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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS PROPOSED GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN**

**Report by Director – Education and Lifelong Learning**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**29 JUNE 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

**1.1 This report proposes that the Council’s proposed Gaelic Language Plan (see Appendix A), be forwarded to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for their agreement in accordance with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.**

1.2 The Gaelic Language Plan consists of 3 parts as follows:

- i. Increasing the use of Gaelic within our organisation and encouraging more people to use Gaelic, more often when they interact with us.
- ii. Increasing the opportunity for people to learn Gaelic as part of our day-to-day operations.
- iii. Promoting a positive image of Gaelic whenever we can as part of our day-to-day operations as an organisation.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that the Committee agree that the Council submit their Gaelic Plan to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for their approval. Thereafter the Gaelic Plan (once approved), will be translated into Gaelic and both copies (English and Gaelic) published on the Council’s website.**

### **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. Following the public consultation, the plan has to be submitted to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval. The Gaelic Language Plan includes a report on the outcome of the consultation. (See Appendix B)
- 3.4 The SBC Gaelic Language Plan was originally brought to Council for approval in June 2021; however, it has undergone a number of revisions following engagement with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

### **4 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING GROUP**

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

### **5 IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to the current recommendations. However if, as a result of the actions within the Gaelic Language Plan, there was a significant increase in requests for Gaelic Medium Education (GME), then a feasibility study would be required to decide whether a GME provision is developed within Scottish Borders.

#### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

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. Council will be failing in its statutory duty if a Gaelic Language Plan is not approved and submitted to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig. 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.

### 5.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no significant effects on the Integrated Impact Assessment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all potential: the Gaelic Language Plan will ensure opportunities for those who wish to learn and speak Gaelic.

### 5.5 **Climate Change**

There are no significant effects on climate change arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.6 **Rural Proofing**

There are no significant effects on rural proofing arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.8 **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 proposal contained in this report.

## 6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received will be incorporated into the final report.

### **Approved by**

**Lesley Munro**

**Director Education and Lifelong Learning**

### **Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Gillian McKenzie	Quality Improvement Officer (01835 824000 Ext 8006)

**Background Papers:** Not applicable

**Previous Minute Reference:** Minute of Meeting of Scottish Borders Council held via Teams on Thursday, 17 June 2021 at 10.00am

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Contact us at Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA (Tel 01835 24000).