

APPENDIX 2

Consultation on our draft Gaelic Language Plan

Background

From the 2011 Census, it was reported that 0.37% of the Angus population spoke Gaelic. This equates to approximately 429 Gaelic speakers in the area, out of a population of approximately 116,000.

Angus Council's draft Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2019 -2024 was approved by the council's Policy & Resources committee on 4 June 2019. It had been widely discussed in the chamber, and a deputation was in attendance to give a presentation about their concerns. Ultimately, however, the draft Plan received unanimous approval.

The draft GLP was translated into Gaelic , and the statutory six week consultation was from 22 July – 5 September 2019.

Distribution

The draft GLP:

- Appeared on the council's Facebook page.
- Appeared on the council's consultation page on the website, 'Have Your Say' for the whole 6 week period.
- Was emailed to the GME unit in Whitehills PS for parents and staff to comment on it.
- Was emailed to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, for distribution to Gaelic contacts.
- Was emailed to the local councils' Regional Gaelic group.
- Appeared on the council's intranet for staff to comment on it.

Responses

Below is a table of the reaction on our Facebook page, which reached 8,773 people, in itself generating awareness of Gaelic. Comments were both negative and positive in almost equal measure. Negative comments tended to be around concern for the cost, and the view that Gaelic wasn't spoken in Angus. The positive views were that the draft Plan doesn't go far enough, people welcomed what the council was trying to do, information was given that adult learning was available in Blairgowrie, which could be accessed by people in Angus, and some comments between people posting were in Gaelic. The reach of social media was therefore impressive.

Performance for your post		
8,773 People Reached		
301 Reactions, comments & shares <i>i</i>		
89 Like	44 On post	45 On shares
16 Love	14 On post	2 On shares
1 Haha	0 On post	1 On shares
1 Wow	1 On post	0 On shares
3 Angry	3 On post	0 On shares
172 Comments	125 On Post	47 On Shares
19 Shares	18 On Post	1 On Shares
2,258 Post Clicks		
49 Photo views	47 Link clicks <i>i</i>	2,162 Other Clicks <i>i</i>

There was one response from Whitehills primary school, which clarified that Gaelic is not available in Whitehills for a secondary pupils on a weekly basis, but on a voluntary basis for interaction with younger pupils on a Friday afternoon. So far this has not been followed through by secondary pupils.

There is also mention of the teacher leading a termly learning opportunity for parents and pre-school providers, but currently this does not occur.

There were no responses from other staff or members of the Regional Gaelic group.

There was one response from one of our elected members.

There were five responses by email to the consultation, but it was not known where the respondents had seen the draft Plan. Responses were both positive and negative. The main points were:

Feelings of a waste of public money; only a handful of people will understand Gaelic signs; would have liked more awareness of the GME unit available in Whitehills primary school; and languages taught should benefit children's futures, like Mandarin and French.

Feelings of appreciation that the council is making efforts to increase the profile of Gaelic in the area; delight that the council is supporting the development of the language, and suggestions of more the council could be doing e.g. changing the name of Angus Council to Comhairle Aonghais, renaming the position of Councillor to Comhairliche, and all new signs for towns displaying the town's Gaelic name 1st.

Council response

The responses to the consultation were discussed at our internal Gaelic group on 4 September 2019. There was agreement that renaming the council was not an option, nor renaming elected members' positions.

There was also agreement that whilst the council remains ambitious for the development of Gaelic in Angus, following the guidance of Bòrd na Gàidhlig in giving equal recognition to English and Gaelic on signage, the practice of using Gaelic first on signage is where there is a larger number of Gaelic speakers in an area, thus road signage changes to give prominence to Gaelic in the North/West of Scotland. It would be inappropriate in this area.

With regard to buildings having a Gaelic name, this will be the case as and when we replace signage/new signs for new buildings. The adoption of the Gaelic rather than the English version would be a matter for users.