

# The Highland Council

Agenda Item	8
Report No	HC/15/25

**Committee:** Gaelic

**Date:** 27 August 2025

**Report Title:** Gaelic Specific Grant – 2025/26

**Report By:** Assistant Chief Executive - People

## 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Gaelic Committee Members of the grant application made to the Scottish Government for Gaelic Specific Grant 2025/26 and provide an opportunity to consider the projects that this funding will help to support.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Note the 3 projects and outcomes outlined in the Gaelic Specific Grant bid;
  - ii. Note the programme of work that the grant will help to support and that these are adjusted as the full amount was not secured;
  - iii. Note the increase in the Gaelic grant offered by Scottish Government.

## 3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource  
The funding provided by the Scottish Government through the Gaelic Specific Grant (GSG) provides invaluable support for a wide range of projects that assist the Council in delivering its commitments under the Gaelic Language Plan with the majority dedicated to the delivery of Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner Education. Whilst this is significant and welcome, it should be noted that the majority of the Council's Gaelic expenditure comes from core Council budgets.

For the financial year 2025/26 the Council bid for £1.3M in Gaelic Specific Grant, against a total projected spend of £8.3M. The bid was submitted on 19 December 2024. On 30 April 2025, the Council was awarded a grant of £940,000 in connection with the cost of supporting Gaelic education. This an increase of £25,000 on the previous year's grant award.

In addition to core Council funding and the Gaelic Specific Grant, the Gaelic budget also secures additional funding through project-specific bids to Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Capital funding for Gaelic from Scottish Government.

- 3.2      **Legal**  
The Highland Council is required to implement its Gaelic Language Plan under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act of 2005.
- 3.3      **Risk**  
The Scottish Government's Gaelic Specific Grant budget is usually over-subscribed which means that the full amount being applied for in the Council's application is challenging. As such, it is necessary to reassess the projects within in the bid and adjust to reflect the resource available.
- 3.4      **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)**  
None.
- 3.5      **Gaelic**  
The application demonstrates that the Council is ambitious about preserving and growing the Gaelic language across all the sectors and age groups and values the educational, social, cultural and economic benefits of the language.

#### **4.      Impacts**

- 4.1      In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2      Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3      This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

#### **5.      Purpose**

- 5.1      The Gaelic Specific Grant is awarded to enable the Council to meet the outcomes set against 3 project headings. The project outcomes are linked the Council's Gaelic Language Plan and commitment to promotion of Gaelic Education.
- 5.2      The Scottish Government has outlined that there are increasing calls on the Gaelic budget and that, as this has not been increased, there was a likelihood that our full bid would not be awarded, and this has been the case for a number of years now. However, the Gaelic Team was successful in securing an increase in the grant in comparison to last year and this has given the Gaelic Team increased confidence for this year's projects.
- 5.3      The following table provides an overview of the previous 6-years Gaelic Specific Grant awarded to Highland Council. Each project and the resource allocated is also included in the breakdown.

	24/25	23/24	22/23	21/22	20/21	19/20
The total amount received via the Gaelic Specific Grant	£915,000.00	£905,000.00	£910,000.00	£910,000.00	£905,000.00	£905,000.00
Project 1 – Gaelic Planning, Policy Implementation and Resources	£147,691.00	£132,457.00	£162,817.00	£159,536.00	£161,173.00	£150,422.00
Project 2 – Gaelic in the Home and in Communities - Learning & Development Projects including 0-3	£142,660.13	£141,794.00	£133,449.00	£126,527.00	£83,191.00	£77,795.00
Project 3 – Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education	£624,648.87	£630,749.00	£613,734.00	£623,937.00	£660,636.00	£676,783.00

The overview provides information that;

- **Education staffing costs** are allocated the highest allocation of the funding, indicating a strong focus on spend towards Gaelic language education from 3-18.
- **Community and home learning projects** have seen increased investment in recent years.
- **Policy and planning and resources** funding has varied but remains fairly consistent.

## 6. Background to the purpose and requirements of the Gaelic Specific Grant

6.1 The primary purpose of the Gaelic Specific Grant is to assist in meeting the targets as set by Bòrd na Gàidhlig's National Gaelic Language Plan and the Highland Council's own Gaelic Language Plan. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (the Act) seeks to secure the status of Gaelic as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language. All Local Authorities have duties under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to support and promote Gaelic, and this is reflected in the Highland Council's application for Gaelic Specific Grant.

