

Agenda Item	9
Report No	G/22/21

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Gaelic Committee

Date: 16 December 2021

Report Title: Capital Investment and 3-18 Feasibility

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give a general overview of the capital investment the Council has made in the school estate relating to the provision of Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Language education.
- 1.2 In addition, the report provides an update on the development of terms of reference for a study into the expansion of 3-18 GME in Inverness – included at Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. Note the Council's capital investment in GME;
 - ii. Note and welcome the recent investment from the Scottish Government; and
 - iii. Note and comment on the draft terms of reference for a feasibility study for the expansion of 3-18 Gaelic Medium provision in Inverness.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – there are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Section 4 sets out the capital resources already approved for GME schools and ELC. Section 5 provides information about investing in the expansion of 3-18 GME in Inverness. Once the likely cost of the feasibility study is known, this will be reported back to Gaelic Committee members. As there has already been approval in place to fund this from the existing Scottish Government capital grant sum, there is no requirement to seek further Member approval prior to commissioning the study.

- 3.2 Legal - The Council's Gaelic Language Plan takes account of and is in line with the Scotland Gaelic Act 2005. Section 3 of the Gaelic Language Plan sets out the Council's commitment to Gaelic in Education and includes a commitment to ensure that Gaelic education is considered as an important component within Highland Council's estates and associated management meetings and to continue Scottish Government partnerships to deliver new stand-alone Gaelic schools.

The commissioning of a 3-18 GME feasibility study is compliant with Contract Standing Orders and Procurement legislation.

- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) – there has been capital investment in schools across the Highland Council area which has had positive impacts on rural communities. Whilst there is a specific focus on Inverness in the 3-18 feasibility study, the intention is to use the learning from this to consider how to expand across the whole of the Highlands.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – schools capital investment considers sustainability in the design and build of new facilities.
- 3.5 Risk – there are no specific risks associated with this report.
- 3.6 Gaelic – Gaelic schools capital investment and the expansion of 3-18 GME in Inverness and elsewhere has very positive implications regarding the preservation and development of Gaelic and culture across age groups and it also enhances the social and economic value of the Gaelic and its associated culture.

4. Schools Capital Investment.

- 4.1 The following section sets out the successful delivery, completion and planned key Gaelic capital projects across the Council's schools estate. This has recently been enhanced by a £900k award of a capital grant from the Scottish Government, split between Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar and Dunvegan Primary School.
- 4.2 An extension to Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar has recently been completed, increasing the number of primary classrooms in the school from 4 to 6. The new school opened in 2015, and the pupil roll has increased steadily since then. The building was designed to allow additional classrooms to be added relatively easily when required. The investment was supported by £650k from the Scottish Government's Gaelic Capital budget.
- 4.3 The Council approved capital funding earlier this year for new primary school buildings at Broadford and Dunvegan, with Broadford also included in Phase 2 of the LEIP. Dunvegan is due to open in 2024, with Broadford opening in 2025. Members and Council officials continue to engage with a local Working Group in Broadford on the aspiration to deliver a Community Hub as part of the new campus.

The budgeted costs of the projects are as follows:

- Dunvegan £12m total cost; (£250k Scottish Government funded)
- Broadford £11.5m

- 4.4 The entitlement to funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for all three and four year olds, and eligible two year olds, was increased to 1,140 hours a year from August 2021. Highland received a capital funding allocation from the Scottish Government to deliver the building improvements necessary to support the expansion programme, and this was combined with funding from the Council's own capital programme to deliver other

essential works at the same time. The following are the settings where improvements were carried out to Gaelic Medium ELC provision.

- Acharacle
- Broadford
- Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis
- Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Phort Rìgh
- Bun-Sgoil Shlèite
- Dunvegan
- Gairloch
- Glenurquhart
- Lochcarron
- Mallaig
- Newtonmore
- Ullapool

4.5 The new 3-18 Campus in Tain will open in 2024 and is included in Phase 1 of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP). This will see Tain Royal Academy, Craighill and Knockbreck Primary Schools and St Duthus School relocated to a single campus. Craighill currently has some Gaelic Medium classes and these will be part of the combined primary school in the new building.

