

**Dreachd Ro-innleachd Chorpóra  
aig Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Freagairt Cho-chomhairle  
Le Bòrd na Gàidhlig  
16 Sultain 2021**

**Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Draft Corporate Strategy  
Consultation Response  
By Bòrd na Gàidhlig  
16 September 2021**

## Ro-ràdh

Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a’ cur fàilte air a’ chothrom gus freagairt a chur a-steach mun dreachd Ro-innleachd Chorpóra.

Sheall Cunntas-sluaigh 2011 gun robh an àireamh sa chiad as àirde de dhaoine aois 3 no nas sine le sgilean Gàidhlig ann an Alba anns na h-Eileanan Siar (61%). Bha seo tòrr na b’ àirde na sgìre comhairle sam bith eile. Ach, tha grunn rannsachaidhean sgoileireil air dearbhadh gun robh crìonadh ann an cleachdadh na Gàidhlig bhon uair sin.

## Puingean Coitcheann

Mholamaid gum bu chòir barrachd iomraidhean a bhith ann air a’ Ghàidhlig agus a cultar anns an sgrìobhainn. Bhiodh seo a’ leantainn aithris ann am Plana Gàidhlig làithreach (2018-22) na Comhairle gu bheil i ag aithneachadh gur e “pàirt in-ghnèitheach de bheathannan, dearbh-aithne agus dualchas cultarach muinntir nan Eilean Siar a th’ anns a’ Ghàidhlig”.

Gu sònraichte, bu chòir iomraidh a bharrachd a bhith ann air:

- ‘Gàidhlig an toiseach’ mar am poileasaidh airson foghlaim
- A’ cleachdadh na Gàidhlig barrachd mar stòras eaconamach, a’ gabhail a-steach a bhith nas àrd-amasaidhe a thaobh na ghabhas coileanadh.
- Cho cudromach ‘s a tha a’ Ghàidhlig mar phàirt de dhualchas is cultar nan Eilean Siar.
- Cuid de na prìomh chuspairean ann am Plana Gàidhlig na Comhairle.

**Molaidhean agus Atharrachaidhean sònraichte a mholamaid**

## Introduction

Bòrd na Gàidhlig welcomes the opportunity to respond to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar’s draft Corporate Strategy 2022-27.

The 2011 Census showed that the Outer Hebrides had by far the greatest concentration of people aged 3 and over with Gaelic skills in Scotland (61%). However, a number of academic studies have evidenced that there has been a decline in Gaelic usage since then.

## General Points

We would recommend that there should be an increase in the number of references to Gaelic language and culture within the document. This reflects the Comhairle’s current (2018-2022) Gaelic Language Plan’s statement that it “recognises that Gaelic is an inalienable part of the lives, identity and cultural heritage of the people of the Western Isles”.

In particular, there should be more references to:

- ‘Gaelic First’ as the policy for education
- Greater use of Gaelic as an economic asset, including increasing ambition as to what can be achieved.
- The importance of Gaelic within the culture and heritage of the Outer Hebrides.
- Some of the key themes of the Comhairle’s Gaelic Language Plan.

**Suggested Specific Changes and Recommendations**

<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 4</b></p> <p>Lèirsinn</p> <p>Atharraich gu:</p> <p>Coimhearsnachdan soirbheachail gu sòisealta agus gu heaconamach le fòcas air cumail suas càileachd ar beatha, dualchas nàdarra, agus <b>a’ Ghàidhlig agus a cultar</b>.</p> <p>Prìomh Luachan</p> <p>Cuir a-steach:</p> <p>A’ neartachadh na Gàidhlig agus a Cultar mar phrìomh luach.</p>	<p><b>Page 4</b></p> <p>Vision</p> <p>Change to:</p> <p>To have socially and economically thriving communities with a focus on sustaining our quality of life, natural heritage, and <b>Gaelic language and culture</b>.</p> <p>Core Values</p> <p>Include:</p> <p>Strengthening the Gaelic Language and Culture as core value.</p>
<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 5</b></p> <p>Tha a’ Ghàidhlig air a sealltainn mar chothrom san diagram, ach chan eil mòran iomraidhean air seo sa chòrr den sgrìobhainn.</p> <p>Cuir <b>Crìonadh susbainteach ann an cleachdadh na Gàidhlig</b> ann mar chunnart.</p> <p>Tha na molaidhean anns a’ phàipear seo a’ coimhead air na cothroman a tha an lùib na Gàidhlig agus air na cunnartan a tha mu a coinneamh.</p>	<p><b>Page 5</b></p> <p>Gàidhlig is shown in the diagram as an opportunity but there is little reference to this elsewhere in the document.</p> <p>Include <b>Significant decline in use of Gaelic</b> as a Threat.</p> <p>The recommendations in this paper can speak to the opportunities that Gàidhlig provides and the threats that it faces.</p>
<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 6</b></p> <p>Cuir a-steach ann an earrann Ar Gealltanasan:</p> <p>Dèan cinnteach gu bheil Gàidhlig air a fighe a-steach gu, agus follaiseach anns an earrainn air ar gealltanasan.</p> <p>Atharraich gu:</p> <p>Thoir taic do na gnìomhachasan beaga is meadhanach againn gus a bhith air an stèidheachadh agus a bhith a’ fàs, <b>gu ìre tro bhith a’ dèanamh barrachd feum den Ghàidhlig mar stòras</b>.</p> <p>Bhiodh seo a rèir Plana Gàidhlig na Comhairle a thaobh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An iomraidh air “Na buannachdan mòra eaconamach do ghnìomhachasan an Alba tro bhith a’ cleachdadh Gàidhlig ann am bathar, seirbheisean agus margaidheachd”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Page 6</b></p> <p>Include in Our Commitments:</p> <p>Ensure that Gaelic is integrated into and made visible in our commitments.</p> <p>Change to:</p> <p>Support our small and medium sized businesses to be established and grow, <b>in part through greater use of Gaelic as an asset</b>.</p> <p>This would reflect the Comhairle’s Gaelic Language Plan in terms of its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference to “The huge economic benefits to businesses in Scotland of the use of Gaelic in products, services and marketing”.</li> </ul>



- A' liostadh nan diofar sheòrsaichean taic a tha rim faighinn bhon Chomhairle airson a bhith cleachdadh na Gàidhlig le gnìomhachasan agus leis an treas roinn.
- Iomradh air taic a chumail ri oidhirpean gus mothachadh a thogail mu na buannachdan eaconomach a tha an lùib a bhith a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig.

Bhiodh e cuideachd a' comharrachadh mar a tha aithne air na tha a' Ghàidhlig agus a cultar a' cur ri eaconamaidh nan Eilean Siar a' sior fhàs.

Ann an dòigh nas fharsaing, thomhais rannsachadh *Ar Stòras Gàidhlig*<sup>1</sup> an luach eaconomach a tha a' Ghàidhlig a' toirt do dh'Alba. Bha an aithisg fàbharach. Fhuair i a-mach gu bheil gnothachasan anns na gnìomhachasan cruthachail, turasachd, dualchas, agus roinnean bidhe is dibhe a' faighinn buannachd bho bhith a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig, agus gu bheil comas aig seo luach eaconomach mòr a thoirt seachad. Sheall e gum faodadh luach de suas ri £149 millean a bhith aig a' Ghàidhlig mar stòras.

#### Taobh-duilleig 7

Mholamaid gun rachadh an gealltanais mu FhtG a neartachadh mar a leanas:

Leasaichidh sinn agus leudaichidh sinn FtG mar an t-àite far am bithear an dùil gun tig clann a-staigh gu foghlam ann an CnES. Cruthaichidh sinn lèirsinn fharsaing airson FtG bho aois 3-18 a' dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil roghainn aig a h-uile duine òg san Ùghdarras Ionadail foghlam beòthail fhaighinn tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig aig gach ìre.

#### Taobh-duilleig 8

Tha a' Ghàidhlig agus a cultar a' cur ri càileachd beatha muinntir na sgìre. Bu chòir sin a bhith san liosta a tha anns a' chiad seantans. Bu chòir gealltanais a bhith ann mar a leanas cuideachd:

Leudaich agus leasaich cothrom air seirbheisean tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

Atharraich:

- Listing the various support available from the Comhairle for the use of Gaelic by businesses and the third sector.
- Reference to supporting efforts to raise the profile of the economic benefits arising from the use of Gaelic.

It would also reflect the increasing recognition of the contribution of the Gaelic language and culture to the Outer Hebrides economy.

More widely, the *Ar Stòras Gàidhlig*<sup>2</sup> research measured the economic value Gaelic brings to Scotland. The report was positive. It found that businesses in the creative industries, tourism, heritage, and food and drink sectors benefit from their use of Gaelic, and that this has the potential to bring significant economic value. It showed that the potential value of Gaelic as an asset could be up to £149 million.

