



**Guidance on the Development of  
Gaelic Language Plans**

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## Foreword by the Chair, Bòrd na Gàidhlig



I am pleased to introduce this official guidance for the preparation of Gaelic Language Plans. Under the terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, Bòrd na Gàidhlig has been charged with identifying public bodies to develop plans. These organisations are integral to public life in Scotland and have a key role to play in the development of Gaelic.

Language Plans will reflect the aspirations of the *National Plan for Gaelic*, and will mean that Gaelic users can access some public services in their own tongue more often. It is also expected that authorities producing Plans will encourage people to use Gaelic when dealing with them, and will expand their organisation's Gaelic services and resources.

In time this should mean that there are more opportunities to communicate in Gaelic, more services through the medium of Gaelic, and a more visible promotion of the language such as signage. Bòrd na Gàidhlig also recognises that there are significant tourism and other business benefits to using Gaelic in signage.

It is important to emphasise that Gaelic Language Plans are not about forcing anything on anybody. On the contrary, they are about serving the needs of the Gaelic speaking customer and playing a part in helping sustain and develop Scotland's national language. This is about facilitation and not coercion. It is simply about creating opportunities for Gaelic speakers and those interested in Gaelic to use the language in as many situations as possible.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has identified public authorities which it will formally target between 2006 and 2009, with the selection being made on the basis of the potential impact these bodies could deliver to the vitality of Gaelic in the community and home; education at all levels; and the general community life of the Highlands and Islands area in particular.

We know, however, that many other organisations, public and private, are already working on their own Plans, independent of the formal process operated by the Bòrd but using this Guidance document as a template for promoting Gaelic. This is to be welcomed and shows the great interest in and support for Gaelic that exists across Scotland. The Bòrd welcomes such enthusiasm and determination and will offer as much support as possible to these organisations.

While this Guidance is a formal document that directs public bodies to the best way of developing Gaelic Language Plans, I think the casual reader will still find it of great interest because it demonstrates the progress that has been made in formalising and developing the Gaelic language and the status that it now has in public life across Scotland. I hope you will find this Guidance of great use in developing Gaelic Language Plans – this is the route map to a very special and important journey.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Matthew M MacIver". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Matthew M MacIver**  
Chair, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2007



## Section 1 :: Introduction

### Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 – Bòrd na Gàidhlig

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the 2005 Act”) was passed by the Scottish Parliament with the aim of securing the status of Gaelic in Scotland. The 2005 Act has three main and inter-related elements:

- ❖ it establishes a statutory Gaelic body, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (“the Bòrd”), to encourage the use and understanding of Gaelic, and to facilitate access to Gaelic and Gaelic culture, with the ultimate aim of working towards increasing the number of Gaelic speakers and extending the everyday use of the language
- ❖ it requires the development by the Bòrd of a *National Plan for Gaelic* (“the National Plan”) to promote the use and understanding of Gaelic, Gaelic education and Gaelic culture
- ❖ it gives the Bòrd authority to issue a statutory notice to any Scottish public authority, cross-border public authority or the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, requiring that authority to develop a Gaelic Language Plan setting out how it will use and enable the use of Gaelic within the operation of its relevant functions

## The purpose of this guidance

This guidance has been developed by the Bòrd under section 8 of the 2005 Act and approved by the Scottish Ministers. The guidance provides practical advice to public authorities on the development of their Gaelic Language Plans. Public authorities that have been issued with a notice by the Bòrd are required by section 3(5)(a) of the 2005 Act to have regard to this guidance.

The guidance sets out the steps that the Bòrd considers public authorities should follow when developing their Gaelic Language Plans. It specifies areas of Gaelic language service delivery, internal processes and policy development that they should consider for inclusion in their plans. It also identifies how they should seek to give effect to the priorities for Gaelic development articulated in the *National Plan*.\*

## Flexible application

The 2005 Act was designed to take into account the need for a flexible approach to Gaelic development in Scotland. This guidance has been developed in that spirit, and will enable the development of Gaelic Language Plans that are reasonable and proportionate according to the particular circumstances of individual public authorities. The Bòrd's long-term vision is for the substantial majority of public authorities in Scotland to be part of a national language-planning framework supporting the development of Gaelic, and for the level of Gaelic provision provided by those public authorities to increase incrementally over time.

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\* The *National Plan for Gaelic* can be obtained from [www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk](http://www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk)

## Gaelic Language Plans

The public sector has a vital role to play in ensuring that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland. A key element to enhancing the status, and in turn usage and acquisition, of Gaelic is the creation of conditions for its use in public life. All public authorities should plan for how they will interact with the public in Gaelic.

Public authorities can raise the profile of Gaelic by creating practical opportunities for its use. Gaelic Language Plans should assist those members of the public who may wish to use Gaelic in conducting their business with the public body. They should also assist employees of the public authority who may wish to use Gaelic in their work within the organisation.

By providing for the use of Gaelic in the provision of services as well as in internal operations, Gaelic Language Plans will increase the profile and visibility of the language, helping to increase its status. This will help create a sense amongst users of Gaelic that their language is valued by public authorities, and by the wider society in which they live. In order to help deliver Gaelic provision, Gaelic-language skills will become useful job-skills in an increasingly wide range of employments.

This will greatly enhance Gaelic users' perception of the usefulness of their language, and will create real incentives for increasing numbers of Gaelic speakers to pass on their language, for non-Gaelic speakers to learn it, and for all parents, Gaelic-speaking and non-Gaelic-speaking, to have their children educated in Gaelic.

## Proactively supporting Gaelic development

In the *National Plan*, the Bòrd makes clear that all bodies in Scotland have an important role in ensuring that Gaelic has a sustainable future and that they should proactively consider what they can do to support the language. Although this guidance document is aimed primarily at those authorities that have been formally issued with a statutory notice to develop a Gaelic Language Plan, the Bòrd would encourage any body that can make use of it to do so.

In the case of public authorities that have not yet been issued with a notice from the Bòrd, we would encourage all such bodies to proactively develop Gaelic policies or plans using this guidance as a basis for doing so. Such provision will serve as a useful prelude to the development of a formal Gaelic Language Plan. Public authorities that proactively develop policies or plans will still be required to go through a statutory process when issued a notice by the Bòrd under the terms of the 2005 Act.

The Bòrd does not have authority to issue notices to private bodies, voluntary bodies, or public bodies operating in Scotland that are not Scottish public authorities or cross-border public authorities. The Bòrd does recognise, however, that private sector firms (such as banks, road, rail and air transport organisations, telephone and telecommunications companies), voluntary sector organisations (such as churches and charities), and UK Government departments can all make an important contribution to Gaelic development. We would strongly encourage all such bodies to voluntarily develop Gaelic policies or plans or specific initiatives to extend the use of Gaelic. This guidance document provides an excellent basis for doing so, and we would encourage those bodies to make use of it. The Bòrd will provide advice and assistance on the development of Gaelic provision to any body that seeks it.

