

Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Minutes of Board Meeting
Noss & Rum, Great Glen House, Inverness
Thursday 03 December 2015: 08.45 – 14.00

Board Members

Elizabeth McAtear (Chair on the day) (ENS)
Donald MacLeod (DML)
Fiona O’Hanlon (FOH)
John MacLeod (IML)
Coll MacDonald (CD)

Attending

Joe Moore (Interim CEO) (JM)
Bruce Robertson (BR)
Alasdair MacKinnon (AMF)
David Boag (DB)
Steven MacIver (SMI)
Stuart Pescodd (SG) (SP)
Carol Johnson
Beathag Morrison (Translator)

BnG-4-1516-01	PRELIMINARIES
a)	Apologies
	Apologies received on behalf of Allan MacDonald and June Graham.
b)	Declaration of Interests
	No declarations of interest noted.
c)	Interim Chair’s Report
	<p>On behalf of the Chair and the Board members ENS offered thanks to JG for her excellent work over the preceding years as a member. Particularly noted that as a Gaelic learner how her own personal efforts with the language allowed her to support the work of the Board, offering her knowledge and understanding of the issues through her commitment to the two Committees she participated in. The members wish her every success in her endeavours in teacher training.</p> <p>Thanks also noted to JM for his assistance in the role of Accountable Officer and interim Ceannard, helping the Board fulfil its commitments, whilst efforts made to fill the vacancy for the Ceannard’s position.</p>
d)	Leadership Team’s Report
	<p>Update by JM:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate communication to all staff after each Management Team meeting, keeping staff informed. 2. Excellent staff workshop where staff engaged well and should be a repeated regularly. Some of the suggested savings are being implemented, such as the reduction of the floor/desk space required at GGH. 3. Regular staff catch up meetings are being held in order to improve communication throughout the organisation, allowing information sharing and awareness of emerging priorities. These short meetings are being well received by staff. 4. First Mòd was very enjoyable, with excellent meetings regarding the Education Bill and a closer collaboration with other Gaelic organisations should be developed. Perhaps a closer look should be taken at the expected outcome of any joint ventures during this annual event though. 5. Investment in the BnG website is needed in order to allow more interactive use, and SMI is to liaise with JM and SMT to identify options that would improve the user experience and the ability to get information to users. 6. Jega exercise nearly complete – report to be circulated to Board. 7. Interim appraisals also nearly complete, with Managers noting progress on staff attainment of previously agreed progression. 8. A second attempt at attracting candidates for the new Language Plans Officer was being prepared. This role would be vital in the planning and preparation of the new NGLP 17-22.

	<p>Update by BR:</p> <p>9. FOH to be commended on her presentation with Lindsay Paterson to the recent Cross Party meeting on the Census, demonstrating how it can be useful for Gaelic.</p> <p>10. Education Bill presentation by himself, and update from the Chairman were well received.</p> <p>11. Next Cross Party meeting in March should examine new directions, engaging with the Chair on Agenda setting.</p>
e)	Minutes of Board Meeting and Matters Arising
	The minutes from the Board meeting on 16&17/09/2015 were approved, with the recommended addition to BnG-2-1516-04 PT2 of the alteration of GLP notifications to 3 annually, which has a bearing on KPI targets.
	<p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Noted that MG ALBA have had a cut in funding, and Chair had noted at the Cross Party meeting that closer collaboration could benefit both organisations in cost savings. – Education Bill – noted that the elements relating to Gaelic education have been successfully discharged for this stage of the consultation process. – PNE have decided not to accept the final tranche of funding offered. Their situation is to be examined by CNES, briefed fully by BR. Fiona Hyslop to be questioned regarding this during General Parliamentary Questions, and responses will be closely examined, and Board notified of any developments. – Aberdeenshire Council are in deliberation on their GLP. – Clì Gàidhlig are moving forward constructively, with the final tranche of funding from BnG to the year end.
f)	Committee Reports
	<p>Audit Committee 03/11/2015:</p> <p>CD updated the Board on the latest developments at Audit Committee in light of Internal Audit recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Future planning and budget decisions await Spending Review details, expected on 16th December. – The areas for deliberation include examining where KPIs interlink/overlap with GLP engagement and in light of SR whether these need to be adapted/amended. – Audit Scotland timescale for this year confirmed. – Risk Register to include the addition of the continued Ceannard vacancy, and the need for an additional period of interim CEO cover until a permanent appointment is made. – JGs resignation from the Board has left a vacancy on the Audit Committee, but agreement reached to continue with the current membership until new members have been appointed, when Committee structure can be fully updated. Noted that Board members are under extra pressure servicing Committees whilst the vacancies for members continue.
	<p>Gaelic Development Committee - 04/11/2015:</p> <p>DML updated the Board on developments from Gaelic Development Committee. 11 plan appraisals were successfully completed, with the evidence of Gaelic in public places and situations being noted as a primary objective. Also noted that the Plans Panel meetings would require to be recorded, in order for recommendations to be made to the Committee.</p> <p>Teacher Recruitment to be discussed at the next meeting. Developments on the Education Bill presented by BR.</p>
	<p>Policy and Finance Committee 05/11/2015:</p> <p>ENS updated the Board on developments, and a recommendation noted that the work of CPI should be absorbed into the responsibilities of the Audit Committee during the restructuring.</p>

