

Coinneamh Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta)

Dimàirt 27 Cèitean 2025

19:30

Air-loidhne

Attendees

Helen MacKinnon – Chair
Fiona Stephen – Vice Chair
Athene Richford – Glasgow
Wilma Laird – Edinburgh
Morag Campbell – East Ayrshire
Jon Andrews – North Ayrshire
Alison Craig – Oban
Magaidh Wentworth – Comann nam Pàrant
Innes MacQueen – Comann nam Pàrant
Kirsteen Murray – Comann nam Pàrant
Joanne MacKenzie – Bòrd na Gàidhlig

1. Leisgeulan

Apologies

Sarah Thomas – Treasurer
Dan Mahon – East Ayrshire
Gwen Culbertson – Highland

2. Geàrr-chunntas na Coinneimh 10 Màirt 2025

Minute of Meeting 10 March 2025

Minute of previous committee meeting on 10th March was agreed to be an accurate representation.

Proposed: Wilma Laird
Seconded: Jon Andrews

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

Matters Arising not on Agenda

No matter arising.

Helen asked for an update on the research on secondary provision.

Magaidh updated the committee that the research is now advertised on Public Contracts Scotland. The deadline for tender bids is June 17th and Joanne updated committee that Bòrd na Gàidhlig hope to move quickly on the appointment of the tender intending to meet and appoint contractor before the end of June.

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/search/show/search_view.aspx?ID=MA Y531159

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

Magaidh updated the committee on work that Comann nam Pàrant have been involved with lately. There are issues with Ayrshire with nursery places in which Comann nam Pàrant are supporting parents. More on this from update from local areas.

There is no update regarding the Scottish Languages Bill with the Bill still at stage 3. We hope that there will be an update soon.

We have continued to support parents where required on their request to Highland Council to establish GME in Lochaline. Magaidh attended a meeting recently with the council, school and parents. They have been unsuccessful in recruiting a qualified teacher however there are ongoing discussions with a probationer. Parents have had little communication with the council over the last few months however there is due to be a decision on June 10th on whether GME will be starting in Lochaline in August 2025.

There is no further update regarding the feasibility study for a standalone Gaelic High School in Stornoway.

Joanne will organise a date for another CnamP Liaison meeting. CnamP will decide the focus of the meeting.

Innes's provided an overview of Seachdain Dhùn Èideann. 400 pupils attended throughout the week from 15 different schools. There were sessions taking place at 5 different locations, at Dynamic Earth, the National Museum of Scotland, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Some schools attended for the day travelling from the central belt, with other schools residential as attending from Highland council and Argyll & Bute. It was great to welcome pupils from all three standalone Gaelic schools in the Highland Council area; Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Port Rìgh, and a first visit for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar.

Early years update

Kirsteen Murray updated committee. There is an additional Parent & toddler session now taking place in East Kilbride. This is after working with the school who are providing the room for the session.

Kirsteen delivered two Gaelic song and Rhyme training sessions one in Glasgow and one in Edinburgh in collaboration with Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Kirsteen highlighted that at the Glasgow session, there was an attendee that had travelled from Ullapool as there is no similar training closer to Ullapool. Kirsteen is intending to provide a session in Inverness as well as further sessions in Glasgow and/or Edinburgh.

Kirsteen updated committee that they have now filled June's post in the Western Isles to continue the successful delivery of Thig a Chluich.

Innes shared the draft Youth Strategy produced by Comunn na Gàidhlig prior to the meeting. Committee were updated that we have 5 weeks to respond to this, and it would be good to get feedback on this piece of work.

Lewis shared his new resource that he has been working on. This new online resource called 'Gàidhlig a-staigh' is a phrasebook designed to help families integrate Scottish Gaelic into their daily home life. It provides useful expressions, vocabulary, and grammatical explanations to support parents and caregivers who want to make Gaelic a primary or significant language in their household, regardless of their current fluency level. The phrasebook is organised into different sections covering different domestic scenarios such as getting the table ready for dinner or getting ready for bed. It also includes pronunciation support via hyperlinks to audio files and additional printable resources. The resource is hosted on www.neadan.scot and will be available as physical copies soon.

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

Joanne, Education Manager at Bòrd na Gàidhlig, updated committee. Progress has been slow, partly due to staff changes, on the implementation of recommendations set out by Wilson MacLeod's report on Early Years. However, as recommended simplifications to the grant system for Early Years have been made in conjunction and it is hoped to further simplify the process in future years. Implementing another recommendation in the report, the Early Year's officer at Bòrd na Gàidhlig is planning training for committees of Early years groups on committee skills, risk assessments etc. Bòrd na Gàidhlig are also having discussions on how improvements can be made in the model of delivery for provision in the early years.