The grant provides support to new and current projects that can, or will, demonstrate their value in supporting growth in the Gaelic Education.

6.2 The main objectives/expected outcomes of the Grant are:

- Promote Gaelic as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016;
- Enable young people to learn and be supported in the language of their choice;
- Deliver GME in the Highland Council area across the projects prioritised in bid of 19 December 2024; and
- Complete by March 2026.

6.3 Monitoring of the Gaelic Specific Grant.

The targets/milestones against which progress in achieving objectives/expected outcomes shall be monitored are:

- to meet the education needs highlighted in the Council's grant application of 19 December 2024 within the deadlines submitted;
- to promote Gaelic Medium Education at all levels as outlined in the application;
- to increase the visibility and use of the language in the school environment out with the classroom;
- to increase the availability of Gaelic resources;

- representation of the Local Authority at the quarterly meetings of the Gaelic Local Authority Network (GLAN) where any concerns around funding or spend should be raised;
- to provide the Scottish Government with biannual reports confirming expenditure and outlining progress against objectives outlined in the application; and
- to implement by March 2026.

The eligible costs for which the Grant can be claimed are:

- costs associated with the delivery of educational needs highlighted in the Council's funding request of 19 December 2024.

6.4 The total grant is payable in quarterly instalments over the financial year 2025/26 as shown in the table below.

Payment Month	Amount
May 2025	£235,000
September 2025	£235,000
December 2025	£235,000
March 2026	£235,000

## 7 Gaelic Specific Grant 2025/26 Project Bids and Outcomes

7.1 Outlined in the application are three overarching project headings related to Gaelic Education:

Project 1 – Gaelic Planning, Policy Implementation and Resources

Project 2 – Gaelic in the Home and in Communities - Learning & Development

Projects including 0-3

Project 3 – Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education

Project bids and overall costs are outlined in the table below. The grant of £0.94M is less than the £1.3M requested. The project funding is subsequently adjusted across each project by amending the outcomes in each project.

	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	TOTAL
Cost of Projects	315,546	195,171	7,815,715	<b>8,326,432</b>
Highland Council Contribution	147,124	48,793	6,799,672	<b>6,995,589</b>
<b>Gaelic Specific Grant Request</b>	168,422	146,378	1,016,043	<b>1,330,843</b>

Adjusted table below based on the approved grant of £0.94M.

	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	TOTAL
Cost of Projects	315,546	195,171	7,815,715	<b>8,326,432</b>
Highland Council Contribution	147,124	48,793	7,190,515	<b>7,386,432</b>
<b>Gaelic Specific Grant Request</b>	168,422	146,378	625,200	<b>940,000</b>

## 7.2 Outcomes for Projects Bid For:

7.2.1 Project 1- Gaelic Planning, Policy Implementation and Resources

- Provide strategic direction for Gaelic within the education specific priority areas of the Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan 2024–29 (GLP);
- Agree and deliver refreshed implementation plan and cross-service working group for the GLP;
- Ensure a pan-Highland approach for an equitable provision of resourcing and project delivery;
- Ensure Gaelic in the Highlands is actively promoted and quality assured within a framework of performance and governance and is adaptive to the needs of all our communities;
- Deliver a conference focused on the Gaelic economy;
- Support and assist local communities to embed Gaelic into their Local Place Plans; and
- Monitor developments in Gaelic education and, where required, develop policies that strengthen its provision, ensuring strategic support for educators, learners, schools and communities.

#### 7.2.2 Project 2 - Gaelic in the Home and in Communities - Learning & Development Projects including 0-3

##### Gaelic in the Home and Communities:

- Deliver opportunities to support adult learners within a community context, such as adult learning residentials and exchanges;
- Create an online Gaelic language resource for GME parents, to support Gaelic language in the home;
- Continue to support community organisations with their programme of Gaelic activities;
- Offer a progressive programme of adult learning community-based Gaelic classes;
- On an annual basis organise a Gaelic tutor training event in the Highland area;
- Organise 'GME and the Benefits of Bilingualism' parental workshops, targeting early years parents;
- Organise family learning initiatives and promotional events to support GME parents and pupils;
- Organise and deliver The National Gaelic Family Learning Week in partnership with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig;
- Continue to offer a suite of progressive Gaelic classes to support Gaelic language in the home;
- Deliver a range of Gaelic community events, including opportunities for inter-generational activities; and
- Research and explore initiatives with partner organisations to identify where former GME pupils have studied in further education. The research results will be shared with stakeholders.

##### Gaelic Community in ELC & Childcare:

- Deliver the three-year Gaelic Birth to Three plan; and
- Supplement the Fàs Foghlaim resource and bring it into alignment with the National Plan by developing an information page on GME; and update The Highland Council parental GME information handbook.

##### Gaelic Community in Primary:

- Support and increase extra-curricular activities which are delivered through Gaelic;
- In liaison with Gaelic organisations, increase opportunities for GME pupils to engage in Gaelic arts, music and culture;
- In liaison with HLH and Gaelic organisations, increase sporting and outdoor learning opportunities for GME pupils in the Highland area;
- Continue to work with Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba to develop a Gaelic place-name course for GME primary pupils;
- Continue to develop Gaelic community learning and development plans in partnership with GME schools, organise awareness-raising events and continue to work and collaborate with local authorities through the national Gaelic group GLAD;
- In partnership with GME schools secure external funding to support the development of extracurricular activities and community initiatives, deliver Gaelic cultural days in partnership with targeted GME schools and continue to offer Gaelic arts classes for children;
- Provide programmes of Gaelic activities and events during school holidays to increase Gaelic usage out with formal education;
- Work with a range of Gaelic organisations to deliver sports activities and sports leadership opportunities for GME pupils in the Highland area;
- Support the national and Highland sporting events such as Cuach na Cloinne and Cupa Iomain na h-Òige for primary-aged GM pupils;
- Work with schools and a range of Gaelic organisations to deliver Gaelic arts, music and cultural activities to GME pupils;
- Work in collaboration with GME schools to develop and implement community learning and development plans, to support the school, pupils, and the wider Gaelic community;
- In partnership with GME schools, continue to secure external funding to support the development of extracurricular activities and community initiatives; and
- Enhance and further develop community learning and development liaison within the standalone Gaelic schools in the Highland area.

#### Gaelic Community in Secondary:

- Increase the networking support to GME pupils in the secondary schools associated with the standalone Gaelic schools;
- Deliver and organise the annual Seachdain na Deugairean project for GME and learner secondary pupils;
- Organise Gaelic youth residentials that promote Gaelic, and language and culture connections between Celtic countries;
- Work in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and key local and national organisations to provide an annual secondary Gaelic careers event;
- Increase extra-curricular activities which are delivered through Gaelic and in liaison with Gaelic organisations, increase opportunities for GME pupils to engage in Gaelic arts, music and culture;
- In liaison with HLH and Gaelic organisations, increase sporting and outdoor learning opportunities for GME pupils in the Highland area; and
- Work in partnership with Gaelic agencies such as Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG), Iomain Cholm Cille (ICC) and FC Sonas, as well as High Life Highland (HLH) to deliver both Gaelic national and local sporting events; and
- Continue to deliver Secondary Gaelic Sports Leadership coaching event.

### 7.2.3 Project 3 - Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education

#### 1+2 L3 Live Lessons:

- Focus on schools that do not currently deliver Gaelic as an additional language and schools that do but have new teachers that require support to deliver Gaelic as an L3;
- Support teachers by providing a direct Gaelic teaching input, aimed to build their confidence to deliver the learning activity to their class, allowing for further consolidation of learning after the lessons led by the class teacher; and
- Through signposting further available resources; Gaelic 1+2 modules, GLEANS Challenges, Highland Digital Hub resource, it is expected that these schools would continue to deliver Gaelic as an additional language.

#### 1+2 Training:

- Provide the opportunity for teachers in Gaelic L3 schools and other schools to become familiar with the vocabulary and structures within the Go!Gaelic resource;
- Signpost the learning activity resources available online and recommend participation in the Live Lessons as a next step; and
- Increase the number of teachers able to deliver Gaelic as an additional language in class.

#### Gaelic Professional Learning:

- Coordinate and deliver career-long professional learning sessions for GME teachers to support literacy strategy outcomes in Gaelic;
- Work in partnership with Gaelic education agencies to develop and support key Education Scotland literacy policies for Gaelic;
- Provide support for GME practitioners within the local authority on literacy developments in Gaelic; and
- Form working groups and practitioner networks to support development of the Highland Literacy Project in Gaelic.

#### Gaelic Senior Phase Development:

- Education officers will actively and regularly promote Gaelic Professional Learning and in person/ teams networks / workshops for education colleagues.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 08 July 2025

Author: Lena Walker, Education Support Officer

Background Papers: n/a

Appendices: None