5. 3-18 Gaelic Medium Expansion in Inverness

5.1 As has been reported previously to the Committee, the Scottish Government has awarded £4m to the Highland Council to invest in the expansion of 3-18 GME provision in Inverness. It is intended to use a small amount of this funding to commission a feasibility study to look at how best this expansion can be delivered.

5.2 The draft terms of reference is attached at Appendix 1. The primary purpose of this study is to explore what steps need to be taken to deliver sustainable expansion of 3-18 Gaelic Medium Education in Inverness. An associated specified benefit is that the conclusions should help the Council to develop a fuller understanding of the approaches that could be adopted across Highland to expand Gaelic Medium education and sustain and grow Gaelic across Highland communities. The study should review existing research, including a number of studies commissioned by others – particularly Comann nam Pàrant groups; and also have a clear approach to stakeholder engagement.

5.3 The Council's joint procurement service has advised that there are no existing frameworks that could be used to commission this work and, because the market for this type of study is relatively uncertain, a 'Request For Information' has been issued to see what the market can tell us about meeting our requirements which is posted on the Public Contracts Scotland website. This approach will help us to understand:

- The estimated cost
- Level of interest and type of organisations that could meet our requirements.
- Getting a feedback on our initial proposal.

5.4 Once the likely cost of the feasibility study is known, this will be reported back to Gaelic Committee members. As there has already been approval in place to fund this from the existing Scottish Government capital grant sum, there is no requirement to seek further Member approval prior to commissioning the study. A progress report will be brought back to the next meeting of the Gaelic Committee.

Designation: Kate Lackie, Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance

Date: 6 December 2021

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Gaelic Medium Education 3-18 Development Terms of Reference for Research

The Highland Council is committed to growing the number of children and young people involved in Gaelic education, language and culture and for continuing to improve attainment in Gaelic Medium Education across the whole of the Highlands.

The primary purpose of this study is to explore what steps need to be taken to deliver sustainable expansion of 3-18 Gaelic Medium Education **specifically in Inverness**. An associated benefit should be to develop a fuller understanding of the approaches that could be also adopted across Highland to expand Gaelic Medium education and sustain and grow Gaelic in other Highland communities.

What is required:

- Review of current delivery model of GME within Inverness City and investigate potential delivery models including the development of a standalone 3-18 campus
- Comparison for strengths and challenges of different models of expansion including transition implications if provision is re-located away from existing schools
- Understanding of parental demand and how this might be impacted by the options identified
- Location and impact on catchment; consultation; planning; and transport
- The pupil journey - transitions from the experience of learners and their families; learner pathways from 0-3 to ELC, ELC to Primary into BGE and on into Senior Phase; continuation of curriculum delivery through the medium of Gaelic attainment and educational outcomes; employment pathways
- Sustainability in terms of pupil projections; teacher supply, retention, training and support; and curriculum availability and development
- Financial assessment - capital, revenue funding and ongoing costs
- Physical environment – and what this can look like to support an immersion experience i.e. What is best for pupils to enhance their learning experience.
- The role of the Highland Virtual Academy
- Identification of potential next steps in relation to the National Gaelic Plan and the development of the Council's Gaelic Language Plan 4.
- Produce a report on findings

Approach

- Review existing studies and research, including an earlier feasibility undertaken by the Highland Council for a 3-18 campus in Inverness and a number of studies commissioned by others – particularly Comann nam Pàrant groups – and any others of relevance
- Undertake a lessons learned exercise where approaches to expand language immersion approaches to GME development have been undertaken – to include Glasgow's 3-18 campus model and other countries' approaches to indigenous languages (i.e. Wales, Australia, etc)
- Engage with internal and external stakeholders – including listening to the pupil voice; parent representative groups; education providers (local authorities, PVI, Stòrlann, e-Sgoil); and government and Gaelic agencies

Desired Outcome

The sustainable expansion of 3-18 Gaelic Medium Education in Inverness.

An understanding of the approaches that could be applied across Highland to expand Gaelic Medium and Gaelic language education and sustain and grow Gaelic in Highland communities.