

Meeting: Board Meeting
Date/time: 25 June 2026 at 09:30am
Location: Microsoft Teams

Minute - Open Session

1. Opening Items

1.1. Welcome and Apologies

Board Members present:

Robert Dunbar [RD] Chair
Stewart Macleod [SML]
Seonaidh Charity [SC]
Michelle MacLeod (MNL) – from point 4.1
John Neil MacDonald [JND]
Donald K MacPhee [DKM]
Rob MacKinnon [RMF] – from point 5.1

In Attendance:

Ealasaid MacDonald [ED] Ceannard/Accountable Officer
Iain MacMillan [IMM] Director of Development
Calum Munro [CR] Head of Education and Plans
Nicola Pearson [NP] Head of Finance & Corporate Affairs

Minutes:

Jamie MacLean [JMG] Corporate Co-ordinator

Apologies:

There were no apologies.

The Chair welcomed the Members and the staff in attendance.

1.2. Declarations of Interests

RD – Edinburgh University, Tobar an Dualchais, Ionad Gàidhlig Dhùn Èideann
SC – Education Scotland

1.3. Any other competent business

There was no other competent business to be discussed.

2. Communications

2.1. Stakeholder Communications

ED provided a summary of stakeholder engagement.

Decision:

Members noted the information in the paper.

3. Finance

3.1. Finance Report

NP summarised the financial report and it was announced that the annual report and accounts had been submitted to the external auditors on Monday 22 June 2026.

Decision:

Members noted the information in the finance report.

4. Corporate Plan and Performance

4.1. Progress Report - National Plan for 2023-28

*MNL joined the meeting**

IMM gave a summary on progress with the National Plan.

There was a discussion on the content of the report and on goals for the coming year with the Scottish Government's Gaelic language strategy on the horizon.

ED acknowledged the volume of work undertaken, for which thanks should be recorded, recognising the efforts of Bòrd na Gàidhlig staff and partner organisations.

Decision:

Members noted the content of the report and discussed its contents.

4.2. Report on Gaelic Language Plans

CR summarised the monitoring report on statutory Gaelic plans.

Points were raised about non-compliance by organisations in establishing statutory Gaelic plans.

It was explained that the public authorities who were non-compliant with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 had been restored to compliance through the diligent work and communication of the Language Plan Officers and the Planning and Statutory Functions Manager. A process is also in place for senior managers in the Sgioba-stiùiridh to intervene in defined non-compliance situations.

Decision:

Members approved the report.

4.3. Education and Learning

CR gave an update on education and learning work.

The situation with Scottish Borders Council and the request made for Gaelic Medium Education was discussed. It was acknowledged that the local authority's approach to communications was disappointing. In addition to communication between Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the authority, the Scottish Government is also in communication with the authority.

Decision:

Members noted the information regarding education and learning.

5. Risk Management

5.1. Strategic Risk Register

*RMK joined the meeting**

NP summarised the strategic risk register and provided a summary of the discussions from the agenda of the Audit and Assurance Committee.

Board members considered the impact that the commencement of the Scottish Languages Act would have on the Bòrd's risk model. The officers explained that the register is continuously reviewed.

Decision:

Members agreed the register.

6. Committee Annual Reports 2025/26

6.1. Committee Annual Reports

ED introduced the annual reports from the Audit and Assurance Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee.

SC and SML summarised the content of the reports and of the committee's work, expressing their thanks to Bòrd na Gàidhlig officials for their contributions. It was acknowledged that issues had emerged as a result of insufficient number of members on the Bòrd-stiùiridh.

The Chair thanked SC and SML for their work as Committee Chairs.

Decision:

The Members noted the information in the Committee annual reports.

7. Corporate

7.1. Changes to the Policy and Resources Committee

ED outlined the changes to the Policy and Resources Committee's terms of reference.

There was a discussion on points arising from the changes. A question was raised about the practical operation of the panel chair's role, noting that meetings would be chaired by different individuals. It was noted that, while the detailed arrangements were still to be confirmed, the panel format would allow plans and policies to be taken through an appropriate and flexible review process.

References to "Committee" in the terms of reference were raised and it was suggested that changing the word to "panel" or "committee" would be clearer. ED responded that the appropriate changes would be made and that the paper would be circulated (PT2) to the Members and that the Chair and Ceannard would confirm how the Panel would be managed via email.

It was recognised that the change in the committee's structure does not need to be reported to the Scottish Government due to the nature of the adjustment, although the Scottish Government is aware that the organisation is reviewing its committees.

Decision:

Members agreed to the changes.

Reference to "Committee" will be changed in the terms of reference.

[Action ED]

7.2. Updating of the Scheme of Delegated Authority

ED outlined the changes to the Scheme of Delegated Authority. It was recognised that, although this change does not need to be reported to the Scottish Government, they would nonetheless be advised of the alteration to the Scheme.

It was noted that there were errors in the Scheme (pp. 75–76), and that "£1K" should appear on p75 and "Bòrd" on p76. It was noted that the errors had arisen during the conversion of the files to PDF format. The mistakes will be corrected.

Decision:

Members approved the update on the Scheme of Delegated Authority.

The errors will be corrected.

[Action ED]

7.3. Board Standing Orders

ED gave a summary on the update of the standing orders.

A discussion was held on the process for selecting Members and on how committee membership is discussed, as well as on the role of Co-opted Members.

It was recognised that challenges had arisen because there are not enough Board Members and that matters are therefore not as flexible as had been hoped.

Papers will be prepared when changes are made to committee membership, in order to record the rationale for those changes. It was recognised that it would be helpful to clarify the duties and responsibilities of co-opted members. It was explained that a Members' skills metric will be used to inform decisions and that the Chair will make the final decision on committee membership.

Decision:

Members approved the Standing Orders.

The process for making decisions on committee membership will be explained.

[Action]

7.4. Health and Safety Report

NP gave an overview of the information in the report.

RMF raised the point that it would be useful if information on travel was included in the report. Information on travel will be added to future health and safety reports but it was acknowledged that Bòrd na Gàidhlig is not encouraging employees to drive and that employees are encouraged to use public transport.

Decision:

Members noted the information in the report.

It was decided that travel information will be included in future health and safety reports. **[Action]**

7.5. Paper on Artificial Intelligence (AI)

ED summarised the paper on Artificial Intelligence. ED stated that Bòrd na Gàidhlig will be establishing a policy on the subject. The group will seek advice, on both a formal and informal basis, from external sources to explore the potential opportunities for the organisation and the public sector as a whole from the use of AI. As Public Sector reform is a priority for the Scottish Government, many organisations are currently conducting research on this subject.

It was noted that it was important to ensure that the use of artificial intelligence would not negatively affect the number of Gaelic jobs.

The Chair thanked ED for bringing this paper to the Board.

Decision:

Members noted the information in the paper.

8. Board Work Plan

8.1. Work Plan 2026/27

ED summarised the work plan for the Board and highlighted that the subject of a "Research and Information Strategy" had been added to the work plan and would be presented twice a year.

Decision:

Members approved the work plan.

9. Any other competent business

There was no other competent business to be discussed.

The Chair thanked Bòrd na Gàidhlig officers for preparing the papers and thanked SML for his work in leading the Audit and Assurance Committee over the years as he will be retiring prior to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 11:06am.

Date of next meeting: 10/08/2026

End of Open Session