## Section 2 ::

# Issuing of statutory notices by Bòrd na Gàidhlig

**This section explains how Bòrd na Gàidhlig will decide which public authorities to issue a notice to.**

Section 3 of the 2005 Act gives the Bòrd authority to issue a statutory notice to any relevant public authority, requiring it to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan. The notice will take the form of a formal letter sent by the Bòrd to the Chief Executive or equivalent of a public authority. Section 3(2) of the 2005 Act specifies that the notice must:

- ❖ make clear that the authority is required to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan
- ❖ specify a date by which the plan must be submitted to the Bòrd for approval, giving the public authority at least 6 months to prepare the plan
- ❖ inform the authority of its rights to request a review or appeal against the notice (further information on this process is set out in the Annex)

### Statutory criteria

In deciding which public authorities to issue notices to, there are specific statutory criteria that the Bòrd must have regard to. These criteria, which are set out in section 3(3) of the 2005 Act, will help the Bòrd prioritise which authorities to issue notices to. The Bòrd will consider the extent to which the authority could contribute to the implementation of priority areas of the *National Plan*, the extent to which Gaelic is used in the authority's area of operation, the potential for the authority to develop the use of Gaelic, and any representations received by the authority in connection with Gaelic services. These criteria, described below, can also assist public authorities with the question of when they are likely to be issued with a notice to develop a Gaelic Language Plan. The Bòrd will be happy to provide public authorities with an estimate of when they are likely to be issued with a notice to prepare a plan.



(i) **National Plan for Gaelic – section 3(3)(a)**

The 2005 Act requires the Bòrd to have regard to the most recent *National Plan* approved by the Scottish Ministers under section 2 of the 2005 Act. This means that the Bòrd will take into account not only the number of Gaelic users in an authority's area of operation, but the ability of particular public authorities to deliver priorities for Gaelic development identified in the *National Plan*. The first *National Plan* was approved by the Scottish Ministers and published by the Bòrd on 26 March 2007. The *National Plan* can be obtained from the Bòrd's website or can be requested in hard copy.

(ii) **The extent to which the Gaelic language is used and the potential for a public authority to develop the use of Gaelic - section 3(3)(b)(i) and (ii)**

The 2005 Act also requires the Bòrd to have regard to the extent to which Gaelic is used by persons in relation to whom the functions of the public body are exercisable and the potential that the authority has to develop the use of Gaelic. In this regard, the Bòrd will endeavour to estimate the potential demand there may be for the use of Gaelic in respect of that body's functions.

Since relatively few public authorities presently offer any services through the medium of Gaelic it will not be possible to measure such demand directly. Therefore, we will try to estimate potential demand by reference to relevant indicators for which we do have reliable information. For example, we will consider matters such as the number of persons having Gaelic language skills who reside in the area in which the public authority exercises its functions, as indicated by the most recent census.

Linked with this, the Bòrd will have regard to the likely potential capacity of a public authority to use Gaelic in the exercise of its functions. We have already noted that relatively few public authorities presently offer services through the medium of Gaelic. However, we would expect that a public authority that already uses at least some Gaelic in the exercise of its functions, and/or has a policy with respect to the use of Gaelic, will be in a better position to develop the use of Gaelic than a public authority with no experience. We will also consider the number of people with Gaelic language skills who reside in the area served by the public authority, the concentrations of persons having

Gaelic language skills in relation to the provision of the public authority's services to the public, and the percentage that such persons form in the population of the area served by the public authority.

In determining which public authorities should be served with a notice, the Bòrd will put considerable emphasis on those public authorities that serve comparatively large numbers of people having Gaelic language skills. We will also consider the profile of the particular public authority in Scotland's various Gaelic communities, and amongst persons having Gaelic language skills more generally.

Generally speaking, the larger the numbers, the greater the concentrations, and the higher the percentages of persons having Gaelic language skills, the greater is the potential for the public authority to develop the use of Gaelic, and the greater the likelihood that the Bòrd would request that particular public authority to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan. Most national public authorities should anticipate being issued with a notice by the Bòrd at a relatively early stage.

To summarise, the Bòrd will initially be concentrating on those areas where use of the language in everyday life is more commonplace, and whilst in some cases the potential for development in those areas may not be as great, a notice is likely to be issued early in the process. The rationale is to secure continuing day to day use of the language and to avoid decline. The Bòrd will also consider issuing notices in the near future to those bodies where it is anticipated that significant growth potential can be achieved. In this instance there may be a comparatively small base of persons with Gaelic language skills.

(iii) **Guidance given by the Scottish Ministers – section 3(3)(d)**

The Scottish Ministers have not yet issued guidance on this matter under the 2005 Act.

## Section 3 ::

# Preparing to develop a Gaelic Language Plan

**This section sets out issues that public authorities could consider before they embark upon the process of creating their Gaelic Language Plan.**

## Seeking advice and assistance from Bòrd na Gàidhlig

The Bòrd is required to and will be happy to offer support and advice to public authorities in the preparation of their Gaelic Language Plan, in addition to what is set out in this guidance. The Bòrd can also provide information on numbers and types of Gaelic users in areas served by public authorities. Public authorities should utilise this information in preparing their plans as this is information the Bòrd will have regard to when it comes to consider a plan that has been submitted to it for approval.

We would encourage cooperation where possible between public authorities that exercise similar functions. This could include bodies such as local authorities or health care trusts. Such public authorities can be expected to face many of the same sorts of challenges in providing services to the public in Gaelic and in using Gaelic in their internal processes. Cooperation will result in useful information exchanges, the sharing of best practice and the identification of economies of scale, such as in the joint production of forms, information brochures, leaflets, training schemes etc.

The Bòrd also encourages cooperation between public authorities that are based in the same area or which serve roughly the same section of the public. We believe that a concerted local approach by a range of public authorities can have a positive effect on the use of Gaelic in a locality. The Bòrd will seek to identify opportunities for cooperation, and will encourage the development of links between public authorities that are developing Gaelic Language Plans. The Bòrd will take such joint working opportunities into account when assessing the potential for growth of the language. It may be that one body acting on its own will have little potential for growth, but two bodies in the same area working together may have greater potential. In such circumstances both bodies should expect to receive a notice at the same time, or within a short period of each other.

## A Gaelic Language Plan working group

The Bòrd would suggest that in some situations it may be helpful for a public authority to consider the establishment of a Gaelic Language Plan working group with responsibility for preparing and coordinating the implementation of the authority's Gaelic Language Plan. This working group could include senior officers from each major department or division in the public authority.

## Internal language capacity audit

The Bòrd would also suggest that public authorities conduct an internal audit to determine their existing capacity to deliver services to the public and to assist with the implementation of their plan. We consider such an audit to be useful in enabling a public authority to determine the measures that will need to be taken in order to develop the capacity necessary to deliver its plan.

We would stress that the purpose of developing a Gaelic Language Plan is to expand Gaelic language provision, and all public authorities will be expected to illustrate the extent to which they will provide increased provision and services from the level they currently offer. The Bòrd recognises that changes in the level of Gaelic language provision in Scotland will not occur immediately, and that in many cases time will be needed in order for the public authority to equip itself appropriately to deliver increased Gaelic provision.

