

Agenda Item	8
Report No	G/5/26

# The Highland Council

**Committee:** **Gaelic**

**Date:** **25 February 2026**

**Report Title:** **Internal Gaelic Skills Survey**

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

## **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the Highland Council Staff Gaelic Skills Survey undertaken in November 2025. The survey is a statutory requirement under the Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2024–29. It was designed to assess Gaelic skills across the workforce, identify training needs and inform strategic planning.
- 1.2 The results show strong interest in Gaelic learning, highlight barriers to participation and identify opportunities to improve confidence in the use and visibility of Gaelic in the workplace.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. note the findings of the Gaelic Skills Survey
- ii. agree to implement the proposed action plan to address training needs and increase Gaelic visibility in the workplace
- iii. agree to support the development of flexible and accessible Gaelic learning opportunities for staff

## **3. Implications**

- 3.1 Resource

Delivery will be supported through existing GLP budgets and external funding streams from the Scottish Government and Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

- 3.2 Legal

Under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, The Highland Council has a statutory duty to have a Gaelic Language Plan. The statutory duty includes the obligation to implement and accurately report GLP commitments. The subject of this report complies with statutory duties under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

- 3.3 Risk

Resourcing pressures may impact the ability to deliver the recommended action plan.

3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)  
There are no Health and Safety implications arising as a direct consequence of this report.

3.5 Gaelic  
Positive implications for language development and cultural visibility.

#### **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 a monitoring and/or update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

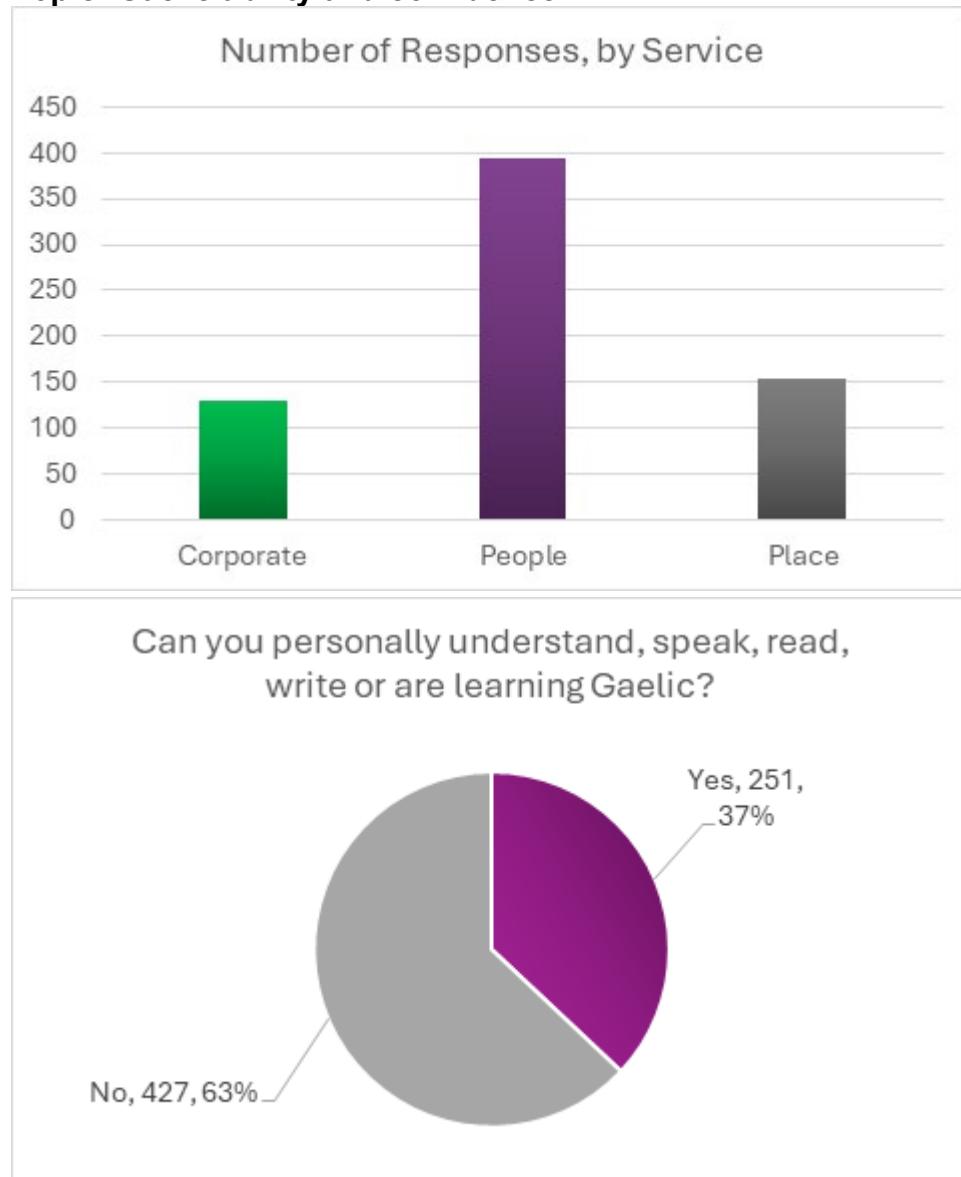
#### **5. Headline Results**

5.1

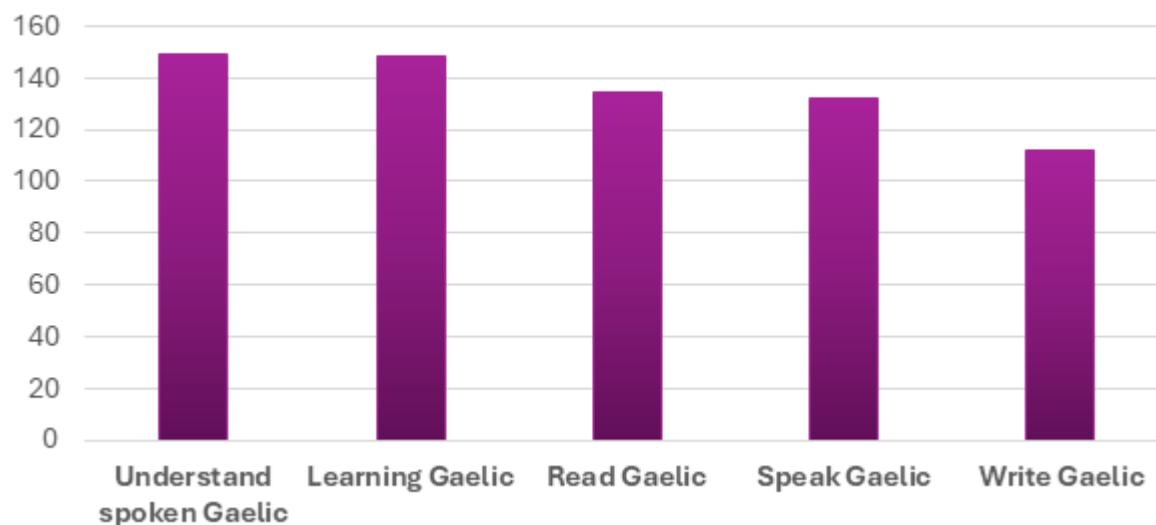
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>678</b>
Staff with some Gaelic ability	251
Staff with no Gaelic ability	427
Can understand spoken Gaelic	149
Can speak Gaelic	132
Can write Gaelic	112
Currently learning Gaelic	148
Interested in future Gaelic training	226
Not interested in Gaelic training	228
Barriers: Need more time or flexibility	305
Barriers: Access to classes or online learning	383

## 5.2 Full results

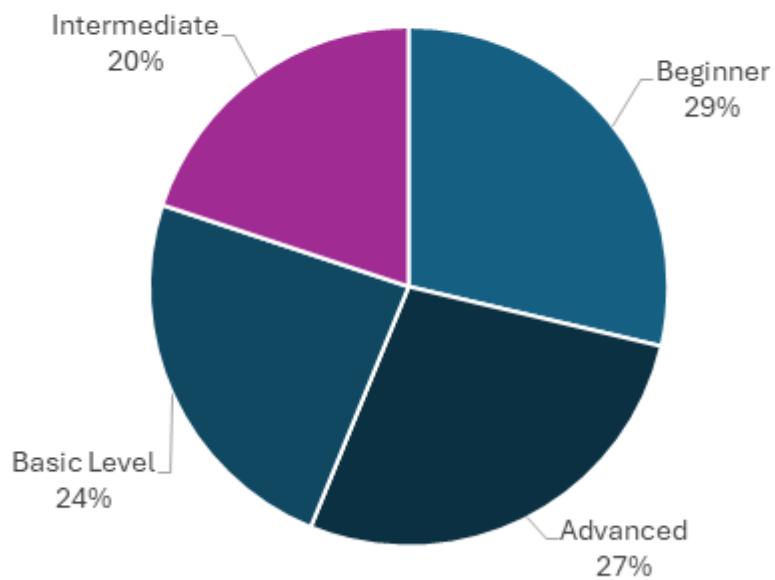
### Topic: Gaelic ability and confidence



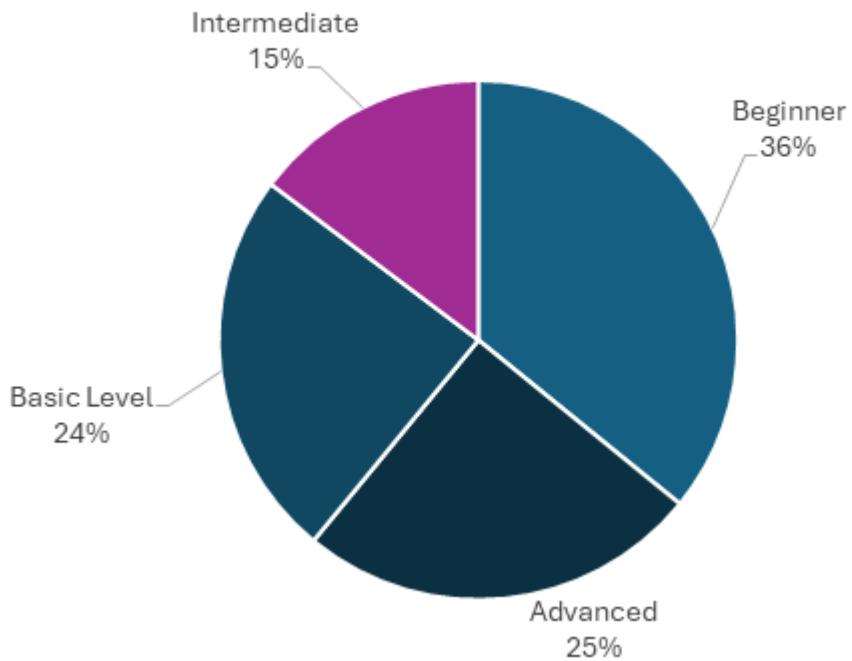
Please tell us about this, selecting all that apply to you



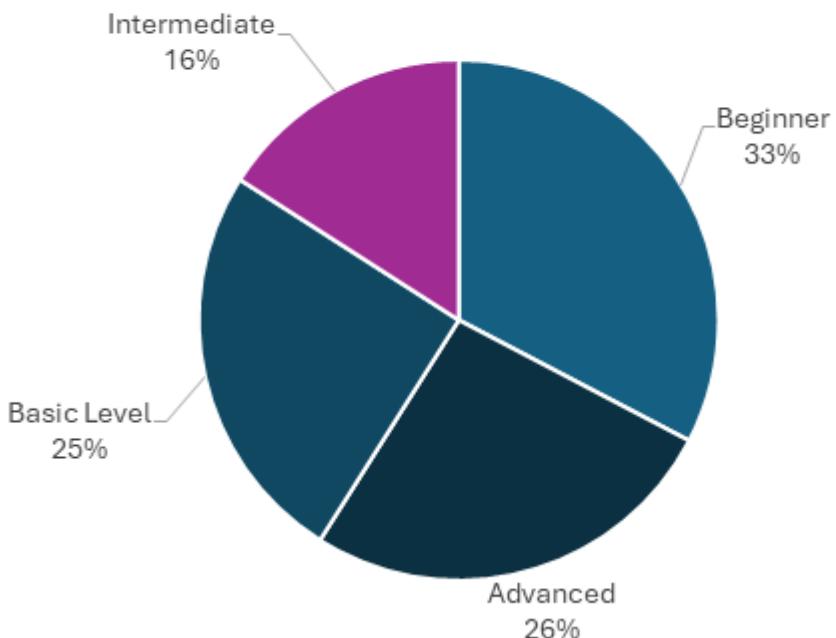
How would you describe your Gaelic skills in understanding spoken Gaelic?



