

Agenda Item	5
Report No	G/14/23

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Gaelic Committee**

Date: **30 August 2023**

Report Title: **Gaelic Translation**

Report By: **Executive Chief Officer, Performance and Governance**

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report informs Members of the work of the Gaelic Translation Service (GTS), including:

- a) an overview of work administered between April 2022 and March 2023; and
- b) a summary of forthcoming projects.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Consider the report and note the work that has been undertaken in relation to Gaelic translation; and
- ii. Note the areas of current and future development.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

The resource implications are within the current main budget stream which include core Council budget and Gaelic Specific Grant.

3.2 Legal

The Highland Council has a requirement to implement its Gaelic Language Plan under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act of 2005.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)

The report complies with The Highland Council's policies on equality. There are no adverse socio-economic, rural or island implications.

3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

The Gaelic Team typically attends meetings online, thus reducing the requirement for business travel.

3.5 Risk

The work of the GTS is important in order to ensure compliance with the Council's bilingual policy and implementation of The Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2018–23 and forthcoming GLP 2023–28, as well as the National GLP.

3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people). No direct implications.

3.7 Gaelic

This report has positive implications regarding the preservation, development and promotion of Gaelic language and culture across all sectors in the Highland area. The GTS also contributes to consultation on place-names and linguistic or corpus issues with other organisations, thereby contributing to language development nationally.

4. Gaelic Translation

4.1 The Gaelic Translation Service (GTS) consists of one member of staff, a Senior Translation Officer, whose remit includes translation, proofreading and dealing with linguistic advice requests. During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, 982 requests were administered.

Individual requests vary in size from single words to projects running to tens of thousands of words. Whilst most of these requests were from within the Council's services, assistance was also provided to Council members, Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba (AÀA) and High Life Highland (HLH). Occasional assistance was provided to external individuals and organisations.

The vast majority of translations were from English to Gaelic, with 12 from Gaelic to English. These related to media enquiries, video sub-titling for Corporate Communications, and contributions from Gaelic school pupils regarding the Council Programme, *Our Future Highland*. Whilst this number is still comparatively small, there has been an encouraging increase in Gaelic to English translations in recent years. The fact that customers who contact the Council in Gaelic are guaranteed a response in Gaelic is one of our ongoing GLP commitments and one which we have pledged to reinforce.

As with previous years, requests fall broadly into the three categories of educational materials, corporate documents, and road/street and building signage. The following sub-sections provide an overview of the work of the GTS over the financial year 2022–23. (See also Infographics at **Appendix A**).

4.2 Education

Translation was provided for educational resources, particularly in order to support secondary GME subject delivery in History and Modern Studies. Materials included a range of texts and PowerPoint presentations on various topics, including the Suffragettes, Liberal Reforms, National Security, Employment & Unemployment and Crime & Punishment.

Administrative and wider support materials for education included school dinner menus, press notices, letters to parents, and correspondence relating to the establishment of school catchment areas. Interview questions were also provided for educational posts.

4.3 Gaelic Team

Assistance continued for Gaelic Team staff, including Community Learning and Development. Materials were provided for all ages from Early Years through to Adult Learning and included posters, advertisements, forms for extracurricular activities, drama workshops, sports clubs, Gaelic classes, and Gaelic culture days. Assistance was also provided to staff who liaise with key Gaelic and cultural partners.

4.4 Corporate and Marketing Texts

All agendas, reports and minutes for the Council's Gaelic Committee are simultaneously distributed in Gaelic and English. Bilingual headings and subheadings are provided for corporate documents not directly related to Gaelic. These include committee agendas and minutes, miscellaneous corporate reports, and advertising and information leaflets relating to Council services. Projects included: Strathpeffer Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan; Cost of Living support; The Highland Council Greenspace Assessment; Inverness City Heritage Trust Planning Enforcement; and Tourism Infrastructure materials. Various texts were provided in relation to the Council elections in May, as well as induction materials for new councillors and business cards for the Council Leader. In addition, The Highland Council Programme 2022–27, *Our Future Highland*, was published fully bilingually.

4.5 Public Relations and Publicity

38 Gaelic press releases relating to various Gaelic language and cultural issues and events were uploaded bilingually to the Council's website. These included: news from the Gaelic Committees; Portree High School's success in winning the National Gaelic Schools Debate; promotion of Fèis Blas; summer activities; a school trip to Edinburgh; a family learning day at Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar; a new Gaelic toddler group in Newtonmore; Cuach na Cloinne football competition; Cupa Iomain na h-Òige shinty competition; a drama workshop in Nairn; and various promotional news releases for The Highland Council GLP 2023–28.

55 posts relating to Gaelic matters were also issued on the Council's social media platforms. These included animated proverbs and place-names for Seachdain na Gàidhlig and Nova Scotia's Mios nan Gàidheal, Bodach an Stòir promotional posts, and Royal National Mod publicity. Gaelic posts relating to Council elections – an issue not considered directly related to Gaelic – were issued for the first time, thereby helping to normalise the language as part of mainstream life.

4.6 Job Advertisements

Gaelic job advertisements – including job descriptions and person specifications – for 37 separate posts where Gaelic was an essential or desirable requirement were translated for publication. Whilst the majority were for teaching and ELC posts in various areas, job advertisements were also issued for a Gaelic Policy Officer, a Gaelic Administrative Assistant, a Gaelic Corporate Communications & Engagement Officer, a Graduate Intern, and an administrator for Cròileagan Grianach.

4.7 Street and Road Directional Signage

The Council continues to work in partnership with AÀA as the national advisory partnership on Gaelic place-names and consults with them, as a matter of policy, to ensure correct forms of Gaelic place-names are used on signage and in other contexts.

