

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**Gaelic Committee - 7 August 2008**

Agenda Item	5i.
Report No	G/17/08

**Gaelic Language Plan – Implementation Update**

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

**Summary**

This report provides an update on the measures being taken to implement the Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan 2008 - 2011

**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 As required by the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 The Highland Council submitted a draft Gaelic Language Plan to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in October 2007. Following discussions and amendments this Plan was formally approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
- 1.2 The Plan's fundamental objectives are to normalise the position of Gaelic within the activities of the Council and also to undertake and support significant development activities.
- 1.3 Having had the Plan approved The Council must now undertake detailed planning work to ensure its implementation within the specified timescales.

**2.0 Implementation Plan**

- 2.1 The Gaelic Language Plan contains over 100 specified actions and associated targets for the period 2008 – 2011.

A full copy of the Gaelic Language Plan can be found on the Council's website via: [www.highland.gov.uk/gaidhlig](http://www.highland.gov.uk/gaidhlig)

- 2.2 The actions in the Plan comprise a mixture of new initiatives alongside activities which the Council has been undertaking for sometime, such as Gaelic Medium Education, but those existing activities have been further strengthened and developed under the Plan.
- 2.3 The Plan will be implemented by staff across the Council's departments, co-ordinated and supported by the Gaelic Team. A key forum will be the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Group (GLAIG) comprising representatives from each of the 7 Service departments and the Gaelic Development Staff.
- 2.4 Each of the actions in the Gaelic Language Plan will require a detailed breakdown of actions and required progress to achieve the specified

target. This breakdown and associated timescales will need to be informed and agreed by the Council's departments. Annex 1 to this paper provides examples of the sort of planning being undertaken and the steps being taken to ensure implementation of the Plan. These examples are simply drawn from the beginning of the Plan and do not imply any specific prioritisation. Further refinement of these and other actions will be undertaken in the next few months. It will be appreciated that this is, and will continue to be a working document.

2.5 A number of key actions are worth highlighting at this stage:

**Staff Gaelic Skills Audit:** Underway

**Awareness raising:** The Plan specifies a number of areas in which awareness of Gaelic needs to be heightened, from the general public to parents of potential GME pupils. Further to this it is critical that Highland Council staff are made aware of the Plan, its implications, and the responsibilities it places on them. A 'roll out' of Gaelic awareness is being planned for the months ahead – with key staff in service departments to be identified and engaged. This is essential to allow delegation of specific tasks and functions to individual Departments and to ensure ownership of the plan within and across all services of the Council.

**Recruitment:** Posts within the Gaelic Team relating to school education and early years developments have been restructured to further support developments in relation to a Curriculum for Excellence.

The post of Gaelic Education Development officer is being advertised in early in August and the post to support development of childcare and family support services through the medium of Gaelic is to be submitted to the August Resources Committee. Recruitment is under way for a Gaelic Resources Assistant and Administration post.

**Budgets:** There will be costs associated with the implementation of the Gaelic Plan. Some of these will be supported by Government, via Bòrd na Gàidhlig, through the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF) and also through Gaelic Specific Grant funding. Other posts will need to be met through mainstream service budgets. Following the awareness-raising roll out outlined above each service will be required to consider the detail of the Gaelic Language Plan and how it applies to their activities, identify any specific costs associated with this and any significant funding requirement.

It should be stressed in this context that the principle behind the Gaelic Language Plan, of 'normalising' Gaelic within the activities of the Council, applies equally to budgets. Even where GLAIF funding is secured this will be on a declining scale over the three years of the Plan, with the Council undertaking to absorb the total costs of ongoing activity at the end of that three year period. This has implications for budget planning across all services of the Council over the lifetime of the plan.

**3.0 Recommendation**

3.1 Members are invited to note and comment on progress with the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan.

Signature:

Designation: Director, Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date: 22 July 2008

Author: Donald MacNeill, Gaelic Development Manager

Plan Objective	HCGLP Action	HCGLP timeline	Who	08/09 action	08/09 budget + source	09/10 action	09/10 budget & source	10/11 action	10/11 budget & source
Public guaranteed a reply in Gaelic to correspondence	Gaelic team will organise translation services relating to correspondence	From 2008	GDM/GDO	Establish translation unit	£22.5k - THC; GLAIF; Partner agencies	Translation unit developing, Service Level Agreements with partners	£90k - THC; GLAIF; Partner agencies	Translation unit fully mature	£90k - THC; GLAIF; Partner agencies
Bilingual reports, documents & forms	Commission & publicise the preparation & production of forms, reports & docs. Including the Council Complaints procedure	First available from end of 2008	GDM/GDO	List current provision & identify potential forms/documents for translation ( <b>inc Council complaints procedure</b> )	£0 (translation unit)	New forms/documents being made available as per list from 2008	£0 (translation unit)	Further forms available + review of provision & suitability of further translations	
HC will regularly publicise the fact that the public can communicate with Council staff orally in Gaelic	Employ a Gaelic speaking staff member in the Service Centre & provide tuition to any staff wishing to acquire Gaelic skills	Apr-08	GDM/GDO, Customer services manager	Gaelic speaking staff member employed? Develop co-ordinated approach/strategy to staff tuition	£ recruitment & salary from mainstream budget £ training costs for staff (GLAIF & THC)	Identify appropriate training and means of selecting appropriate individuals	£training costs (mainstream & GLAIF bid)	Further training for staff	£training costs (mainstream & GLAIF bid)

Plan Objective	HCGLP Action	HCGLP timeline	Who	08/09 action	08/09 budget + source	09/10 action	09/10 budget & source	10/11 action	10/11 budget & source
	Develop a badging scheme to allow clients to identify staff able to deal with queries in Gaelic	Apr-08	GDM/GDO, Employee Dev Mngr	Dependent on BnG initiative. Hold discussions with BnG & progress as appt. Consider how to identify GS staff	£ minimal (production of badges - shared costs nationally?)	Badges distributed and worn. Ongoing monitoring underway of public demand for Gaelic services. Publicise availability of these services.	£0	Ongoing monitoring underway of public demand for Gaelic services. Publicise availability of these services	£0
HC will regularly publicise the fact that Council services are increasingly being made available through the medium of Gaelic.	Conduct an audit of the use of Gaelic in the delivery of Council services and other Council business and produce a Plan for expansion	From June 2008	Service Directors	Audit of current provision of services in Gaelic - and assessment of public demand. Consideration of those services where Gaelic provision could be developed	£ minimal cost - in-house audit of service provision and demand	consolidate provision of existing services (documents & staff) and seek to identify/implement appropriate new opportunities	£ minimal - covered elsewhere under translation unit and staff training	consolidate provision of existing services (documents & staff) and seek to identify/implement appropriate new opportunities	
	Services will be provided in Gaelic where that is desirable & feasible	From June 2008	Service Directors	Follows audit - little action in 08/09		Service provision rolled out as per Expansion Plan	£ mainstream?		
NOT IN HCGLP - BUT ESSENTIAL ACTION	Roll out awareness of Plan to key staff	From Autumn 08	GDM/GDO / GLAIG	Identify key staff within services/areas for this 'induction' - estimate 10 days	£4000; THC & GLAIF?	Further specific action unlikely - rolled up into THC induction schemes/costs			

Plan Objective	HCGLP Action	HCGLP timeline	Who	08/09 action	08/09 budget + source	09/10 action	09/10 budget & source	10/11 action	10/11 budget & source
Information available on Gaelic Careers	Schools Gaelic Careers conference	August 2007 & 2009	GDM + <u>GEDO</u>	Revised targets - 2009 & 2011 = planning for conference in 2008/0	£ pre-conference costs	Conference held and assessed. Lessons learned.	£conference costs - ca. £8,000 GLAIF & THC - possible other partners - "Careers Scotland"	No conference in 2010 - plan for 2011 event	
Increased availability of staff able to communicate with the public in Gaelic	Designate certain posts as 'Gaelic Essential'	Summer 2008	Personnel service	Plan / policy formulated to assess Gaelic essential criteria	£0	Policy implemented	£0		
	Adopt an appointments policy which recognises the ability to use Gaelic as a relevant 'additional' job skill in certain contexts	Summer 2008	Personnel service	Plan / Policy formulated to define context and nature of 'Gaelic desirable' posts, or where Gaelic = an 'additional' skill	£0	Policy implemented			