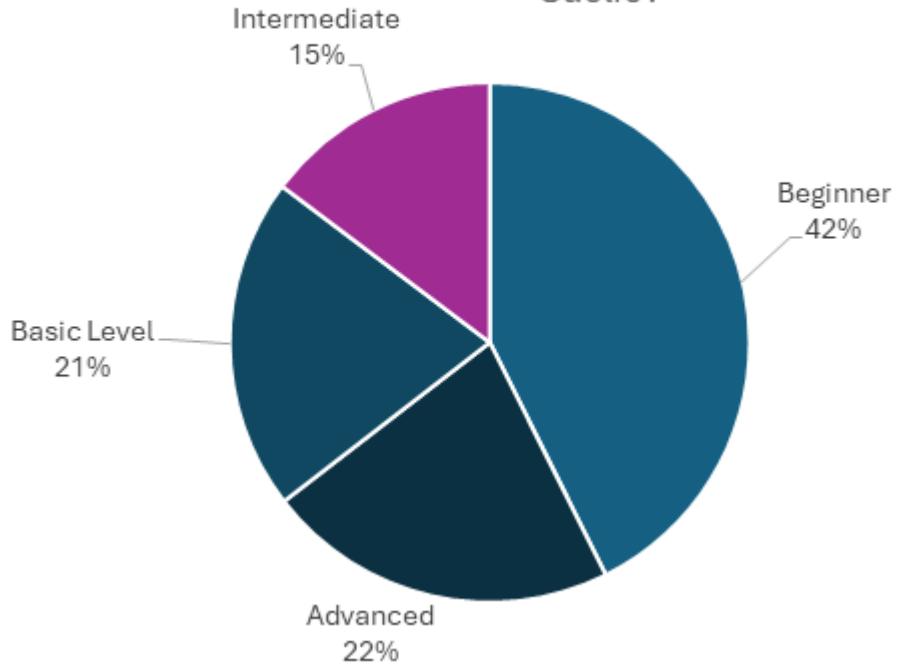
How would you describe your Gaelic skills in speaking Gaelic?



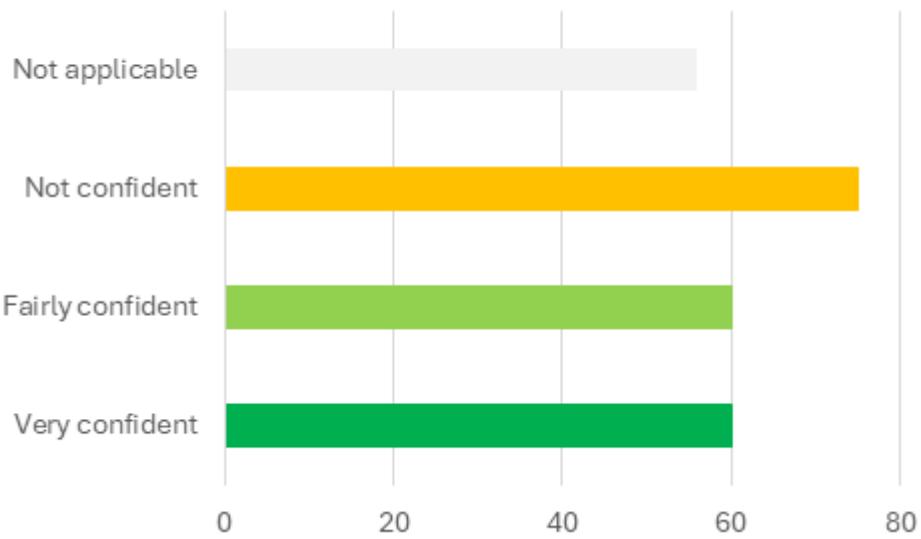
How would you describe your Gaelic skills in reading Gaelic?



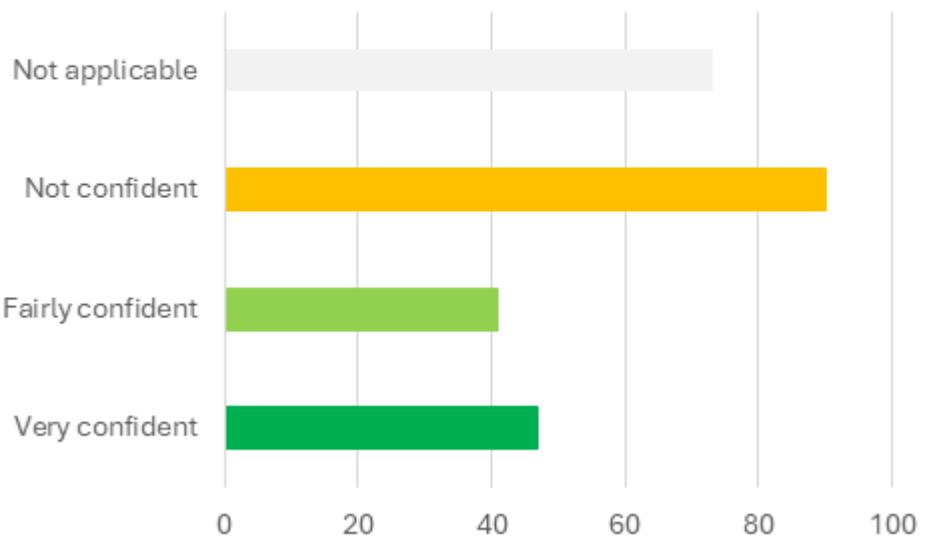
How would you describe your Gaelic skills in writing Gaelic?



