chair of MRG**.

2.3 The Gaelic Development Manager also represents the Council on the Board of Directors of **Stòrlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba** (the Gaelic educational resources agency); as Vice Chair of the Board; and also on other national Policy and Strategy Committees and Working Groups as applicable.

2.4 Regular discussion and liaison on local and national Education issues are programmed within the Care & Learning Service; and **include the Director, the Head of Education, Gaelic Development Manager and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Gaelic Implementation Group** as necessary.

2.5 Some recent national developments include the following:

- The **Education (Scotland) Bill** was introduced to Parliament on 23 March 2015 and contains significant elements in relation to Gaelic Education. Specifically, the Bill proposes that Local Authorities will have a process in place to respond to parental requests for GME; will have a duty to promote GME and Bòrd na Gàidhlig must prepare National Guidance on GME. The Council has responded to the initial call for written evidence; and has also offered to give oral evidence to the Parliament's Education and Culture Committee. The **response to the initial call for written evidence is an Officer Submission and can be seen at Appendix 2**, below.
- The **National Gaelic Education Strategy Steering Group (NGESSG)** continues to progress policy and partnership action in the birth to 3, Pre-school, Primary and Secondary School sectors. A report on Gaelic Secondary level education is currently being worked and the Council will be inputting to this in due course. The NGESSG is scheduled to meet next in in June 2015.
- The **Management Review Group** for Gaelic Education brings together Local Authorities in receipt of Gaelic Specific Grant Funding. The MRG will shortly be reviewing its Terms of Reference and the Council will be engaged in that process.
- The Council is also part of a **Scottish Government Forum, reviewing GLPS**. This Forum works to prepare a national framework for GLPS; linking this work in with wider work on the 1+2 Language Learning agenda.
- We maintain positive links with **Education Scotland** to discuss a wide range of issues including Gaelic resources, and 1+2. ES is arranging a **National**

Conference in Inverness on 9 June 2015, to discuss their recently published Advice on Gaelic Education.

- The Gaelic Teacher Education Working Group continues to monitor implementation of the **Gaelic-Medium Teacher Education Strategy**.

A brief run-through of **other national initiatives that the Council is engaged with** includes the following:

- The Council has received confirmation that we shall receive seven **Gaelic Primary Teacher Probationers for 2015-16**. The Council warmly welcomes this support; which is a hugely important element of our delivery for Gaelic Education.
- Through MRG, we have also signalled our desire for direct involvement for Local Authorities in the **Gaelic Teacher Probationer Allocation process**; given the Council's significant requirements.
- The Council has four Teachers undertaking the **Gaelic Immersion for Teachers (GiFT) Pilot course** commencing in August 2015 with "Outreach Provision" in Inverness. Officers are working with Strathclyde University to secure accommodation, logistical and ICT support for the next Academic Year.
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig organises **Gaelic Immersion Weeks** for Teachers interested in learning Gaelic and potentially becoming Gaelic Teachers. The Council is seeking to organise an Immersion Week with BnG in Inverness in 2015.
- We await **the appointment of a Senior Education Officer for Gaelic in Education Scotland**. This will place Gaelic alongside other curricular areas in terms of a strategic overview of education learning and teaching needs.
- The Council supported four teachers who undertook an **Award in leadership in Gaelic for Teachers and Educational Professionals course**. This course, organised by the Social Enterprise Academy and with support from Education Scotland, was held on Skye. The feedback from attendees was very positive and clearly demonstrated the need for such an event.

Strategic Commitment 2 - We will ensure that Gaelic Education is factored into strategic Highland Council Education reviews and assessments.

- The Director of Care & Learning, the Head of Education and the Gaelic Development Manager work to further **develop internal liaison on Gaelic Education matters**. The Gaelic Development Manager works alongside the Head of Education and the Area Care & Learning Managers to ensure that the needs of GME are assessed and taken account of as part of ongoing strategic overview of education provision in Highland.
- The **Pilot Placement of a Gaelic Education Officer (GEO) as a shared service between Highland and Argyll & Bute Councils** continues to develop. The GEO has undertaken a number of visits as part of the Council's Quality Improvement Team; providing support to Gaelic Primary and Secondary Probationer Teachers; providing support mechanisms for Curriculum for Excellence compliance in respect of Gaelic Education; and also feeds into our implementation of the Scottish Government's 1+2 Languages initiative.

