

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Gaelic Implementation Group** held in the Council Chamber, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 26 May 2016 at 10.30 am.

### Present:

Mrs I Campbell (substitute)  
Mr G Farlow  
Mr C Fraser  
Mr H Fraser  
Mr S Fuller

Mr K MacLeod  
Mr F Parr  
Mr T Prag (substitute)  
Dr A Sinclair

### In attendance:

Mr B Alexander, Director of Care and Learning  
Mr K A Murray, Gaelic Development Manager, Care and Learning Service  
Mrs M A Macleod Mitchell, Gaelic Development Officer, Care and Learning Service  
Mrs M Mulholland, Gaelic Community Learning and Development Officer, Care and Learning Service  
Ms D Grant, Gaelic Community Learning and Development Officer, Care and Learning Service  
Ms S Paterson, Community Learning and Development Officer, Care and Learning Service  
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service

### Also in attendance:

Mr D McIntyre, The Market Specialists  
Mr J Morrison, An Comunn Gàidhealach  
Ms E Rankin, FilmG

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Group.**

### Mr H Fraser in the Chair

#### Business

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Gordon, Mr J McGillivray, Mrs M E Paterson and Ms K Stephen.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

The Committee **NOTED** the following declaration of interest:-

Item 4 – Mr T Prag (non-financial)

#### 3. Good News

There had been tabled a list of Good News items involving and promoting the Gaelic language and culture.

Having congratulated all those involved, the Group **NOTED** the Good News.

#### 4. Presentation - An Comunn Gàidhealach

**Mr T Prag declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Board Member of Eden Court Theatre but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

Mr David McIntyre, The Market Specialists and Mr John Morrison, Chief Executive of An Comunn Gàidhealach (ACG) undertook a presentation setting out the background of ACG, the context in which it operated within and the direct economic impact the Royal National Mod (RNM) had had on host areas in the past 8 years. Details of competitor and visitor numbers were provided together with information on the Return on Investment (ROI) over the same period of time, ROI being the measure taken into account by VisitScotland. This economic impact was well recognised and, as a consequence, there was considerable competition each year to host the RNM. The RNM received support from a number of sources including the media, Local and Scottish Government and through national sponsorship from organisations such as the Royal Bank of Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Royal Mail etc. Local/Provincial Mods also took place though-out Scotland, varying in size, and all received massive voluntary backing and local sponsorship. Information too was provided as to the extent Mods generated publicity for Gaelic and examples of this were provided.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- ACG made a significant contribution to the attainment of the main Scottish Government Gaelic objectives;
- RNMs were consistently successful, always generated a significant profit and drew tourists to host locations at what was the tail end of the season. It was queried if it was possible to quantify the extent to which tourists from abroad were attracted to locations as a result of the Mod;
- the RNM also generated significant benefits for the various venues in which it was held;
- local businesses should be encouraged to contribute to the organising of the RNM given that they were the main beneficiaries. This could be in terms of local tourism taxes or via a Tourism BID;
- confirmation was sought, and received, that the RNM came to Highland every three years. It would take place in Fort William in 2017 and, in 2020, to a venue to be agreed by the Council;
- Mods also promoted Gaelic Medium Education (GME);
- whilst some had previously queried the Scottish Government's ring-fencing of monies to support GME, it was acknowledged that the hosting of the RNM made a significant difference to the Gaelic profile in host areas;
- information was sought as to the criteria/facilities required to host a Mod and it would be useful for Members to revisit this if required; and
- in a time when Council budgets were under pressure, it was important that Members remembered the importance of supporting Gaelic.

Appreciation having been expressed to Mr McIntyre and Mr Morrison, the Group otherwise **NOTED** the presentation.

## 5. Presentation – FilmG

Ms Eilidh Rankin, FilmG's Project Officer undertook a presentation on the impact of FilmG 8 in the Highland Council area, with many schools and filmmakers from the area getting involved. Highland had been particularly successful in FilmG 8 and there had been 7 wins for filmmakers from the region. Ms Rankin also covered what lay ahead for the FilmG team as they worked towards the launch of the ninth annual Gaelic Short Film Competition, scheduled to take place in Edinburgh on 13 June. To showcase the talents of young people a short film made by the pupils of Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Inbhir Nis was shown to Members, following which Ms Rankin thanked Highland Council for its ongoing support.

