

REPORT TO BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE – 18 APRIL 2024

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2022-23

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 requires all local authorities to publish a Gaelic Language Plan (the Plan) and to monitor progress of actions within the Plan. The Council is required to submit its statutory monitoring report (annual return) for the period December 2022 to July 2023. Committee is requested to consider, comment on and agree the Annual Return Form attached as **Appendix 1** to this report. The annual return reflects the shorter than normal reporting period with activity ongoing to deliver the Plan proportionate to local demand.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 **Consider, comment on and agree the Annual Return Form attached at Appendix 1; and**

1.2.2 **Note that following approval, the Annual Return Form will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.**

2 Decision Making Route

2.1 The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (the Act) requires relevant public authorities, including the Council, to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan (GLP). Aberdeenshire Council's first GLP was published in 2016. The next iteration of our GLP, from 2022-2027, was approved by Business Services Committee on 11 November 2021 and submitted to the Bòrd Na Gaidhlig (the principal Gaelic body in Scotland) (BnG) for approval.

2.2 BnG requested a number of modifications to the draft Plan in August 2022. Following significant negotiations with BnG, modifications were agreed by Committee on 2 March 2023 and the amended Plan was submitted for approval. The plan was agreed by BnG, and the current Gaelic Language Plan is now in place for 2023-2028. The 2016 Plan remained in place until the agreement of the 2023 Plan.

3 Discussion

3.1 BnG submitted a statutory request for a monitoring report to the Council on 11 January 2024. The monitoring report is for the period 7 December 2022 to 24 July 2023. Following Committee approval, the monitoring report will be submitted to BnG who will assess it and provide a written response to the Council.

3.2 The report requests information and data on areas such as: the number of staff who received Gaelic skills training, communications/publications released in

Gaelic, correspondence in Gaelic received by the council, staff who have Gaelic skills and Care Experienced Gaelic speakers. It asks for specific action points to be ranked as a RAG (red, amber, green) status on how successfully the Council is meeting each of the action areas. The annual return form reflects the short reporting period and local demand in terms of the primary indicator area. The Council continues to progress the National Gaelic Language Plan Priorities and Corporate Indicators.

3.3 Whilst work has continued to deliver the Gaelic Language Plan priorities, the Council's main focus has been the delivery of core services; progress is reflective of the circumstances and local demand for Gaelic services and the pressure on staff.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This report helps to deliver the Strategic Priority "Learning for Life" within the Pillar "Our People".

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Learning for Life Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Climate Change Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economic Growth Infrastructure and public assets

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		X	
Staffing		X	
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland		X	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		X	
Climate Change and Sustainability		X	
Health and Wellbeing		X	
Town Centre First		X	

4.3 There are no staffing / financial implications as a result of this report.

4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken as this report is presenting performance information to Committee and does not have an impact on those with protected characteristics or experiencing poorer socio-economic outcomes.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- ACORP006 – Reputation management (including social media); There is a risk that Aberdeenshire Council would not meet its public duties by failing to respond to the statutory requirement and reporting duties. Failure to comply has the potential to result in loss of reputation. [Corporate Risk Register](#).

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section C. 1.1.b of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to a policy issue within the functions delegated to Committee, specifically Customer & Digital Services.

Rob Simpson

Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Katie Insch, Policy Officer
25 March 2024

List of Appendices –

Appendix 1 Gaelic Language Plan Annual Return Form 2022/23