

Midlothian Council Gaelic Language Plan 2021 - 2026**Report by: Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive****Report for Noting****1 Recommendations**

Council are asked to note:

- i) Publication of the finalised Gaelic Language Plan which was considered and approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig at their meeting 2 February 2021.
- ii) Revisions to the delivery timeframe previously set out in the draft plan considered by Council 19 December 2019 as a result of Covid-19 impact.
- iii) The requirement for ongoing monitoring and reporting.

2 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the approval of the final Gaelic Language Plan following submission to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in early 2020.

The initial draft plan was previously presented to Council on 17 December 2019, following which it was submitted to the Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig was delayed due to the pandemic and as a result the original delivery timeframe has been revised from 2019–2024 to 2021–2026.

Following receipt of feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig in recent months the final draft plan shown in appendix B incorporates suggested changes to text to provide further clarity for some areas of commentary within the plan and to some actions noted in the delivery plan as well as changes to the delivery timeframe. Bòrd na Gàidhlig approved the final plan at their meeting 2 February 2021.

Date 12 May 2021**Report Contact:**

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3 Background

- 3.1** The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 established a new national agency, Bòrd na Gàidhlig to prepare a national Gaelic Language Plan and gave it authority to request public authorities (including local authorities) to prepare and publish Gaelic Language Plans.
- 3.2** Midlothian Council's draft Gaelic Language Plan, presented to Council for noting on 17 December 2019, was prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act, and having regard to the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans produced by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- 3.3** In line with the required process the draft plan was submitted for approval to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in early 2020 but due to the impact of the pandemic feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig regarding the plan was initially delayed.
- 3.4** The feedback received was largely noted as satisfactory with some areas of commendation. Where changes were required these focused on information that the Bòrd na Gàidhlig felt had been omitted or where further clarity was required to support the information already included.
- 3.5** The final Gaelic Language Plan approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in February 2021, shown in Appendix B, sets out how the council will use Gaelic in the operation of its functions, how it will enable the use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners, and how it proposes to promote and develop Gaelic.
- 3.6** The key components of the Gaelic Language Plan are:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter provides the background and context relating to the preparation of Gaelic Language Plans under the 2005 Act and the structure of Midlothian Council's main areas of operation. It also provides some background information on the use of the Gaelic language in Midlothian.

Chapter 2 – Commitments

This chapter sets out how Midlothian Council will use, and enable the use of, Gaelic in relation to our main business functions. It covers key areas of operation such as corporate identity, signage, communication with the public and the use of Gaelic on our website. This chapter sets out the level of Gaelic language provision to which we are committed to providing in the lifetime of the Plan.

Chapter 3 – Implementation and Monitoring

This chapter sets out how the implementation of our Gaelic Language Plan will be taken forward, and how implementation and outcomes will be monitored.

- 3.7** Once approved there was a requirement that the final plan be published on the Council's website and delivery of the plan monitored and reported to facilitate ongoing updates to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

There is no ring-fenced funding associated with the production of the Gaelic Language Plan and no immediate resource implications arising directly from this report other than the time of the Council's corporate Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer to oversee the plan.

Ongoing delivery of actions identified within the plan should be incorporated within normal business planning activities.

4.2 Digital

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

4.3 Risk

The Council has a duty to comply with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

An Integrated Impact Assessment supported the development of the Gaelic Language Plan.

4.4 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Gaelic Language Plan

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Midlothian Council and its Community Planning Partners have made a commitment to treat the following areas as key priorities under the Single Midlothian Plan:

- Reducing inequalities in learning outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in health outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in economic circumstance
- Reducing the impact of climate change

Gaelic language and culture is an equality, educational and cultural issue. Equality, diversity and human rights underpin all three priorities.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☐ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☒ Sustainable
- ☐ Transformational
- ☐ Preventative
- ☐ Asset-based
- ☐ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☐ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☒ Preventative and Sustainable
- ☐ Efficient and Modern
- ☐ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

Supporting a sustainable approach to the continuous improvement of Gaelic language and culture within Midlothian Council and its communities supports the delivery of Best Value.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Midlothian Council was required to consult on the draft plan for a minimum period of six weeks and the consultation exercise closed on Friday 1 November 2019.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Completion of actions and the meeting of outcomes within the plan will enhance equality, diversity, human rights, and educational performance and outcomes.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

By adopting a pro-active approach to equality, diversity, human rights, educational and cultural issues a preventative approach will be engendered.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The content of this report contributes to a sustainable approach to the continuous improvement of Gaelic language and culture within Midlothian Council and its communities.