#### Page 7

We would recommend that the commitment to GME is strengthened as follows:

We will develop and extend GME as the presumed entry point into education in CnES. We will develop a broad vision for GME across the 3-18 range ensuring all young people in the LA have the option of a vibrant educational experience through the medium of Gaelic at all levels.

#### Page 8

Gaelic language and culture contribute to residents' quality of life. They should be included in the list set out in the first sentence. There should also be a commitment included as follows:

Extend and develop the access to services through the medium of Gaelic.

Change:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hie.co.uk/media/5585/hieplusreportplus2014plusfinalplusonline.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hie.co.uk/media/5585/hieplusreportplus2014plusfinalplusonline.pdf>



<p>Cùm taic ri dualchas nàdair is cultarail nan eilean a’ gabhail a-steach na Gàidhlig.</p> <p>Bhiodh seo a rèir nan iomraidhean anns a’ Phlana Ghàidhlig air an taic a bheir a’ Chomhairle do Chomainn Eachdraidh agus buidhnean mar eisimpleir, An Lanntair, Taigh Chearsabhagh agus Ceòlas Uibhist am measg eile.</p> <p><b>Taobh-duilleig 9</b></p> <p>Cuir gealltanais ann mar a leanas: Nì sinn cinnteach gu bheil a’ gabhail a-steach coimhearsnachd labhairt na Gàidhlig ann an libhrigeadh nan seirbheisean uile againn.</p> <p><b>Taobh-duilleig 10</b></p> <p>Cuir prìomhachas ro-innleachdail ann:</p> <p>Nearthaich a’ Ghàidhlig agus a cultar tron obair air fad againn</p> <p><b>Taobh-duilleig 11</b></p> <p>Bu chòir am Plana Gàidhlig a bhith air a liostadh anns a’ chlàr anns a bheil liosta de na Ro-innleachdan is Planaichean uile.</p> <p><b>Taobh-duilleig 12</b></p> <p>Thathar a’ toirt iomradh air turasachd agus biadh is deoch mar roinnean a tha ro-chudromach do dh’eaconamaidh nan Eilean Siar. Bu chòir toirt fa-near cuideachd gur iad seo na roinnean cuideachd far a bheil rannsachadh <i>Ar Stòras Gàidhlig</i> a’ meas mar na roinnean a gheibh a’ bhuannachd as motha bho bhith a’ cleachdadh na Gàidhlig mar stòras.</p> <p><b>Taobh-duilleig 13</b></p> <p>Aig deireadh para 2, cuir a-steach an seantans a leanas:</p> <p>Tha a’ Ghàidhlig agus a cultar a’ tabhainn leasachadh sgilean, cothroman eaconamach, agus co-leanailteachd shòisealta.</p> <p>“Tha eaconamaidh atharrachadh na gnàth-shìde agus cumhachd ath-nuadhachail a’ toirt dhuinn fìor chothrom a bhith a’ togail obraichean agus a bhith tionnsgalach”. Bu chòir a chur an cèill cuideachd gu bheil barrachd ann an tionnsgalachd gnìomhachais na dìreach a bhith a’ toirt a-steach teicneòlas ùr. Tha e a’ gabhail a-steach, mar eisimpleir,</p>	<p>Support the natural and cultural heritage of the islands including Gaelic.</p> <p>This would reflect the Gaelic Language Plan’s references to the support the Comhairle provides to, among others, Comainn Eachdraidh and organisations such as An Lanntair, Taigh Chearsabhagh and Ceòlas Uibhist.</p> <p><b>Page 9</b></p> <p>Include a commitment to: We will ensure that the Gaelic-speaking community is included across all of our service provision.</p> <p><b>Page 10</b></p> <p>Include a strategic priority: Strengthen Gaelic language and culture across all our work</p> <p><b>Page 11</b></p> <p>The Gaelic Language Plan should be included in the table that lists Strategies and Plans.</p> <p><b>Page 12</b></p> <p>Tourism and food and drink are referred to as sectors on which the Outer Hebrides economy is reliant. It should be noted that these are also sectors which the <i>Ar Stòras Gàidhlig</i> research sees as particularly likely to benefit from greater use of Gaelic as an asset.</p> <p><b>Page 13</b></p> <p>At the end of para 2 add the sentence: Gaelic language and culture offer skills development, economic opportunities, and social cohesion.</p> <p>“The climate change and renewable energy economy provides real opportunity to develop build innovation and jobs”. The point should also be made that business innovation extends beyond simply introducing new technology. It includes for example, businesses</p>