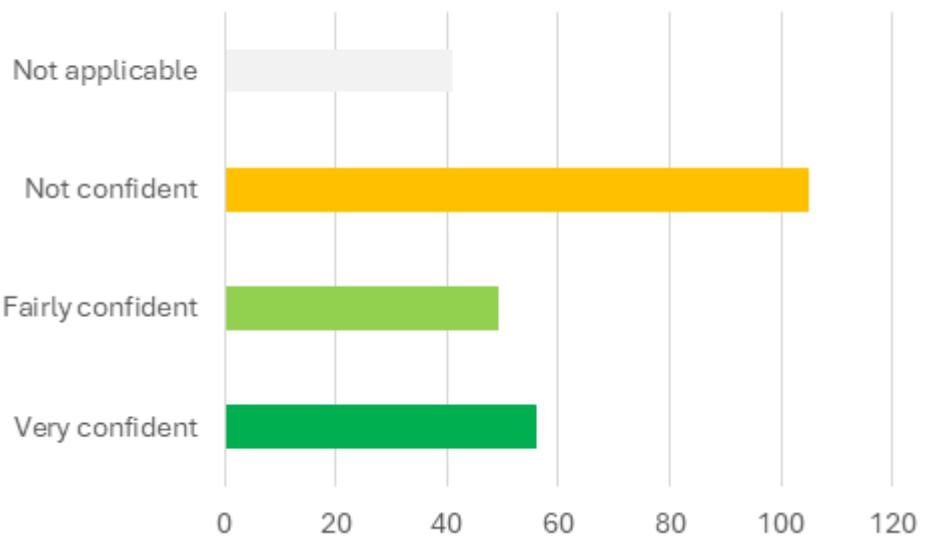
How would you describe your spoken Gaelic, when speaking to **immediate family**?



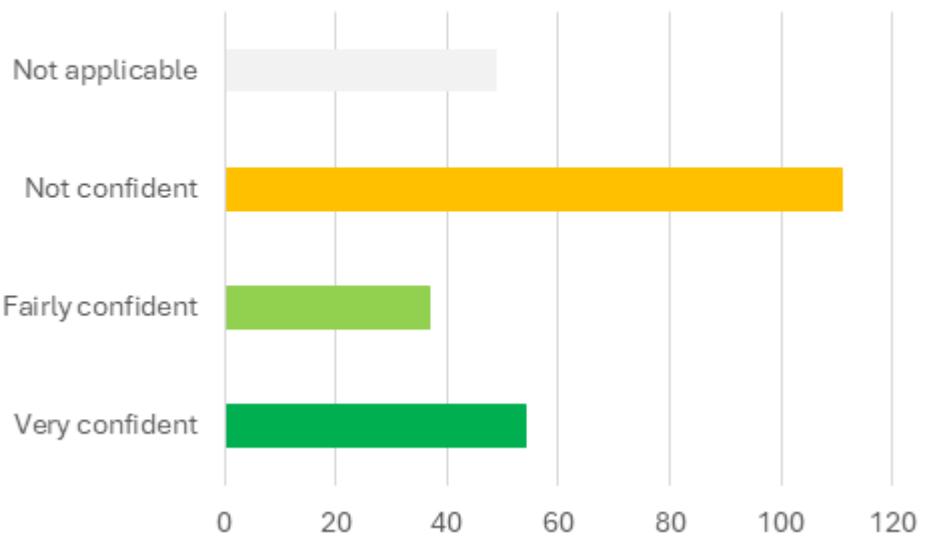
How would you describe your spoken Gaelic,  
when speaking to **other relatives**?



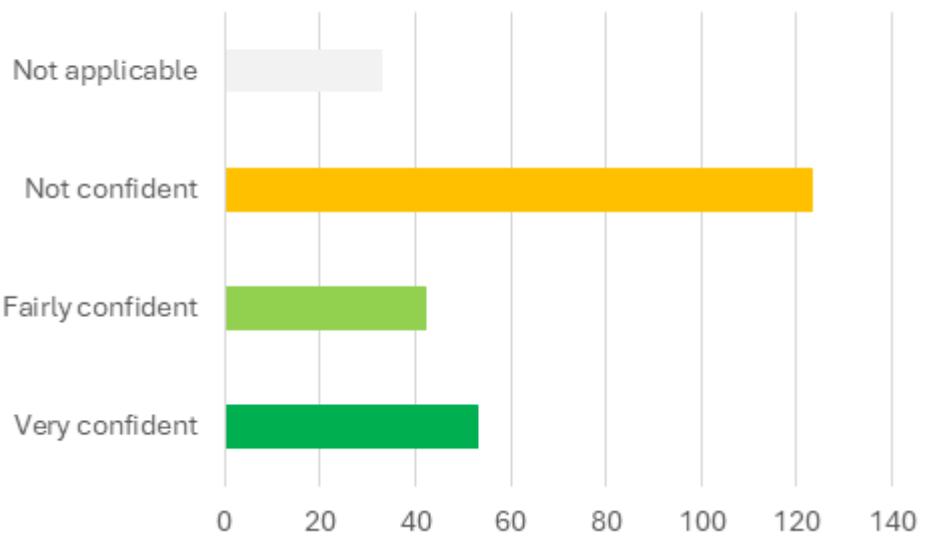
How would you describe your spoken Gaelic,  
when speaking to **friends**?



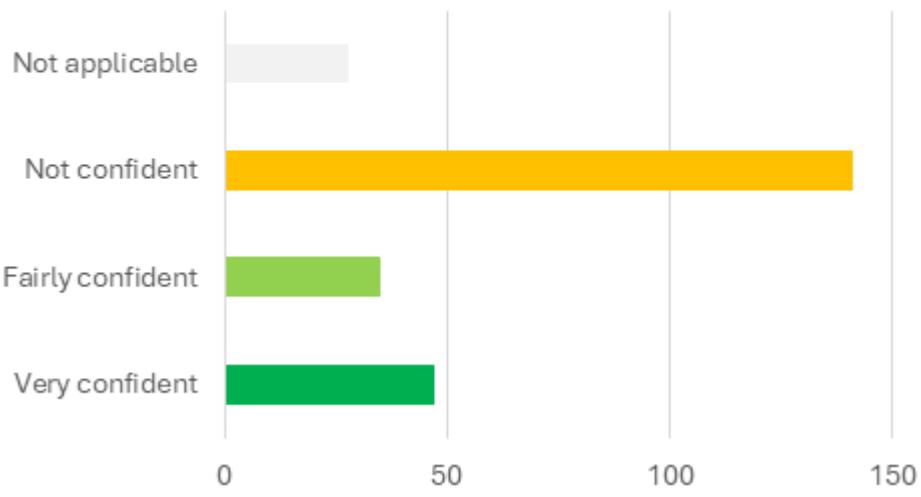
How would you describe your spoken Gaelic,  
when speaking to **work colleagues**?



