

Agenda Item	8
Report No	G/17/24

The Highland Council

Committee: Gaelic Committee

Date: 20 November 2024

Report Title: Gaelic Plan Fund – Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – People

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report is to inform Members that Bòrd na Gàidhlig has approved an award of £173,500 for Highland Council for the coming three years (2024-27) via the Gaelic Plans Fund.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the report.
- ii. Note and consider Gaelic Early Years (0-3) support for Highland.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

In addition to the Gaelic Plans Fund, the delivery of the Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) is funded by The Highland Council, Scottish Government grants and various Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnaG) funding streams.

3.2 Legal

Under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 The Highland Council has a statutory duty to have a Gaelic Language Plan.

3.3 Risk

Gaelic Early Years Provision (0-3) support was not included in the strategic funding agreement with Bord na Gaidhlig for years 25/26 and 26/27.

3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)

No risks identified.

3.5 Gaelic

Very positive implications regarding the preservation and development of the Gaelic language and culture across corporate, education and community sectors.

4. Impacts

4.1 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5. The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2024–29 and Strategic Funding

5.1 The Highland Council GLP 2024–29 was approved on 7 May 2024 and runs until 2029. The Gaelic Plans Fund (GPF) is administered by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and is designed to assist public authorities with the delivery of commitments in their Gaelic Language Plans. This year the scheme has been run in two streams as more fully described here:

- The Strategic Stream – for the 6 local authorities deemed significant due to their overall number of Gaelic speakers according to the most recent census figures available, the number of pupils they have in Gaelic-medium education and previous support provided to them via the Gaelic Plans Fund/GLAIF
- The Projects Stream – for all other public bodies with Gaelic Language Plans

5.2 Bòrd na Gàidhlig invited The Highland Council to submit an application under the new Strategic Stream of funding by the 30th of May 2024. The Highland Council was asked to submit one application that details a three-year programme of work which will contribute to delivering the National Gaelic Plan 2023–28 and The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan 2024–29.

5.3 Bòrd na Gàidhlig requested that the application was structured around work areas. These are discrete streams of development work that The Highland Council undertakes for Gaelic for which funding is sought from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. For each work area, Highland Council provided a description of the work and what it will achieve, what actions from The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan 2024–29 or the National Gaelic Language Plan this will support, the people involved in delivering this work, an overview of the costs and a funding request from Bòrd na Gàidhlig for the work and how the impact of the work will be assessed.

5.4 Bòrd na Gàidhlig have asked that the application was developed on the basis of an award of around £60,000 per annum (a total of £180,000 over the three-year period). This amount was based on the previous grant support received via the GPF/GLAIF and the number of Gaelic speakers in the Highland Council area.

5.5 Bòrd na Gàidhlig also invited an application for a strategic 0-3 funding on the basis of a £50,000 per annum.

Following the submission of the application, the Wilson MacLeod (Professor of Gaelic, Edinburgh University) report was published. The report was commissioned by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

[Research on Gaelic Early Years Provision \(0-3\) – Bòrd na Gàidhlig \(gaidhlig.scot\)](https://www.gaidhlig.scot/research-on-gaelic-early-years-provision-0-3)

The report was commissioned to assess the current levels of Gaelic early years provision across Scotland. The report contains recommendations for changes that can be made for organisations who are active in this sector to create more complete and effective provision.

- 5.6 The provisional strategic funding model of £50,000 per annum has been revised. Going forward, funding has now been allocated to maintain current provision to 24/25 with The Highland Council currently engaging with Bòrd na Gàidhlig on how 0-3 outcomes will be supported for the duration of the plan going forward.
- 5.7 A portion of the Early Years sector in Highland is organised by independent committees who run 0-3 groups and childcare out with the remit of The Highland Council's 0-3 project. This includes;
- Comann nam Pàrant Portrigh
 - Fàs Mòr Slèite
 - Cròileagan Inbhir Pheotharain

The national organisation Comann nam Pàrant also has a presence in Highland, with family support provided. [Gaelic Education | Comann Nam Parant](#)

- 5.8 Below is a summary of the Gaelic Team's support for 0-3 as reported to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for 23/24.
- A Gaelic Toddler support worker was employed to cover Lochaber; Acharacle, Mallaig, Ballachulish, Fort William and occasional visits to provide Gaelic activities to an English group in Roybridge. The support worker liaised with parents on their statutory request to establish Gaelic Medium Education in Lochaline. This has been agreed by The Highland Council with an initial 10 hours per week Gaelic immersion now supported in the nursery at the school from September 2024.
 - A Gaelic Toddler support worker was recruited in April 2024 to support groups in the Inverness and surrounding area as well as covering a wider area when required.
 - Cluich aig Cultarlann sessions for parents and pre-school children ran throughout the summer of 2024. These sessions attracted families from the Inverness, Nairn and Dingwall areas with a number of families from other parts of Scotland also attending while visiting Inverness. These sessions were innovative in that parents were present with their toddlers but also with their slightly older siblings who would normally have been at Sgoil-araich. These sessions included play, song, rhymes, arts activities, stories and music through the medium of Gaelic. Parents have requested a continuation of these sessions.
 - A new Parant is Pàiste group, 'Na Ògannan' was set up in Kilmuir in Skye in March 2024. The 0-3 group is delivered in partnership with Kilmuir Primary School.
 - Initial talks between the Gaelic team, Plockton parents and Plockton Head Teacher have begun to take forward a new initiative in Plockton to establish 0-3 Gaelic sessions.
 - New Gaelic play sessions take place in Glenurquhart Primary School on a fortnightly basis.
 - The Newtonmore group has been re-established and supported.
 - Support visits for Gaelic activity have taken place in Nairn, the Inverness groups as well as Ullapool.
 - An Early Years support worker attended and promoted careers in the Gaelic Early Years sector at Siuthad Careers event in October.

- In cases where committees have folded, new developments and work in the community has been targeted to enable the re-establishment of these groups.

6. Award of Funding

6.1 Bòrd na Gàidhlig has approved an award of **£173,500** for the coming three years (2024-27) via the Gaelic Plans Fund, with the expectation that this will be paid out as follows:

	IOMLAN / TOTAL	2024/25 (Oct – Mar)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 (Apr – Sep)
Media, Arts, Culture and Heritage	£19,000	£8,000	£5,000	£5,000	£1,000
Gaelic Cultural Trail	£0				
Gaelic Parental Digital Resources	£11,000	£8,000	£3,000		
CLD – Communities and Home	£126,000	£21,000	£45,000	£45,000	£15,000
0-3	£17,500	£15,000	£2,500		
IOMLAN / TOTAL	£173,500	£52,000	£55,500	£50,000	£16,000

6.2 In addition to the strategic funding set out in 6.1, resource for 0-3 has been committed by Bòrd na Gàidhlig to support The Gaelic Team maintain current 0-3 provision.

The Gaelic Team contributed to the Early Years Provision (0-3) Wilson MacLeod Report and the next year will be crucial to engaging with the report recommendations and organisations for determining strategic support going forward.

Early Years (0-3) work across Highland has enabled there to be experienced and trained play workers in place with a thorough knowledge of the area and sector which is essential in going forward.

Designation:

Date: 31 October 2024

Author: Lena Walker, Eoina Rodgers

Background Papers:

Appendices: