

Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Minutes of Board Meeting
St Kilda, Great Glen House, Inverness
Wednesday 02 March 2016: 14.00 – 17.00

Board Members

Allan MacDonald (Chair) (AD)
Elizabeth McAtear (ENS)
Donald MacLeod (DML)
Fiona O’Hanlon (FOH)
John MacLeod (IML)
Coll MacDonald (CD)

In attendance:

Bruce Robertson (BR)
Alasdair MacKinnon (AMF)
David Boag (DB)
Steven MacIver (SMI)
Douglas Andsell (SG) (DA)
Carol Johnson
Beathag Morrison (Translator)

New Members – Observing only

Donald MacSween (DMS)
Jim Whannel (JW)
Johan Smith (JNG)
Joy Dunlop (JD)
Mary MacInnes (MNA)

BnG-4-1516	PRELIMINARIES
1)	Chairs Welcome & Introductions
	<p>Chair welcomed everyone and for the benefit of the new members attendees gave a brief introduction and their role with the Board.</p> <p>BR gave an update on recent events regarding GME developments in Glasgow and Edinburgh, detailing the support and assistance given to the parent bodies involved. Chair thanked both BR and DA for their timeous efforts, which helped bring a satisfactory resolution.</p>
2)	Apologies
	No apologies were recorded.
3)	Minutes of Board Meeting and Matters Arising
	The minutes from the Board meeting on 3 December 2015 were approved subject to noted amendements.
4)	Matters arising:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update on Cli by BR. They are moving forward to rationalise their business model, in order to re-establish themselves, as they intend to make efforts to ensure they are in a better position in the future to support work in the Adult Learning sector. – Staff JEGS exercise is to be undertaken by Beamans.
5)	Declaration of Interests
	<p>Declarations of interest noted as follows: Item 8 (CNES) – DML, DNS, MNI</p>
6)	Committee Reports
	<p>Policy & Finance Committee: As acting Chair of this committee, CD updated the Board on the latest developments, including retained budget for 2016/17, allowing time to plan for the anticipated cuts in the 2017/18 core funding. Noted that the KPI targets have been achieved to 84%.</p>
	<p>Gaelic Usage Committee: DML updated the Board on the latest developments, including Plans panel progress, Education Bill and respective Guidance, Early Years, Teacher Recruitment and Lifelong Learning Strategy.</p>

	<p>Audit Committee: CD updated the Board, noting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – there were no major advisory notes from either internal auditor Norma MacKenzie, or external auditor Audit Scotland – that Paul Johnson, Director General at Scottish Government has current responsibility as Accountable Officer for Bòrd na Gàidhlig until such time as a new Ceannard and Accountable Officer is appointed – reporting of staff absence in annual report should include a mitigation clause for long term absence. – A full and detailed report has been requested for the Board in June on staff absence – Strategic Risk Register, whilst being monitored by ARMC, should still remain the responsibility of the Board itself and should be a standing agenda item at meetings.
BnG-4-1516	FINANCE
7)	Grant-in-Aid Settlement 2016/17 and 2017/18
	BR spoke to the GiA paper, explaining the delay in receiving our official letter being due to the Scottish Budget having been late. Information on GIFT and Teacher Recruitment, which are funded separately to the core funding, should also be with the Board shortly. Pleased that the forthcoming year's budget was a roll-forward of current position, and our team at Sponsor Division are thanked for their efforts on our behalf in securing the level of funding for this year. Leadership team will bring forward proposals for this transitional year ahead and planning for the anticipated reduction in 2017/18 of of 7-8%.
8)	Grant Awards
	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>DML, DMS & MMI left the room</i></p> <p>CNES Virtual eSchool – BR discussed the proposed eSchool project in partnership with CNES with members, answering questions and giving background to whats being seen by SG and other Educational bodies as a valuable pilot project. This eSchool initiative should assist in bridging the skills gap for Gaelic teachers over the next 5 years, whilst waiting for specialist teachers to emerge from training to meet demand in secondary subjects. Virement of funds for this project from underspend in Development has been approved by SG who are fully supportive of this new resource. This is not as an alternative to teacher recruitment in the Gaelic Education sector, but rather is being seen as creating an additional school in the Western Isles. Members asked that parties relating to the required infrastructure and technology in the Western Isles be consulted to ensure that all efforts are made to support the project. Funding was approved, with the suggestion that specific targets are incorporated in contracts, to show a growth in numbers participating in subjects due to the scheme. Regular progress reports would be expected at future Board meetings.</p> <p>CNES & Lews Castle College Mentoring Scheme – As an underpinning resource to the Lifelong Learning Strategy discussion on the operating model led to approval of funding. <i>DML, DMS, MMI returned to the meeting</i></p> <p>National Theatre of Scotland - Gaelic Team – Discussion on the proposed deployment of Arts underspend to establish a specific Gaelic team to encourage cross genre productions. Project funding approved and seen as a first step in establishing better connections with other key funders NTS and Creative Scotland.</p>
9)	Gaelic-medium Education Statutory Guidance
	BR gave progress update. Scottish MSPs have been written to and it has been established that they are largely supportive of Gaelic Education. NGESSG met regularly in the preparation of this statutory guidance, which fully underpins the new legislation, which they have now signed off. Once legal aspects have been approved, the draft guidance will be available to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for the formal consultation period of 6 weeks. Subject to feedback from this a final draft should be prepared for June Baord meeting for approval, subject to Royal assent of the Education Bill and all necessary legal checks being completed.