BnG-4-1516-02	GAELIC DEVELOPMENT
a)	Gaelic Language Plans
	PT1 – VisitScotland : The GLP was approved, and all those involved were commended for the amount of work and progress that was achieved in such a short time, mainly due to very good relationships and engagement. Appropriate notifications to be sent to CEO, and liaison with the respective Communications teams recommended in order to publicise the launch and publication.
	PT2 – Education Scotland: The GLP was approved. Noted that this was ES’s first plan, further to the merger of the two former organisations HMIE and Learning Teaching Scotland, who had both previously developed their own GLPs.
b)	Update on Communities Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DB presented his draft Strategy, which members agreed should form the basis of the new NGLP 17-22. – Focus on Communities and in particular what is actually achieved in Communities and what should underpin the planning for completion of this Strategy and also the NGLP 17-22. Discussion on the various methods that could be introduced to support this were discussed. – Devolving responsibility to Communities to come up with local projects and initiatives, in conjunction with other interested parties such as the Local Enterprise Companies, Arts and Youth Organisations. – This would be supported by new legislation being consulted on at the moment, such as the Islands Bill and Community Empowerment. – Measurement of success also an area to be developed, using currently held research information, and KPIs to reflect the new targeted investment in areas that have growth potential and are showing an appetite to increase Gaelic. – A result matrix to be developed to allow for easier analysis of the substantive progress from events and classes. – Further support for Gaelic Learners is required, with this sector being a priority for the new NGLP 17-22. – Welsh Language Planning experts to be consulted with, as there are strong similarities with their successful initiatives. Colin Baker and Merion Prys Jones to be invited to contribute to planning days. – The voluntary support from people in Gaelic communities is commendable. Local people to be identified in areas invested in Gaelic and developing projects, supported by Local Enterprise Companies and Bòrd na Gàidhlig. – Strengthening communities, educational attainment and economic impact should potentially all come together under this Strategy. – FOH to circulate useful work-plan template. – ENS thanked DB for a very useful and informative paper, which will form the baseline for discussion on work going forward on both finalising this strategy and will likely be a primary influence in developing the new NGLP 17-22.
c)	Update of Gaelic Drama Strategy
	Paper presented by DB, with discussion on the new tenders being invited for a new entity guiding Gaelic Arts, inviting full engagement from Creative Scotland. With shared initiatives and collaboration with MG ALBA, HIE and Communities themselves through projects, promotion using social media, the skills required for this sector should grow. BnG should be fully involved in facilitating an advisory group, involving all Arts organisations such as National Theatre Scotland and Creative Scotland, in order to ring fence budgets for Gaelic Arts. The role of the current NGAS forum to be clarified or developed in line with ongoing discussions with the main contributors in this new strategy. Sponsor Division to keep BnG apprised of any developments that may affect the best direction, on advice from Ministers. DB stated that the aim would be to have a more developed plan in place by the end of March, further to Spending Review impact being fully examined by all NDPBs, and that timing would be subject to advice from SG.

d)	Update on Adult Learners Strategy
	<p>Roddy MacLean appointed to finalise the Adult Learners Strategy, and scheduled to have a draft completed by 15/12. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommendations for budget use • 3 year implementation plan from April 2016 <p>BR will present a written report to the Board on this, which should take the policy from implementation through to delivery initiatives.</p>
e)	Update on Education Bill
	<p>BR updated members on significant amendments and debates. Stage 1 complete, and pleased to report the further strengthening the Bill through Amendment 30. A press release to be prepared welcoming this significant amendment.</p> <p>FOH thanked BR for his expertise and invaluable input.</p>
f)	Response to the Islands Bill
	<p>DB presented a draft response to the Bill. Amendments to be directed to DB ahead of the submission deadline.</p>
g)	National Gaelic Language Plan III 2017-2022
	<p>DB presented the planning brief for the new NGLP 17-22. AMF and SMI were thanked for their work on budget projections. Digital media to be used to engage with the public, and allowance for both formal and informal engagement to be encouraged.</p> <p>Due to the level of scrutiny required by SG legal advisors it was agreed that they should be more fully involved at each stage of the drafting process by our Sponsor team, in order to factor in and avoid any delays caused by these necessary safeguards.</p>
BnG-4-1516-03	CORPORATE MATTERS
a)	Corporate Performance
	PT1 – Finance Report
	<p>AMF presented Finance Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Procurement & Performance Officer and Finance Manager to amalgamate reports. – SG issued instructions that restrict commitment of currently uncommitted funds. – Management Team are to examine allocation of funds till 2015/16 financial year end. – Planning for the forthcoming two years has started, but will be dependent on the outcome of the SG Spending Review. – It is felt that funding for 2016/17 should be manageable within the models under consideration, but that greater savings will be required for 2017/18. – Increase in uncommitted funds questioned. This is due to PNE's decision not to take up the final quarter funding offered, and also due to Councils returning unspent GIFT funding. There should be no trouble however in allocating these funds to other budgets. – JM explained how common understanding is that initiatives that would help with meeting current objectives could benefit from unallocated funds. In particular GIFT funding from CNES being returned, as there was a legitimate reason for the funding being returned, as there is still a need for this funding towards new teacher recruitment. CNES Education Director to address issues related to this for next year. – Noted that 90% of KPIs are expected to be achieved by year end, subject to recruitment of a new GLP Officer.

	Communications
b)	<p>Update on Communications Strategy: AMF updated members on progress. Liaison with SG team in hand to further develop this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Website needs updating - SMI considering options. Avoiding duplication of data with other stakeholders is key, and effective interactive information should be sought. – Question has arisen at a recent seminar asking Who Represents the Gael? BnG and MG ALBA to discuss this issue collaboratively. BNA suggested this as an agenda item on the forthcoming joint meeting with MG ALBA for discussion. – As BnG is hampered as an NDPB (not a lobbyist nor NGO) in directly responding to media stories. Positive responses to be encouraged through our funded partners. – Regular written reports on progress to the Board.
c)	<p>Education Initiatives: SMI gave members an update on the Education initiatives. SG thanked for assisting with funding for this targeted campaign. Councils advice sought on the best marketing approach in their own areas. Noted that there has been growth in the numbers entering GME in each of the areas previously targeted. Members welcomed the positive outcomes from this campaign.</p>
BnG-4-1516-04	RISK MANAGEMENT
a)	<p>Strategic Risk Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Audit Committee to undertake responsibility for Strategic Risk monitoring. – Changes to the Interim Leadership team to be included on the register. The requirement for up to a further 6 month period of cover by a new interim-CEO to be highlighted. Chair to be fully involved with SG in the appointment of this interim post, as well as the permanent Ceannard post. – Production of NGLP 3 timings and costs to be added to the register.
BnG-4-1516-05	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS
a)	<p>Highland Council Extension to Funding Application for Early Years Project</p> <p>Board approved an application for additional funding from HC, as a necessary extension to assistance for a project that we currently support.</p>
b)	<p>Interim Leadership Team Report</p> <p>Board noted the information presented by the Interim Leadership team, and thanks extended for their combined efforts to bring the information together. From the recommendations relating to staffing model and board structure itself, useful discussion and debate took place. Current external and national influences will dictate any new direction taken. Agreed that BR will present a more detail report on the various options recommended, in order to allow the Board to make a more informed decision, where the impact of the Spending Review specifics could be incorporated. The option of a charitable organisation working at arm's-length and program working for staff in particular need further outlining.</p> <p>Recommendations for Committee rationalisation were approved, and new Terms of Reference are to be drawn up for consideration.</p>
	Date of Next Special Spending Review Meeting
	Members agreed to meet early in February to deal with Finance issues as a result of the Spending Review. Date to be advised.
	ENA as acting Chair took the opportunity to thank exiting member JG for her work on behalf of the Board, and JM who would be finishing as Interim CEO at the year end.