

Coinneamh Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta

23 Samhain 2024 @ 10:30

Taigh-Osta Maldron, Glaschu



Geàrr-Chunntas na Coinneimh

An làthair,

Magaidh Wentworth

Eilidh MacKinnon – Chair (Glasgow)

Fiona Stephen – Vice-Chair (Edinburgh)

Gill Steele – Secretary (Aberfeldy)

Innes MacQueen – Comann nam Pàrant

Joanne MacKenzie – Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Wilma Laird – Edinburgh

Sarah Thomas – Treasurer (Stirling)

Kirsteen Murray – Comann nam Pàrant

Ali Craig - Oban

Jon Andrews – North Ayrshire

Dan Mahon – East Ayrshire

Isabel Taylor – Cowal

Athene Richford – Glasgow

1. Leisgeulan

Apologies

No Apologies

2. Geàrr-chunntas na Coinneimh 03 Sultain 2024

Minutes of the meeting 03 September 2024

Jon Andrews - the minute did not give reference to the importance of establishing a nursery in North Ayrshire which was discussed in relation to the North Ayrshire Gaelic language plan. Minutes will be amended to include.

Proposed – Fiona Stephen

Seconded – Jon Andrews

3. Gnothaichean ag èiridh nach eil air a' chlàr-gnothaich

Matters arising not on the agenda

No matters arising.

4. Fios as ùr bho Bhòrd na Gàidhlig Update from Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Joanne provided a report beforehand and expanded on further points as noted below.

Link to Report: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:321f18f0-23de-4ee6-9669-d0f408f5f4be>

On the back of Wilson MacLeod's report on Early years and in recognition of the importance of the sector Bòrd na Gàidhlig hope to have a plan in place for supporting the development of early years within the next few months.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig are to meet with Scottish Book Trust soon, to discuss offering Gaelic BookBug training again.

The Bòrd na Gàidhlig community fund is now open until 28 January. Joanne highlighted how this is a good opportunity for local Comann nam Pàrant to apply for funding.

<https://www.gaidhlig.scot/en/funding/funding-schemes/taic-freumhan-coimhearsnachd/>

Bòrd na Gàidhlig have been meeting with East Lothian and they are aware that travelling to Edinburgh is not a long-term solution for GME so are investigating what opportunities are available for GME within the area.

Joanne provided an update regarding the Language assistant SVQ 3 course which is currently running at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Students are enrolled on the course who are employed in Early years, primary and secondary. There are concerns regarding take up of the course as currently there is little offering of extra pay or benefit upon completion of the course. Members felt that the course needed more of an incentive for practitioners, eg an increase in salary. When Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta first discussed the need for training for the post of Language Assistants, the aim was to train Language Assistants able to assist with language acquisition in GME classes to improve fluency among pupils. It has been agreed that the working group previously established to look at developing a course for language assistants should be reinstated. Lisa MacDonald, course leader of the current SMO, is happy to be involved. Some Local Authorities are willing to be involved as well as Education Scotland and Scottish Government. There was also discussion as to how this course could create more opportunities for apprenticeships.

Joanne highlighted that BnaG have supported 46 applicants this year to the value of £49,606 through the Gaelic Education Grant's scheme. Joanne also highlighted that there is a 20k bursary also available for those leaving full time employment through the Scottish Government.

5. Fios as ùr bho Chomann nam Pàrant Update from Comann nam Pàrant

Report provided before Innes spoke to the report adding some further information.

Link to report: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:a3027f0c-3b3b-4dda-af19-5de28b41d1a2>

Information sessions continue to be a good way to engage parents and have taken place in various locations over the last few months. Continuing challenge as to how to get information to parents about these sessions and GME in general, especially in the local authorities which are still fairly new to delivering GME and where the wider community are not always aware that GME is an option. Innes also encouraged members to share information about the online CnP / BnaG information event taking place on Tuesday 28 November.

Kirsteen updated committee on the early year's work. Kirsteen continues to deliver Bookbug Sessions in Falkirk and East Lothian as well as supporting several Pàrant is Pàiste groups throughout southern Scotland.

Thig a Chluich continues to be successful various communities in Lewis and Harris every week. The session is especially well attended in Stornoway.

Kirsteen has supported the establishment of an early years group in Angus. They are using the curriculum for the group that Kirsteen has developed. North Lanarkshire are in discussions to establish an early year's group in the Cumbernauld area. East Kilbride are keen to get an Early Year's groups established and Kirsteen is supporting with this also.

