



The
Highland
Council
Comhairle na
Gaidhealtachd

SERVING The Highland Community

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Education, Culture and Sport Service – Autumn 2005

Seirbheis Foghlaim, Cultair Agus Spors - Foghar 2005

*Colleagues,
I hope you all have enjoyed the summer and trust you find this edition of the Newsletter interesting and informative.*

Bruce

Successes

Each week we hear of outstanding achievements across the Highlands. It is difficult to just pick a few but what about congratulations to:

- The Am Baile Team for winning the COSLA Quality Awards
- Ross and Cromarty Healthways Project for winning the COSLA Quality Awards
- Ullapool High School for winning The Young Enterprise Award
- Kiltearn Primary for being our 100th Health Promoting School
- Mark Sloggie of Kirkhill Primary for reaching the finals of the Scottish Education Awards.
- Moira Mackenzie of Park Primary for winning the inspirational teacher section of the Scottish Education Awards.
- Central Primary School for their outstanding Gaelic musical in Eden Court, "Taigh Mairi Anndra"
- Diana Mackay, cook in Alness Academy who was invited to 10 Downing Street in recognition of her health improvement work. Trish Hossack from Dochgarroch Primary School, Ainsley Burns from Inverlochry Primary School, John Tracey from Fortrose Academy, Norma Young from Portree High School and Gavin Maclean, Glenurquhart High School have also been invited to 10 Downing Street in recognition of their outstanding contributions.

This is but a flavour of a huge amount of successes across ECS.

External Inspection and Review

During the early part of the year, a team of inspectors from a variety of backgrounds inspected Child Protection services in Highland. ECS, Social Work, Police and Health were the main services inspected and the conclusions were very positive indeed. The main report can be accessed on the Council web site.

The Council is currently subject to a Best Value Audit to ascertain how well we deliver across all our services to individuals and communities in Highland. Again, this report will be published. (For further information contact Pauline Chapman).

Resource Issues

The ECS Revenue Budget for 2005/6 is now well in place. It saw an increase of £6.8223M which directly related to inflation, cost of living increases and ring fenced initiatives. The Budget now sits at £185.715M. The future year's projections for the Council's revenue budget suggest a much tighter settlement for the next two years.

Our PPP project continues toward the Commercial Close Stage for the building of 11 new schools and associated Community facilities, across the Region. Full details are included in our PPP Newsletter.

Finally, on resource issues, we are reviewing the Capital Plan of the service to complete a 5 year programme through to 2010. It will include Highland 2007 projects as

well as the 21st Century School Improvement programme.
(For further information contact Hugh Fraser – Head of Support Services.

Energy Management

I hope everyone has received the communication from the Director on Energy Management. We all have a part to play in trying to reduce the consumption of energy and to ensure that our young people understand how important this is to our world.

2007 Year of Highland Culture

The team to take forward Highland 2007 is now in place and work is well underway. Fiona Hampton, the Project Director has, supporting her, Morven MacLeod, project administration, Torquil Macleod, sponsorship and fundraising, Alison Bell, marketing and publicity and Cathy Shankland, in a Scottish Arts Council funded post looking at joint agency support for Highland 2007 and special arts projects.

Some £3 million has now been made available to local groups, for local projects, and on how school and community groups can apply, is already available. A working group to develop the cultural pledge, now called "Your Choice in 2007". has had an exciting first meeting and some really good ideas are being explored. Watch out for a Highland 2007 opportunity coming locally near you!

(For further information, contact Graham Watson, Community Development Manager).

McCrone, Probationers, Student Teachers

McCrone implementation continues apace with revised Primary management structures now well underway. Following the increased allocation of management time to

Primary schools, a number of Principal Teachers have now been appointed, all of which has considerably enhanced management capacity within the Primary sector.

One of the most rewarding moments of the year came on Friday 12th August when we welcomed the grand total of 106 probationer teachers to Highland. The 59 primary and 47 secondary probationers represent a doubling of last year's numbers, a crucial development in light of the age profile of the teaching profession here in Highland. We were particularly delighted to have Peter Peacock, Minister for Education & Young People, give a keynote speech at the outset of the Probationer Induction Day.

Also encouraging is the increase in student placements we are seeing throughout Highland schools. Of particular note is the ongoing partnership arrangement with the University of Aberdeen, who are committed to placing students in rural areas wherever possible. The 2 year part-time distance learning course run by the University of Aberdeen for Primary teacher training has proved to be enormously successful, with 23 students graduating in June 2005 and all now in Induction Year placements in their home areas. The second cohort of Primary DL students are now underway, as are the first cohort of secondary part-time students in English, Mathematics, and Home Economics. As part of the partnership agreement, we have appointed a number of Primary and Secondary Associate Tutors, all practising teachers throughout Highland, who will provide local support for the DL students.

(For further information contact Moira McCarrell or Elaine Kirkham).

Gaelic Developments

The Gaelic Language Bill received Royal Assent early in June and the Council made a detailed submission during the Parliamentary Process, including giving evidence to the Parliamentary Committee. We are of a view that a national education plan is required and are working

with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Scottish Executive to try to arrive at such a solution. The Council has produced (the first in Scotland) its own Plana Gaidhlig and Cultair/ Gaelic Language and Culture Plan which sets out our aspirations and targets for the language. This can be accessed on line on the Council's website.