- This initiative, in tandem with the **GLOW Secondary School Resource Development Support** and the advent of the Gaelic Education Improvement Group chaired by the Head of Education, demonstrates our commitment to support Gaelic teachers and pupils across Highland.
- The Council is addressing the **significant accommodation pressures at Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis**. This priority is part of overarching strategy discussions on the medium to longer term delivery requirements for Gaelic Medium education in Inverness City and the surrounding area.
- Following on from a **survey of the entire teacher cohort in Highland** in March 2014; an **All Staff gaelic Skills Survey will be undertaken in September 2015**. Within this Survey, there will be a specific section for School based staff in order to identify training and development needs and also identify staff who might wish to consider switching to Gaelic teaching.
- The inclusion of **Gaelic within the Strategic Meetings of the Care & Learning Service's Senior Management** will assist with the implementation of GLP 2012-16.
- A **Forward Look of Gaelic Education challenges and development is planned for the South Education Area** in the 2015-16 school Session.
- Gaelic education is now embraced as a pivotal element of the Council's policy development of the **Government's 1+2 Languages Agenda**. This work was in response to the Government's key commitment to *"introduce a norm for language learning based on the European Union 1+2 model - that is to create the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue. This will be rolled out over two Parliaments and will create a new model of language acquisition in Scotland"*. There was a link between local and national engagement and the new Gaelic Education Officer and a Gaelic Primary School Teacher are part of the Council's 1+2 Forum. The work carried out within the Council and by MRG/Scottish Government colleagues ensures a robust linkage to the Council's direction of travel on Gaelic education in the coming years.
- The Council's **Gaelic Education Improvement Group** will be chaired by the Head of Education. It comprises the Gaelic Development Manager, the Workforce Planning and Staffing Manager, the Gaelic Education Officer and includes representation from Gaelic Pre-school, Primary and Secondary levels plus the Gaelic Education Resources Assistant. The Group will improve our consultation and communication with teachers on:
 - implementing the Council and National Gaelic Language Plans;
 - Highland Council Gaelic Education policy and strategy,
 - Gaelic education staffing and supply cover
 - Resources
 - CLPL (CPD) opportunities;
 - In-Service provision,
 - leadership development and wider networking opportunities.

When appropriate, the Group may also be useful for consultation on issues and initiatives that may arise on an ad-hoc basis.

Strategic Commitment 3 - We will create partnerships to establish a professionally organised, well-resourced and sustainable 0-3 Gaelic Early Years sector.

- Following the success of the 3-year Pilot Project, the Council is working on a **new 3-year Strategic Project with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Care and Learning Alliance (CALA) in the Pre-Birth to Three Sector**. Further details on this will be provided when a framework has been agreed between all parties.

Strategic Commitment 4 - We will develop 3-18 Gaelic Education and increase the number of Gaelic Learners in schools.

- The Council is supporting a **Scoping Study of Gaelic Pre-School provision in Dingwall**. This is looking at unifying and consolidating Gaelic Pre-School Provision in Dingwall and to identify the options around the unification and consolidation in pursuance of Highland Council's Statutory Gaelic Language Plan and Gaelic Education Sustainability model. A Report is expected before the end of the current School Session.
- The Council appointed a new **Permanent Head Teacher at Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis**, Mrs Barbara Smith. Given that Mrs Smith currently works in Broadford Primary School as Gaelic Medium teacher; the Council is making every effort to fill the GM vacancy along with others at the School.
- The Council secured partnership funding of some £4.75M from the Scottish Government for **two new standalone Gaelic Primary Schools in Fort William and Portree**.
- **Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar** is schedule to open in Fort William August 2015.
- Work on the standalone **Gaelic Primary School in Portree** continues.
- The decision to proceed with the **Tain 3-18 Campus** means a first for the Council in relation to Gaelic Education. This will be the first opportunity in Highland to focus the Gaelic Pre-school, Primary and Secondary provision in a locality, within a straight-through 3-18 site.
- As mentioned earlier, due to the accommodation pressures, we have commenced scoping the future options for **Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis**. These discussions are part of a city-wide review of education provision which includes **Gaelic Medium provision in Inverness**.
- The Council faces challenges around the **Gaelic provision in Tongue Primary School**. Due to unforeseen circumstances including low numbers, the Council is looking closely at Gaelic provision in the area. Officers and Local Members have commenced discussion on the possible options to revive and renew Gaelic Medium in the Tongue/Bettyhill area.
- The Council has factored in **expanded Gaelic provision in the new Inverness Royal Academy**; which will involve the creation of a better resourced and supported Gaelic Department.
- **Gaelic Learner numbers look set to increase significantly in Millburn Academy**. Following excellent liaison work with several Primary Schools in the ASG; 39 Primary 7 pupils have indicated that they wish to study Gaelic Learners when they enter S1. This will see the current total Gaelic Learner cohort in the School increase from around 20, to approximately 60.
- The **Gaelic Careers Event** partnership between the Council, Skills Development Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Highlands & Islands Enterprise

continues for 2-15. We plan to organise two Careers events in 2015 – one in Inverness and one at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, on Skye.

Strategic Commitment 5 - We will work with partners to review the learning materials and learning resources provided to support Gaelic Education.

- **Dyslexia Scotland** launch of one of its publications in Gaelic; '*Dè th'ann an Diosleacsia?*'. This gives an overview of dyslexia, including a definition, as well as the strengths and barriers associated with dyslexia. Dyslexia Scotland has developed a number of tools to help teachers including a free online Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit which includes information about pupils in Gaelic Medium Education.
- The Gaelic Development Manager represents the Council, as Vice Chair, on the Board of Directors of **Stòrlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba** – the national Gaelic Education Resources body. With colleagues on the Board, the Council continues to pursue a wide range of educational challenges including the formulation of a national GLPS framework, Secondary sector resource creation and translation; the overall prioritisation and production of Gaelic education resources and the relationship between Stòrlann, Education Scotland and SQA, going forward.
- Ongoing **liaison takes place between the Council, Stòrlann and the Scottish Government** including on how best to consult with practitioners on, and subsequently prioritise, the creation of education resources across the 0-18 continuum.

Highland Council Gaelic Education Statistics - Academic Year 2014-15

The statistics show that Highland Council area delivers:

- **18** Gaelic medium Council Nurseries and **4** partner centres providing pre-school Gaelic Education for 291 three and four year old children;
- **22** Primary Schools providing Gaelic Medium Education for 861 pupils;
- **47** Primary Schools providing Gaelic Language in Primary Schools (GLPS) as an additional language for 1533 children
- **12** Secondary Schools offering Gàidhlig (Gaelic fluent speaker) classes, or subject teaching through the medium of Gaelic medium, to 367 pupils; and
- **14** Secondary Schools offering Gaelic Learners classes for 1465 pupils

The National Picture - Academic Year 2014-15

To show Highland provision in a national context, we await confirmation of some national data and will provide Members with updated %age provision figures once available.

The year on year pupil totals in Gaelic Education provision in Highland from 2007 is outlined in the table below:

School Session	Nursery/ Commissioned Playgroups	Primary School Pupils	Secondary School Pupils Fluent Gaelic	Secondary School Pupils Subjects through Gaelic	Secondary School Pupils Gaelic Learners
2007-08	263	718	359	165	1373
2008-09	247	728	345	152	1485
2009-10	270	734	352	165	1421
2010-11	225	744	360	149	1469
2011-12	213	761	373	173	1286*
2012-13	292	784	364	211	1487
2013-14	275	808	369	180	1472
2014-15	283	861	367	224	1465

The Council is keen to ensure that we make relevant comparisons in relation to progress in increasing the numbers entering, or undertaking, Gaelic education. We therefore include, in our internal Performance Monitoring, data showing the %age of pupils in Gaelic Education as a proportion of overall Highland school rolls. This provides a more complete overview of uptake and performance.

