Geàrr-Chunntas na Coinneamh Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta / Minutes of Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta meeting

Dimàirt 27 Faoilleach 2026 / Tuesday 27 January 2026
Air-loidhne / Online

An làthair

Helen MacKinnon (Chair, Glasgow)
Wilma Laird (Secretary, Edinburgh)
Sarah Thomas (Treasurer, Stirling)
Athene Richford (Glasgow)
Jon Andrews (North Ayrshire)
Alison Craig (Oban)
Joanne MacKenzie (Bòrd na Gàidhlig)
Magaidh Wentworth (Comann nam Pàrant)
Kirsteen Murray (Comann nam Pàrant)
Innes MacQueen (Comann nam Pàrant)

1. Leisgeulan
   Apologies

Margaret Millar (East Ayrshire)
Gwen MacQuarrie (Isle of Skye, Highland)

2. Geàrr-Chunntas na Coinneimh 04 Dàmhair 2025
   Minutes of Meeting 04 October 2025

Minutes of previous meeting proposed by Jon Andrews and seconded by Wilma Laird

3. Gnothaichean ag èiridh nach eil air a' chlàr-gnothiach
   Matters Arising not on Agenda

Magaidh updated committee:
Gaelic Medium provision in Lochaline that started in August is continuing as before, without a Gaelic teacher. There is a meeting tonight (Tuesday 27 Jan) to update parents after the job has been advertised again. It is thought that there are expressions of interest in the position. GM pupils are continued to be supported and travelling to Acharacle primary every week.

The first commencements in the Scottish Languages Act came into force on the 30th November 2025. Many of the initial commencements won't have an impact on local authorities but from a GME point of view the most important one is regarding GME transport. If a local authority tries to change the transport arrangement they will now have to go to consultation through the 2010 act. The Scottish Government hope to bring in more commencements by March before purdah.

The Scottish Borders agreed that there is a demand for Gaelic Medium Education after the request made by parents and agreed to start GME by August 2026. Things have gone quiet since, but we hope to hear the next steps by the end of January. It is concerning to parents that they still do not know further details and which school GME will be delivered.

4. Sgìrean Cànain Sònraichte
   Areas of Linguistic Significance

Magaidh previously shared the draft guidance on Areas of Linguistic Significance. Helen highlighted that it is a lengthy document and raised concerns that clarity is still sought as to what exactly *is* an area of linguistic significance and what will they bring. What differences will we see? Helen also raised concerns about the actual agreement of an ALS and from her perspective it seemed easier for local authorities to avoid joining. Athene agreed and felt that Magaidh has covered a lot of points that he would have made. Athene raised the point as to what incentive is there for local authorities to become an ALS and also felt it was too easy for areas to fall in and out and would this have more harm than good.

Further queries were raised as to what would happen to communities that were not designated as areas of significance. Would resources be focused on the ALS areas on. Discussion regarding vast geographical local authorities such as Highland and Argyll & Bute and how ALS would work in these areas. Discussion regarding urban areas and how/if areas would be designated here. It is felt that there needs to be funding for this from Scottish Government. How are local authorities going to be held to account for implementation.

Magaidh has until Friday and will complete the response to the draft guidance based on this discussion.

5. Calls for View; School Reform

Helen commented that this consultation asks questions that many parents may not know the answers too and raises thoughts as to what parents know about the school, how it is run, how a school receives funding etc. A discussion processed regarding Jordanhill High School and that this is the only school that is funded directly from the Scottish Government and not through the local authority and as a result is ran very differently to local authority schools. Magaidh has started a response to this consultation and this has been shared with committee. It was commented on that the Jordanhill model may be interesting to consider through the Gaelic secondary provision. Sarah commented that part of Jordanhill's success is that they've got much more leeway to have a rigorous curriculum than what the Curriculum of Excellence allows.

Discussion also on the importance of promoted teachers and the creation of opportunities for leadership in the Gaelic Medium sector. It is very difficult for the wider Gaelic body to understand and know the answers to these questions with many parents not understanding what is happening in the wider education climate within schools.

Magaidh mentioned the HMI report which has gone live and feels that this could have a lot of significance for us. It is hard hitting and truthful. It will be useful and hopefully be a good tool when liaising with schools and local authorities. The report is especially strong on the importance of a Gaelic preschool and the difference that this makes to fluency.

There was a further discussion from Helen regarding incentivising Gaelic. In the secondary GME setting within Glasgow it is felt there is little incentive to use and speak Gaelic. Many pupils don't understand why they are learning Gaelic and why they are in GME. Innes mentioned that CnP have been involved in conversations with Education Scotland about the updated curriculum and discussion on this topic have frequently come up. Joanne commented that at a recent open evening the school did make clear to parents that GME is a responsibility and parents should make an effort to learn some Gaelic. It was felt that this was a very positive message to be sending out to parents.

