
SCOTTISH BORDERS PROPOSED GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

Report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy

Scottish Borders Council

17 JUNE 2021

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree that the Council's proposed draft Gaelic Language Plan (Appendix 1), is forwarded to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for their agreement in accordance with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.**
- 1.2 The Council conducted a public consultation on the draft Gaelic Language Plan and the outcome is reported in Appendix 2 attached.
- 1.3 Once approved by the Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the draft Gaelic Language Plan will become final and will be translated into Gaelic and both copies (English and Gaelic) will be published on the Council's website.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommend that Scottish Borders Council agrees:**
 - a) That the Council submit their draft Gaelic Plan to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for their approval.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 was passed by the Scottish parliament with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland and commanding equal respect to the English language.
- 3.2 All Councils in Scotland have been asked by the Bòrd na Gàidhlig to prepare a statutory Gaelic Plan in accordance with the Gaelic language (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 3.3 Gaelic Language Plans are seen as a key part in delivering the National Gaelic Plan to secure the status of Gaelic in Scotland. Once the plan has been out for public consultation, it has to be submitted to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval. The Gaelic Language Plan should also include a report on the outcome of the consultation.

4 SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

- 4.1 The plan is Scottish Borders Council first Gaelic Plan and sets out the aims for the next 5 years, from 2021 to 2026. The plan also supports implementation of the Scottish Government's National Outcome '**We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity**'. Our aim is to comply with the language by encouraging the use of the Gaelic language and promoting opportunities for our communities to communicate in Gaelic.
- 4.2 Scottish Borders Council supports the aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 that "Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations".
- 4.3 In order to achieve this aim the plan sets out commitments against three headings:
 - Increasing the use of Gaelic within our organisation and encouraging more people to use Gaelic, more often when they interact with us.
 - Increasing the opportunity for people to learn Gaelic as part of our day-to-day operations.
 - Promoting a positive image of Gaelic whenever we can as part of our day-to-day operations as an organisation
- 4.4 The main body promoting awareness of Gaelic in the Scottish Borders is the Gaelic singing group who perform across the region at music events, they have also run Gaelic song workshops which have attracted considerable interest. In addition to this, they organise a programme of meetings throughout the year to promote Gaelic language and culture. These events include lectures, musical and poetry recitals and ceilidhs.
- 4.5 Scottish Borders Council has in the past sponsored some events organised by Gaelic in the Borders to encourage a wider awareness of the language, and has funded events and classes for Gaelic learners.

- 4.6 Language and Literacy is a core curricular area within Curriculum for Excellence. Gaelic education should be a consideration for all schools as part of their curriculum planning from 3-18 and Scottish Borders Council's Education Service is committed to supporting the development of Gaelic culture through this plan and any subsequent development plans.
- 4.7 There is a strong Gaelic current in Scottish Folk music. Over the past decade the Scottish Borders has developed a strong folk music tradition amongst children, young people and adults and Gaelic music has been an important influence and medium within this.

5 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING GROUP

- 5.1 To ensure that the Gaelic Language Plan is embedded across the corporate structure of the public authority, Bòrd na Gàidhlig recommends the establishment of a Gaelic Language Plan implementation and monitoring group, consisting of staff from across the public authority with responsibility for developing, implementing and monitoring different aspects of the plan.
- 5.2 The group will be responsible for monitoring the Gaelic Plan and ensuring the actions are implemented. The group will meet a minimum of twice a year (more if required).

6 OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Along with the draft Gaelic Language Plan, the Council must submit a report on the outcome of the public consultation to the Bòrd. A summary of the consultation is shown in the table below:

Number of responses	The Council's GLP incorporates the 3 goals for Gaelic	Gaelic speakers	Interested in learning Gaelic	Interested in attending Gaelic events
24	13	5	6	6

- 6.2 Summary of comments:

- *"Yes, but in terms of image, you plan could say more about the historical significance of Gaelic in the Borders, particularly evidenced by the number of Gaelic names in the north and west of the Council area."*
- *"What about the indigenous scots in the area. Where is the Scots language plan? Place names are in Scots, old english or Norse and Gaelic has not been spoken in parts of the borders for hundreds of years whilst Scots is indigenous. Teach the young folk to write in Scots as they all speak it. Gaelic is not a priority here and whilst it has a place in Scotland and deserves to be taught Scots must get the same recognition."*
- *"It would be great to see more opportunities to learn Gaelic!"*

- *"The Scottish Borders was never a Gaelic speaking region. We use Scots in the Borders, there should be as much support in the plan for Scots as there is for Gaelic."*

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

7.2 Risk and Mitigations

Gaelic Language Plans are seen as a key part in delivering the National Gaelic Plan to secure the status of Gaelic in Scotland. Failure to increase opportunities to learn about the Gaelic language and the history of Gaelic may see the language die out altogether.

7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed for this report.

7.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant sustainability impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

7.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

7.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result, rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

7.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Rob Dickson

Signature

Corporate Transformation and Services Director

Author(s)

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Background Papers:

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005
Scottish Borders Draft Gaelic Plan (Appendix A)
Report on consultation (Appendix B)

Previous Minute Reference:

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Sylvia Mendham can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Scottish Borders Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose,
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