Ambitious Excellent Schools

This is the title of the Scottish Executive strategy to improve opportunities for young people in Scotland's schools. There are a number of key projects that are on going which relate to Ambitious Excellent Schools.

They are:-

- Determined to Succeed
- Assessment is for Learning
- PE review
- Better behaviour, better learning
- Leadership Developments
- A curriculum for excellence

Also, Inverness High School is to be our first School of Ambition.

(For further information contact Donnie Macdonald)

Improving Parents Involvement in Schools

This is also part of the Ambitious Excellent Schools strategy. A national consultation has just concluded on a draft Bill and we are to receive further information in the autumn. Parents from across Highland helped shape up the Council's response which can be seen on the website under the May ECS Papers.

(For further information contact Bruce Robertson).

Highland Virtual Learning Community

Have you used this excellent website which has been developed for all learners and their parents/carers?. Log on to www.hvlc.org.uk

High Life ~ Young Scot

The High Life ~ Young Scot team are pleased to report that 11,149 cards are in the hands of Highland secondary school pupils, with uptake rates of up to 99%.

Thurso High	91%
Wick High	88%
Dornoch Academy	77%
Farr High	93%
Golspie High	96%
Kinlochbervie High	95%
Alness Academy	62%
Dingwall Academy	51%
Fortrose Academy	93%
Gairloch High	83%
Invergordon Academy	91%
Tain Royal Academy	99%
Ullapool High	75%
Charleston Academy	82%
Culloden Academy	80%
Glen Urquhart High	82%
Inverness High	78%
Inv Royal Academy	77%
Kilchuimen Academy	91%
Millburn Academy	67%
Grantown Grammar	91%
Kingussie High	84%
Nairn Academy	62%
Plockton High	95%
Portree High	70%
Ardnamurchan High	83%
Kinlochleven High	88%
Lochaber High	77%
Mallaig High	90%
Special Schools	
Drummond	52%

We would like to thank all the Head Teachers; school Co-ordinators; Admin Staff and Community Learning Staff for their support and assistance in getting over 11,000 cards distributed.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Golden Putter Golf Competition

Two Highland pupils, Euan McCorquodale, Inverness Royal Academy, and Gavin Laing, Millburn Academy both members of Inverness Golf Club won their way through from the Scottish Heats to the U.K. Final of the "Golden Putter" competition which was held at the world famous Wentworth Golf

Course. It was a very special experience for both boys.

Euan described the trip to Wentworth as "a once in a life-time experience". He went on to say "Not only was the golf course in great condition but the whole event was so well organised. The Wentworth club had laid on so much for us. We had a practice round the day before and use of their driving range before the competition."

The thrill of playing Wentworth was the highlight of the trip. As Gavin said, "I really enjoyed my experience at Wentworth - it was a great trip. It was fantastic just to get a chance to play the course (twice at that!!) and to see the Wentworth resort. It was certainly a trip I'll always remember vividly."

Health Developments Local Motion

*Local Motion
Is my potion
To get me fit
And up in Motion"*

Rebecca Pick,
Cannich Bridge Primary, P6

Local Motion is a 3 year Out-of-School Hour Activity physical arts and sports programme, for Inverness and Nairn areas. It is run by the Community Learning and Leisure team and funded through the New Opportunities Fund. Since the outset in October 2003 the programme has proved very popular and has been well supported by schools, parents and pupils alike. Last year there were 250 activity sessions and there have been nearly 6000 individual attendances to June 2005.

Schools receive two 8 week blocs of sessions for an age range of their choice. The programme has been designed to appeal to all Primary aged children and includes parachute games, basket ball, creative movement, drama games, dance, physical theatre, hand drumming, football, Uni-hoc and circus skills. The project is deliberately cutting across sports/arts divisions.

Feed back from parents and children has been excellent:

"... she plays a lot more football and she rides her bike a lot more'

"...found the project to be a lot of fun"

(For further information contact Adrian Clarke).

ECS GOLF DAY 10 AUGUST 2005

Stableford Competition for the Director's Cup

Over 30 E.C.S. staff played in the first ever Education, Culture & Sport Golf Day. We enjoyed glorious sunshine and the challenge and the very picturesque links course on the Channory Peninsula.

Results:

1st - Winning the Director's Cup – John Finlayson, Portree and Charles Stephen, Dingwall – 44 points (better last 6 holes).

2nd – Alan Clark, Dingwall and Willie MacKay, Dornoch – 44 points

3rd – Douglas Simpson and Alastair Tait, both Fortrose – 41 points – better last 3 holes.

[also 41 points – Janine & Charles Cooper, Fortrose; Douglas McKintosh & Muir Morton both Dingwall]

Nearest the Pin – 5th hole – Dave McCartney, Dingwall / Forres – 3 metres 10 cm

Nearest the Pin – 18th hole – Liam Anderson Anderson, Alness - 5 metres 85 cm

Longest Drive – 12th hole – Muir Morton – 370 yards – measured and verified (wdm/kf).

Thank you all who entered. We had staff from as far away as Thurso, Fort William, Kingussie and Portree. Spread the word folks and please forward suggestions for next summer's venue.

Willie MacKay (Junior Golf Development Officer)