

Meeting: Policy and Resources Committee
Date/Time: 10 February 2026 at 09.30
Location: Microsoft Teams

Minutes - Open Session

1. Opening Items

1.1. Welcome and Apologies

Committee Members Present:

Seonaidh Charity (Chair) [SC]
John MacDonald [JND]
Mary MacInnes [MTNA]
Michelle Macleod [MNL]

In Attendance:

Ealasaid MacDonald Ceannard/Accountable Officer [ED]
Stuart Dunmore, Planning and Statutory Functions Manager [SD]
Iain MacMillan, Director of Development [IMM]
Steven Kellow, Funding & Projects Officer [SK]
Nicola Pearson, Head of Finance & Corporate Affairs [NP]
Calum Munro, Head of Education, and Plans [CM]
Jamie MacLean, Corporate Co-ordinator [JM]

Minutes:

Nicola NicThòmais, Lasair Ltd

Apologies

All members present.

1.2. Declaration of Interests

MNL – Member of staff, University of Aberdeen
MNL - Chair - Theatre gu Lèor
SC - Highland Council
SC - Gaelic Books Council

1.3. Any Other Competent Business (AOCB)

Nothing was raised.

2. Finance

2.1. Finance Report

NP spoke about the finance report to the end of December 2025. The amount in the bank was higher than expected due to the January grant coming in early from the Government. It is expected that the budget will be spent as agreed.

Members asked about staff costs. The gap was due to vacant posts and leave but the team is complete again.

Decision:

Members noted the verbal financial report.

2.2 Priorities for Gaelic Plans Fund

SK spoke on the paper about the next round of the Gaelic Plans fund.

A total of £723,000 has been offered to local authorities over three years through the Strategic Stream for October 2024 to September 2027.

£214,733 was awarded to 21 projects (by 16 organisations) through the 2025/26 Projects Stream of the scheme (an increase of £37.5k and 3 additional projects in comparison to 2024/25). There are few changes to the scheme as it stands currently.

More responsibility is being placed on organisations to be more strategic in their plans as the funding runs over three years. This has already resulted in improvement.

A question was raised about which criteria would be used in reviewing this scheme. This would include basic questions such as “how does the work help to implement the National Plan for Gaelic?” and “what impact does the funding have on the use of Gaelic?”

Decision:

Members agreed on the priorities and rules for the 2025/26 round of the Gaelic Plans Fund (Projects Stream).

2.3 Progress of Delivery Partner Groups

IM spoke about the Development Report.

11 Delivery Partner Groups are being supported in 2025/26. A £500,000 increase has been provided to the Delivery Groups in 2025/26 through additional funding from the Scottish Government, with £35,310 of that support being allocated towards a budget for partnership projects. In general, the groups are making progress and there is support for those who are not making the same level of progress. The groups are working well with each other and with the Bòrd.

A question was raised about the flexibility of the targets that span three to five years. They are reviewed annually and the Bòrd is therefore willing to work with the groups if their priorities change.

A question was asked about the impact of the work. The Bòrd wants to find more ways more ways to measure feedback and the impact of the work, rather than relying on surveys, which have perhaps become overused. Officers are also going out into the community more, to see the groups and the good work that is happening.

A question was raised about sharing the responsibility for Gaelic development with other funding bodies. Additional requests came to the Bòrd when funding was withdrawn from other funding bodies and it was agreed by Members that Bòrd na Gàidhlig will not fill the gaps that arise due to cuts from other bodies. The Bòrd's priorities are very clear and more funding is still required. The groups themselves are optimistic that more support will come through the Act.

While measuring impact can be a challenge, the organisations themselves are getting better at telling the story of what is happening. The Bòrd itself is also making more of an effort to tell the story.

There are wider issues regarding people's availability, especially in remote areas, which hinder the development of Gaelic even when funding is available, because organisations are unable to recruit staff. The Officers raise these concerns every opportunity they can.

Decision:

Members noted the Progress Report of the Delivery Partner Groups.

3. Gaelic Language Plans

3.1 Gaelic Plan - East Dunbartonshire Council

CR spoke about the plan.

Members noted the third edition of East Dunbartonshire Council's Gaelic Language Plan. There had been difficulties because the Plan was published by the Council without sign-off and Officers acknowledged that mistakes had been made on both sides.

A question was raised regarding Gaelic-medium education, which does not include any commitments regarding L2, though L3 is specified. It was also felt that some of the school targets were vague and without specific support mentioned in the Plan itself.

Members highlighted that more is needed in the Plan and that some of the deadlines have already passed.

A question was raised about current Gaelic development activity in the area, and Officers indicated that significant work is underway in several parts of the Council area.

Decision:

Members agreed that the Plan was too weak currently and that the draft should be strengthened with clearer targets, some tidying, with updated dates and a reference explaining the position with regard to L2 and L3 and that the Plan, as a priority and with the support of the Officers, would be returned for approval at the earliest opportunity.

Members rejected the Plan.

3.2 Gaelic Language Plan - East Lothian Council

CR spoke about the plan.

Members noted the second edition of East Lothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan.

Members were content with the Plan although broader points such as AI arose from the discussion, which will be discussed at a future meeting.

Decision:

Members agreed the East Lothian Council Gaelic Language Plan.

3.3 Gaelic Language Plan – Falkirk Council

CR spoke about the plan.

Members noted the third edition of Falkirk Council’s Gaelic Language Plan.

Doubts were raised about the wording of the goal of providing a translation service, which would only be for non-English speakers. It was agreed to confirm this at monitoring phase. An "annual review" was proposed for almost all points and Members believed that this would be appropriate, as long as this actually happens.

Officers agreed to ask the organisation to amend the section “Provision is in place for interpretation and translation services for non-English speaking clients on request.”

Members were content with the Plan and recognised that much is happening in terms of Gaelic development.

Decision:

Members approved Falkirk Council's Gaelic Language Plan, with the condition that the section on translation be clarified.

4. Regulation

4.1 Policy & Resources Committee Work Plan

The Ceannard spoke on the papers.

The staff survey report was not presented due to illness but will come to the next meeting.

Decision:

Members approved the Work Plan for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

5. AOCB

There were none.

The Chair thanked the Members and the Officers for the detailed information they had provided.

The meeting was brought to a close at 11:05am.

Date of next meeting: 05/05/2026

Meeting closed