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<p>gnìomhachasan a tha ri ùr-ghnàthachas tro bhith a’ cleachdadh na Gàidhlig anns a’ bhrann-dhadh, margaideachd, is mar sin air adhart.</p> <p>Bu chòir toirt fa-near cuideachd gu bheil cothroman didseatach ann do ghnìomhachasan agus buidhnean Gàidhlig cuideachd. Mar eisimpleir, an fheadhainn a tha a’ toirt seachad clasaichean Gàidhlig. Chunnaic grunn dhiubh sin àrdachadh nach beag ann an àireamh nan daoine a bha a’ gabhail pàirt tron ghalar lèir-sgaoilte. Tha cothrom ann togail air seo gus cur ri ruigsinneachd na Gàidhlig, agus gus coimhead air na cothroman eaconamach a dh’fhaodadh a bhith ann. Bhiodh seo a rèir targaid a’ Phlana Ghàidhlig: “Brosnaich cleachdadh na Gàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachd nan Eilean Siar, agus ceangail seo ri gnìomhachd eaconamach far an gabh seo dèanamh”.</p>	<p>innovating by introducing Gaelic into their branding, marketing, etc.</p> <p>It should also be noted that digital offers opportunities for Gaelic businesses and organisations. For example, those delivering Gaelic language classes. A number of these saw a significant increase in participants during the pandemic, including those living overseas. There is scope to build on this to increase the reach of Gaelic and explore potential economic opportunities. This would reflect the Gaelic Language Plan’s target: “Promote the use of Gaelic in the communities of the Western Isles and link it to economic activity wherever possible”.</p>
<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 14</b></p> <p>Dh’fhaodadh an earrann seo àrd-amasachd a bhrosnachadh tro chothroman airson co-obrachadh le Leasachadh Sgilean na h-Alba agus YoungScot, mar eisimpleir, gus a’ Ghàidhlig a neartachadh.</p>	<p><b>Page 14</b></p> <p>This section could increase ambition through opportunities for joint working with Skills Development Scotland and YoungScot, for example, to strengthen Gaelic.</p>
<p>Aig deireadh para 7:</p> <p>Cuir a-steach seantans a tha a’ mìneachadh buannachdan an dà-chànanais (a tha air an comharrachadh sa Phlana Gàidhlig) agus fear eile a’ toirt fa-near gu bheil fàs ann am FtG na chothrom air a’ chrìonadh ann an cleachdadh na Gàidhlig a thionndadh air ais.</p>	<p>At the end of para 7:</p> <p>Include a sentence articulating the benefits of bilingualism (which are noted in the Gaelic Language Plan) and another noting that growth in GME is an opportunity to reverse the decline in the use of Gaelic.</p>
<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 15</b></p> <p>Tha Cumhachdachadh Coimhearsnachd cuideachd a’ toirt chothroman do choimhearsnachdan seirbheisean a bhith air an libhrigeadh tron Ghàidhlig ma thogras iad, mar sin a’ neartachadh na coimhearsnachd agus cleachdadh na Gàidhlig sa choimhearsnachd.</p>	<p><b>Page 15</b></p> <p>Community Empowerment also presents opportunities for communities to have services delivered through Gaelic if desired, thereby strengthening the community and the use of Gaelic in the community.</p>
<p>Aig deireadh para 3, cuir a-steach an seantans a leanas:</p> <p>Tha a bhith a’ dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil Gàidhlig air a brosnachadh, agus seirbheisean air an libhrigeadh a bheir taic do luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig, deatamach ann a bhith a’ dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil deagh shlàinte is sunnd aig coimhearsnachdan eileanach.</p>	<p>At the end of para 3 add the sentence:</p> <p>Ensuring that Gaelic is promoted, and services delivered which support Gaelic speakers, is integral to ensuring good health and wellbeing in the islands’ communities.</p>
<p><b>Taobh-duilleig 16</b></p> <p>Cuir seantans ann:</p>	<p><b>Page 16</b></p> <p>Include a sentence:</p>



Mar phàirt den ghluasad againn gus feachd-obrach dà-chànanach a chruthachadh, nì sinn cinnteach gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig anns a' cholbh riatanach no na buannachd airson gach dreuchd.

