

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Gaelic Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 1 September 2022 at 10.30 am.

### Present:

Mr C Aitken (remote)	Mr W Mackay (remote)
Mr R Bremner (remote)	Mr D Millar (remote)
Mr I Brown	Mr C Munro
Ms S Fanet	Ms L Niven (remote)
Mr J Grafton	Ms M Nolan

### In attendance:

Ms K Lackie, Executive Chief Officer – Performance and Governance  
Ms L Walker, Gaelic Development Manager  
Ms M A MacLeod Mitchell, Gaelic Development Officer  
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator  
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator

### Also in attendance:-

Mr J Whannel, Director of Education, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (remote)

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.**

## Mr C Munro in the Chair

### Business

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr P Logue and Mr R Stewart.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. Good News

The Chair conveyed the following items of good news:-

- Praise for Skye Sgoil-àraich
- Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh had won the National Primary Schools Football Competition (Cuach na Cloinne)
- Glenurquhart Primary School Gold Languages and Employability Award
- Gairloch Gaelic and Culture Open Day
- The Blas Festival
- North Area summer fun with Gaelic activities
- Gaelic Summer Playscheme Week held at Stramash Fort William

- Gaelic Drama Workshop in Nairn
- Highland pupils experience Seachdain Dhùn Èideann 2022
- Gaelic Football Camp had been a success in Skye
- Gaelic Language and Culture Training for Elected Members

The Committee **NOTED** the Good News.

#### 4. Appointments

##### (a) An Comunn Gaidhealach

The Council has a Service Delivery Contract with An Comunn Gàidhealach which provided for the Royal National Mod to be held in the Highland area in 2025.

In this regard, the Service Delivery Contract contained the following clause in relation to representation - the Service Provider is required to permit an elected representative from the Purchaser to sit on the Board of the Service Provider's organisation and participate fully in all discussions and decisions relating to the Royal National Mods taking place in Highland, to provide the elected representative with all relevant Board agendas, papers, reports and minutes, to invite the elected representative to attend and participate in Board-led reviews, evaluations or other appraisals and to invite the elected representative to sit on both the National and Local Organising Committees.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mrs I Campbell as the representative on An Comunn Gaidhealach.

##### (b) Board of Governors for Catherine McCaig's Trust

The Board of Governors for Catherine McCaig's Trust was established to disburse bursaries to students from the Highlands, Argyll and Bute and the Western Isles to assist them in attending university.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr C Munro to the Board of Governors for Catherine McCaig's Trust.

#### 5. Presentation - Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Mr Jim Whannel, Director of Education at Bòrd na Gàidhlig, gave a presentation on the next National Gaelic Language Plan, including timescales and processes, national budgeting and funding issues, learning resources and initiatives, and usage.

During discussion, Members made the following points:-

- information was sought, and provided, on Stòrlann, a national resource for Gaelic Medium Education;
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig was working closely with the Highland Council and Argyll & Bute Council on teacher recruitment challenges, especially in remote and rural areas. Members emphasised the importance of creative recruitment solutions, for example working in partnership with other services and/or organisations to recruit couples and to help resolve housing and transport challenges;

- the focus on Gaelic in the home and workplace was welcomed and should continue into the Council's Gaelic Language Plan 4 (GLP4). It was hoped that information gathered for the latest census would be taken into consideration in the development of the next National Gaelic Language Plan. It was explained that timescales for the census information were unlikely to fit with the timetable for the next Gaelic Language Plan though it was explained this would be a flexible document that could take into account new information that emerged during its five years duration;
- it was hoped that national conversations were taking place about the possible impact of the current economic challenges on Gaelic. Attention was drawn to the wide range of consultations to which Bòrd na Gàidhlig had responded; and
- the main focus for Bòrd na Gàidhlig should be on the creation of fluent Gaelic speakers, including those from households without a traditional Gaelic background, to ensure their use of the language through education and into the workplace and communities.

The Committee thanked Mr Whannel and **NOTED** the presentation.

## 6. Progress Against Gaelic Language Plan 3

There had been circulated Report No. G/6/22 dated 23 August 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- having English translations displayed on the screen while Gaelic was being spoken was welcomed;
- tribute was paid to the various ambassadors for Gaelic, especially in schools, who were demonstrating the positive outcomes of the investments being made, and this was reflected in the Good News item;
- information was sought, and provided, on work being undertaken to tackle the challenging task of identifying, encouraging and supporting the uptake of Gaelic in the community;
- the online Gaelic tuition was welcomed and assurance sought that no groups were disadvantaged in their ability to access these courses;
- the importance of providing Gaelic activities outwith the school setting, and providing a variety of levels and types of learning opportunities, was emphasised; and
- assurance was sought, and provided, that Gaelic in care homes was being encouraged, noting the value of this to older people who spoke Gaelic. Examples were provided of initiatives that were underway and planned as part of Gaelic in the Community.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the progress made in both monitoring and implementing GLP3 on a quarterly basis utilising the (PRMS) support delivery of GLP3; and
- ii. the progress and challenges regarding the implementation of some enabling actions in the Plan.

## 7. Gaelic and Gàidhlig Medium Education Update

There had been circulated Report No. G/7/22 dated 17 August 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the progress reported was welcomed;
  - a visit to Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis was proposed and it was agreed that this could be arranged;
- it was disappointing that more progress was not being made to develop a 3-18 Gaelic Medium Education campus in Inverness;
- the benefits of bi-lingualism, including improved literacy and empathy, were emphasised, as was the importance of offering Gaelic experience in all primary schools. Reference was made to the Scottish Government's 2+1 language model for schools; and
- creative solutions to teacher recruitment challenges were being worked on with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the paper and recognised the significant improvement trends in attainment and presentation numbers for Gàidhlig and Gaelic in S4, S5 and S6;
- ii. **AGREED** to formally congratulate the young people, their families and the school staff for such significant improvement in Gàidhlig SQA attainment and presentation in the Highlands in August 2022;
- iii. **NOTED** that a report would be brought back to the Gaelic Committee on progress on the 3-18 feasibility study; and
- iv. **AGREED** to give consideration to arranging a visit for Members to Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis.

## 8. Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund

There is circulated Report No. G/8/22 dated 19 August 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance.

The Committee **NOTED** :-

- i. the applications submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig had been awarded a total of £101,675;
- ii. the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund projects that the Highland Council Gaelic Team were managing, leading, and participating in; and
- iii. that one application was still awaiting decision from Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

## 9. Bòrd na Gàidhlig Annual Return Gaelic Language Plan 3

There had been circulated Report No. G/9/22 dated 22 August 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance.

During discussion, it was pointed out that some of the reported figures from 2015 were now seven years out of date and it was felt there had been significant cultural change in outlook in relation to Gaelic. Attention was drawn to plans for a targeted consultation in relation to Gaelic in advance of the Council's Gaelic Language Plan 4.

The Committee **NOTED** the annual return.

The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm