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| Agenda Item | 6 |
| Report No | G/3/25 |

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Gaelic Committee

Date: 26 February 2025

Report Title: Strategic Funding Gaelic Language Plan

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – People

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Highland Council provides annual funding to Gaelic organisations to support delivery of Gaelic events and organisations and to deliver on the strategic outcomes of the Gaelic Language Plan (GLP).
- 1.2 This report informs Members of the allocation of the Highland Council's Gaelic Plans Fund which are in two categories:
 - Service Delivery Agreements
 - Small Grants (below £5,000)

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. Discuss and agree the current funding allocations for Gaelic organisations;
 - ii. Note that modifications to the funding allocated to organisations will directly impact other organisations. The allocations are listed in 5.2;
 - iii. Note that the organisations listed along with other Gaelic organisations are supported with yearly partnership funding but that this funding varies from year to year in alignment with the targets in the Gaelic Language Plan (GLP).

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – Funding for the implementation of the GLP will be sought through the Scottish Government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnaG), Highland Council and other funding streams, where appropriate. Gaelic Specific Grant (GSG) from the Scottish Government and Maoin Planaichean Gàidhlig (MPG) from Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnaG) provide annual grant awarded funding towards supporting the delivery of the GLP.

- 3.2 Legal – The Highland Council is required to publish and implement a Gaelic Language Plan in accordance with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act').
- 3.3 Risk – the arrangements set out on this report are intended to mitigate the risk that the outcomes listed within the GLP 2024–29 are not achieved.
- 3.4 Gaelic – The GLP is a statutory framework by which The Highland Council supports the Gaelic language and culture. Therefore, the implications of this report are positive for Gaelic.

4. Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5. The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan

- 5.1 The Council has a longstanding and successful history of working collaboratively with other organisations to support Gaelic actions and projects.

The annual funding of projects is prioritised for those which align most closely with the strategic priorities over the period of the Gaelic Language Plan. Consistent with advice from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, organisations are named in the current practice section. This allows the Council to maintain flexibility in how resources are allocated whilst ensuring alignment with the Strategic Priorities of the GLP.

The actions evidence the commitment to partnership working with local and national Gaelic arts, culture and music organisations.

- 5.2 The Scottish Government's Short Life Working Group on Economic and Social Opportunities for Gaelic: [link](#) found that the key areas which offer the best prospects for social use of the language and economic benefit from Gaelic include education, provision of public services, early years & social care, the creative industries, culture, heritage, tourism and sport. The Highland Council provides Gaelic strategic funding for organisations that deliver projects and activities which support Gaelic economic and social opportunities across these sectors.
- 5.3 The Gaelic organisations listed in 5.2 have extensive experience and a strong track record of achieving positive outcomes for Gaelic across Highland.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal (FnanG); An Comunn Gàidhealach (ACG); Fèis Rois (FR); FilmG and Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba (AÀA) have presented to the Gaelic Committee annually or in the last 3 years, evidencing their high-quality impact and success across wide ranging projects. The Highland Council remains committed to building on this by

including these organisations as partners within the current practice section of the Gaelic Language Plan.

6. The Highland Council Gaelic Plans Fund – Strategic Stream

6.1 The Strategic Gaelic Plans Fund is administered by the Gaelic Team for The Highland Council. The fund is designed to assist The Highland Council work with Gaelic partners and organisations with the delivery of commitments in their Gaelic Language Plan. The funding operates in 2 streams:

- The Strategic Stream – 3 organisations with 4 annual service delivery agreements
- The Grant Projects Stream – 4 organisations/projects

6.2 The Gaelic organisations who support the delivery of outcomes using annual Strategic Funding are:

[An Comunn Gàidhealach \(ACG\) - Royal National Mòd](#)

[Fèisean nan Gàidheal \(FnanG\) - Blas](#)

[Fèisean nan Gàidheal \(FnanG\)](#)

[Fèis Rois \(FR\)](#)

[Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba \(AÀA\)](#)

[Comunn na Gàidhlig \(CnaG\)](#)

[Sabhal Mòr Ostaig \(SMO\)](#)

[FilmG – Astar Media](#)

Further information can be found by clicking on the links to each organisation. These organisations are based in the Highlands or deliver an event or projects in the Highlands.

6.3 The Highland Council also works with other organisations and third-party organisations to support outcomes within the Plan. This work varies from year to year and is dependent on the targets set out in the GLP. This is funded by the Scottish Government Gaelic Specific Grant and the Strategic Plan Funding Agreement from Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

It is recognised that demand for funding often exceeds available resources and so there are ongoing conversations with organisations to explore innovative ways to increase impact and ensure sustainability.

6.4 The funding for Gaelic organisations listed is provided on an annual basis. FnanG, FR, Blas and ACG have annual service delivery agreements which set out the agreed outcomes between the organisation and The Highland Council.

With the new iteration of GLP underway these agreements will be reviewed and the Gaelic Team will engage with the 3 organisations, and the Council's Shared Procurement \Team, to determine the next steps.

The Gaelic Team works in ongoing close partnership with the organisations who are recipients of the smaller grants, delivering projects in partnership or close working on the delivery of the grant project as well as other projects funded by GSG or MPG.

6.5 The table illustrates how the total funding of £178,484* has been allocated for 2024/25.

| | 2024-25 | % of Grant |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| ACG (National Mòd) | 37,500 | 21 |
| FnanG (Blas) | 62,869 | 35 |
| FnanG | 37,794 | 21 |
| Feis Rois | 29,121 | 16 |
| AÀA | 3,840 | 2 |
| CnaG | 4000 | 2 |
| UHI/SMO | 2,400 | 1 |
| FilmG Project | 960 | 0.2 |

*Funding for 2025/26 is currently anticipated to be at the same level as 2024/25 but this cannot be confirmed until the 2025/26 budget is agreed by Council.

Multi-year settlements are not currently provided for due to the annual nature of the Council budget approval process and the non-contractual status of the agreements. The exception to this has been previous decisions to fund the Royal National Mòd on a 4/5-year basis so that the budget accrues to the total amount required to fund the event when it is in Highland. This agreement requires approval through the Council's Corporate Resources Committee.

6.6 Lochaber will be hosting the National Mod in October 2025 which means that the current SDC with ACG will conclude in the next financial year.

7. Gaelic Conference

7.1 The Highland Council will host a Gaelic Conference in Eden Court on 1 of May 2025. The conference aims to invite stakeholders to meet and discuss how to maximise Gaelic as an economic and employment asset for the Highlands.

7.2 As part of our positive partnership working, the organisations who receive grant funding will be invited to participate or deliver keynote speeches to demonstrate how their work directly impacts on employability and economy in the Highlands.

Designation: Interim Chief Officer Early Years and Primary Education

Date: 30 January 2025

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Background Papers:

Appendices: