

**Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd  
The Highland Council**

**Gaelic Language Implementation Group – 1 February 2017  
Buidheann Buileachaidh na Gàidhlig – 1mh An Gearran 2017**

Agenda Item	<b>11</b>
Report No	<b>GIG 5/17</b>

**The development of the third iteration of the Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan**

**Report by Director of Care and Learning**

**Summary**

The report informs Members of progress, and strategic planning in relation to the drafting, consultation and the submission to Bord na Gàidhlig (BnaG) of the Highland Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Gaelic Language Plan (GLP3). The Report contributes to the delivery of :

- The National Performance Indicator Outcome – “We take pride in a strong, fair, and inclusive National identity”.
- The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan 2012-16,
- The Highland Council Corporate Plan 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’.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act the Council is required to develop and implement a Gaelic Language Plan (GLP)
- 1.2 The Council's GLP3 was due for renewal, consultation, Council approval, followed by Statutory Approval by BnaG by 18 September 2016. To ensure that new Gaelic Education Guidance could be factored into the Council's GLP3; and that the GLP3 and BnaG's new Plan might be more closely aligned, the Highland Council requested an extension to time frame for publication of GLP3, which was seen as being strategically beneficial.
- 1.3 On the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015, the Chief Executive wrote to the then interim Chief Executive of Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnaG) seeking formal approval for a 1 year extension to the Council's Gaelic Language Plan, to September 2017.
- 1.4 On February 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, the Chief Executive received a response from BnaG which formally approved an extension to the Council's current GLP2.
- 1.5 Currently BnaG are developing their National Gaelic Language Plan, a draft will be available at the end of February 2017.

**2. BnaG Draft High Level Aims**

- 2.1 On the January 13<sup>th</sup> BnaG submitted to the Council draft High Level Aims for the Council's GLP3. The draft High Level Aims are in line with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Guidance on Developing Gaelic Language Plans.

2.2 The draft High Level Aims focus on the following headings:

- 1) Throughout the Plan
- 2) Public Services
- 3) Home and Early Years
- 4) Education
- 5) Community,
- 6) Workplace,
- 7) Arts, Culture and Heritage
- 8) Economy

The following is a *summary* of the draft High Level aims

2.3 **Throughout the Plan**

- That all Gaelic services and resources demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English.
- That all Gaelic services and facilities are actively offered and promoted, including through the HC website

2.4 **Public Services**

- That the HC normalises equal respect for Gaelic and English across its services and policies and within the Corporate Plan.
- That the HC includes a language choice (Gaelic and English) on the Council's website, once Gaelic content has been increased.

2.5 **Home and Early Years**

- That the HC maintains a close working relationship with Bòrd na Gàidhlig staff in relation to early years and childcare provision in the HC area and in preparation for the growth in pre-school hours, including the promotion of GME to all pre-school children.
- That the HC undertakes a parents' Gaelic skills audit to create baseline data for future planning of services.

2.6 **Education**

- That the HC increases the number of pupils in GME and GLE across the HC region at primary and secondary school levels.
- That the HC creates a Gaelic medium education transitions strategy for retaining children in early years and childcare; early years and childcare to primary; and primary to secondary.

2.7 **Community**

- That the Highland Council provides a clear link between the commitments in the HC Gaelic Language Plan and Hi-Life Highland delivery of essential Gaelic medium services, particularly out of school activities for Gaelic speaking young people.
- That the Gaelic language plan describes any services which the HC provides for Gaelic speaking senior citizens and how these will be developed.

2.8 **Workplace**

- That a Gaelic workplace ethos is established and maintained within all HC Gaelic schools through training and in-service.
- That the HC encourages the promotion of Gaelic careers, on an annual basis, throughout the HC region.

## 2.9 **Arts Media and Heritage**

- That the HC maintains support for a programme of Gaelic arts, culture and heritage in the HC area.

## 2.10 **Economic Development**

- That the HC continues to support Gaelic developments within its economic development strategy.
- That the HC continues to work with partners to fully realize the potential benefits highlighted in *Ar Stòras Gàidhlig* research.

## 3. **The Process in Relation to Drafting, Public Consultation and Submission of GLP3**

3.1 The Local Government Elections take place on May 4<sup>th</sup>, and purdah commences on March 13<sup>th</sup> and ends on May 6<sup>th</sup>. During this period Elected Members are not permitted to take part in public meetings and chair official Council Meetings.

3.2 The 2017 Headquarters Year Planner indicates that there are 3 GIG Meetings planned this year: February 1<sup>st</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup>, and November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Year Planner has been agreed by the current administration and could be subject to change by the 'new' administration which commences on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

3.3 The draft GLP3 requires to be approved and ratified by full Highland Council. There are full Council meetings scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup>, June 29<sup>th</sup>, and September 7<sup>th</sup>. As at point 3.2, this may be subject to change following the Local Government Elections.

3.4 Following the current Committee cycle schedule and allowing for GLP3 to be drafted, liaising with BnaG, and adhering to public consultation timeframe, draft GLP3 must be presented to GIG on August 30<sup>th</sup> and approved by Full Council on September 7<sup>th</sup>, to fulfil the Council's requirement to submit the GLP3 to BnaG on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2017.

3.5 The Council must submit the draft GLP3 for public consultation; it is planned that the main consultation process will take place online and on social media.

3.6 BnaG have requested that the Council host at least 1 public meeting as part of the public consultation process. It is proposed to hold 4 public consultation meetings, across the Highland Council area, dates of which are provisionally scheduled for the middle of May.

3.7 The Gaelic Team will work closely with the Communications Team in the promotion of the public consultation meetings, and promote draft GLP3 in the local and national media, taking account of all forms of social media currently at their disposal.

3.8 The Gaelic Team in association with the Ward Managers will also ensure that the draft GLP3 is distributed through Community Councils, and Community Planning Partners.

3.9 The Gaelic Team will also distribute the draft GLP3 to key partners, all Gaelic and cultural organisations, and the various social networks, and websites/links.

#### 4. Gaelic Strategic Planning

- 4.1 As agreed at the GIG meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> a Gaelic Strategic Planning meeting with GIG Members and Substitutes took place on January 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was Chaired by the Chairperson of GIG. The main aim of the meeting was to discuss BnaG draft high level aims in relation to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation GLP and to strategically forward plan in relation Gaelic.
- 4.2 9 Elected Members, Head of Education, Area Care and Learning (West) Manager and 4 Gaelic Team Officers attended the meeting. An informative presentation was also delivered by the Digital Services Officer.
- 4.3 The meeting was productive as Members' and Officers discussed the draft aims. The Members' made observations and put forward a number of suggestions, including the addition of a Digital strategy.
- 4.4 It was agreed that Gaelic Strategic Planning Group would meet on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, to monitor the progress in relation to contributing towards, and the drafting of GLP3.

#### 5. Implications

- 5.1 There are no rural, legal, equality, risk, and climate change/ carbon clever associated with this report at present.
- 5.2 It is a statutory requirement that the Council has a GLP, and the current plan draws ends as soon as GLP3 is approved by the Scottish Government.
- 5.3 GLP3 will continue the ongoing work, and maximise and build on the successes of GLP2. GLP3 will strengthen Gaelic, add to the Council's commitment to Gaelic and culture, and this will lead to many positive implications for the future of Gaelic within the Council area.

#### Recommendation

Members are asked to discuss and agree

- a)** the *summarised* draft high level aims (3.1 – 3.10) which BnaG submitted to the Council, as a focus for the development of GLP3
- b)** a timeframe in relation to the drafting, consultation, and the presenting of draft GLP3 to GIG meetings, and the full Highland Council.

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**Date:** January 20<sup>th</sup> 2017  
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