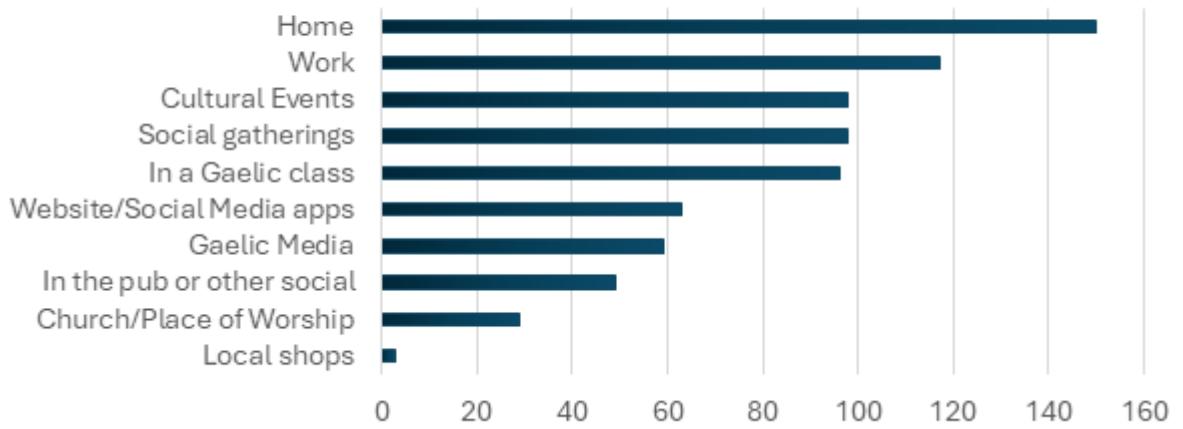
How would you describe your spoken Gaelic,  
when speaking to **acquaintances**?



How would you describe your spoken Gaelic,  
when speaking to **someone you have never  
met before?**

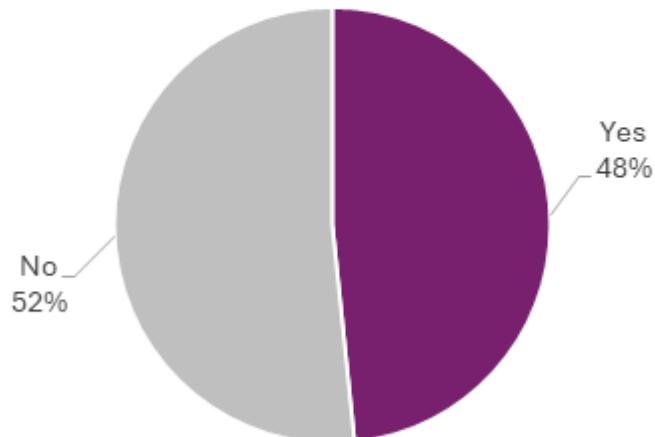


Where would you normally use Gaelic? Selecting all that apply

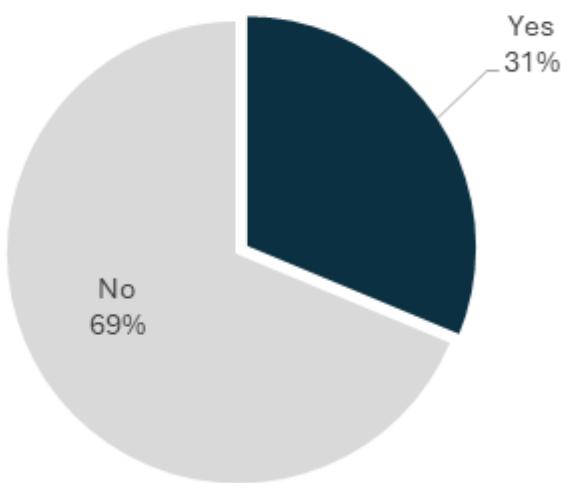


**Topic: Attitudes and Awareness**

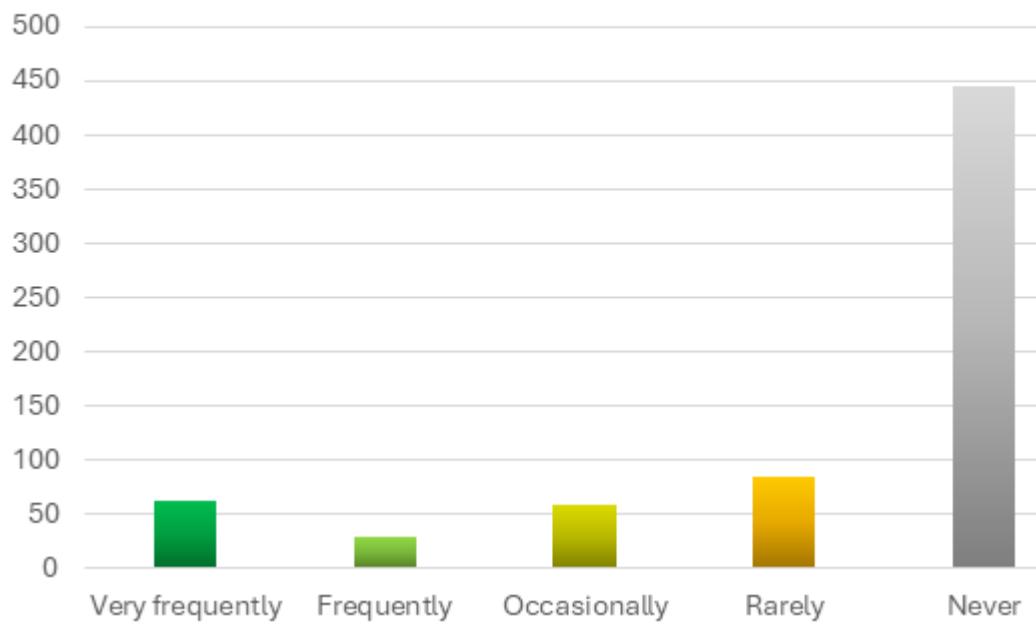
Are you aware of the Highland Council's commitment to Gaelic Language set out in the current 2024-29 Gaelic Language Plan?



