

Draft National Plan for Gaelic-response

Is the vision of the draft plan one in which you can share?

Yes. It is however essential that the Gaelic language is perceived by readers of the plan as a vibrant, modern, forward-looking language. The perception of the Gaelic culture remains that of 'quaint' for a great many Scots. Two main success criteria of the National Plan, should be:

1. perception no longer exists
2. increased interest in Gaelic language and culture in the Scottish community

In the light of your response to the above question, are the proposed sectorial projects essential to the meeting of the action area aims for 2012? If not, why not?

Yes. In the process towards raising the profile of the Gaelic language as an everyday working language, it may well be, in the present economic climate for councils, that colleagues in Council departments other than Education, may see the issue of cost as a burden, and thus a barrier, to meeting the action area aims relating to communications within public bodies.

The reassurance that financial assistance may be available to for non-recurring capacity-building costs is welcome. In West Dunbartonshire Council, our priority is to increase access to learning Gaelic language across the community. Our Gaelic specific funding is fully targeted at developing school, community and immersion provision. We would require supplementary funding to meet the costs of non-recurring capacity-building.

Are the outcomes for the twenty themes and the priorities for tackling them correctly outlined and prioritised? If not, why not?

Yes, they are wide-ranging, cross-sectoral and the line from the ideal to the practical is evident.

The plan does not seem to address the issue of exploiting media access to Gaelic language. While the programmes currently shown on TV are interesting and engaging for those who have an interest in, or who can speak Gaelic, they do little to engage the uninterested or non-speaking viewer. It is essential to the status and vitality of the Gaelic language, that the profile is raised through the facility of sub-titling of peak-time national news and weather bulletins, and programmes broadcast on the Scottish network of BBC1 and 2. The status of Gaelic remains to be strengthened as a language of communication in the here and now world along with its partner European languages.

In the light of your response to the above question, what projects do you view as being essential to implementing these priorities (some examples are offered in Appendix 1)?

Projects which target community and cultural links with Education, and those which involve parents in their children's learning.

The Gaelic 'badging' of Council communications.

More use of Gaelic in the media.

Are the right organisations identified as being the primary players in implementing these priorities?

Yes

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, how do you see yourselves contributing to the success of the National Plan?

Absolutely. West Dunbartonshire Council Education & Cultural Services has Gaelic language as a priority in its Local Improvement Objectives and departmental Development Plan. Programmes funded by the Gaelic specific grant have facilitated the annually increasing provision of a peripatetic GLPS service for two days per week (currently 6 schools); Gaelic immersion for adults (CLD); longer term plans for joint family learning initiatives; provision of transport for the small number of families seeking Gaelic medium education.

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