The Bòrd would be happy to provide advice on the conduct of an authority's internal audit, and would recommend in particular that the following issues be considered:

- ❖ whether the public authority already has a Gaelic policy and if so what its scope is and how it is implemented
- ❖ the linguistic profile of the authority, including numbers of employees who speak, read, write or understand Gaelic, and the level of their language skills
- ❖ the services that are already provided, or the internal processes that are already conducted, through the medium of Gaelic

- ❖ the creation of an inventory of all existing Gaelic and bilingual publications such as forms, reports, leaflets, internal and external signs, letterheads, translation and interpretation capacity

## Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund

To assist public authorities in expanding the level of Gaelic language provision that they make available, the Scottish Ministers have provided the Bòrd with a ring-fenced Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund, currently totalling £1.4 million per annum. For as long as the Bòrd has access to this funding stream, public authorities that are issued with a notice to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan will be eligible to bid for assistance from the fund in line with the Bòrd's principles for its use. The basic premise on which the funding will be provided is that it will be used to initiate new Gaelic provision, with a requirement for public authorities to subsequently mainstream those costs.

Public authorities may face certain one-off costs associated with capacity building, and these will generally be the sorts of expenditures for which assistance could be available from the fund. Examples would be templates of bilingual and Gaelic forms and accompanying explanatory material, templates of bilingual and Gaelic stationery, signage, vehicle livery and other indicators for the public, the production of bilingual websites and bilingual and Gaelic web pages, and facilities for translation and interpretation. Staffing costs relating to the provision of services will not generally be eligible for an award under the fund. The Bòrd will publish a policy on the use of the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund.

## Section 4 ::

# Statutory considerations in the preparation of a Gaelic Language Plan

**This section explains the duties which the 2005 Act places on public authorities that have been issued with a notice by the Bòrd, and how those bodies should seek to give effect to those duties.**

Section 3(5) of the 2005 Act specifies that, in addition to this guidance and any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers, a public authority must have regard to a number of statutory criteria when preparing its Gaelic Language Plan. The criteria are similar to those set out in section 2 of this guidance, but they serve a different purpose here and should be considered again in this context.

### (i) **National Plan for Gaelic – section 3(5)(a)**

The *National Plan*, developed by the Bòrd as a requirement of section 2 of the 2005 Act, was approved by the Scottish Ministers and published by the Bòrd on 26 March 2007. The *National Plan* sets out a comprehensive range of actions that touch on the home, community, workplace, public life and the education sector, which are necessary to ensure Gaelic has a sustainable future. The *National Plan* makes clear that all relevant public bodies in Scotland have a role to play in its implementation.

Public authorities must have regard to the *National Plan* in preparing their Gaelic Language Plans. Public authorities should therefore consider what steps they can take to deliver relevant development priorities identified in the *National Plan* and set out in their Gaelic Language Plan how they will assist in their implementation. Section 7 of this guidance provides an overview of the main themes that public authorities should have regard to.

(ii) **Extent to which the Gaelic language is used by persons in a public authority's area of operation and potential for a public authority to develop the use of Gaelic – sections 3(5)(b) and (c)**

Public authorities must have regard to the use of Gaelic in their area of operation, and to the potential for its development. The Bòrd recognises that both will vary considerably depending on the linguistic landscape of the area that the public authority serves. We are of the view that public authorities should, whatever the particular linguistic landscape they face, prepare their Gaelic Language Plan with a view to facilitating the use of Gaelic to the greatest possible extent that they reasonably can. In our view, public authorities across Scotland have the potential to support Gaelic development in some way and we would encourage innovative and novel proposals for how they can do so.

(iii) **Representations made to the public authority – section 3(5)(d)**

Public authorities must take into account any representations made to them in relation to their use of Gaelic. Section 3(6) of the 2005 Act also requires public authorities to consult persons appearing to them to have an interest in the development of their Gaelic Language Plan. To comply with these statutory requirements the Bòrd recommends that public authorities conduct a public consultation exercise.

It is accepted that each authority will have its own internal procedures on conducting public consultations. The Bòrd would be happy to further provide advice to authorities about consulting on their Gaelic Language Plan, and suggests that the following strategies could be considered and used when appropriate and justified by the circumstances:

- ❖ a consultation period of about 6-12 weeks to ensure that members of the public have sufficient time and opportunity to make their views known

- ❖ a draft of the plan published bilingually in Gaelic and English with hard copies available. An electronic copy should be made accessible in a prominent place on the authority's website
- ❖ a bilingual press release announcing the beginning of the consultation process, brought to the attention of all relevant media outlets. The public authority should endeavour to make available a Gaelic-speaker to conduct media interviews with Gaelic media
- ❖ other channels for consulting the public may include local radio stations, placing copies of the draft plan in their local offices, in libraries and health centres, issuing leaflets, using noticeboards, and using electronic means of communications. A particularly effective way of raising the profile of the consultation is to include a bilingual strap-line in e-mails sent by employees and officers of the public body notifying recipients of the existence of the draft plan
- ❖ a programme of public meetings, widely advertised with the outcomes recorded

Public authorities should prepare a report on their consultation exercise, summarising the outcomes, the main themes that emerged, and summaries of the feedback obtained at public and employee meetings. The report should also describe the changes, if any, that the public authority has made to its draft plan in response to the consultation. A copy of this report should be provided to the Bòrd when the authority's Gaelic Language Plan is submitted for approval. This will assist the Bòrd when considering whether to approve a plan or to suggest modifications to a plan that has been submitted to it. The Bòrd is statutorily required in the approval process to have regard to representations that have been made to the public authority in the preparation of its Gaelic Language Plan.

## Equal respect

The 2005 Act requires the Bòrd to exercise its functions in such a way as to secure the status of Gaelic as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to English. In preparing this guidance, the 2005 Act requires the Bòrd to take the principle of equal respect into account, and the Bòrd in turn expects that authorities will demonstrate in their plans how the principle will be achieved and maintained in practice.

The principle of equal respect was incorporated into the 2005 Act by Parliament as a positive statement about the value and worth of Gaelic, in recognition of the fact that Gaelic users aspire to use Gaelic as normally as possible in their lives, that there should be a generosity of spirit towards Gaelic across Scotland, and that the language should not suffer from any lack of respect either at an individual or corporate level. It was also recognised that the principle needed to be sufficiently flexible to take account of the differing use of Gaelic across Scotland and that its practical application would be influenced by a range of factors, such as the numbers of Gaelic users served by a public authority, the potential for further development of the authority's Gaelic services, guidance on Gaelic matters given under the 2005 Act and representations made from members of the public.

Giving Gaelic equal respect does not therefore automatically mean identical treatment for Gaelic and English, or that a particular level of Gaelic provision must be made available in all circumstances. Instead, public authorities should endeavour, whatever the particular linguistic landscape they face, to be supportive and generous to Gaelic development and to prepare their Gaelic Language Plans with a view to facilitating the use of Gaelic to the greatest extent that is appropriate to their individual circumstances. Public authorities should not take a minimalist approach to Gaelic development, but 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 to interact with them through the medium of Gaelic. Public authorities should also seek to expand over time the level of Gaelic provision that they provide. When delivering services in Gaelic, they should endeavour to ensure they are of a comparable standard and quality as those they provide in English.





## Section 5 ::

# Structuring a Gaelic Language Plan

**This section provides guidance to public authorities on how they should structure their Gaelic Language Plans.**

A Gaelic Language Plan is a statement of an authority's commitment to Gaelic and what users of the services of a particular authority can expect from that authority. It is therefore important that commitments are clear and that Gaelic users can understand what the authority has agreed to do to respond to the needs of the Gaelic language community. The development of Gaelic Language Plans should follow broadly similar lines, and the following elements in particular should feature.