Since the information event at West Primary in Paisley, 4 or 5 new families are now attending the Pàrant is Pàiste in Paisley. Early year's groups are continuing to improve links between the groups and schools that are delivering GME within the area.

Kirsteen is also developing resources that are available online and on the social media platforms.

The funding for the current early year's team is until March 2025 but we will hear in December if this will be extended. Eilidh commended the achievements of the team and there was general agreement regarding the positive impact that the early year's team are having on the sector, and we are very hopeful that this funding will continue.

Eilidh commended the online resources that are being shared as fun and engaging.

What have numbers been like at these sessions? (Eilidh) Innes answered, varying. Class teachers and management seem to be very influential in the organisation of these sessions.

Magaidh gave a further update as follows -

Scottish languages bill is at stage 2, MSPs are able to put forward amendments as well as Scottish government. We have until 5 December to ask an MSP to put in an amendment on our behalf

Suggested amendment from Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta

- A structure to creating a Gaelic school, similar to 2010 consultation act
- A right to GME in the Areas of Linguistic Significance.

Discussion regarding who was on the education committee and who could we ask for this.

Athene raised questions the Scottish Languages Bill. Is language commissioner now off the table?

(Athene) A lot of language used in the draft about promoting the language which seems a low threshold for LAs to only promote Gaelic. Language not strong enough in Bill. (we have been told that some of these points have been taken up) Is there to be any additional funding regarding the areas of linguistic significance?

MW – Main Gaelic Organisations met with DFM and asked them to submit different budget scenarios, static funding, decrease in funding and increase in funding. Comunn na Gàidhlig have now submitted this.

Comann nam Pàrant received a response on 22/11/24 regarding funding request to complete an options appraisal on secondary provision in South-West Glasgow. Funding request has been rejected at this stage, but BnaG have agreed to meet to discuss the proposal further and possibly include other organisations in discussions. There was disappointment expressed by members regarding this decision and discussion proceeded to highlight the importance that the original reason for the research is not lost. The main request from parents is for clarity on secondary provision for the local authorities that are new to GME delivery or for those that can no longer access/rely on SGG. With an increasing number of local authorities required to deliver secondary provision with limited resources, could there be another approach which would be a better use of these resources such as more inter-authority collaboration.

Magaidh – there is to be a meeting with HMI for Gaelic parents on Tuesday morning as part of their stakeholder meetings and all members have been invited. Eilidh and Gill are able to attend.

New Inspection Frameworks and Methodologies – Stakeholder Engagement Forums – 3 stakeholder forums - new school inspections frameworks and models, improving the curriculum framework, the development of a framework for the inspection of local authorities. Comann nam Parant have been invited to have representative at all three.

Jon asked about N Ayrshire GLP. Joanne can find out timeline now that the consultation period is over and let Jon know.

6. Fios as ùr bho na sgìrean ionadail

Update from the local areas

Athene – teacher / pupil ratios, should they be preferential for language immersion. MW – there is reference in the Statutory guidance that preferential ratios should be considered but the decision is left to Local Authorities. This could be strengthened in the review of statutory guidance or will possibly be included in the new standards from the Scottish Languages Bill. The review of the Statutory guidance was then discussed and we hope to have more information on this soon.

Isabel Taylor, Cowal - Isabel apologised that she has missed last few meetings. There has been some restructuring within the local Comann nam Pàrant which has taken some time to

sort out. She expressed disappointment that Argyll and Bute Council announced that they were not taking forward a standalone Gaelic school. No P1s started in Gaelic Medium at Sandbank Primary this year although August 2025 intake is looking positive. Innes will communicate with Isabel about providing guidance for the local Comann nam Pàrant group and advising about promotion etc. The High School Provision continues to be positive offering Gaelic, RE and PSEd through the medium of Gaelic. However, it seems that the Gaelic teacher is fully stretched, and the school would benefit from an additional teacher.

Jon Andrews, North Ayrshire – there was a healthy intake in P1 however not looking as healthy for August 2025. No GME nursery does not help there seems to be a large drop-off from those going to Gaelic early year group to starting school. There are Gaelic BookBug sessions being delivering within the area. There is a lot of engagement from the school and involving parents in their learning which is welcomed. There are strong links developing with GME pupils in Kilmarnock however there is currently no active Comann nam Pàrant group. It is felt from parents that there could be more promotion happening within the local area and from the council. There were videos previously made but are these being put to good use? Parents have lost their contact with the council which does make progressing things more difficult.

Sarah Thomas, Stirling – the school was unable to recruit a Gaelic speaking support for learning assistant which is disappointing. Stirling Gaelic choir have set up a youth choir which is a good step forward and creating an out-of-school opportunities for pupils. There is still an intergenerational reading group running which could be very effective and a good idea however there is very little uptake from children taking part. It is the 30th anniversary for GME within Riverside Primary School next year and it is hope that there will be celebration of this as well as an opportunity to do more promotion of GME as there is currently very little promotion from the school.

Ali Craig, Oban – Comann nam Pàrant an Òbain welcomed having the National Mòd take place within the town. The group used this as an opportunity to host events and do fundraising. Comann nam Pàrant reps and Innes met with Depute Head and head of languages at Oban High School to discuss secondary provision. This was very positive, and the head of department seemed ambitious and positive about GME. There are discussions with a local parent interested in doing the parental advisory scheme within the town which would be very welcomed. Ali raised that pupils from Oban will be attending Seachdain Dhùn Èideann however the costs were extremely high and proposed that the CnP N investigate in the future the event taking place at a different time or in a different location.

Dan Mahon, East Ayrshire – there were families that attended the National Mòd in Oban which they enjoyed and now more are keen to get involved with discussion surrounding forming a Gaelic choir. The Headteacher has left, and the recruitment process is still ongoing. Sradagan continues to be well attended however they are currently advertising for an additional Gaelic speaking leader to assist in the running of it. There have been a few promotional events in the last few months which parents have been involved with. The numbers in sgoil àraich are very strong and reaching capacity showing demand both within and out with East Ayrshire.

Athene Richford, Glasgow - CnP Ghlaschu are struggling for active volunteers especially for events however next year's ambition is to try and do events again. There are still ongoing challenges with staffing especially at Bun Sgoil Ghleann Dàil. They have been without a headteacher for two years and although oversubscribed from catchment area, pupils are leaving, and school role has fallen which could risk losing staffing. Could this become a Hard to Recruit for School?

Govan Gaelic School, an executive headteacher is in place as well as a Head of School. There has been a noticeable difference in having this stabilised structure now in place. Calltainn school build is delayed, now due to open in December 2025. It has been established the sgoil àraich and primary school needs to have moved out of the Berkley Street campus by 2028. Parents continue to have a working group with the council discussing GME development within the city. There has been a new QIO appointed a 0.5 contract who comes from within GME and will be focusing on GME delivery within the city which is welcomed. Discussion that Bòrd na Gàidhlig should be represented on the working group. A lack of community support officers is having an ongoing impact on the overall GME delivery with Glasgow.

Gill Steele, Aberfeldy - There are very low numbers enrolling into GME although there are healthy numbers at Sgoil-Àraich not all are transitioning into P1. Very little promotion is done by the school or local authority and there could be a lot more done. Innes and Gill to liaise to organise a meeting with the new headteacher.

Wilma Laird & Fiona Stephen, Edinburgh – there is currently little appetite for change from parents as they are quite happy with the Darroch arrangement. The numbers at primary school are currently fairly static. The council have been very slow at advertising to recruit additional play workers at Croileagan although another advert is due to come out soon. Pre covid, there were 6 sessions per week but now there are only 3 croileagan sessions. No convenor currently of CnP Dhùn Èideann but a dedicated committee. Permanent headteacher has now been appointed at Taobh na Pairce after the requirement of Gaelic in the advert was changed. It is the headteacher that was previously acting head that has been appointed.

7. Aithisg Ionmhasair

Treasurer's report

There have been very little transactions this year. The end of the financial year is Jan 2025.

Opening Balance 01/02/24 - £7025.71

Expenditure - £4545.24

Balance on 18/03/24 - £2480.37

8. Gnothaichean sam bith eile

Any other business

In response to Dan's earlier point about the difficulty in recruiting a Sradagan leader, Wilma inputted that senior pupils have become paid play leaders for Sradagan which helps to

facilitate the sessions. Ali Craig also expressed interest and further information on this and the practicalities of it. Innes to follow up with Wilma and share information.

Innes will share a DoodlePoll to agree date for the next meeting.