#### **Taobh-duilleig 17**

Thoir a-mach 'nuair agus far a bheil seo iomchaidh' agus cuir a-steach an seantans a leanas:  
Dèan cinnteach gu bheil conaltradh tron Ghàidhlig air a thoirt seachad air stèidh co-ionann ri conaltradh sa Bheurla.

#### **Taobh-duilleig 18**

Tha sinn ag aithneachadh gum feumar com-pàirteachasan làidir a thogail le raon de luchd-ùidh gus na taobhan Gàidhlig den phlana seo mar a tha air am moladh sa phàipear seo a lìbhrigeadh. Bu chòir an ro-innleachd a mheasadh agus atharrachadh far a bheil sin iomchaidh air feadh beatha a' phlana.

#### **Taobh-duilleig 20**

Tha sinn a' moladh seantans a chur ann a tha a' nochdadh beachd na Comhairle gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig na pàirt bhunaiteach de bheatha nan eilean agus gum feumar oidhirp mhòr a dhèanamh gus dèanamh cinnteach gum mair i agus gun leasaich i san àm ri teachd. Faodar seo a choileanadh tro bhith a' toirt gu buil agus ag aithneachadh bhuannachdan so-bheantainn agus do-bheantainn.

#### **Slatan-tomhais Coileanaidh**

Tha farsaingeachd de thobraichean dàta dàrnach air an sealltainn a thèid a chleachdadh gus soirbheas na Ro-innleachd Corporra a mheasadh. Ach, le bhith gan cleachdadh, 's ann a bhios sibh a' meas soirbheas nan Eilean Siar - rudeigin a tha eadar-dhealaichte.

Mar eisimpleir, 's e fear de na slatan-tomhais air taobh-duilleig 31 "Àireamh sa cheud de shluagh nan Eilean Siar aig nach eil sgilean sa Ghàidhlig". Thèid seo a thomhas a' cleachdadh dàta a' Chunntais-sluaigh Ach, bidh am figear sin mar thoradh air raon farsaing de nithean a tha a' toirt buaidh air togail / gleidheadh sgilean Gàidhlig - agus chan eil ann an gnìomhan na Comhairle ach aon de na nithean sin. Mar sin, tha feum air measaidhean sònraichte air gnìomhan na Comhairle gus tomhas ceart a dhèanamh air an diofar a rinn na ceuman seo.

As part of our drive to create a bilingual workforce we will ensure Gaelic is in the desirable or essential column for all employment.

#### **Page 17**

Remove 'when and where appropriate' and include the sentence:  
Ensure communication through Gaelic is delivered on an equal basis to communication in English.

#### **Page 18**

We acknowledge that delivering the ambitious Gaelic aspects of this plan as recommended in this paper will require building strong partnerships with a range of stakeholders. The agreed strategy should be evaluated and amended as required throughout the life of the plan.

#### **Page 20**

We recommend the inclusion of a sentence demonstrating the Comhairle's belief that the Gaelic language is an integral part of Island life, and that substantial effort is required to ensure its continuation and development into the future. This can be achieved through realising and recognising tangible and intangible benefits.

#### **Performance Measures**

A range of secondary data sources are shown which will be used to measure the success of the Corporate Strategy. However, the use of these will actually measure the success of the Outer Hebrides - which is something different.

For example, one of the measures on page 31 is "Percentage of the Eilean Siar population with no skills in Gaelic". This will be measured using Census data. However, that figure will reflect a wide range of factors affecting the acquisition/retention of Gaelic skills-of which the Comhairle's actions is only one. Thus, there is a need for specific evaluations of the Comhairle's actions to properly measure the difference these have made.



Bhiodh sin cuideachd a' gabhail a-steach a bhith a' cleachdadh barrachd shlatan-tomhais gus buaidhean co-cheangailte ris a' Ghàidhlig a thomhas. Mar eisimpleir, an àireamh de stòrasan ann an seilbh coimhearsnachd a tha a' **brosnachadh cleachdadh na Gàidhlig**; an àireamh sa chiad de dh'inbhich a ghabh pàirt ann an gnìomhachd cultarail **Gàidhlig** anns na 12 mìos a dh' fhalbh; an àireamh de dh'inbhich a bha an sàs ann a bhith ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig anns na 12 mìosan a dh'fhalbh.

That would also include using more measures to assess Gaelic-related impacts. For example, number of assets in community ownership **promoting Gaelic usage**; percentage of adults who participated in a **Gaelic** cultural activity in the last 12 months; number of adults engaged in learning Gaelic in the last 12 months.