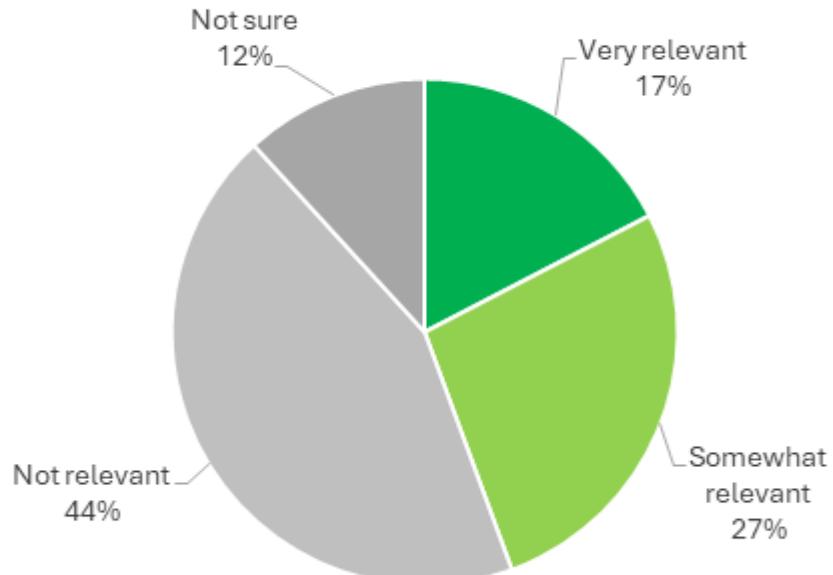
Does your job role contribute to the development or promotion of the Gaelic language?



During your working week, how often do you communicate using Gaelic?

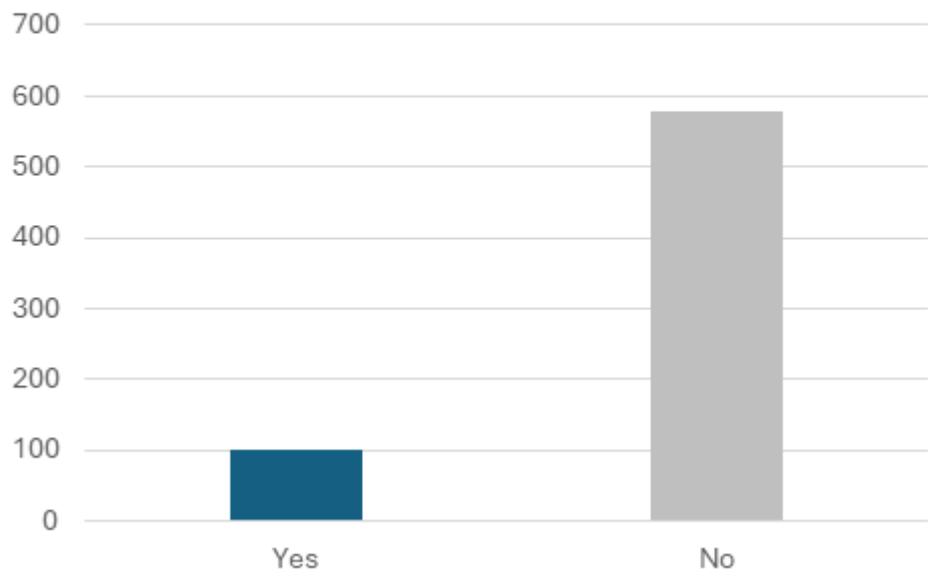


How relevant is Gaelic to your current role or service area?

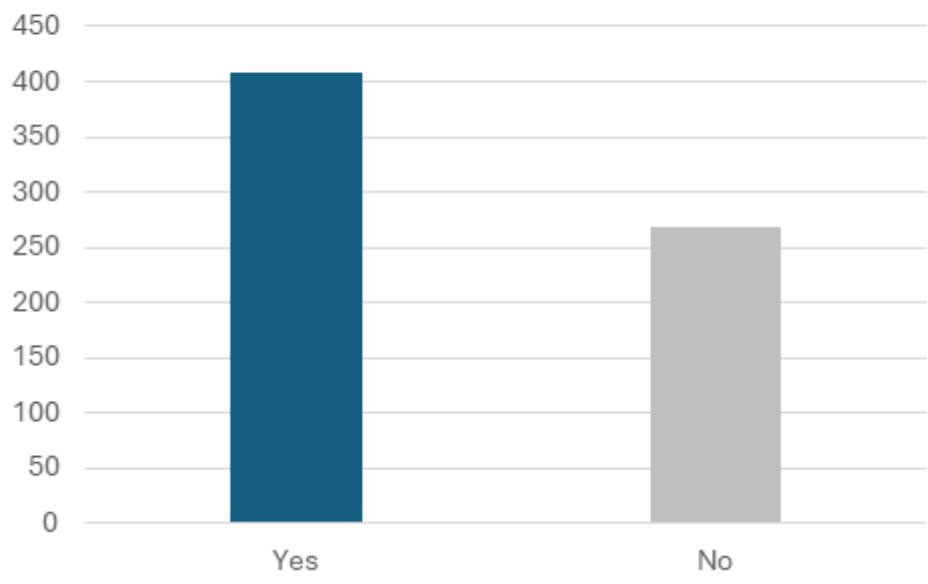


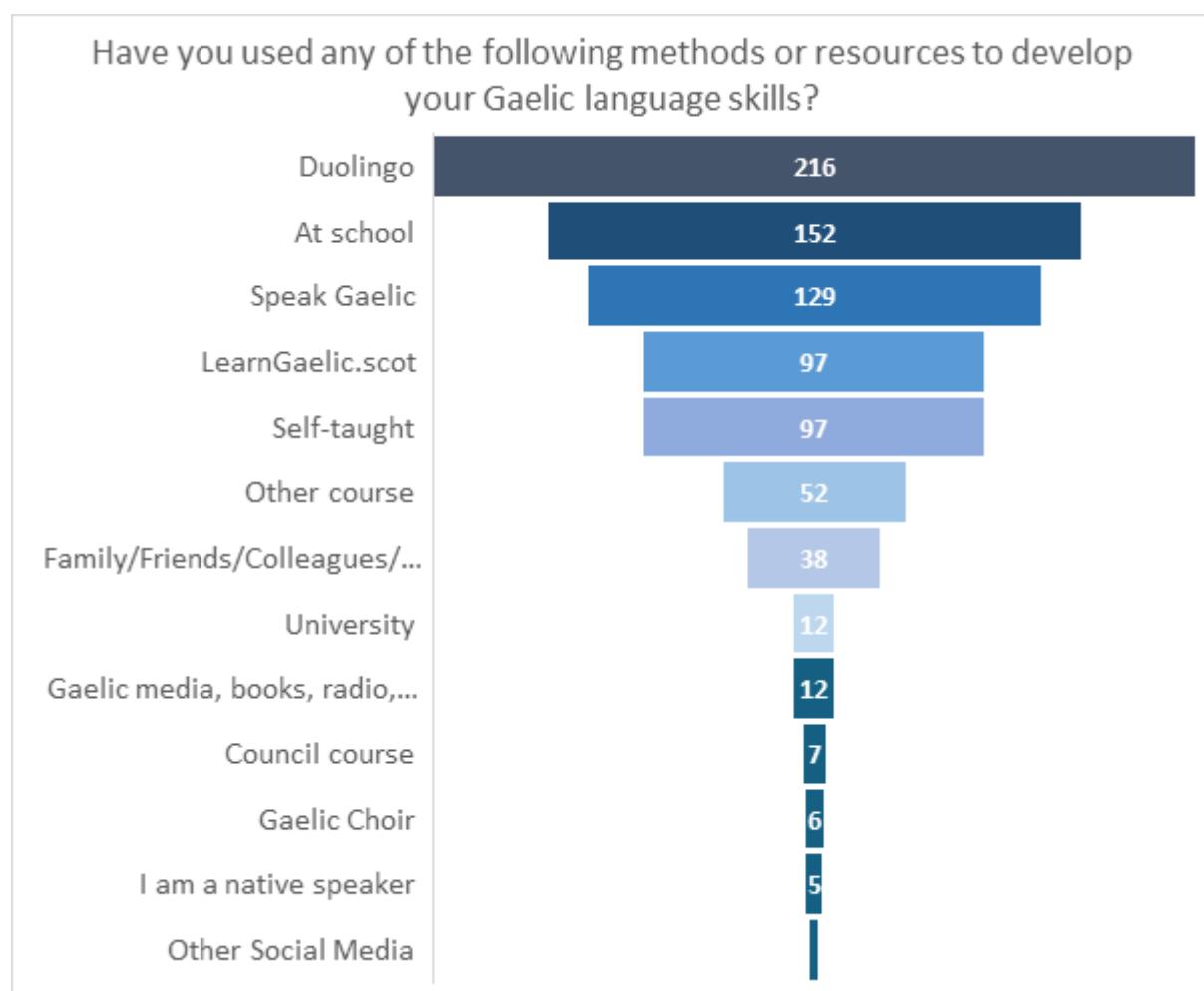
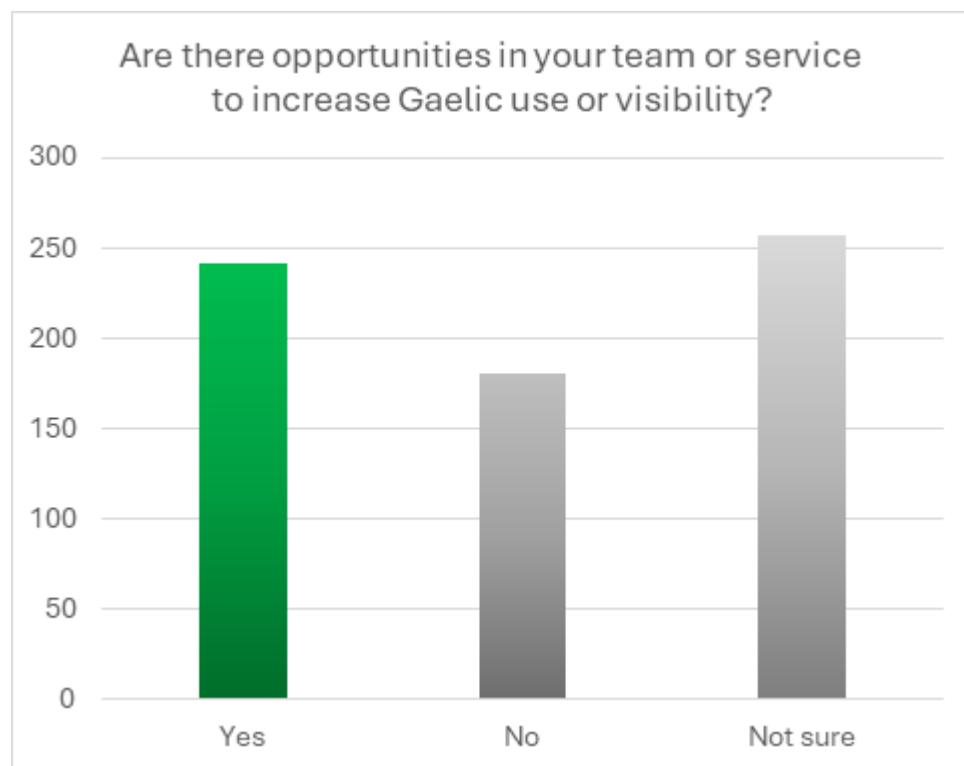
**Topic: Learning history and future interest**

Have you ***previously attended*** any of the Highland Council's Gaelic classes or awareness opportunities?