### Section headings

#### **Cover**

The cover should indicate the name of the public authority, that the document is a Gaelic Language Plan prepared under section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, and the date it was approved by the Bòrd.

#### **The 2005 Act and the issuing of a notice**

This introductory section should describe briefly the 2005 Act, the purpose behind the issuing of the notice and what an authority must have regard to in its preparation. There should also be a statement that the authority will seek to give effect to the principle that the Gaelic and English languages should be accorded equal respect.

#### **Description of the public authority**

This section should describe the functions of the public authority, its duties, its organisational structure, location of offices, and the public it serves.



### **Gaelic in the authority's area of operation**

This section should describe the public authority's understanding of the levels of use and interest in Gaelic in the area of its operation, and its potential for development.

### **Core commitments**

This section, drawing from section 6 of this guidance, should describe how the public authority will use Gaelic in relation to its internal processes, such as corporate identity, communications, publications and staff matters, and how Gaelic will be used in any of the services the public authority delivers. As required by section 3(4)(b) of the 2005 Act, this section must provide a timetable for the implementation of individual commitments.

### **Helping implement the *National Plan for Gaelic***

This section, drawing from section 7 of this guidance, should describe how the authority will help implement relevant priority areas identified in the *National Plan*.

### **Monitoring implementation of the plan**

This section should describe the processes that the authority will put in place to monitor implementation of its Gaelic Language Plan, and the process it will follow to review it within the statutory five-year period set by the 2005 Act.

### **Authority contacts**

The contact details of the senior officer with responsibility for the preparation, delivery and monitoring of the plan should be included, and the contact details of any relevant officers in individual service delivery areas.

### **Language preference**

A Gaelic Language Plan should recognise that enabling the public to use the Gaelic language is a matter of good practice and that members of the public can often express their views and needs better in that language. Plans should also recognise that Gaelic may be a person's preferred mode of communication irrespective of their ability in Gaelic relative to English or any other language. Employees of the public authority should be informed of the possibilities for using Gaelic in the workplace, and should be proactively encouraged to take advantage of such possibilities where possible.

The Bòrd will be happy to provide further advice about the structure of a Gaelic Language Plan as the authority begins the process of developing it. The Bòrd would also be happy to offer assistance in developing the content of the different elements of the plan.

## Section 6 ::

# Core commitments of a Gaelic Language Plan

**This section provides guidance on the core commitments which public authorities should consider for inclusion in their Gaelic Language Plans.**

### Public authorities and the development of the Gaelic language

The Bòrd considers the public sector to have a vital role to play in ensuring that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland. One of the key aspects to normalising the use of Gaelic is in creating the conditions for its use in public life. Alongside the other key goals of the Bòrd – an expanding Gaelic education sector, a thriving Gaelic arts and culture sector, supporting Gaelic speaking communities and increasing the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland – public authorities need to plan for how they will interact with Gaelic speakers.

The *National Plan* identifies a range of measures designed to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland. The preparation of the *National Plan* was guided by four well-established language planning concepts, and these are also relevant to the preparation of plans by public authorities:

*Language Usage – to encourage greater use of Gaelic, to provide opportunities to use the language and to promote access to Gaelic forms of expression*

Through the provision of a greater range of services to the public through the medium of Gaelic, and by providing their own staff with greater possibilities to use Gaelic in the conduct of their jobs, public authorities can significantly increase opportunities to use Gaelic.

*Language Status – to increase the visibility and audibility of Gaelic, to enhance its recognition and to create a positive image for Gaelic in Scottish public life*

Public authorities can play an important role in increasing the visibility of Gaelic by, for example, using Gaelic on signage, letterheads and on their websites.

*Language Acquisition – to increase the number of Gaelic speakers by ensuring the language is passed on and by securing effective opportunities for learning Gaelic*

The key areas in which the Bòrd considers authorities need to focus are on school education, the home and adult learning. In some cases the increased Gaelic provision an authority provides may stimulate additional demand for services in Gaelic and create added interest for Gaelic to be learned and passed on.

*Language Corpus – to strengthen the relevance and consistency of Gaelic and to promote research into the language*

The expanded use of Gaelic in the delivery of services and in corporate identities is likely to trigger the development of new terminology in Gaelic, ensuring that users of Gaelic are equipped to deal with all aspects of daily life.

## Gaelic Language Plans and a public authority's corporate functions

The 2005 Act states that a Gaelic Language Plan must set out the measures which an authority will take in relation to the use of Gaelic in connection with the exercise of its functions. The Bòrd has identified four core areas that it wishes public authorities to address when preparing their plans.

**Identity:** corporate identity  
signage

**Communications:** reception  
telephone  
mail and e-mail  
forms  
public meetings  
complaint procedures

**Publications:** public relations and media  
printed material  
websites  
exhibitions

**Staffing:** training  
language learning  
recruitment  
advertising

Each of these four corporate functions, and the categories within them, can play an important role in raising the profile and visibility of Gaelic and of providing a service for Gaelic speakers and learners. Further explanation of their importance to Gaelic development is provided in the tables at the end of this section.

## Developing Gaelic Language Plans that are reasonable and proportionate

The Bòrd recognises that Gaelic Language Plans will differ depending on the functions of individual public authorities and where they operate in Scotland, and in terms of the number of Gaelic speakers and the potential for the development of Gaelic in their area. Consequently, we do not think it is possible to be precise about the specific content for individual public authorities. We are committed to working with authorities to achieve Gaelic Language Plans that are reasonable and proportionate according to their individual circumstances.

As described in section 3 of this guidance, and in line with the statutory criteria that public authorities must have regard to under the 2005 Act, the Bòrd's general expectation is that in those geographical locations in which the percentages or numbers of Gaelic speakers is greater, the scope of the Gaelic Language Plan of the public authority will be wider and the level of commitments in it will be stronger.

## Identifying core commitments to include in a Gaelic Language Plan

The identity, communication, publication and staffing strategies of public authorities all offer the potential to support Gaelic development. The Bòrd would like to encourage authorities to consider within these functions where they could make a contribution to raising the profile of Gaelic and in promoting its use. To help public authorities in this task, we have identified examples of core commitments that public authorities should consider for inclusion in their plans. In recognition of the varying levels of Gaelic provision that may be achievable in different areas of the country, we have sought to provide different levels of commitment within each internal process or service delivery area. These examples are intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive.

To help guide public authorities in their approach to the level of Gaelic provision they should seek to deliver, and to determine which commitments might be suitable for inclusion in their plan, we have identified four broad categories of expected Gaelic language provision below. Ultimately, it is a matter for the authority concerned to determine an acceptable level of provision having regard to the criteria in the 2005 Act, this guidance, and advice provided by the Bòrd. Since the 2005 Act requires public authorities to submit their Gaelic Language Plans to the Bòrd for consideration and approval, we would be happy to discuss with public authorities at an early stage which level of expected provision we believe is applicable to their circumstances.

### *Levels of Gaelic language provision*

- (i) for public authorities that operate in areas where persons who understand, speak, read or write Gaelic form a majority of the population, the expectation is that the public authority will work towards, within a reasonable timescale and having regard to its particular circumstances, creating the conditions in which Gaelic can be used across all of its services to the public, and in which any employee who wants to use Gaelic in the execution of their duties can do so. These authorities should endeavour to identify a comprehensive range of commitments to include in their Gaelic Language Plan, most of which may
- be of a relatively high level, to ensure Gaelic is given a high profile and to provide a variety of means by which Gaelic speakers will be encouraged and enabled to interact with the authority through the medium of Gaelic
- (ii) for public authorities whose areas of operation include districts in which persons who understand, speak, read or write Gaelic form a majority of the population, the expectation is that the public authority will work towards, within a reasonable timescale and having regard to its particular circumstances, creating the conditions in which Gaelic can be used across services to the public from offices and units based in those districts, and that other services provided from outwith those districts (including head office services) to persons residing in those districts should be available in Gaelic. These authorities should endeavour to identify a broad range of commitments to include in their Gaelic Language Plans, some of which may be at a relatively high level. In addition to taking steps to raise the profile of Gaelic, particular consideration should be given to identifying a broad range of service delivery areas where Gaelic speakers will be encouraged and enabled to interact with the authority through the medium of Gaelic
- (iii) for public authorities that serve districts in which persons who understand, speak, read or write Gaelic do not form a majority of the population, but are present in significant numbers or percentages or in significant concentrations, the expectation is that the public authority will work towards, within a reasonable timescale and having regard to its particular circumstances, providing services in Gaelic which those speakers are more likely to access. These authorities should endeavour to identify a range of commitments to include in their Gaelic Language Plan. In addition to taking steps to raise the profile of Gaelic, particular consideration should be given to identifying specific service delivery areas where Gaelic speakers can be encouraged and enabled to interact with the authority through the medium of Gaelic

- (iv) public authorities in all other areas, where there are low percentages of Gaelic speakers and where significant Gaelic provision may not be possible, should still endeavour to work towards, within a reasonable timescale and having regard to its particular circumstances, identifying service areas in which some Gaelic provision can be made available, and to identify policy measures which can be taken to assist in the creation of Gaelic language environments, such as schools, community centres and other locally-based institutions and events. While the initial focus of these authorities may be in taking steps to enhance the status of Gaelic and in building capacity to support Gaelic development in other ways, they should still seek as a starting point to identify any ways in which Gaelic speakers can be encouraged and enabled to interact with the authority through the medium of Gaelic

These broad categories are intended to act as a guide only. The Bòrd appreciates that the development of Gaelic Language Plans will need to be approached on a case by case basis and that authorities may include differing levels of commitments across a range of levels depending on their specific circumstances. The Bòrd also recognises that in many cases there will be a need to build capacity before services can be delivered through the medium of Gaelic.

The tables below set out the four main corporate functions to be considered in the preparation of a Gaelic Language Plan. These are then subdivided into specific functions on the left-hand side, with examples provided on the right-hand side to indicate the potential commitments for inclusion in a public authority's Gaelic Language Plan. The Bòrd will prepare and make available further detailed advice on these areas over time to assist public authorities with their implementation.

While it is unlikely that authorities, having had regard to the 2005 Act criteria and the broad levels of provision identified above, will determine that none of the examples provided below are appropriate to their circumstances, it may be the case that they consider only some to be appropriate for inclusion in their first Gaelic Language Plan. The Bòrd would stress that the examples given are intended to be illustrative only and are not exhaustive. The Bòrd would expect all of the four corporate functions it has identified to be represented in some way in the Gaelic Language Plans of all public authorities. All authorities should, therefore, consider what they can do within each broad function and come up with alternative and/or additional commitments that have the potential for supporting Gaelic development in their area. The Bòrd will provide further illustrative examples for possible inclusion in Gaelic Language Plans in the light of experience.

## Identity

### Function

#### *Corporate identity*

The presence of Gaelic in the corporate identity of a public authority can greatly enhance the visibility of the language, and makes an important statement by a public authority about how Gaelic is valued and how it will be given recognition.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how Gaelic will be used in their corporate identity.

➔ Examples of what the different elements of that policy might be are:

- ❖ the use of some Gaelic in selected stationery, badges, passes and vehicle livery\*
- ❖ the use of Gaelic slogans and strap-lines
- ❖ Gaelic incorporated into corporate logo
- ❖ fully-bilingual treatment of all stationery, badges, passes and vehicle livery\*

\* The Bòrd would encourage all public authorities to ensure that they consider the use of Gaelic when, for example, updating vehicle livery or stationery. Introducing Gaelic at this point can often be achieved at marginal cost.

#### *Signage (internal and external)*

As with corporate identity, the use of Gaelic in signage can greatly enhance the visibility of Gaelic and makes an important statement about the status of the language. Developing the use of Gaelic through signage can also enrich the vocabulary of Gaelic users and contribute to the development of the language.

➔ Authorities should consider developing a policy for how Gaelic will be used in signage for which they are responsible. Examples of what the different elements of that policy might be are:

- ❖ the use of Gaelic in selected internal and external (particularly an authority's most prominent) signs
- ❖ the use of Gaelic in multilingual signs and plaques
- ❖ the use of Gaelic in temporary signs
- ❖ a predominantly or fully bilingual approach to the use of Gaelic in internal and external signage throughout the authority

## Communications

### Function

#### Reception

The use of Gaelic at the initial point of contact that members of the public have with a public authority increases the audible presence of the language, and contributes to the sense that the use of Gaelic is possible and welcome. In addition to raising the profile of the language, it also creates opportunities for its practical use and encourages members of the public to use Gaelic in subsequent dealings with the public authority.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how Gaelic will be used in any reception facilities they provide. Examples of what the different elements of that policy might be are:

- ❖ the development of a guidance note on Gaelic issues provided to staff
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat enquiries from Gaelic speakers
- ❖ selected staff to offer visitors a welcome in Gaelic
- ❖ selected staff to deal with members of the public who would prefer to communicate in Gaelic
- ❖ Gaelic speaking reception staff available and identified to members of the public

#### Telephone

The use of Gaelic in interactions with the authority by telephone is important in creating practical opportunities for the use of the language, and in contributing to the sense that its use is possible and welcome.

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how Gaelic will be used in telephone communications. Examples of what the different elements of that policy might be are:

- ❖ the development of a guidance note on Gaelic issues provided to authority staff
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat calls from Gaelic speakers
- ❖ the designation of an authority officer who will handle Gaelic enquiries
- ❖ the use of Gaelic welcomes, in answer machines or in automated systems
- ❖ when no Gaelic speaker available, calls returned by a Gaelic speaking member of staff where that is the preference of the caller
- ❖ the provision of a dedicated line specifically for calls from Gaelic speakers



## Communications (continued)

### Function

#### *Mail and email*

The use of Gaelic in mail and email to and from a public authority enables the use of Gaelic in two important means of communication. Its use in these environments provides opportunities for Gaelic speakers to use Gaelic in a wide range of situations.



### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how Gaelic will be used in mail and email.

