

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

### Gaelic Committee - 15 January 2009

Agenda Item	6.
Report No	G-04-09

## Gaelic Manager's Update

### Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

#### Summary

This report provides an update to Members on various issues of potential interest to the Gaelic Committee.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Gaelic Manager's Update paper is intended to inform members on issues of interest or relevance to the Gaelic Committee.

#### 2. Gaelic Language Plan Implementation

- 2.1 A full annual report on the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan will be prepared for the May meeting of the Gaelic Committee. This will reflect the first 12 months of the Council having had an externally approved Plan in place.
- 2.2 In the meantime good progress is being made on implementing most targets within the Plan. As Members will be aware from the section above, and previous reports, the primary obstacles have been delays in recruiting to key posts.
- 2.3 Looking into future years it is evident that securing sufficient funding to allow development activity to continue at current levels will be increasingly difficult. This applies to Bòrd na Gàidhlig GLAIF funding, where the fundamental principle is one of 'pump priming' support for early Plan implementation as well as to Highland Council's own resources.
- 2.4 A senior level meeting is anticipated between senior Members and officers of Highland Council, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig later this month to consider other elements of the Plan where more formalised joint working is required.
- 2.5 The first tranche of GLAIF funding for the 2008/9 financial year has been received and those projects are proceeding to timetable. One project 'Ainm is Àite' - a schools-based project to record Gaelic place-names knowledge among older native speakers in the community - had been dependent upon Heritage Lottery funding in addition to Highland Council and Bòrd na Gàidhlig resources and this application has been successful.

### **3. Scottish Government Gaelic Language Plan**

- 3.1 The Scottish Government's Draft Gaelic Language Plan has now been approved by the Scottish Cabinet and Senior Civil Servants and is due to be published in January.
- 3.2 There will be a three month consultation process on this draft plan and it is anticipated that a response from Highland Council will be put before the Gaelic Committee in May.

### **4. Highland Youth Gaelic Choir**

- 4.1 Proposals to establish a Highland Youth Gaelic Choir have been successful in receiving external funding. This will represent the 7<sup>th</sup> such region-wide musical grouping alongside others such as the Highland Youth Orchestra.
- 4.2 Auditions for the Choir were held on 10<sup>th</sup> January with first rehearsals being held on the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> January. By aligning with the rehearsal schedule for existing such groups costs and administration are being kept to a minimum however an external musician, Eilidh Barker will be leading the group. This requirement also meant external funding was successfully sourced from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Friends of Highland Music.

### **5. Staffing**

- 5.1 Recruitment of staff for the Council's Gaelic Development Team is progressing.
- 5.2 The post of Gaelic Childcare and Family Resources Officer has now been filled. The successful candidate, Mary Morrison, will take up her post in early January 2009. While part of the Gaelic Development Team, she will work closely with the Childcare Team and focus on those elements of the Council's Gaelic Language Plan concerning language acquisition among 0-3 yr olds and expanding childcare options for parents of Gaelic Medium pupils.
- 5.3 A successful candidate has been selected for the post of Gaelic Education Development Officer. However they will not be released from their current school position until after the commencement of the SQA exams period in May 2009. Work is underway to implement an interim solution which will see progress made to a more substantial implementation of the wider education targets within the Council's Gaelic Language Plan in the meantime.
- 5.4 A number of applications were received for the post of Senior Translation Officer. It is hoped interviews for this post will be held in early January, with a successful candidate expected to be in post towards the middle of February.
- 5.5 Recruitment into other posts: The second Translator for the Translation Unit and the full-time Community Support Officer to work alongside Bun Sgoil Gaidhlig Inbhirnis will require to be considered by the Resources Committee in February. If approved, advertising and recruitment will begin as soon as possible thereafter.

**6. Recommendation**

6.1 Members are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report

Signature:

Designation: Director, Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date:

Author: Donald MacNeill, Gaelic Development Manager

Ref:

Background Papers