

<p><b>A' stèidheachadh Rannsachadh Poblach Albannach air COVID-19 Freagairt Conaltraidh Le Bòrd na Gàidhlig 30 Sultain 2021</b></p>	<p><b>Setting up the Scottish COVID-19 Public Inquiry Dialogue Response By Bòrd na Gàidhlig 30 September 2021</b></p>
<p>Is e Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' phrìomh bhuidheann ann an Alba air a bheil dleasan agus leasachadh Gàidhlig a chur air adhart agus gus comhairle a thoirt do Mhinistearan na h-Alba mu chùisean Gàidhlig.</p> <p>Bu chòir mar a tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba a' dealbhadh an Rannsachaidh Phoblach a bhith a' nochdadh nam poileasaidhean is geallaidhean aca a thaobh na Gàidhlig.</p> <p>Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba “ag aithneachadh gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig na pàirt bhunasach de dhualchas, dearbh-aithne nàiseanta agus beatha chultarail na h-Alba”<sup>1</sup>. Tha e “fhathast dealasach a thaobh a bhith a' toirt taic don Ghàidhlig agus ag amas air dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil an fheadhainn a tha airson Gàidhlig a chleachdadh nam beatha làitheil a' faighinn cothrom sin a dhèanamh”<sup>2</sup>. Tha seo a' toirt a-steach dealas airson “dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach air am brosnachadh agus a' faighinn taic gus an riochdachadh fhèin tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig”<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p><b>Air an adhbhar sin, bu chòir don Rannsachadh Gàidhlig a chleachdadh ann an conaltradh le luchd-ùidh agus leis a' phoball.</b> Bhiodh sin a' gabhail a-steach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sgrìobhainnean co-chomhairleachaidh no fiosrachaidh sam bith eile a thèid a thoirt seachad.</li> <li>• Gum faodadh luchd-ùidh agus am poball freagairtean sgrìobhte a chur a-steach sa Ghàidhlig.</li> <li>• Gum faodadh daoine a tha a' toirt seachad fianais gu pearsanta sin a dhèanamh sa Ghàidhlig.</li> </ul>	<p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig is the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development and providing advice to the Scottish Ministers on Gaelic issues.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's design of the Public Inquiry should reflect its existing policies and commitments regarding the Gaelic language.</p> <p>The Scottish Government “recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and current cultural life”<sup>8</sup>. It “remains committed to supporting the Gaelic language and aims to ensure that those who wish to live their lives through the language are afforded the opportunities to do so”<sup>9</sup>. That includes a commitment to “ensure that Gaelic speakers in island communities are encouraged and supported to represent themselves through the medium of Gaelic”<sup>10</sup>.</p> <p><b>Therefore, the Inquiry should include the use of Gaelic in its engagement with stakeholders and the public.</b> That would include in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any further consultation or information documents that are issued.</li> <li>• Stakeholders and the public being able to submit written responses in Gaelic.</li> <li>• Those giving evidence in person being able to do so in Gaelic.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>



Cuidichidh seo gus coinneachadh ri dùil Ministearan na h-Alba gun gabh an Rannsachadh “dòigh-obrach stèidhichte air còraichean daonna, gus dèanamh cinnteach gum faod gach neach agus buidheann an-sàs ann a bhith a’ gabhail pàirt gu brìoghmhor, gun tèid dèiligeadh riutha gu cothromach agus gu bheil iad air an cumhachdachd pàirt a ghabhail ann.”<sup>4</sup>.

Bu chòir don Rannsachadh beachdachadh air a’ bhuidheann air coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig agus air a’ Ghàidhlig fhèin mar phàirt den sgrùdadh aca air na “ceithir croin”<sup>5</sup>.

Airson “**buidhean eileair slàinte**” shealladh seo ris an ìre cleachdaidh/cothrom air Gàidhlig ann an suidheachaidhean cùram slàinte. Thathar ag aithneachadh sa chumantas gum faod e a bhith na chofhurtachd aig àm a tha duilich do euslaintich no luchd-faighinn cùraim le Gàidhlig bruidhinn ri luchd-obrach nan cànan fhèin. A-rithist, tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba air gealladh a dhèanamh a thaobh seo:

“Gus slàinte is sunnd adhartachadh agus a leasachadh bidh sinn ..... a’ dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil seirbheisean slàinte, cùram sòisealta agus sunnd rim faighinn tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig airson taic a thoirt do choimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig nan eileanan”<sup>6</sup>.

Ann am “**buidhean sòisealta, a’ toirt a-steach foghlam**” bu chòir don Rannsachadh beachdachadh air buidhean sònraichte air Foghlam Meadhain-Ghàidhlig thar gach buidheann aoise is suidheachadh.

Taobh a-staigh “**buidhean eaconamach**” bu chòir beachdachadh air nàdar bhuidhean agus dè cho dona ’s a tha iad ann an coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig dùthchail agus eileanach Tha e coltach gu bheil na sgìrean sin air fulang gu sònraichte cruaidh mar thoradh air an eisimeileachd air cuid de na roinnean as motha a thàinig fo bhuidheann a’ ghalair. Gu h-àraidh, turasachd, na h-ealainean agus cultar.

Tha sin ann an co-theacsa far a bheil cuid de dh’eileanan/sgìrean a tha lag mar-thà gu h-eanamach, a’ gabhail a-steach cuibhreann àrd de meanbh-

This will help to meet Scottish Ministers expectation that the Inquiry will adopt “a person-centered, human rights based approach to ensure that every person and organisation taking part can meaningfully participate, be treated fairly and be empowered to take part”<sup>11</sup>.

The Inquiry itself should consider the impacts on Gaelic and Gaelic speaking communities as part of its review of the “four harms”<sup>12</sup>.

For “**other health impacts**” this would look at the extent of use/availability of Gaelic in healthcare settings. It is generally recognised that Gaelic speaking patients or care-recipients being able to converse with staff in their own language can be a source of comfort at what is a difficult time. Again, there is a Scottish Government commitment in this regard, that:

“To improve and promote health and wellbeing we will.....ensure that health, social care and wellbeing services are available through the medium of Gaelic to support Gaelic speaking island communities”<sup>13</sup>.

Within “**societal impacts, including education**” the Inquiry should consider any specific or distinct impacts on Gaelic Medium Education across all age groups and settings.

Within “**economic impacts**” consideration should be given to the nature and severity of impacts in Gaelic speaking rural and island communities. They appear to have been hit particularly hard due to their dependence on some of the most affected sectors. In particular, tourism, the arts and culture.

That is in a context of some islands/areas already being economically fragile, including a high proportion of micro/small enterprises with fewer

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-inquiry/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-inquiry/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-inquiry/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-inquiry/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>



iomairtean/iomairtean beaga le nas lugha de stòrasan gus dèiligeadh ri crìonadh mòr ann an iarrtas.

Dh'fhaodadh droch bhuaidhean eaconamach is sòisealta Covid anns na coimhearsnachdan sin a bhith a' ciallachadh nach eil iad cho tarraingeach a bhith a' fuireach annta. Dh'fhaodadh seo leantainn gu call luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig thar ùine. Bhiodh sin a' lagachadh a' chànain ann an sgìrean far a bheil Gàidhlig an ìre mhath làidir agus far as i a' chiad chànan airson cuid mhath de dhaoine. Tha na sgìrean sin glè chudromach airson seasmachd iomlan na Gàidhlig ann an Alba.

Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba air gealltainn “obair le ùghdarrasan iomchaidh gus solar Gàidhlig a leasachadh do choimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig nan eileanan ann a bhith a' libhrigeadh an gnìomhan agus an seirbheisean”<sup>7</sup>. Mar sin, bu chòir don Rannsachadh, ann an co-theacsa buaidh Covid, **beachdan fhaighinn bho luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig – gu sònraichte an fheadhainn anns na h-eileanan – airson molaidhean air mar a libhrigeas iad seirbheisean dhaibh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.**

resources to cope with a significant downturn in demand.

The negative economic and social impacts of Covid in these communities have the potential to make them less attractive places to live. This could lead to a loss of Gaelic speakers over time. That would weaken the language in areas where Gaelic is relatively strong and is the first language for a sizeable proportion of people. These areas are very important to the overall sustainability of Gaelic in Scotland.

Scottish Government has committed to “work with relevant authorities to improve Gaelic provision for Gaelic speaking island communities in delivering their functions and services”<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, the Inquiry should, in the context of the impacts of Covid, **seek views from Gaelic speakers - particularly those in the islands - for recommendations on how to deliver services to them through the medium of Gaelic.**

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/documents>

