

Agenda Item	7
Report No	G/16/23

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Gaelic Committee

Date: 30 August 2023

Report Title: Gaelic Education Update

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This Report informs Members of

- a) An update on recent key activities within the development of Gaelic and Gaelic Medium Education (GME)
- Progress with the 3-18 Gaelic Education for Inverness Feasibility Study
 - Applecross Gaelic Medium Education request
- b) An update on the catchment consultation process for Gaelic Medium provisions and Gaelic Medium Schools.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Consider the update on the Inverness 3-18 Gaelic Education Feasibility Study
- ii. Note the current position of the Applecross Gaelic Medium Education request
- iii. Note the catchment consultation process and update for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, Dingwall and Nairn Gaelic Medium provisions.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource -The resource implications are within the current main budget streams which include Gaelic Specific Grant, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (Bòrd na Gàidhlig) alongside core Council revenue funding.

- 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) -There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Risk – Risk is managed through regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken if necessary
- 3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people). No direct implications.
- 3.7 Gaelic - The report enhances Gaelic Education development within The Highland Council area and supports the implementation of The Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan.

4 3-18 Gaelic Education provision Inverness

- 4.1 The 3-18 Gaelic Education feasibility study is now underway. Early actions are reviewing good practice advice from a range of advisors across the GME and education landscape. This will include those with an applied overview of the attributes that deliver sustainable and successful approaches to delivering 3-18 GME.

Further actions include consulting organisations who have applied experience of successfully delivering minority language education elsewhere, for example Wales.

- 4.2 The consultation with teachers, pupils and parents in Inverness will be underway from late-August onwards.

The focus is that consultees reflect on strengths and weaknesses of educational structural approaches in GME to help understand how they could best be facilitated within a 3-18 GME provision for Inverness and the Highlands.

Consulting GME campus models in other parts of Scotland will be important to the feasibility study. In tandem will be the early liaison with Highland Council staff to identify next feasibility steps to inform the various infrastructural issues around campus extension or new campus development, including growth trends forecasting and accessibility issues.

5. Applecross Gaelic Medium Education Request

- 5.1 Background

The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 established a process for parents to request an assessment of the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) from their education authority i.e., the local authority that provides school education in the area where they live.

Highland Council received a GMPE request from 8 parents at Applecross Primary School in May 2022.

The initial assessment response is available [here](#)

- 5.2 A full assessment for GMPE has now been actioned and completed. The assessment followed the guidance 'Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education' published by Bord na Gaidhlig in terms of Section 9 Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

The Highland Council engaged with statutory consultees and the presumption continues to be in favour of setting up GMPE provision, on the basis that both accommodation is secured within the school and recruitment of staff is successful.

- 5.3 The Gaelic Schools Capital Fund from the Scottish Government will enable the Council to provide suitable accommodation for GME at Applecross Primary School while the Council continue to advertise to recruit a teacher in order to provide Gaelic Medium Education.

6. Update on the creation of Gaelic Medium catchments

- 6.1 At the time of writing, the Council has created Gàidhlig Medium catchment areas for 16 of the 20 primary schools in Highland that offer GME and for 10 of the 14 secondary schools that do so.
- 6.2 Since the last time this was reported to the Committee, the Education Committee has approved a statutory consultation into creating a catchment area for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, together with GM catchment areas for Inverness Royal Academy, Dingwall Primary School, Dingwall Academy, Millbank Primary School, and Nairn Academy. The formal consultation began on 21 August and is due to conclude on 27 October following which there will be consultation with Education Scotland.
- 6.3 Informal discussions are now underway regarding a GM catchment area for the Tain 3-18 campus. Officials have met with their counterparts in Bòrd na Ghàidhlig and have started informal discussions with local Elected Members.

Designation: ECO Performance and Governance

Date: 8 August 2023

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Background Papers:

Appendices: