

Perth And Kinross Council

4 October 2023

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2023 – 2028

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

(Report No. 23/264)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report outlines the next, and third version, of the Perth and Kinross Council Gaelic Language Plan for the period from 2023 - 2028. This Plan and its commitments and actions are a continuation of the first two Plans and builds on the work of those, with enhanced emphasis on community benefits and Gaelic as an asset. It asks Council to approve the Plan, subject to final review by Bòrd na Gàidhlig which monitors Gaelic Language Plans on behalf of Scottish ministers.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:
- Approves the implementation of the new Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 subject to any final review comments received from Bòrd na Gàidhlig; and
 - Requests the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services to provide an annual progress update report to the Learning and Families Committee over the lifetime of this new 5-year Plan, and the Scheme of Administration be amended accordingly.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Proposals
- Section 6: Further Considerations
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council's second Gaelic Language Plan 2018 - 2023 ([Report No. 17/416 refers](#)) was approved by Council on 20 December 2017. The Gaelic Language Plan is a statutory plan intended to support the promotion and protection of the Gaelic language in Scotland. Implementation of the Plan is jointly monitored by Perth and Kinross Council and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the national Gaelic language agency which formally advises Scottish ministers on matters related to the language. Delivery is co-ordinated by Perth and Kinross Council.

- 4.2 The new 2023 – 2028 Plan (Appendix 1) has been submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for formal assessment. Feedback will be provided by 20 December 2023, at the latest, which will be within the 3 months of receiving the Plan, as per section 5 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. There has already been significant dialogue with Bòrd na Gàidhlig during the development phase of the Plan.
- 4.3 The Royal National Mòd, Scotland’s premier Gaelic language and culture festival was held in the City of Perth in October 2022. This was the first Mòd to be held fully in-person since 2019 and it was the first to be held in Perth since 2004, and the eleventh in the region since it began. The Mòd was highly successful with extremely positive feedback from participants and attendees. It brought significant economic and wellbeing impact and benefit to the local community and businesses. This included over 7500 visitors to the city and wider region and an estimated economic boost of over £2.5m. Work continues on the legacy of the Mòd and actions contained within this plan consider that legacy and it is hoped that the Royal National Mòd will return to Perth and Kinross in the near future.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government’s Programme for Government 2023-24 includes the Scottish Languages Bill that will provide a further legislative framework for Gaelic, and now legislative recognition for Scots language. It will provide a new strategic approach to Gaelic Medium Education and will consider the development of a Gàidhealtachd in Scotland.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The Gaelic Language Plan, at Appendix 1 (English version), sets out Perth and Kinross Council’s strategic commitments and actions that are aligned with the National Plan for Gaelic. These commitments are set out in the **3 Pillars of Gaelic**:

- **Using Gaelic**

A sustainable future for Gaelic involves increasing the number of Gaelic speakers and increased usage. We aim to encourage more individuals to use Gaelic as their preferred mode of communication in daily life.

- **Learning Gaelic**

The aim is to provide diverse opportunities for employees, community members, children and young people and parents to learn Gaelic in ways that ensure its presence in Perth and Kinross. Sufficient skilled Gaelic speakers are required to meet the need for arising vacancies and staff opportunities in Perth and Kinross Council, as well as other employers, and to meet the need for Gaelic experiences that are both formal and informal, and community based.

- **Promoting Gaelic**

We will promote the use of Gaelic, its visibility, and its status to make it a part of daily life in Perth and Kinross. We will work to create a more

positive image for Gaelic and a more significant role for it in the cultural life of Perth and Kinross and across Scotland, ensuring its future.

6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Public Consultation - Gaelic Language Plan

- 6.1 The draft Gaelic Language Plan for 2023 - 2028 was issued for public consultation from 7 August 2023 to 31 August 2023.

The consultation was available online via the Perth and Kinross Council's Consultation Hub and it was circulated to, and conversations held with, local and national interest groups, parents, and Perth and Kinross Council employees.

- 6.1.1 57 responses were received, and a summary of the feedback is included in the Plan. The largest number of responses were in relation to provision of Gaelic education and the provision of adult education and language learning opportunities for adults. A number of respondents also commented on the importance of promoting Gaelic culture and heritage. There was positive feedback from respondents that the Plan was easy to read, and particularly, how they identified themselves as fitting in with the Plan.

Council Employee Survey - Gaelic Skills

- 6.2 Perth and Kinross Council employees were asked to complete a short survey that was open during the month of August 2023 and asked about the Gaelic skills they currently had and also sought their interest in learning Gaelic and developing their Gaelic language skills for work or personal purposes.

- 6.2.1 217 staff responded with 41 of those reporting that they were able to understand, speak, read and/or write Gaelic. 40% of staff who responded indicated they were interested in learning Gaelic for personal purposes and 25% responded that they would be interested in learning Gaelic for work purposes. The staff survey was distributed to all staff via managers through the Managers' Weekly Briefing. There are currently 5875 staff in Perth and Kinross Council, and this indicates a response rate of 4%.

Conclusion

- 6.3 The Royal National Mòd in 2022 demonstrated that Gaelic is an asset to the communities and businesses of Perth and Kinross and to the Council as a provider of public services. This was informed by feedback and evidence from visitors and competitors, from Council partners and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) and from local businesses.

- 6.3.1 The Gaelic language is an asset and is beneficial to the following:

- The economy.
- Tourism and the visitor experience.
- Our culture and heritage.
- Linguistic development and bilingualism.
- Our identity.

- The environment.
- Our health and wellbeing.

6.3.2 The new Perth Museum is scheduled to open in Spring 2024 and will provide a platform for further engagement with the rich Gaelic culture and heritage of the area and the folklore and history that have shaped Perth and Kinross.

6.3.3 The implementation of this Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 will ensure that Gaelic has a positive image and profile, that it is valued and recognised, it is learnt by many through a range of methods and opportunities and is used in the daily life of communities throughout Perth and Kinross

This will be realised through the Council's vision for Gaelic and under the 3 Pillars of Gaelic as follows:

- More people using Gaelic.
- More people learning Gaelic.
- Better promotion of Gaelic.

Monitoring and Implementation

6.4 A Gaelic Language Plan Steering Group comprising of representatives from the following Council Services will monitor the implementation of the Plan twice annually:

- Communications
- Communities
- Education and Children's Services
- Environmental and Consumer Services
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Organisational Development
- Place and Business Development

6.5 The Gaelic Language Plan Steering Group will continue to report progress to Council annually over the lifetime of this 2023 - 2028 Plan.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Sheena Devlin	Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)	22 September 2023

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to all of these Objectives.

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to all of these Objectives.

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Learning and Achievement

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 The Gaelic Language Plan identifies where financial resources are required to deliver the commitments it includes. Commitments in relation to corporate communications and signage, for example, are intended to be proportionate: for example, bilingual signage will be installed when signs are due for renewal. Many Gaelic related initiatives are externally funded via Scottish Government or Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The Council will continue to submit bids for this external funding in order to implement key commitments across Council services.

Workforce

2.2 There are no direct workforce implications to this report. The Gaelic Language Plan has provided opportunities for staff development in relation to learning staff accessing Gaelic awareness and training classes and will plan for essential Gaelic posts and desirable Gaelic posts.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no asset management implications to this report.

3. Assessments

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to this report can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation.
 - Gaelic will be recognised as a valuable asset and will benefit to the communities of Perth and Kinross and the Council. It will provide health and wellbeing benefits to speakers and learners, improve the visitor experience to the area, revitalise elements of heritage and culture and have a positive economic impact.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

The proposals have been considered under the Act; however, no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

- 3.3.1 Not applicable.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 Not applicable.

- 3.5 Not applicable.

Risk

- 3.6 Not applicable.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Perth and Kinross Council officers, services and management teams that have commitments in the Plan have been consulted during the development stages of the draft Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028.

External

- 4.2 A public consultation on the draft plan took place from 7 to 31 August 2023.

- 4.2.1 The draft Plan for 2023 - 2028 was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in September 2023 for initial consideration after approval by Perth and Kinross Council.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communications plan will be prepared to support the launch of the Gaelic Language Plan once approved.
- 5.2 Gaelic and English versions of the approved Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 will be published upon final approval by Bòrd Na Gàidhlig.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report:

- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)
- [Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans](#)

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix 1 – Gaelic Language Plan (English version)