6. Inbhe Laghail aig CnP (N)
   Legal Status of CnP (N)

Comann nam Pàrant are currently a charitable body but as we are taking more responsibility and an officially names body in the Scottish Languages Act, it is suggested the committee become a SCIO – Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This would mean that CnP would become a legal personality. Athene offered support to Magaidh in the establishment of this and also advised that this would protect officer holders more. It was agreed that the National Committee should become a SCIO.

7. Ùrachadh fios bho Chomann nam Pàrant
   Update from Comann nam Pàrant

Update from Lewis

Currently offering 6 learning opportunities a week:

- 3 complete beginners' classes - 45 registered, 22 on waiting list - still facing issues of no shows - I would gladly welcome if there are any suggestions on how to mitigate this situation in the future.
- Two classes at the end of A1 level - these will continue through a new mentorship scheme, which will also offer 1-1 conversation sessions, if wanted. Currently working on background documents, such as code of conduct etc.

- One 1-1 class with an early years practitioner wishing to improve their Gaelic (End of A1) - these opportunities are available to staff working in early years. Mention expression on interest form on website.
- Face to face opportunities in Inverness will be offered in collaboration with CnaG and Cultarlann as the year goes on.

Course for parents based on Gàidhlig a-staigh and that aligns with Speak Gaelic A1 level

This project is still very much 'sa bheairt', but I am happy with how it is progressing. Content will consist of short videos, flashcards, posters and a workbook/course book.

Gàidhlig a-staigh

Book has been high demand - another run of hard copies will likely be required in the near future.

Hoping to meet with the new NHS Highland Gaelic officer about similar projects we could collaborate on.

Innes gave an update continuing to support parents establish and reestablish Comann nam Pàrant groups. Groups have been supported in Fort William, Ullapool and East Renfrewshire.

Innes has been preparing for Seachdain Dhùn Èideann. Gaelic Medium activities taking place at 5 different attractions throughout Edinburgh during week commencing 27 April. There are schools from many local authorities attending including Highland Council, Argyll & Bute and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Comann nam Pàrant are holding a meeting tomorrow evening (28 January) for parents in Lochgilphead who are interested in GME. We will support parents to submit a request to the council for GME if there is demand.

Kirsteen updated that the central belt group supported by her continue to run. Kirsteen updated that parents in Peebles are concerned that there sis no decision about a school for GME yet and worry that some parents will pull out if they don't hear soon. The early year's team conducted a survey in the Western Isles trying to find out why families opt out of Gaelic Medium Education. The survey received over 400 responses so a lot of work required to analysis these responses. The Thig a Chluich sessions continue to be popular, especially the one in Stornoway.

8. **Ùrachadh fios bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig**
   Update from Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Joanne MacKenzie was present to give an update. Calum Munro has started at Bòrd na Gàidhlig as director of Education and Plans. As part of education, some of the first topics he is looking at is early years and adult learning.

The training for early years group on committee skills, finance etc continue to be offered. Bòrd na Gàidhlig have been suggesting the classes that Lewis runs for early year's workers to try and improve uptake especially as some groups struggle to recruit workers to deliver the sessions.

There has been some issues with local authorities with advertising Gaelic essential posts but not stating that Gaelic is essential. Ie early year's worker in a sgoil àraich. This has been flagged in Highland Council and Argyll & Bute. Moray council have indicated an interest in introducing more Gaelic into their early year's settings which is encouraging.

Joanne updated committee that the Gaelic Plans fund will be open for applications will open at the beginning of February. This is to help public authorities in the delivery of commitments in their Gaelic language plans. If Comann nam Pàrant/parents are liaising with a Local Authority this would be good to remind them.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig are pleased to have received the same funding for next year. BnaG will be sending a response about Areas of Linguistic Significance. Bòrd na Gàidhlig wrote to Scottish Borders this week regarding GME so hopeful that this will encourage an update to parents.

9. Cuspairean sam bith a tha ag èirigh aig ìre ionadail
   Any issues arising in local areas

Sarah updated the committee that there is a concern that there could be issues with recruitment in the near future as one teacher will be going on Mat. Leave.

Ali Craig updated committee that Oban is also dealing with staffing issues both at primary and secondary. Serious concerns at secondary about the lack of Gaelic teaching for GME pupils and notable lack of fluence for S1/S2 pupils.

10. GISBE/AOCB

Magaidh and Joanne will organise a CnP Liaison meeting to take place in March. Other CnP reps will be required to join meeting with Helen so we will share with others once date is agreed.

Our next meeting will be the AGM in May. Innes will share with all Comann nam Pàrant group to see if there any other nominations for additional members. If anyone knows of anyone from additional areas that are currently not representative, then please contact Innes.