Examples of what the different elements of that policy might be are:

- ❖ a commitment to promote a supportive attitude to Gaelic throughout the authority
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat enquiries from Gaelic-speakers
- ❖ a commitment given to accept communications in Gaelic
- ❖ a commitment given that written communications received in Gaelic will receive a reply in Gaelic within an agreed timescale
- ❖ guidelines established for the circumstances in which Gaelic or bilingual correspondence will be used when initiating (rather than responding) to correspondence, such as the initiation of correspondence in Gaelic with those individuals and organisations known to prefer correspondence in Gaelic



## Communications (continued)

### Function

#### Forms

Enabling the use of Gaelic on the forms of public authorities can greatly enhance opportunities for the use of the language. The presence of Gaelic in a wide range of Gaelic forms, or in bilingual forms, can also greatly enhance the visibility and prestige of the language. The preparation of Gaelic versions of forms, applications and similar documents, will assist in expanding the range of Gaelic terminology and the awareness of the Gaelic speaking public of such terminology, helping the development of the language itself.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use and enable the use of Gaelic in relation to forms for which they are responsible. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ a commitment to promote a supportive attitude to Gaelic throughout the authority
- ❖ a commitment to accept forms completed in Gaelic, unless there are reasons why that is not possible (where there are reasons these must be clearly stipulated)
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat forms from Gaelic users
- ❖ guidelines established for the circumstances in which Gaelic or bilingual correspondence will be used when initiating (rather than responding to) correspondence
- ❖ the issuing of a comprehensive range of forms and supporting material in Gaelic or in bilingual format

## Communications (continued)

### Function

#### *Public meetings*

The use of Gaelic in public meetings provides a key means by which Gaelic speakers can express their views in the language of their choice and helps promote the audibility of Gaelic in a wider range of settings.



### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use and enable the use of Gaelic in public meetings. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ a commitment to promote a supportive attitude towards Gaelic throughout the authority
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat communications from Gaelic speakers
- ❖ a commitment to ensure that people who are attending selected public authority meetings are able to contribute through the medium of Gaelic or English, and to let them know in advance that they are able to do so
- ❖ interpretation facilities in relevant circumstances made available
- ❖ guidelines established for the circumstances in which meetings will be held in Gaelic, such as the designation of public meetings at which Gaelic will be the language of communication, and the provision of interpretation facilities for non-Gaelic speakers

#### *Complaints procedure*

In addition to creating practical opportunities for the use of Gaelic, the establishment of a complaints procedure that is receptive to the use of Gaelic affirms the authority's commitment to the use of Gaelic and to providing a quality service to those members of the public who prefer to express themselves through Gaelic.



Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will enable the use of Gaelic in complaints procedures. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ complaints about Gaelic issues, in English or Gaelic, handled in a sensitive manner
- ❖ guidance given to staff on how to treat complaints received in Gaelic
- ❖ publication of the details of the authority's complaints procedure in Gaelic and English

## Publications

### Function

#### *Public relations and media*

The use of Gaelic in the media helps demonstrate a public authority's commitment to making important information available through the medium of Gaelic, as well as enhancing the visibility and status of the language.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use Gaelic in connection with public relations and the media. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ a commitment to promote a supportive attitude towards Gaelic throughout the authority
- ❖ reference made to the body's Gaelic Language Plan and Gaelic provision in notes to editors in relevant press releases.
- ❖ Gaelic or bilingual versions of selected press releases to be made available
- ❖ where appropriate and reasonably practicable, Gaelic speakers to be made available to deal with Gaelic media enquiries and interviews

#### *Printed material*

The use of Gaelic in a range of printed material can assist Gaelic development in a variety of ways. It helps increase the visibility of the language, it enhances Gaelic's status by being used in high profile publications, and it can help develop new, and enhance existing, terminology.

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use Gaelic in any printed material that they publish. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ the inclusion of information about Gaelic development issues where relevant to the authority's functions
- ❖ the incorporation of Gaelic elements (e.g. Gaelic names, bilingual captions, Gaelic summary) in non-Gaelic publications
- ❖ Gaelic versions or bilingual production of booklets or leaflets if the material is judged to be of particular interest to Gaelic speakers, or where it is of national significance
- ❖ consideration given to the circumstances in which Gaelic or bilingual publications will be considered as the default position of the authority

## Publications (continued)

### Function

#### Websites

As more people access information about public authorities through their websites, making provision for the use of Gaelic can significantly enhance the status and visibility of the language.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will make use of Gaelic in connection with any websites for which they are responsible. Examples of what might be included in that policy are:

- ❖ a commitment to provide information on Gaelic matters on the authority's website
- ❖ the use of Gaelic and English web addresses to direct visitors to the authority's homepage
- ❖ a Gaelic element of the authority's home page to be developed
- ❖ the development of specific Gaelic pages on the authority's website
- ❖ the development of a fully or predominately bilingual website by the authority

#### Exhibitions

The use of Gaelic in exhibitions recognises the authority's commitment to providing information in Gaelic and to extending its use in a wider range of environments.

Gaelic in connection with any exhibitions for which they are responsible. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ where relevant to the exhibition, information will be provided on the Gaelic context
- ❖ the incorporation of Gaelic into some (especially the most prominent) display material
- ❖ the incorporation of a significant amount of Gaelic into display material when the subject matter is related to Gaelic or of particular interest to Gaelic speakers
- ❖ the use of Gaelic or bilingual material in most or all exhibitions

## Staffing

### Function

#### *Training*

In order to deliver services through the medium of Gaelic, public authorities will need to develop the requisite job skills and language skills of their staff.

### Options

→ Authorities should consider developing a policy for what training they will make available to staff in connection with Gaelic. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ the development of a guidance note for staff providing background information on Gaelic issues that are relevant to the authority
- ❖ training, support and resources available for staff involved in implementing the authority's Gaelic Language Plan (e.g. language skills, dictionaries, software)
- ❖ access provided to translation and proofing services for staff involved in the Gaelic issues when required

#### *Language learning*

The provision of language learning for its staff will help promote adult Gaelic learning, and in promoting Gaelic as a useful skill in the workplace.

→ Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they enable Gaelic learning amongst their staff. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ language training to be provided to staff who are to be involved in the implementation of the authority's Gaelic Language Plan and in Gaelic development activities
- ❖ staff encouraged to learn Gaelic
- ❖ existing Gaelic speakers offered training opportunities to enhance their Gaelic language skills

## Staffing (continued)

### Function

#### *Recruitment*

The creation of jobs in which Gaelic is an essential or desirable skill will contribute greatly to the status of the language, and in identifying it as a positive skill to acquire.

### Options

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use Gaelic in connection with the recruitment of staff. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ where staff are recruited to deal with Gaelic issues, guidance and/or training will be provided to enable them to be supportive in the development of the language
- ❖ the authority investigates and ascertains which posts, if any, could be designated Gaelic-essential and which could be designated Gaelic-desirable, taking into account the relevant applicable legislation
- ❖ the employment of dedicated Gaelic development officer(s) to assist with the implementation of the Gaelic Language Plan and in Gaelic development and outreach duties

#### *Advertising*

The use of Gaelic in advertising helps recognise that Gaelic should be used in public life and that Gaelic speakers have an important role to play within a public authority.

Authorities should consider developing a policy for how they will use Gaelic in connection with advertisement of staff posts. Examples of what might be included in this policy are:

- ❖ references to the authority's Gaelic Language Plan included in some or all recruitment documentation
- ❖ for posts designated as Gaelic-essential or Gaelic-desirable, the use of Gaelic or bilingual advertising as appropriate

## Policy functions of public authorities

Along with service delivery and their internal processes, public authorities can also have a major impact on Gaelic development through many other aspects of what they do, such as their policies and decisions on social, economic, educational and other issues within their remit. In the next section of the guidance, we provide a summary of the main priorities for Gaelic development that are set out in the *National Plan for Gaelic*. Many of these relate to the specific policy functions of different types of public authority. In formulating policies, public authorities should have regard to the direct and indirect impact that they have on Gaelic, having particular regard to the priorities identified in the *National Plan*.