The review into Statutory guidance will hopefully be completed soon. There wasn't a huge number of responses received during the consultation but those that were received were very helpful.

Joanne also updated that the fund for Early Year's group is now open with a bit of additional funding secured for this fund.

The Gaelic officer scheme is now also open at Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The BnaG officer dealing with the fund has had quite positive conversations with different organisations regarding this fund. Some interested groups already have an officer in position through current funding but it is also open to organisations that have not previously been supported.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig have received more funding from Scottish Government which has been distributed to their Main Delivery Partners. For example, Comunn na Gàidhlig have been able to advertise to reinstate the Gaelic youth officer post in Glasgow.

Joanne updated the committee that the Falkirk draft Gaelic plan is out for consultation. With issues recently with GME transport, within the area, it is advisable for parents to put in a response. There are issues with Wallace High with one family not getting a place even though they were in GME in Riverside Primary School, Stirling. The family now resides in Falkirk and are having to appeal the decision.

There will be a GME information session in Borders on 14th June organised with Comann nam Pàrant with Bòrd na Gàidhlig present.

6. Fios as ùr bho na sgìrean ionadail
Update from the local areas

Edinburgh

Wilma updated the committee that all croileagan playleader posts have now been filled and they are back to a full offering. It is the highest ever intake for C1 in Taobh na Pairce in August 2025 with 98 children now enrolled. The Headteachers at Taobh na Pairce and James Gillespie's are to meet with council to discuss forward planning.

Glasgow

Athene updated the committee that the numbers are lower for enrolment this year. Although the cap is still in place this is not impacting this year as the number is well below the cap. It is feared from parents that the cap is raising doubts amongst parents who may be considering GME and may be stopping them from applying. There are about 40/50 less pupils than previous years, and there is a smaller drop of a 10% decrease within English medium also.

Athene reported that all primary schools now have headteachers, which is welcomed however the new east end school, is still at least 1 year away from opening.

There has been a long-held commitment from Glasgow City council to move the primary out of secondary school at Berkley Street but there now seem to be a bit of resistance in fulfilling this commitment. The subgroup including parents and council officials that was established has collapsed and parents are now struggling to have meaningful conversations with the council.

There is also concern amongst parents that the Gaelic community post within the council has never been advertised since the previous officer left last year.

Oban

Ali Craig updated committee that she is no longer chair of Comann nam Pàrant. There are now two co-chairs who are newer to GME and there seems to be more engagement from younger families which is encouraging. Ali is now going to take more of a focus on secondary. Although CnamP had a positive meeting last year with the high school there has not been a lot of progress since the meeting and important to keep the pressure on to see an improvement in provision and opportunities.

Ali also thanked Comann nam Pàrant for Seachdain Dhùn Èideann which Bun Sgoil Achadh na Creige attended.

North Ayrshire

The primary school in North Ayrshire lost a teacher however an advert went out end of April and they were going to interview. Parents have no further information regarding plans for secondary apart from their commitment within their Gaelic language plan to have provision in place by 2028. However, there will be GM pupils reaching secondary age in 2026 so uncertainty what will be in place for them. Jon updated committee the pupils really enjoyed attending Seachdain Dhùn Èideann for the very first time and the Spòrs Gàidhlig trip. Croileagan has taken a bit of a dip in attendance however are still running two sessions per week and Bookbug sessions continue.

There is a Gaelic café happening in the school, building a stronger Gaelic network which is making the Gaelic provision more visible in the community.

East Ayrshire

Morag Campbell was in attendance and gave the committee an update. The Primary school is switching from 2 to 3 classes.

There have been families refused a place in the Sgoil Àraich due to it being oversubscribed. Parents are particularly upset as there is no priority given to siblings so some families with children already in the sgoil-àraich/school not being offered places. The sgoil-àraich has no opportunity to expand and it is understood that the extra room that was created when the school was built for GM provision is now being used for English provision. Magaidh had a meeting this week with BnaG and Scottish Government. The CEO of Bòrd na Gàidhlig will be writing to all Ayrshire local councils as all are currently accessing the provision within East Ayrshire.

7. GISBE/AOCB

No other business arising

8. Ceann-là airson an ath-choinneamh

Date for the next meeting

Innes suggested that our next meeting in September be hybrid with the in-person meeting taking place in Glasgow. Innes will share a DoodlePoll in the coming weeks.

IM