

Agenda Item	9
Report No	G/15/26

The Highland Council

Committee: **Gaelic**

Date: **26 August 2026**

Report Title: **Gaelic Specific Grant 2026/27**

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 note the:
- i. 3 projects and outcomes outlined in the Gaelic Specific Grant bid;
 - ii. programme of work that the grant will help to support and that these are adjusted as the full amount was not secured; and
 - iii. maintained level of £940,000 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 2026/27 the Council bid for £1.379M in Gaelic Specific Grant, against a total projected spend of £8.381M. The bid was submitted on 18 December 2025. On 19 March 2026, the Council was awarded a grant of £940,000 in connection with the cost of supporting Gaelic education.

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)**
There are no specific risks.
- 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.
- 5.3 The following table provides an overview of the Gaelic Specific Grant awarded to Highland Council. Each project and the resource allocated is also included in the breakdown.

	26/27
The total amount received via the Gaelic Specific Grant	£940,000.00
Project 1 – Gaelic Planning, Policy Implementation and Resources	£204,760.00
Project 2 – Gaelic in the Home and in Communities - Learning & Development Projects including 0-3	£166,388.00
Project 3 – Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education	£568,852.00

6. Gaelic Specific Grant 2026/27 Project Bids and Outcomes

6.1 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

6.2 Outcomes for each project

6.2.1 Project 1:

- Provide a 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 Highlands is actively promoted, and quality assured within a framework of performance and governance and is adaptive to the needs of all our communities.
- Support and assist local communities to embed Gaelic into their Local Place Plans.
- Monitor developments in Gaelic education and, where required, will develop policies that strengthen its provision, ensuring strategic support for educators, learners, schools and communities.
- Mod Academy Increase in Gaelic L2 and L3 Provision - The Highland Council has a target of 70% of schools offering Gaelic as L2 or L3 following programme delivery across period of the GLP (GLP Strategic priority) This project aims to contribute to this by targeting 20 schools, leading to an additional 15% towards the target;
 - Minimum of 450 pupils in 15 new schools participate in Gaelic cultural activities (music, drama, arts) linked to L2/3 language learning.
 - Evidence of Curriculum progression and Learning.
 - 80% of pupils who take part in cultural activities go on to further Gaelic lessons (L2 or L3) within the academic year.

- Improved Confidence and Skills in Gaelic.
- 70% of pupils and teachers report increased confidence in using Gaelic words and phrases through cultural activities (measured via surveys).

6.2.2 Project 2:

A - Gaelic in the Home and Communities. We will:

- Deliver opportunities to support adult learners within a community context, such as adult learning residencies 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 we 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.
- 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.

B – Gaelic community in ELC & Childcare. We will:

- Deliver the three-year Gaelic Birth to Three plan.
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

C – Gaelic community in Primary. We will:

- 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 we will 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, we continue to secure external funding to support the development of extracurricular activities and community initiatives.
- Enhance and further develop community learning and development liaison within the standalone Gaelic schools in the Highland area.

D – Gaelic community in Secondary. We will:

- 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.
- Work in partnership with Gaelic agencies such as Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG), Iomain Chòlm Cille (ICC) and FC Sonas, as well as High Life Highland (HLH) to deliver both Gaelic national and local sporting events. We also continue to deliver Secondary Gaelic Sports Leadership coaching event.
- Support Senior Leadership Teams to lead, monitor and evaluate Gaelic medium literacy across the school, ensuring immersion principles are being embedded.

6.2.3 Project 3:

1+2 L3 Live Lessons:

- Focusing 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.
- To support teachers by providing a direct Gaelic teaching input, aimed to build their confidence to then deliver the learning activity to their class.

- This then allows for further consolidation learning after the lessons led by the class teacher.
- Through participating in the Beginners course and then progressing onto the Extension course, it is expected that these schools would continue to deliver Gaelic as an additional language.

1+2 CLPL Training:

- Provide the opportunity for teachers, in Gaelic L3 schools or other schools to become familiar with the vocabulary and structures within the Go!Gaelic resource.
- To promote further available resources; Gaelic 1+2 modules, GLEANS Challenges, Highland Digital Hub School/Home link.
- To recommend participation in the Live Lessons as a next step. This will 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.
- Working in partnership with Gaelic education agencies to develop and support key Education Scotland literacy policies for Gaelic.
- Providing support for GME practitioners within the local authority on literacy developments in Gaelic.
- Forming working groups and practitioner networks to support development of the Highland Literacy Project in Gaelic.
- Education officers are actively and regularly promoting Gaelic Professional Learning and in person/ teams networks / workshops for education colleagues.
- Organise an authority wide professional learning event for in-service day in February 2027.

Gaelic Medium Literacy Development

- Support schools to develop Highland Literacy approaches specifically adapted for Gaelic medium literacy development.
- Support schools and ELC settings to implement shared Gaelic medium literacy frameworks ensuring, ensuring continuity and progression from early years onwards.
- Develop and support schools in the delivery of interventions and support tools bespoke to Gaelic medium literacy outcomes.
- Support professional moderation of Gaelic medium pupils work.

7 Gaelic Grant Expenditure 2025/26

7.1

Expenditure category	Grant expenditure (£)
Project 1 – Gaelic Planning, Policy Implementation and Resources	£168,422

Project 2 – Gaelic in the Home and in Communities - Learning & Development Projects including 0-3	£146,378
Project 3 - Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education	£625,200
TOTAL	£940,000

Project 3 Highland Council contribution:

Gaelic Education - Early Learning and Childcare, Primary, Secondary 2025-26*	Total
Gaelic Early Learning and Childcare (Nursery) staffing (incl. on costs)	£1,538,918
GM primary staffing (incl. on costs)	£4,685,125
GM secondary staffing (incl. on costs)	£1,533,892
Total	£7,757,935

*Please note: These figures are from a reporting position in April 2026.

The Scottish Government Specific Grant contribution forms part of the overall funding package for Project 1-3. The above table provides more detail on how the Grant and Council contributes towards the operational costs of delivering Gaelic education. The balance of funding is provided by The Highland Council through its core education budget.

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