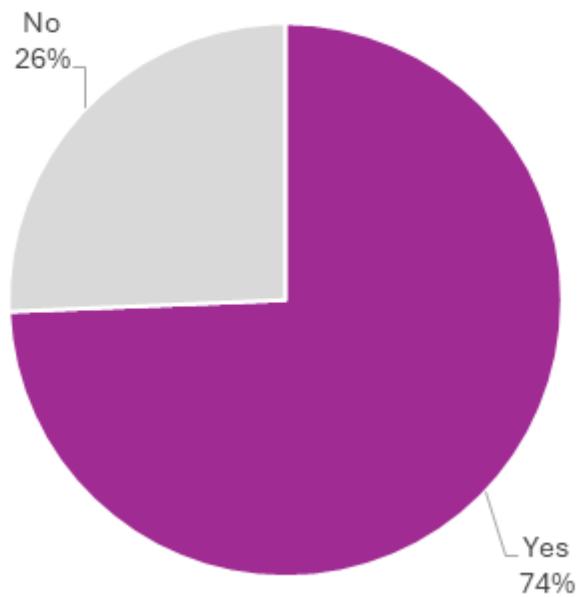


Would you be ***interested in attending*** any of the Highland Council's Gaelic classes or awareness opportunities?

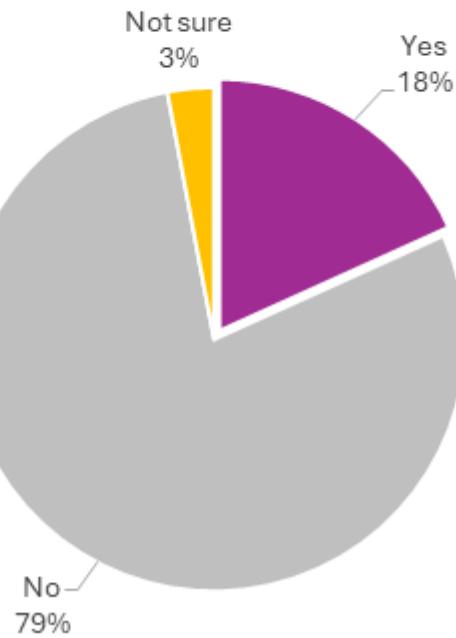




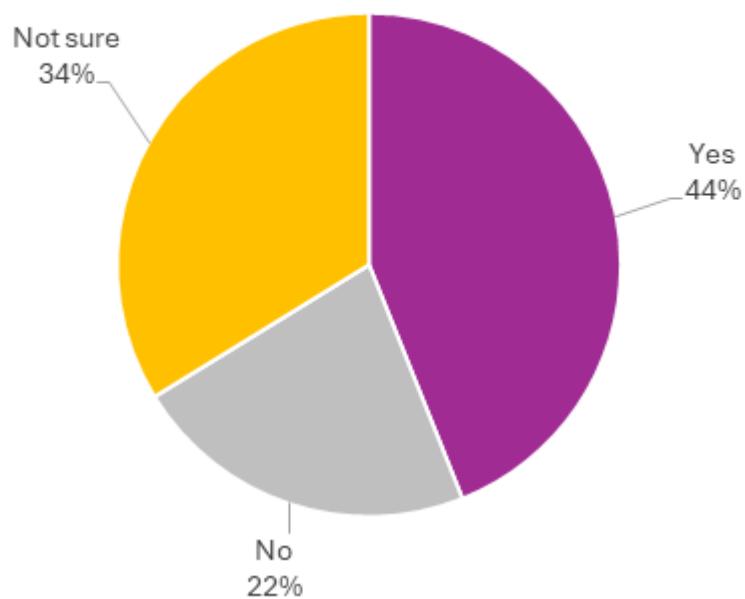
Do you interact with the public in your role?



Have you ever been asked to use Gaelic by a member of the public?



Are there Gaelic-speaking service users in your area/team?

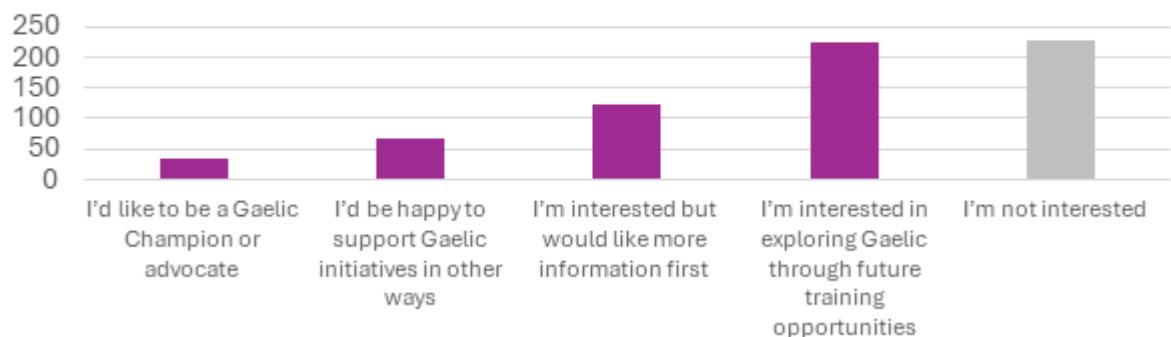


### Topic: Barriers and ideas for workplace use

What would encourage you to learn or use more Gaelic at work?



What role would you feel comfortable taking to promote Gaelic within your team?



## 6. Key finding and proposed actions

### 6.1 Proposed Action Plan

Finding	Proposed Action
Low confidence in using Gaelic at work	Develop workplace-focused confidence-building sessions and informal conversation groups.
High interest in future training (226 staff)	Expand online learning options and promote flexible scheduling. Promote suite of community Gaelic classes to staff.
Major barriers: time and access to classes	Introduce micro-learning modules and lunchtime sessions. Offer micro Gaelic Language Plan awareness sessions to be delivered during team meetings. Distribute slide decks to service leads which can be issued to their teams to raise awareness.
Limited awareness of Gaelic relevance to roles	Deliver targeted awareness sessions linking Gaelic to service priorities.
Strong interest in cultural engagement	Increase visibility of Gaelic in workplace events and encourage staff participation in cultural activities

## 7. Next Steps

- Develop flexible online learning modules
- Deliver awareness sessions on Gaelic relevance to services
- Repeat skills audit in 2027 to measure progress

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 4 February 2026

Authors:

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Laura Husher, Education Programme Officer

Background Papers: