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**Report to: Clackmannanshire Council**

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**Date of Meeting: 24 October, 2013**

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**Subject: Statutory Gaelic Language Plan**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise Council that official notification has been received from Bòrd na Gàidhlig to prepare a statutory Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) under the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council notes:
- a) that the Council has received formal notification of the requirement to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan;
  - b) that officers will be meeting with representatives of Bòrd na Gàidhlig in the coming weeks to discuss the high level aims which have been set out for the Council in that notification.

## **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 Gaelic Language Plans are a component in implementing the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and in delivering the National Gaelic Language Plan which aims to secure the status of Gaelic in Scotland.
- 3.2 Section 3 of the 2005 Act confers power on the Bòrd to require any relevant public authority (councils being relevant public authorities) to prepare and implement a GLP which will set out how the authority will use Gaelic in the exercise of its functions.
- 3.3 Bòrd na Gàidhlig in its official notification to the Council has determined the high-level aims it will be seeking from the Council's GLP and these are set out overleaf.
- 3.4 The Council is required to submit its GLP to the Bòrd no later than 28 February, 2015. A 6-12 week consultation period has to be undertaken and the Council will also be required to submit a report on the public consultation to the Bòrd.

## **Clackmannanshire GLP High-level aims**

### **Home and Early Years**

- Work in partnership with the Gaelic community in the area, including the early years network, to establish demand for a Gaelic medium early years service in the area.
- Actively support the development of Gaelic medium early years education provision within the authority area.

### **Education and Learning**

- Work in partnership with the Gaelic community in the area to establish the demand for Gaelic medium education with the aim to establish a Gaelic medium primary school in the area.
- Provide Gaelic Language in the Primary School (GLPS) across primary schools in the authority.
- Expand the provision of Gaelic learners provision in secondary schools within the authority area and establish a link with GLPS.
- Include Gaelic in the European Union 1 + 2 model for the learning and teaching of languages being introduced by the Scottish Government.
- Provide Gaelic awareness learning opportunities for 3-18 year old school pupils.
- Actively support and develop Gaelic learning opportunities for adults.
- Work in partnership with the Gaelic community in the area to establish the demand for Gaelic classes for adults in the authority area.
- Work in partnership with Gaelic community in the area, with Gaelic organisations that work at a national level and with other public authorities that have Gaelic Language Plans to create a programme of Gaelic events for adults.

### **Communities**

- Work in partnership with the Gaelic community in the area to establish a programme of events throughout the year that promote the status and use of Gaelic.
- Actively support existing and new Gaelic language and cultural community groups and initiatives within the local authority area, to help grow the profile of the language, increase usage and encourage new learners.

## **Workplace**

- Carry out a survey of Gaelic language skills and interest in training amongst authority employees as part of the plan preparation process or, within the first year of the plan.
- Provide Gaelic language skills training for staff involved directly in the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan and / or based on the Gaelic language skills audit.
- Support employees of the local authority to undertake Gaelic language training as part of the authority's personal development programme.
- Provide Gaelic awareness training to senior staff and councillors as part of the implementation of the plan, to be rolled out to other staff engaged with the Gaelic Language Plan delivery.

## **Arts and Media; Heritage and Tourism**

- Establish a link with the work of communities and arts, culture and heritage activities in order to promote the status and use of Gaelic.
- Promote Gaelic in programmes that are funded by the local authority.

## **Corporate Identity and Public Services**

- Render the corporate logo bilingual (Gaelic and English) at the earliest opportunity, demonstrating equal respect for the languages and roll-out accordingly across the authority, on a new or replacement basis.
- Demonstration of how the public authority will contribute to the status of Gaelic in Scotland through bilingual (Gaelic and English, demonstrating equal respect) signage, in cooperation with Transport Scotland where appropriate, on a new or replacement basis.
- Establish a mechanism to allow Gaelic speakers to engage with the local authority through the medium of Gaelic if they choose to do so, based on the principle of active offer and equal respect (for Gaelic and English).
- Increase in the profile of the Gaelic language in the authority's communications.
- Comply with the rules of Gaelic Orthographic Conventions and utilise the services of Ainmean-aite na h-Alba as standard across all services.

## 4.0 Considerations

- 4.1 The remit of Bòrd na Gàidhlig is to promote Gaelic education and culture and to increase the number of people learning and using Gaelic. The National Gaelic Language Plan, which the Bòrd was tasked with drafting, sets out strategies to *"reduce the decline in number of Gaelic speakers, stabilise them and create new foundations for growth, national, regionally and locally."* The national Plan informs the aims set out for local Plans.
- 4.2 The management team within the Council has reviewed the GLP requirements and considers that, depending on what is envisaged by the Bòrd, the Council might not be in a position to meet some of the high level aims which have been set for it.
- 4.3 The reasons for considering that to be the case relate principally to:
- a) factors of budget and our need to close a £26M funding gap over the next four years; and
  - b) agreed Council priorities which which might cut across some of the high level aims.
- 4.4 In respect of the funding gap, on average £6.5M per year for four years, the Council is embarked upon a budget process which will be considering significant savings. In tandem, we are undertaking a programme of transformational change which is reviewing priorities and which may result in reconfigured services. As part of this reconfiguration, and as intimated by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services in her August budget update report, it may be that the Council ceases to deliver some services which traditionally it has provided. This could mean that we have no capacity or resources to contribute to some of the intended high level aims which have been set out in our statutory notification. There is also an issue of proportionality in terms of Clackmannanshire's scale.
- 4.5 Having said that, transformational change, of course, also provides an opportunity in the context of a GLP to think more innovatively about how we might contribute to many of the high level aims. With Clackmannanshire and Stirling councils sharing the management of their education functions, there may be a number of positive opportunities for the councils to work together to achieve the aims of our respective GLPs, particularly around home and early years, education and learning and communities.
- 4.6 However, given the contexts set out in paragraphs 4.2-4.4, the Chief Executive has contacted the Bòrd seeking a meeting to have a more detailed discussion about the respective understandings of what is expected in terms of the high level aims which have been set so that the Council's GLP can be proportionate to our scale and capacity to deliver, as well as achievable.
- 4.7 A positive response has been received from the Bòrd and it is anticipated that a meeting will take place towards the end of October to discuss the high-level

aims issued and to agree on a set of aims that are reasonable and proportionate for Clackmannanshire Council.

## 5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 the Bòrd can require any relevant public authority to prepare and implement a GLP which will set out how the authority will use Gaelic in the exercise of its functions.

5.2 While the Council would wish to conform to the requirements around the preparation and implementation of a GLP, it will be important that the Council has ownership of a Plan which is proportionate and achievable and which recognises the need for local decision-making which is appropriate to local circumstances.

## 6.0 Sustainability Implications

6.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

## 7.0 Resource Implications

7.1 *Financial Details* - there are no financial implications at this time. There may be financial implications arising from the agreed GLP - these will be reported to Council for consideration at the relevant time.

7.2 *Staffing* - there are no implications for the staffing establishment as a result of this report.

## 8.0 Exempt Reports

8.1 Is this report exempt? No

## 9.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box )

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are safer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerable people and families are supported	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

**10.0 Equalities Impact**

10.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

No  n/a at this stage.

**11.0 Legality**

11.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

**12.0 Appendices**

12.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None

**13.0 Background Papers**

13.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

a) Statutory notification letter from Bord to Chief Executive

**Author(s)**

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Elaine McPherson	Chief Executive	2002

**Approved by**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>DESIGNATION</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
Elaine McPherson	Chief Executive	Signed: E McPherson