Having recognised the opportunities that FilmG gave to young people to become involved with Gaelic media, the Group otherwise **NOTED** the presentation.

## 6. Gaelic Language Plan 2 2012-16, Theme 3 “What we will do for Gaelic in the Arts, Media and Heritage” – Implementation Report

There had been circulated Report No GIG/6/16 dated 11 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning providing an update on the implementation of Gaelic Language Plan 2012-16 Theme 3, “What we will do for Gaelic in the Arts, Media and Heritage

In discussion the support Highland Council received from partner organisation in implementing its Gaelic Language Plan was recognised and this played a pivotal role in achieving its aims. In addition, further information was sought, and received, in relation to the Gaelic language training sessions provided to the Alness Service Centre staff.

Thereafter, the Group **NOTED** the report.

## 7. Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund Projects 2016-17 – Project Applications submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig

There had been circulated Report No GIG/7/16 dated 12 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning providing details on the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund (GLAIF) applications submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnaG) for the 2016-17 funding period by the Gaelic Team.

GLAIF was established to assist public authorities deliver commitments in their established Gaelic Language Plans, to support the National Gaelic Language Plan and to assist public authorities in the delivery of projects ahead of their formal notice to produce a Gaelic Language Plan. The deadline for applications for financial year 2016-17 closed on 18 April and all applicants were to be informed by BnaG of the decision on their applications by the beginning of July 2016.

In discussion, Members particularly welcomed the Gaelic Immersion for Teachers (GIfT) Course, designed for teachers wishing to transfer to Gaelic Medium Education. The Council had 5 participants in the 2015-16 GIfT cohort and it would be interesting to monitor how successful the course continued to be in the future.

The Group **NOTED** the 2016-17 GLAIF Applications submitted by the Council to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

## 8. Gaelic Language Plan 2 2012-16, Theme 2 "What we will do for Gaelic in Education" - Implementation Report

There had been circulated Report No GIG/8/16 dated 15 May 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning providing an update on the implementation of Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2012-16 Theme 2, "What we will do for Gaelic in Education" together with information on a wide range of local and national level work.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- reference was made to the recent meeting held with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar on digital/remote learning and teaching possibilities in Secondary Schools (e-Sgoil). This had been particularly beneficial and the Chairman looked forward to the on-going co-operation and collaboration and a pilot between the Councils;
- it was hoped e-learning could be expanded to include adult learning;
- options for Gaelic Medium Schools in Inverness and Tain were being considered and an assurance was given that all options would be looked at;
- disappointment was expressed at the difficulties encountered in reinvigorating GME in North Sutherland. However, the challenges ahead were now recognised and would be addressed with Local Members and the Community;
- it was argued that the remit of the Group should be amended to take into account the reporting and monitoring of all expenditure by the Council on Gaelic, including Grant income. This would highlight the benefits of investment, particularly in Education, and would be a clear indication what Gaelic generated in terms of ROI; and
- in acknowledging Gaelic education was a pivotal element of the Council's policy development of the Government's 1+2 Languages Agenda, confirmation was sought, and received, that children who already had other languages apart from English were also directed, where appropriate, towards GME.

Members also expressed their disappointment that the post of Gaelic Development Manager had been deleted at the Council meeting on 25 February. Mr Murray had contributed significantly, together with his team, to the promotion of Gaelic and fears were expressed that progress made in recent years would be lost as a consequence of the deletion of the post. It was important that Members ensured Gaelic continued to be supported and best wishes were extended to Mr Murray for his new role within the Council.

The Group:-

- i. **NOTED** progress in implementing the Education Theme in GLP;
- ii. **AGREED** to congratulate all our Gaelic Education partners inside and outside the Council, in growing our Gaelic future;
- iii. **NOTED** the action being taken to resolve challenges due to accommodation pressures and that scoping had commenced for future options for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis (these discussions were part of a city-wide review of education provision which included Gaelic Medium provision in Inverness);
- iv. **AGREED** further work around Gaelic Medium provision in the Bettyhill/Tongue/Tain/Dingwall/Nairn and Drumnadrochit areas;
- v. **AGREED** to continue to press for Local Authority participation in the Gaelic Probationer Allocation Process; and
- vi. **AGREED** to the updating and publication of all the Gaelic Education statistical data and the Online Gaelic Education Map.

The meeting ended at 12 noon.