The Bòrd recommends that Gaelic Language Plans should contain a commitment that the linguistic impact of policies will be considered, and that policies pursued by an authority will be consistent with the measures contained in the Gaelic Language Plan. The Bòrd would encourage the development of policies where practicable that seek to promote and support the promotion and facilitation of the use and acquisition of Gaelic.

## Section 7 ::

# Helping implement the National Plan for Gaelic

**This section provides guidance on the statutory links between the *National Plan for Gaelic* and the preparation of individual Gaelic Language Plans and how an authority should have regard to the *National Plan*.**

## The National Plan for Gaelic

### *Background*

One of the central features of the 2005 Act is the duty placed on the Bòrd to prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers a *National Plan for Gaelic*. This provision was developed in recognition of the fact that the position of Gaelic is extremely fragile. If the language is to have a sustainable future, there needs to be co-ordination of effort and direction of resources towards agreed actions and outcomes. The rationale for developing a *National Plan for Gaelic*, therefore, is to provide a comprehensive overview of what actions are needed to ensure its vitality, and to set out a blueprint for stabilising and then ultimately increasing the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland.

The *National Plan* sets out a vision for Gaelic of a healthy, vibrant language increasingly used, valued and respected in a modern, multicultural and multilingual Scotland. The *National Plan* explains why, in order to achieve that vision, four key concepts of language development must be addressed – how people are enabled to acquire Gaelic; how they are enabled to use Gaelic; how the status of Gaelic can be enhanced; and how Gaelic corpus can be developed.

For each of these language planning concepts, a series of priority areas are identified, such as acquisition through education, and then a number of key projects, infrastructural projects and general actions are set out explaining how progress can best be made. The *National Plan* is wide-ranging in scope, and makes recommendations that touch on the use of Gaelic in the home, community, workplace, public life and the education sector.



## **Public authorities and the National Plan**

Of particular importance in the implementation of the *National Plan* is the role that can be played by public authorities across Scotland. The Bòrd wishes to see public authorities engage with the *National Plan*, to recognise actions that they can take in areas within which they operate, and for them to take practical steps to deliver those actions.

The 2005 Act is intentionally structured to require public authorities that have been issued with a statutory notice by the Bòrd to develop a Gaelic Language Plan to engage with the *National Plan*. As explained in section 4 of this guidance, section 3(5)(a) of the 2005 Act places a duty on public authorities to have regard to the *National Plan* in preparing their own Gaelic Language Plans. Public authorities should therefore familiarise themselves with the aims and ambitions of the *National Plan*, review the priority areas, key projects and actions which are relevant to their functions, and then consider what steps they can take to help implement them (including working with others and the Bòrd) and set out in their Gaelic Language Plan what these are.

In the case of local authorities and other public authorities involved in the provision of education (such as HMIe, Learning and Teaching Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Scottish universities and Teacher Training Institutions), they should have particular regard to the *National Plan's* priority area of acquisition through education. These authorities should then consider setting out in their Gaelic Language Plan how they will help support, promote and/or deliver Gaelic education. Specific issues that local authorities might address are how they will:

- ❖ promote Gaelic education
- ❖ provide Gaelic education
- ❖ meet demand for the provision of Gaelic education

- ❖ provide support for Gaelic pupils and teachers
- ❖ provide resources for Gaelic education
- ❖ develop and improve the provision of Gaelic education
- ❖ work in partnership with national education bodies, tertiary training providers and the careers service to increase opportunities for pupils in Gaelic education

Public authorities that operate in different policy areas should go through a similar process of identifying the specific commitments they can make to supporting Gaelic development in their area.

### **Summary of the priority areas of the National Plan**

The language planning concepts that underpin the *National Plan* are set out below along with priority areas for Gaelic development that have been identified as crucial to Gaelic development. Public authorities should have regard to these areas, and should ensure they review the full version of the *National Plan*. The Bòrd will provide a copy of the *National Plan* to those bodies that have been issued with a statutory notice, and it can also be obtained from the Bòrd's website.

## Language planning principle

### *Language acquisition*

To increase the number of Gaelic speakers by ensuring the language is passed on and by securing effective opportunities for learning Gaelic.



## Priority area

### **Acquisition in the home:**

We recognise the crucial importance of the use and transmission of Gaelic in the home, and the need for an increase in the numbers of young people having acquired Gaelic in this way.

### **Acquisition through education:**

We recognise the crucial importance of Gaelic-medium education (GME) and the valuable contribution of Gaelic-learner education (GLE), and we will seek to increase the availability and quality of both and increase the numbers and continuity within GME.

### **Acquisition in adult learning:**

We recognise the importance of opportunities for adults to gain fluency and literacy in Gaelic, and we will seek to increase the availability and uptake of appropriate adult learning opportunities.

## Language planning principle

### *Language usage*

To encourage greater use of Gaelic, to provide opportunities to use the language and to promote access to Gaelic forms of expression.

## Priority area

### ***The use of Gaelic in communities:***

We recognise the crucial importance of Gaelic in the communities where it is in widespread use, and we will seek to promote the increased use of, and confidence in, Gaelic in all communities.

### ***The use of Gaelic in the workplace:***

We recognise the importance of the use of Gaelic in the workplace, and we will seek to promote and encourage the increased use of Gaelic in places of work, and in communication with members of the public.

### ***Promotion of Gaelic in the media:***

We recognise the crucial importance of an increased presence for Gaelic in the print, broadcast and online media, and we will seek to secure an increase in range, quantity and quality.

### ***Promotion of Gaelic in the arts:***

We recognise the crucial importance of the arts delivered through Gaelic and we will seek to promote excellence, access and participation.

### ***Promotion of Gaelic in tourism, heritage and recreation:***

We recognise the need and importance for an increased profile for Gaelic in the tourism, heritage and recreation sectors and we will seek to promote and encourage this where possible.

## Language planning principle

### *Language status*

To increase the visibility of Gaelic, enhance its recognition and create a positive image for Gaelic in Scottish public life.



## Priority area

### ***Preparation of Gaelic Language Plans:***

We recognise the need for Gaelic to extend into all areas of Scottish public life, and to this end we will issue notices requiring public bodies to prepare Gaelic Language Plans in Scotland.

### ***A positive image for Gaelic:***

We recognise the importance of a positive image for Gaelic, and we will seek to raise the profile and prestige of Gaelic wherever possible.

### ***Increased visibility of Gaelic in Scotland:***

We recognise the need for the Gaelic language to be visible in Scotland in a wide range of contexts and we will seek to encourage and support this wherever possible.

## Language planning principle

### *Language corpus*

To strengthen the relevance and consistency of Gaelic and to promote research into the language.

## Priority area

### ***Gaelic orthographic, terminological and place-name development:***

We recognise the need for appropriate measures and structures to ensure that the richness, relevance and consistency of the Gaelic language is maintained and strengthened.

### ***Gaelic translation and interpretation:***

We recognise the importance of encouraging more information being translated into Gaelic, and we will seek to ensure quality and accessibility in Gaelic translations and interpretation.

