

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLANNING AT THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Executive Summary

1. Following the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 coming into force, the SPCB agreed a Gaelic Language Plan. The first Plan ran April 2007 – March 2013, and established some basic service levels. We are currently in the latter half of the second Plan (April 2013 – March 2018) which has focused on our communications and workplace training. Our activities are delivered within existing resources and seek to raise the profile of Gaelic in simple but effective measures.
2. The third iteration of our Plan will run April 2018 – March 2023 and consultation on what this Plan includes will begin in the middle of 2017.
3. This paper sets out for information the approach being take to :
 - a. deliver the commitments in the remaining part of the current Plan; and
 - b. develop and consult on the third iteration.

Issues and Options

4. During delivery of the current Plan, we have developed a strong foundation for our services in Gaelic. Whilst there are times where services need to be delivered bilingually, there are equally times where sensible alignment of Gaelic within existing resources or activities is more practical and serves to raise the profile and status of Gaelic more effectively.
5. Our approach therefore is moving towards a more pragmatic one, ensuring as much as possible Gaelic is integrated within our work rather than as an additional requirement. We intend to continue this approach as we develop our third iteration of the Plan.

Gaelic Language Plan 2013-2018

6. The current Plan includes a commitment to a Gaelic Language Day event at the Parliament every two years. The next one is scheduled to take place on 30 November 2016.
7. This offers us an excellent opportunity to pull together our different strands of ongoing work with the public, staff and MSPs and present them as a package to increase the impact. This year we intend to hold a series of events and activities across the week commencing 28 November.

8. During this week, we will deliver all three of the two-hour language support events we currently offer (awareness of the importance of languages; learning Parliamentary and workplace Gaelic phrases; practice opportunities based on Parliamentary work). This package will be available to MSPs and their staff, SPCB staff and the public. The week will also serve as an opportunity to raise the profile of the Gaelic services and resources available to support our new intake of MSPs.

Gaelic Language Plan 2018 – 2023

9. The third iteration of the Gaelic Language Plan needs to be developed early in 2017, before public consultation over the summer. This will ensure the SPCB can consider the plan in early 2018 before it is submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnG) and Scottish Ministers in March 2018.
10. BnG are likely to look for this plan to continue the mainstreaming of Gaelic within the Parliamentary service and for us to use Gaelic more in our work reaching out into Scotland. This is in keeping with the work we are developing and delivering in the last 18-24 months of the current Plan.
11. With this in mind, we will begin working on the next Plan based on the following high level aims:
 - a. Use Gaelic where appropriate to reach out to communities across Scotland and ensure communities can reach out to us in Gaelic (by offering outreach and education activities in local communities and facilitating interactions with the Parliament in Gaelic).
 - b. Support our MSPs and staff in developing confidence around using Gaelic in their work (by providing and promoting support and opportunities for them to do this).
 - c. Integrate Gaelic into the fabric of the Parliament's thinking (by ensuring work is delivered alongside and within existing programmes as well as having activities specifically for raising the profile of Gaelic).
12. We propose to work with selected staff and MSPs to develop the detailed delivery proposals, before wider MSP, public, and staff consultation begins. This will ensure we can develop ideas that fit in with existing work and add most value to ongoing activities.

Resource implications

13. For the Gaelic Language Day 2016, all of the resources being promoted in the week have been developed within existing resources to support MSP and Parliamentary engagement.

14. Resource for the development and consultation of the next iteration of the Gaelic Language Plan has already been planned for by the Outreach Services team in the financial year 2017/18.

Governance

15. The requirements and timescales for consultation have been set out by BnG in a letter to the Chief Executive.
16. The project is part of the responsibilities of the Head of Outreach Services and has been planned for within the standard corporate planning processes.

Publication

17. This paper should be published following the issuing of the high level aims by BnG to the Chief Executive, anticipated before the end of December 2016.

Recommendation

18. The SPCB is invited to note the direction of the Gaelic work at the Parliament and the timescales for the new iteration of our Gaelic Language Plan.

Outreach Services November 2016

Legislative context for SPCB Gaelic Language Plan

1. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the SPCB to publish a Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) every 5 years. The focus of a GLP is to set out how a body will use and enable the use of Gaelic within its functions. Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnG) are seeking for a 'normalisation' of Gaelic with the Scottish population, with public bodies providing an active offer of Gaelic services. Three guiding principles from the Act which should underpin GLPs are:
 - a. to secure the status of Gaelic as an official language of Scotland commanding *equal respect* to English.
 - b. to support organisations in delivering *reasonable and proportionate* Gaelic services according to their individual circumstances
 - c. for organisations to have a long term vision for Gaelic that will grow Gaelic provision over time through *incremental growth*.
2. The concepts of the 2005 Act are to support:
 - d. Acquisition, use, status and corpus of Gaelic through language planning.
 - e. Normalisation of the use of Gaelic as part of the day to day fabric of modern Scottish life.
 - f. Gaelic actively offered to people by public authorities.
 - g. Gaelic developing as a valuable skill within the workplace.
 - h. Corpus development that sees the language grow and be used in a consistent manner.
3. The Guidance issued by BnG on preparing GLPs specifically states:
 - Public Authorities should prepare their GLPs with a view to facilitating the use of Gaelic to the **greatest extent** that is appropriate to their individual circumstances.
 - Public Authorities should be **positive and proactive** in identifying the most appropriate ways in which they can help raise the profile of the language and encourage and enable Gaelic users.
 - Public Authorities should also seek to **expand over time** the level of Gaelic provision they provide.
 - Public Authorities with a geographically national remit should make **substantive provision** to ensure their services are available **bilingually**.
4. Each SPCB GLP has to be publicly consulted upon and agreed by the SPCB before being submitted to BnG and Scottish Ministers. BnG

expects GLPs to outline how an organisation intends to deliver more and better services to current and future Gaelic users. They also expect them to state how the organisation will contribute to raising the awareness of the language. The guidance states that plans must take into account:

- The National plan, as the Parliament's plan has to support this.
 - Use of Gaelic within the area the Parliament is responsible for (relevant data: 1% nationally with peaks and troughs within that locally; 81% of Scottish people surveyed do not want Scotland to lose its Gaelic identity).
 - The potential to develop Gaelic services by the SPCB.
 - Any representations made to BnG in relation to SPCB responsibilities.
 - Guidance given by ministers to BnG.
5. BnG has outlined the following priority areas of action for Gaelic development:
- Home and Early years
 - Education
 - Communities
 - Workplace
 - Arts and Media, Heritage and Tourism
 - Corpus
6. The template for the plans asks the SPCB to outline:
- i. High level aims of the organisation
 - j. Service Standard Commitments
 - k. Actions towards raising visibility of Gaelic in our work
 - l. Actions towards supporting our staff develop their Gaelic awareness and learning
 - m. How Gaelic will be used in our day to day operations
 - n. How Gaelic will be used in our communications activities
 - o. How we will contribute to the corpus requirements
 - p. Our governance, monitoring and reporting arrangements
 - q. To do all this in a way that makes clear the proposed outcome, current practice, action required, target date and responsible officer.