Requests for 114 separate road directional and street signs were administered, for both new developments and new or replacement signage for streets and locations across the Council area.

During this period, signs were provided for Achintore, Alness, Ardersier, Ardgour, Aviemore, Balnakeil, Bunloit, Cairngorm, Clovullin, Coylumbridge, Croy, Culloden Moor, Drimnin, Evanton, Feshiebridge, Fort George, Gairloch, Inverness, Isle of Skye, Lochaline, Lochaber, Loch Arkaig, Nethy Bridge, Scaniport, Shiel Bridge and Spean Bridge. This also included a series of signs for the Core Paths network and for the Ness Riverside Project.

4.8 Building Signage

Requests for 165 separate building signs were administered for Council-owned buildings and properties. As well as numerous internal door signs for Council offices, signs were provided for Ardgour Primary School, Ballachulish ELC, Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar, Crown ELC, Farr ELC, Farr Primary School, Farr High School, Grantown Primary School, Hilton Primary School, Miller Academy ELC, Milton of Leys Nursery, Ness Castle Primary School, and Thurso High School. Also, for Culloden Leisure Centre, Highland Folk Museum Pinewoods, Invergarry Lodges & Glengarry Lodges, Inverness Museum & Art Gallery, Longman Waste Transfer Station, Provost Ronnie Watson House, Tongue Cemetery, Tornagrain, and Wick Bay Apartments.

The ongoing development of bilingual signage increases the visual presence of Gaelic and raises its profile in schools, the workplace and the wider community. It is hoped the more recent initiative of providing bilingual lift commands, which will ensure that Gaelic is heard as well as seen, can be replicated elsewhere and will help to further promote the language.

4.9 Interpretation Panels and Posters

Gaelic was provided for several bilingual interpretation panels, in order to incorporate local cultural, historical and geographical information. Projects included the Devil's Staircase in Glencoe, the West Highland Way, the Old Man of Storr project, the Ness Hydro project, and Merkinch Nature Reserve.

As well as bilingual panels, the Ness Hydro project includes a dedicated Gaelic panel with information about the River Ness together with Gaelic place-names and etymologies. Gaelic proverbs, phrases and words with a river or water theme are attractively presented. Additional English translation is available through a QR code.

Posters were provided for various events, such as public consultations and community activities. Bilingual notices were also applied to Council gritters.

4.10 High Life Highland

Assistance was given to High Life Highland (HLH), mostly related to film and website text for the ongoing Inverness Castle and Spirit of the Highlands project, as well as support to Am Baile and signage for HLH properties.

5. Comparison with Previous Years

- 5.1 The GTS was established in March 2009, initially with the assistance of incrementally decreasing Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF) financing from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Since 2011, the service has been supported by Gaelic Specific Grant funding from the Scottish Government.

The service is demand-led and has administered a high volume of translation and proofreading requests since it was established. The following table shows the total number of requests returned per financial year, for the last several years. Monthly logs are maintained with details of dates, contacts, services, subjects and word counts. Individual requests vary greatly in size from single words to sizeable documents and consequently, time spent on each individual request can also vary greatly. Single word requests such as place-names may involve significant research and consultation with AÀA, whilst other short phrases can be returned instantly. Therefore, due to many variables, the figures cannot be directly compared on a like-for-like basis. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the high demand for the service.

April–March	No. of Requests Returned
2014–15	810
2015–16	767
2016–17	620
2017–18	918
2018–19	748
2019–20	720
2020–21	939
2021–22	885
2022–23	982

6. The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan 2023–28

- 6.1 A significant amount of translation and proofreading work was undertaken in relation to Gaelic and English versions of The Highland Council GLP 2023–28. This has so far included several drafts and amendments, summary documents, infographics, public consultation materials, pupil voice projects, letters to stakeholders, publicity and press releases.
- 6.2 Translation work was also undertaken in relation to consultations and workshops for the National GLP 2023–28, and for the Gaelic and Scots and Scottish Languages Bill.

7. Forthcoming Projects

- 7.1 Due to the extremely high volume of requests received, the work of the GTS tends to be reactive rather than proactive. However, a number of projects are due to be implemented and reinforced under GLP 2023–28. This includes, as a priority, the reinforcement of the Council’s bilingual policy across all Council services, and in particular the importance of adhering to the correct processes regarding signage. This will mitigate against the unfortunate errors and subsequent adverse publicity that occur when the GTS is not consulted.
- 7.2 Bilingual email footers and out-of-office messages, etc will be offered to staff across services. Training will also be delivered to frontline and reception staff to reinforce bilingual welcome messages, salutations and basic phrases.
- 7.3

In collaboration with colleagues, the Gaelic Toolkit will be updated and the presence of Gaelic on The Highland Council's website will be increased.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Performance and Governance

Date: 11.08.23

Author: Jo MacDonald, Senior Translation Officer

Infographics at Appendix A designed by Eoina Rodgers, Gaelic Policy Officer

Background Papers: N/A

Appendix A



Gàidhlig Translation 2022-23

982

Requests received for translation, proofreading and linguistic advice requests



Type of request

Requests fall broadly into three categories:

Educational materials

Corporate documents

Road/street and building signage

Partnership working

While most requests were from within the Council's services, assistance was also provided to Council members, Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba (AÀA), and High Life Highland (HLH).



Education

Translation was provided for educational resources, to support secondary GME subject delivery. Administrative and wider support materials for education included school dinner menus, press notices and letters to parents.

Community Learning & Development

Assistance with materials for a wide range of ages from Early Years to Adult Learning. This included posters and adverts for extracurricular clubs and activities, including FC Sonas events, drama workshops, sports clubs, Gaelic classes, and Gaelic culture days.



38

PRESS RELEASES

55

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

37

JOB ADVERTS

114

ROAD AND STREET SIGNS

