

A response on the draft Guidance on Gaelic Language Plans

Organisation National Library of Scotland

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Introduction

NLS is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to certain aspects of this consultation. Please note also our response to the National Plan for Gaelic.

Are you satisfied with the interpretation of equal respect on page 8?

In general, the definition is appropriate; we agree not only that a generous and supportive attitude is essential in providing Gaelic language services, but also that this should not mean identical treatment of Gaelic and English. We believe that it may not always be possible (or desirable) for public bodies to commit to providing services to the same standard in each language.

Are the suggestions from page 14 for the content of a Gaelic language plan comprehensive enough and appropriate to the requirements of Gaelic development?

The examples listed give a range of useful ideas as to what would be appropriate for inclusion in a Gaelic Plan and the areas that a plan could cover. NLS would particularly wish to place an emphasis on our responsibilities to encourage the broader understanding and use of our Gaelic collections. We may be more reluctant to adopt commitments to bilingual publishing, websites and staffing.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, would the draft Guidance adequately assist in drawing up a Gaelic language plan?

The guidance would certainly assist, but we would also anticipate a need for discussion with the Bòrd, especially to clarify our statutory obligations.

For NLS in particular, we would expect a Gaelic Language Plan to have considerable emphasis on our approach to collecting, preserving and providing access to Gaelic collections through a wide range of activities. This is rather in contrast to the emphasis in the Plan guidance on the extent to which we are able to provide opportunities for Gaelic to be spoken.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation not covered by the Gaelic Act, do you feel that this guidance would be of assistance in drawing up a non-statutory Gaelic language plan? Yes.