### ***Gaelic in surveys and research:***

We recognise the importance of and the need for accurate information on all areas of Gaelic activity and development and that this should inform policies and programmes.

## Section 8 ::

# Submitting a Gaelic Language Plan to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval

**This section provides guidance on the process which must be followed when public authorities submit their Gaelic Language Plan to the Bòrd for approval.**

## Submitting the Gaelic Language Plan to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval

A Gaelic Language Plan must be submitted to the Bòrd for approval under the terms of section 3 of the 2005 Act. Section 5 of the 2005 Act specifies that the Bòrd must then either approve the plan or propose modifications to it. When considering whether to approve the plan or suggest amendments to it, section 5(2) requires the Bòrd to have regard to broadly the same criteria that public authorities must have regard to when developing their plans:

- ❖ the *National Plan*
- ❖ the actual or potential demand for Gaelic provision in the body's sphere of operation
- ❖ any representations made to the public authority with regard to the exercise of its functions and the use of Gaelic
- ❖ any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers

The Bòrd will therefore consider whether the Gaelic Language Plan developed by the public authority is in line with these statutory criteria, whether it is compatible with the broad categories of level of provision identified at the beginning of section 6, and whether the public authority has had appropriate regard to this guidance document.

When submitting their Gaelic Language Plan, public authorities should attach the following supporting documents to assist the Bòrd in its deliberations:

- ❖ a copy of their existing Gaelic policy, if any
- ❖ a summary of their language capacity audit, if carried out
- ❖ an analysis of their consultation exercise

The Bòrd expects that Gaelic Language Plans submitted to it for approval will demonstrate that public authorities have made a genuine attempt to propose Gaelic language provision that is appropriate to their circumstances.

## Modifications

If the Bòrd proposes modifications to the plan submitted by a public authority, it will discuss the modifications with the authority and then inform the authority formally. The authority must then either notify the Bòrd within one month that it does not agree with any or all of the proposed modifications, or submit a revised plan taking account of the proposed modifications. The Bòrd must allow between three and six months for the submission of a revised plan.

Following notification from a public authority that it does not agree with any or all of the modifications proposed by the Bòrd, the Bòrd must either approve the plan as originally submitted or approve it subject to any modifications agreed between the two bodies. If agreement cannot be reached within two months then the matter is automatically referred to the Scottish Ministers to make a decision.

## The role of the Scottish Ministers

If a Gaelic Language Plan is referred to Scottish Ministers, they must either approve the plan as originally submitted, or approve a plan subject to any modifications they consider appropriate, having regard to:

- ❖ the *National Plan*
- ❖ the actual or potential demand for Gaelic provision in the body's sphere of operation

Scottish Ministers must also give the Bòrd and the public authority concerned an opportunity to make representations about the plan, and they may consult with any other person whom they may think fit.

## Publication

On approval of a Gaelic Language Plan by the Bòrd or the Scottish Ministers, the public authority must publish it and implement the measures in accordance with the plan.

## Section 9 ::

# Monitoring and statutory review of a Gaelic Language Plan

**This section provides guidance on the process which the Bòrd will follow in monitoring Gaelic Language Plans, and the process which public authorities must follow when undertaking a statutory review of their Gaelic Language Plan.**

## Monitoring

Section 6 of the 2005 Act enables the Bòrd to request a monitoring report from a public authority. The authority must comply with such a request within three months.

The Bòrd will use this monitoring information:

- ❖ to assist in the compilation of information about Gaelic provision made by public authorities generally, in order to discharge the Bòrd's statutory function of monitoring and reporting to the Scottish Ministers on the implementation of Gaelic aspects of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
- ❖ to obtain confirmation that commitments specified in the plan are being implemented in line with identified timescales



If the Bòrd believes that the monitoring report demonstrates that not all requirements have been met, it may submit a report to this effect to the Scottish Ministers. The Bòrd will do this if it believes that there is a clear case of the public authority not managing to honour the commitments made in its plan.

The Scottish Ministers may upon receiving a report from the Bòrd and after consulting with the public authority and taking account of any representations by it, lay a copy of the Bòrd's report before Parliament and/or direct the authority to implement any or all of the measures in its Gaelic plan. Prior to issuing a direction, Ministers must consult with the authority about the terms of the direction and take into account any representations which the authority wishes to make.

## Reviewing

The framework for the development of Gaelic Language Plans under the 2005 Act requires that they are reviewed and updated by the public authority and resubmitted to the Bòrd for approval within five years. This is a crucial part of the process of ensuring that public authorities seek to incrementally increase the level of Gaelic provision they make available. The Bòrd will normally expect to see evidence that public authorities have included more ambitious commitments following the review of an existing Gaelic Language Plan.

The review of the Gaelic Language Plan is carried out in the same way as the original plan was prepared under the 2005 Act. This means that the same process of having regard to statutory criteria, of having regard to the most recent version of this guidance, of conducting a consultation process, and of submitting the revised plan to the Bòrd for approval, must be followed.

Public authorities may make minor alterations to their Gaelic Language Plan without the approval of the Bòrd, such as correcting an error or updating factual information which has changed, as long as the change does not alter the plan substantially.

## ANNEX ::

# Appealing a statutory notice issued by Bòrd na Gàidhlig

**This section explains the process that a public authority should follow if it feels it has been unreasonably asked to produce a statutory Gaelic Language Plan by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, or if it feels that the timescale set for the submission of the plan is unreasonable.**

### Appeals against timescale

If a public authority believes that the specified date for the submission of its Gaelic Language Plan is unreasonable, section 4(1) of the 2005 Act provides that it may appeal and request that the date be changed. A public authority must submit the appeal to Bòrd na Gàidhlig within 28 days of receiving notification of the requirement to prepare a plan, and it must set out the reasons for the appeal.

If an authority requests the Bòrd to review the submission date, the Bòrd must either confirm that the original date stands or agree to a later date. This must be done within 28 days of Bòrd na Gàidhlig having received the appeal. If the Bòrd determines that the original date should stand, the Bòrd must explain to the public authority its reasons for reaching that decision.

If, after appealing, a public authority remains unsatisfied with the Bòrd's decision about the date for the submission of the plan, the public authority may make a further appeal to the Scottish Ministers under section 4(5) of the 2005 Act. This must be done within 28 days of receiving the decision on the original appeal from the Bòrd. The Scottish Ministers must make a decision on the appeal within two months of its receipt. Whatever date Ministers decide on for submission of the plan is final.

## Appeals against having to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan

Section 4(8) of the 2005 Act also provides for a public authority to appeal directly to the Scottish Ministers against having to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan. Such an appeal must demonstrate that the Bòrd's decision to issue the notice to the public authority was unreasonable in terms of the criteria in section 3(3) of the 2005 Act which the Bòrd must have regard to when determining which public authorities to issue notices to.

Ministers must make a decision on an appeal within six months. If the appeal is upheld, then the notice ceases to have effect and the Bòrd may not issue a further notice to the public authority until at least two years after the date on which the original notice was issued. If the appeal is not upheld, the public authority must prepare a Gaelic Language Plan in line with the requirements of the 2005 Act and this guidance and submit it to the Bòrd for approval, and review it within five years in terms of the framework of the 2005 Act.

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