Academic Year 2014-15 - Online Map of the Council's Gaelic Education Provision

The Council's website contains an online map, to show Highland parents - and parents who may be considering moving to the Highlands – the locations in which the Council provides Nursery, Primary and Secondary Gaelic Education. The map shows the following information:

- All Gaelic Nursery School provision (Council and partner centres) and the number of children attending;
- All Gaelic Primary School provision, the number of pupils, and the associated Secondary School;
- All Gaelic Secondary provision, including the number of pupils studying subjects through the medium of Gaelic, those studying Gàidhlig as fluent speakers, and those studying Gaelic as Learners;
- A contact email for those who wish to know about Gaelic classes or Gaelic activities in communities.

5. Implications

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

6.	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on progress in implementing the Education Theme in the GLP. • Agree to urgently seek to resolve the difficulties around GM provision
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	<p>in the Bettyhill/Tongue area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree to continue to press for Local Authority participation in the Gaelic Probationer Allocation Process• Agree to the updating and publication of all the Gaelic Education statistical data; and the Online Gaelic Education Map.
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Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 13 May 2015

Author: Kenneth A Murray, Gaelic Development Manager.

Theme 2 - What we will do for Gaelic in Education

Strategic Commitment 1

We will contribute to national strategic partnership initiatives, and policy formulation for Gaelic Education.

Partners

Scottish Government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Education Scotland, Local Authorities, Universities.

Key Performance Results

- A national strategy to provide the teaching and other staff required to achieve the Government targets for growth in Gaelic Education.
- A national strategy for the supply of specialist Additional Support Needs staff for Gaelic Education.
- National policies and guidance in relation to Gaelic will be influenced and enhanced by Highland Council input.
- The benefits of bilingualism through Gaelic Education will be highlighted in Gaelic Medium Education information/publicity material.
- Improved linguistic competence leading to improved teaching and learning experiences.
- Pilot the joint production of generic Gaelic Education marketing material by Local Authorities.

Enabling Actions

- (i) Through membership of the National Gaelic Education Strategy Steering Group and other forums, contribute to, and engage with, initiatives which inform and influence national policy and guidance.
- (ii) Engage with Education Scotland and others to agree actions from its Report of June 2011 “**Gaelic Education: Building on the successes, addressing the Barriers**”.
- (iii) Ensure engagement and involvement with Academic sources, Research bodies, Conferences, Studies and Reports which may inform and influence national policy and guidance.
- (iv) Ensure that the outcomes of the Council’s 25th Anniversary Gaelic Medium Education Consultation Events are fed into deliberations on Gaelic Education at national level where appropriate.
- (v) Work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig on a national Gaelic Education Workforce Planning Strategy.
- (vi) Develop and enhance linguistic competency through teacher Continuing Professional Development.
- (vii) Work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig on a national Gaelic Education Additional Support Needs Strategy.
- (viii) Engage with other Local Authorities to examine where joint working and shared services might benefit the sustainability and expansion of Gaelic Education.

Theme 2 - What we will do for Gaelic in Education

Strategic Commitment 2

We will ensure that Gaelic Education is factored into strategic Highland Council Education reviews and assessments.

Partners

NHS Highland

Key Performance Results

- Gaelic Education requirements will be assessed as part of the Strategic School Estates Review (SSER) including the Inverness/A96 Corridor.
- Strategic Education reviews or other education assessments will take account of the potential implications for Gaelic Education.
- The potential impact on Gaelic of the 'Integrating Care in the Highlands' initiative with NHS Highland will be assessed and addressed.

Enabling Actions

- (i) Gaelic Education will be taken into account within the Council's SSER.
- (ii) Engage with 'Integrating Care in the Highlands' Project Team and carry out a Gaelic Impact Assessment.
- (iii) Ensure that the outcomes of the Council's 25th Anniversary Gaelic Medium Education Consultation Events are fed into deliberations on Gaelic Education where appropriate.
- (iv) Ensure that Gaelic Education requirements form part of the Council's assessment of Additional Support Needs.
- (v) Review and refresh the approach to recruiting a Gaelic Education officer.

Theme 2 - What we will do for Gaelic in Education

Strategic Commitment 3

We will create partnerships to establish a professionally organised, well resourced and sustainable 0-3 Gaelic Early Years sector.

Partners

Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Care and Learning Alliance (CALA)

Key Performance Results

- In association with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Care and Learning Alliance, establish baseline data for 0-3 Gaelic Early Years provision across Highland in 2012. Following this exercise, set a target for increasing the numbers over the lifetime of the Plan; with a consequential increase in the number of children feeding through to 3-5 Council and Partner Centre Gaelic Nurseries.
- Over the lifetime of the Plan, establish new provision in Kinlochbervie, Lochcarron, Kyle, Tongue, Tain, Inverness, Newtonmore, Mallaig and Ballachulish. Strengthen and expand all other 0-3 groups across Highland.
- A Report outlining the actions required to plan ongoing resources and staffing support.

Enabling Actions

- (i) Establish a 3 year pilot partnership programme with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Care and Learning Alliance to secure 5 Full Time Equivalent Early Years Support Workers to establish sustainable provision within the 0-3 sector feeding directly through to Gaelic Medium Pre-school, Primary and Secondary schools.
- (ii) Agree a funding support formula with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, for sustaining and expanding this crucial sector.
- (iii) In concert with the Council Early Years Team, engage with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Care and Learning Alliance to carry out an assessment of the Gaelic related training, staffing and resources/materials required to sustain growth in the sector.

Theme 2 - What we will do for Gaelic in Education

Strategic Commitment 4

We will develop 3-18 Gaelic Education and increase the number of Gaelic Learners in schools.

Partners

Scottish Government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Key Performance Results

- Two new standalone Gaelic Primary schools in Fort William and Portree and additional nursery development in Lochcarron.
- Over the lifetime of the Plan, increase the number of children accessing Gaelic Medium Primary Education to support the attainment of Scottish Government targets. More detailed pupil target and funding support subject to consultation with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- Over the lifetime of the Plan, increase the number of English Medium pupils receiving Gaelic Learners in Primary Schools (GLPS) – target subject to consultation with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- Over the lifetime of the Plan, increase the number of Secondary pupils studying:
 - a) Gaelic as Learners;
 - b) Gàidhlig (as Fluent Speakers); and
 - c) Subjects through the medium of Gaelic.Secondary Sector targets subject to consultation with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- An online map showing all Council Gaelic Education provision, potential capacity and local Gaelic community activity.

Enabling Actions

- (i) Establish a partnership approach with the Scottish Government to deliver new standalone Gaelic Primary schools in Fort William and Portree.
- (ii) Agree a funding support formula with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, for new developments and additional provision.
- (iii) Council-wide Mapping exercise to identify the areas within, or between, Associated School Groups, where current Gaelic Education provision (0-18) could be configured and/or strengthened to support and establish long term sustainable Gaelic Education provision.
- (iv) Identify Gaelic community development activities within Associated School Groups, to complement and link with formal Gaelic Education provision.
- (v) Identify and support 3-5 Pre-school provision, in specific locations, to support the transition to Gaelic Medium Primary and Secondary schools.
- (vi) Work locally, at the earliest opportunity, to establish demand for full wraparound care provision in anticipation of the planned standalone Gaelic Primary schools in Fort William and Portree. Should sustainable demand be identified elsewhere such as Inverness or Dingwall, these will also be explored.
- (vii) Target Gaelic Medium Primary provision in Thurso, Ullapool, Portree, Dingwall, Tain, Nairn, Inverness and Fort William.

- (viii) Target Gaelic Learners in Primary Schools (GLPS) expansion in North and North West along with the Greater Fort William area.
- (ix) Target Gaelic Secondary Education expansion in Inverness, Lochaber and in Dingwall/Tain.
- (x) Initiate research into the action required to increase pupil numbers around the key transition stages from nursery to Primary school; from Primary to Secondary school and within Secondary stages.
- (xi) Develop links between Gaelic Medium Primary and Gaelic Medium Secondary schools, where Gaelic teaching provision for S1 and S2 might usefully be supported by Primary teachers.
- (xii) Create parental promotion and marketing material highlighting the benefits of Gaelic Education and bilingualism.
- (xiii) Provide guidance and support for relevant Council staff, including in schools, to encourage parents to choose the Gaelic Education route to bilingualism.
- (xiv) Work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig on a national Gaelic Education Workforce Planning Strategy.
- (xv) Work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig on a national Gaelic Education Additional Support Needs Strategy.

Theme 2 - What we will do for Gaelic in Education

Strategic Commitment 5

We will work with partners to review the learning materials and learning resources provided to support Gaelic Education.

Partners

Scottish Government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Local Authorities, Stòrlann, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

Key Performance Results

- An overview of Gaelic Education online learning materials resources that will inform a strategic national assessment of the development of future online requirements for teachers, pupils and other learners.
- A review of the outcomes and resource priorities required from Stòrlann.

Enabling Actions

- (i) Undertake an audit of the Gaelic Education online learning material and resources currently available in Highland, including usage and uptake.
- (ii) Engage with other Local Authorities, Stòrlann and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig to assess the current range of Gaelic education materials and resources, their delivery and outline future development.

WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE FROM THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Gaelic

10. How significant a change in Gaelic medium primary education will the Bill deliver? Do you agree these provisions should be limited to primary schooling?

At present, given the spread and delivery of Gaelic Education across Highland, it is very difficult to assess the level of change in Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) resulting from the Bill. As the largest provider of Gaelic Education, through 22 Primary and 16 Secondary provisions, the effects of targeted, increased promotion and publicity may provide a platform for increased numbers. This includes development work in the Pre-Birth to age 3 sector.

We believe that the Bill should not be limited to Gaelic Medium Primary Education and, indeed, makes reference to Pre-School provision. The Bill should address the varied nature of Gaelic education delivery, which includes Gaelic Pre-School provision, standalone Gaelic Medium Primary Schools, Gaelic Medium Primary Schools with English Medium Departments and English Medium Primary Schools with Gaelic Medium Departments. In addition, it should also address the different Gaelic delivery methods in Secondary School stages; Gaelic Medium Subject learning, Gaelic studied through the medium of Gàidhlig and Gaelic Learners Education. (See response to Q13 below.)

11. What are the most appropriate ways for education authorities, particularly those with low levels of Gaelic usage, to promote and support Gaelic medium education and Gaelic learner education? What impact is this promotional work likely to have on the Gaelic language and the number of Gaelic speakers?

We are unable to comment on Authorities with low levels of Gaelic usage, as Highland already has an established, thriving and geographically dispersed Gaelic Education provision. As such, it is anticipated that this proposed legislation would likely affect Highland in a different way to other authorities. Gaelic is promoted within the Council with a centralised Gaelic Team in place which provides support for education and other Gaelic related activities. Additional resources and funding to assist with promotional work will be required; and will be welcomed. Gaelic Education is crucial to a healthy and sustainable future for the language and targeted, high profile promotional work could provide a platform to encourage parents to choose Gaelic Education; thereby increasing the number of speakers. This work could usefully include:

- Regular and high-level Ministerial references, support and encouragement for Gaelic and Gaelic Education, giving Gaelic appropriate status, priority and profile;
- More publicity and easily accessible information (especially web/app based) on the significant benefits associated with Bilingualism through GME;
- More flexible, accessible, community and on-line Adult Learning resources and opportunities; to support and develop the language skills of Parents who choose GME for their children;
- More marketing initiatives especially around Gaelic careers including Teaching - Scottish Government/Skills Development Scotland/Bòrd na Gàidhlig/Local Authorities etc.;
- maximising use on social media which is currently so important to young people;
- Education Scotland, SQA and SFC would also be very important partners in promoting GME across their significant spheres of influence. Increasing Gaelic profile in their work would provide additional status and credibility to Gaelic Education across Scotland's National Education hierarchy;
- The GTCS could also play an important role in promoting Gaelic Education; by publicising/confirming the status of teaching Gaelic within its formal professional and regulatory processes;
- Some "marketing" support and various types of encouragement for a programme on BBC Scotland TV (as opposed to BBC Alba) on Gaelic Medium Education; and the remarkable success story of Gaelic education in the last 30 years.

It would also add strength to the foregoing to have clear messages highlighting the academic research into, and the supporting educational evidence collated on, the Benefits of Bilingualism.

12. Do you agree that the Bill "will establish a clear process for authorities to follow in considering parental requests for an assessment of the need for Gaelic medium primary education"? Do you agree with the thresholds proposed in the Bill in relation to the assessment of parental requests?

Highland Council agrees that a clear, transparent and consistent process should be put in place whereby authorities can assess parental requests for Gaelic medium education. We currently publish an online map of where we provide our sustainability model (Pre-School provision feeding through directly to Primary and Secondary education); so we make it clear where we provide Gaelic education. In that context, we would be keen to contribute to the development of a national process to respond to parental requests for the provision or expansion of Gaelic education.

The process must be flexible and not a “one size fits all”. In addition, geographic, transportation and demographic challenges must also be borne in mind. Any process to assess demand must be based on the sustainability and long term likely success of provision; and the best use of resources. The process must be clear, efficient and time bound, non-bureaucratic, proportionate and affordable.

13. Under existing legislation, education authorities must have regard to Bord na Gaidhlig’s education guidance when they are producing their annual statement of improvement objectives. What will the requirement in this bill add to this?

Section 9 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 states that “The Bòrd *may* prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers guidance in relation to the provision of Gaelic education and the development of such provision.”

Section 14 of this Bill confers new statutory responsibilities on Bòrd na Gàidhlig, in that the Bord now “*must* prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers guidance in relation to the provision of Gaelic education and the development of such provision.”

Any Guidance should be drafted in partnership with Local Authorities and should define, in the first instance, what constitutes Gaelic Medium Education in solely Gaelic Medium Primary Schools. There is also scope for the Guidance to define the other modes of delivering Gaelic Education which, in addition to GME schools, include:

- Pre-school and Primary Language Learning (PLL) or GLPS – linked with the 1+2 Strategy. (National Framework currently being worked on.)
- Gaelic Medium Primary Schools with English Medium Departments (“not Units”). (What might the difference be between these Schools and fully GM schools?)
- English Medium Primary Schools with Gaelic Medium Departments (“not Units”). (What might the difference be between these Schools and fully GM schools?)
- Secondary School phases for Gaelic Medium/Gàidhlig Fluent and Gaelic Learners.

The Guidance would therefore set out what type/level of Gaelic education should be delivered at Pre-school, Primary and Secondary levels including associated linguistic competence and learning aspirations/targets especially in the early stages.

This would create a clear, shared, national understanding of 3-18 Gaelic Education for pupils, teachers, parents/guardians and officials.

14. Overall, to what extent will the Bill help to deliver the Scottish Government’s commitments to grow and strengthen Gaelic education?

As mentioned earlier, Gaelic Education is crucial to a healthy and sustainable future for the language and this Bill could provide a positive platform to encourage parents to choose Gaelic Education; thereby increasing the number of speakers. The Highland Council has sought to build a sustainable, strategic GME delivery model, based on our Gaelic Pre-school provision feeding through to Primary and Secondary provision across a network of schools in Highland.

This Bill has the potential to clarify, through extensive consultation, what the differing elements of Gaelic Education consist of; and this would be of enormous help to teachers, parents and authorities. Consequently, this would provide everyone with a clear understanding of what is expected within a consistent and quality assured framework for Gaelic Education across Scotland.

15. What potential impact on other educational services might arise from the local authority having to implement these new duties?

Growth in Gaelic Education will result in the consequential expansion of staffing and expertise in other related support and specialist support areas including Qualified Pre-School Practitioners and Additional Support Needs staff. We would also anticipate additional staff training and development costs to maintain knowledge and expertise and related Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning. Another area where significant costs could be incurred is in pupil transportation; and we would need to look across the board at the potential impact on other educational services in order to factor these into the overall picture relating to additional funding support requirements.

We have already mentioned above, the importance of colleagues in Education Scotland, SQA and SFC in promoting GME. It would be worthwhile considering if the Gaelic Education landscape might be improved by strengthening the interface between these organisations and Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig. Resources and Translation of Gaelic Education Materials (particularly in the Secondary sector) is hugely important and should be factored into considerations when English resources/materials are being prepared and distributed. Establishing more formal and robust links between these organisations could bring significant benefits and a streamlining of education resource creation, translation and production.