	<p>The Guidance will be seen as the main guidance resource tool for all areas of Gaelic Education. FOH thanked BR and Scottish Government for their diligent work in preparation of this Guidance.</p> <p>Noted that financial resource has been set aside to ensure the skills set is available to undertake an advisory role in Gaelic Education through a Standing Advisory Group, and through the appointment of someone with the appropriate qualification.</p> <p>Everyone invited to give their opinion and encourage others to do the same in feedback through the consultation process. Analysis will be dealt with quickly in order to be able to launch the Guidance as soon as possible.</p>
10)	Communications & Engagement Programme
	<p>Discussion on the importance of communications on every aspect of the work of the Board.</p> <p>Gaelic Awards – noted that Members had agreed by email to continue another year's funding of this event.</p>
11)	AOCB
	<p>Discussion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cross Party Meeting on 16th March – National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-22 Seminar on 17th March – CD leaving the Board in June due to work commitments elsewhere – Bilingualism to be promoted as a positive – BR & Chair to compile a piece on this and distribute by email to members. <p>With no further business Chair thanked all in attendance for their contribution and brought the meeting to a close.</p>

St Kilda, Great Glen House, Inverness
Thursday 03 March 2016: 09.00 – 13.00

<p>Board Members</p> <p>Allan MacDonald (Chair) (AD)</p> <p>Elizabeth McAtear (ENS)</p> <p>Donald MacLeod (DML)</p> <p>Fiona O'Hanlon (FOH)</p> <p>John MacLeod (IML)</p> <p>Coll MacDonald (CD)</p> <p>New Members – Observing only</p> <p>Donald MacSween (DMS)*</p> <p>Jim Whannel (JW) *</p> <p>Johan Smith (JNG) *</p> <p>Mary MacInnes (MNA) *</p>		<p>In attendance:</p> <p>Bruce Robertson (BR)</p> <p>Alasdair MacKinnon (AMF) *</p> <p>David Boag (DB) *</p> <p>Steven MacIver (SMI) *</p> <p>Douglas Andsell (SG) (DA)</p> <p>Carol Johnson</p> <p>Beathag Morrison (Translator)</p> <p>* In attendance from item 6 onwards.</p>	
BnG-4-1516	PRELIMINARIES – CLOSED SESSION		
1)	Chairs Welcome		
	Chair welcomed members to closed session.		
2)	Apologies		
	Noted that JD was unable to attend, as a new member observing, due to work commitments elsewhere.		

3)	Declaration of Interests
	Interest was declared as follows: Item 8 – CD, IML, DML, ENA
4)	Arms Length External Organisation
	<p>BR explained the cohes of the proposal, and the background of austerity and cuts which required consideration of this type of new direction, anticipating a need for a more strategic approach to a changing financial landscape. In part, the recently highlighted fragility of some of our delivery partners has also preceded this proposal.</p> <p>Possibilities of further funding streams could be explored for projects through the proposed ALEO which would be free to promote Gaelic language and culture, thus avoiding current constraints related to NDPB guidelines, which are tied directly to Ministerial direction.</p> <p>This scoping exercise would be to establish the benefits of such a proposal, compiling a draft remit and projection of results that could be expected. The newly established Spend to Save budget would provide funding for preparation of a brief. Members approved the scoping excercise funding, with further information to be required by Board in June.</p>
5)	Bòrd na Gàidhlig Structures
	<p>BR presented his report and recommendations, discussion took place. The board approved a two committee structure, comprising of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audit and Risk Management Committee 2. Strategic Planning & Delivery Committee, which would be supported by working groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Finance & Buidget Planning working group – Public Authority Gaelic Language Plans statutory working group <p>Also a Standing Education Advisory Group would be required to oversee the new responsibilities connected with the new Education Bill and related Guidance, with representation from the current NGSSG, Education sector experts, along with the Boards representatives from the National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-22 Group . Both of these working groups would report directly to the Board.</p> <p>It was agreed to schedule a day for members to fully look at the rules of engagement and remit for each Committee and Working Group. Responsibilities would be fleshed out, with individual members skills matched to need, to support the small staff team in delivery. Final decisions would follow thereafter. It is hoped to ensure the inclusion of the needs for communities in the new National Plan for Gaelic, this perhaps being a priority.</p> <p>In order to supply a sustainable framework the new staffing structure was also approved. This comprises of Ceannard and 2 senior posts as detailed in the report. HR implications to be investigated in terms of matching. The proposed Director of Gaelic Education post was welcomed, seen as supporting the responsibilities due from the forthcoming amended/new legislation. Also noted that the remit for IT should be not be part of the Marketing Managers function, but would be better placed with a specialised post, perhaps absorbed in the Information Officer’s post in the current structure.</p> <p>Noted that HR function is to be delivered by SNH from 1st April, as an addition to our Shared Service agreement.</p> <p>With all in agreement with the recommendations, BR authorised to proceed with the preparation of job descriptions.</p> <p>BR also recommended that a Voluntary Severance Policy be added to the Boards policy</p>

	<p>portfollio in order to offer the Ceannard some scope within staffing budget. This would be drawn up in line with SG recommendations and the Union to be consulted. Noted that this Policy could only be triggered by the Ceannard. Policy draft to be presented at the next Board meeting in June for information.</p>
	<p>* Staff and new Board members joined the meeting.</p>
6)	Lifelong Learning Strategy
	<p>DB talked the the paper presenting the draft Strategy prepared by Ruaraidh MacLean. This ties with the Mentoring Scheme approved previously by the Board. Colaborative opportunites are to be fully explored in order to launch this and ensure success. Focus on extending policies relating to the current 0-30 priority age group, and generally improve the learner journey. Whilst DB accepted that the current funding would not be sufficient to meet all the objectives of the strategy, it should be enough to attract joint funding from other organisations such as Skills Development Scotland. In relation to the main recommendation to employ a full time co-ordinator to liase with other interested parties, DB was asked to return to Board in June with a report detailing the medium to long-term implications of the post, and possible joint funding opportunities. BR asked members to note that funding for this post has been already anticipated in the budget for 2016/07.</p>
7)	National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-22
	<p>Measurement project of the success of the current plan will be finalised in May, and results will be presented to the Board in June. Planned seminar for 17th March discussed, with speakers prepared to provide guidance through their various topics, to help attendees engage with the process for preparation of the new Plan and to assist with providing suggestions for key ambitions and focus. We must ensure that we are in a listening mode during this key part of the development process . Timescales for preparation also discussed, and mechanisms for operational delivery.</p> <p>National Plan Working Group will have special responsibility for taking the development of the new plan forward, and this will be examined more fully in the proposed Board scoping days in May.</p>
8)	Budgets 2016/17 and 2017/18
	<p><i>NB: Members were invited to absent themselves from discussion on the parts of funding relating to their own declared areas of interest</i></p>
a)	<p>AMF presented the forthcoming years proposed budget. Confirmation that additional funding for GIFT and Teacher Recruitment is still awaited, but assurances that this should be forthcoming shortly. The increase in budget allocation for IT services was explained, as the current service was not fit for purpose, due to constraints on the shared service IT resource from SNH, and tenders are to be invited to provide fully comprehensive support.</p> <p>Budgets for 2016/17 were all approved.</p>
b)	<p>Funding to Gaelic Organisations and Projects for 2016-17:</p> <p>DB presented proposals for forthcoming years funding, showing the transitional year reduction as an efficiency measure. DB to inform the Gaelic Organisations of this 4.5% reduction. In response to a query on method of allocating funding, the Boards position in having inherited responsibility for funding these organisation at its inception from SG. We employ a robust method of measurement to ensure that funds are deployed fairly using appropriately agreed and pre-set criteria, in conjunction with our colleagues at SG. The issue of significant reserves with certain organisations was discussed, with this issue to be raised if applicable at annual discussion with the managment teams, as part of our monitoring process.</p> <p>All funding was approved as recommended, as per the paper submitted.</p> <p>Questions raised regarding the expenditure related to An Leanag, and a business case needs</p>

	<p>to be drawn up for both our own presence there and the current arrangement whereby the Board pays for the adjacent office as well.</p> <p>Faclair na Gàidhlig to be invited to make a presentation on their work so far to the Board at a future meeting.</p>
c)	<p>Budget Forecast for 2017/18</p> <p>Proposals presented were approved. Officers were thanked for preparation of such concise papers, with a marked improvement in the information being offered.</p>
9)	<p>ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS</p>
	<p>Members asked to be kept informed regarding the position with Education in Glasgow and Edinburgh.</p> <p>Islands Bill submission by Bòrd na Gàidhlig during informal session in December to be circulated to members.</p> <p>DA to convey thanks to his colleagues for the efforts in securing a good settlement for Bòrd na Gàidhlig for 2016/17.</p>
10)	<p>Date of Next Meeting 21 & 22nd June 2016 – Location to be verified.</p>
	<p>Members will be informed by email of possible dates and venues for these proposed options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Induction training day for new Board members in May, followed by a 2. Strategy day for all members, to look at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New structure for the Board itself – Remit of each Committee and working group – Membership through skills matching – New National Plan 3. Board meeting 21 & 22nd June - Explore the possibility of holding this in the community, perhaps in Islay. <p>Beathag Mhoireasdan was thanked for her assistance in provision of simultaneous translation.</p> <p>Chair thanked all for their input and attendance and brought the meeting to a close.</p>