
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: Cairngorms National Park Authority Draft Gaelic Language Plan

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Purpose

This paper seeks the Board's formal approval to consult on the draft Gaelic Language Plan.

Recommendations

That the Board:

- a) Approve the Draft Gaelic Language Plan for consultation
- b) Approve the proposed consultation on the draft plan from 8th November-17th December 2010

Executive Summary

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a statutory duty to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan. This will set out how we will use, or are willing to use, and develop Gaelic in the operation of our functions, how we will enable the use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners and how we will promote and develop Gaelic. The Plan also presents an opportunity for us to work with partners to seek agreement and development of the use of Gaelic with the Park brand and the portal.

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY DRAFT GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN - FOR DECISION

Background

1. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 was passed by the Scottish Parliament with a view to securing 'the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language'. Under the Act public bodies are required to produce Gaelic Language Plans, which 'set out the measures to be taken by the relevant public authority in relation to the use of the Gaelic language in connection with the exercise of the authority's function' (*National Plan for Gaelic*). The Plan should contribute to the National Plan for Gaelic and increase the awareness of and develop the language. The Plan operates on a five-year cycle and will allow for the incremental development of provision for Gaelic in the organisation.
2. The Cairngorms National Park has a rich history and culture of languages. Gaelic became the dominant language of the Cairngorms area over 1,000 years ago (superseding the Pictish language and culture) and because of this the majority of the current place-names within the Park are Gaelic in origin. However, there was a gradual decline of the language and by the 18th and 19th centuries many people in the Cairngorms area were bilingual, speaking Scots as well as Gaelic. Gaelic is still spoken in the Cairngorms National Park, mainly in the Badenoch and Strathspey area. According to the 2001 census approximately 290 of the Park's population speak Gaelic (1.8 per cent of the park's population and 0.5 per cent of Scotland's total Gaelic speaking population). On the east side of the Park, Doric is still spoken and adds to the culture and history of the area.

Current practice

3. A number of the CNPA's activities already promote and develop Gaelic:
 - a) The CNPA's logo has a bi-lingual version, which is used on the website, letter heads, publications, compliment slips and business cards;
 - b) A Gaelic foreword is included in our statutory and policy documents;
 - c) The Place Names of the Cairngorms, a visitor leaflet which gives people an understanding of the Gaelic place names in the Park;
 - d) We have funded Gaelic language training for staff and fund a number of Gaelic organisations and groups in the Park;
 - e) The Land Based Business Training, which is open to the public as well as staff and board, offers Gaelic awareness, culture and language courses
 - f) We have a Community Heritage Officer, who has responsibility for raising awareness of Gaelic and supporting cultural heritage projects and activities among communities

Identity/Signage

4. We already have guidance on using the Gaelic version of our corporate logo and a working approach has been developed on use of Gaelic with the brand (examples include Gaelic signage and interpretation and on the family suite of brands.) The Plan

presents an opportunity to work with partners to agree guidance on use of Gaelic with the brand. This will be done in partnership with the Brand Management Group and partners, and will bring a consistent approach, which encourages the use of Gaelic where relevant and appropriate. This is in-line with the National Plan for Gaelic, and the approach of other public bodies, which states 'equal respect to English... does not mean identical treatment.'

Communications

5. The CNPA has no fluent Gaelic speakers who are responsible for dealing with Gaelic enquiries (a skills audit will determine the level of Gaelic amongst staff). However the Plan sets out the need for the organisation to develop clear guidance on how to deal with and respond to Gaelic enquiries, including responding to Gaelic enquiries in Gaelic. There will be financial implications as we will have to use a translation service. At present there is no data available on the number of enquiries/ requests/ complaints etc received in Gaelic, but we will start to monitor and record these and this will allow us to determine if there are future needs in this area, such as language training for reception staff.

Publications

6. The CNPA produces a number of statutory and policy documents and we already include Gaelic forewords in these. The Plan states that we will continue with this practice and, in line with the National Plan which states 'equal respect does not mean identical treatment', we will produce a Gaelic version of statutory publications on request and where the CNPA considers it relevant and appropriate.

Staffing

7. The use and development of Gaelic within the organisation and in relation to our activities must be supported by staff and board, and embedded into our working practices. To help staff and board understand and support the importance of Gaelic both to the organisation and Scotland all staff and board should attend Gaelic Awareness training. This course will also help staff and board to understand more of the Park's history and culture as well as the relevance and role of Gaelic in the Park. The development of Gaelic within the organisation will identify skills gaps. The Plan will address this by accepting Gaelic applications in recruitment and by supporting further Gaelic training for staff. This will develop the Gaelic skills within the organisation and our ability to deal with Gaelic related activities and services internally rather than relying on translation services.

Consultation

8. It is proposed to start a six-week period of consultation on 8th November 2010, closing on 17th December 2010. The Draft Plan will be available on the CNPA website, at the CNPA offices, libraries and other accessible points as required. Letters will also be sent to key stakeholders informing them of the consultation and highlighting the link on the website (hard copies will be available on request).

Recommendation

9. That the Board

- a) **Approve the Draft Gaelic Language Plan for consultation**
- b) **Approve the proposed consultation on the Plan from 8th November-17th December 2010**

Policy

- 10. The CNPA has a statutory duty to produce a Gaelic Language Plan. The National Plan for Gaelic provides the strategic context for the CNPA's Gaelic Language Plan and it should operate in conjunction with the National Plan for Gaelic and contribute to its objectives.
- 11. It also supports five of the nine outcomes that the CNPA has identified as contributing to in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework outcomes:
 - a) We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
 - b) We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
 - c) We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
 - d) We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.
 - e) Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

Implications

Financial Implications

- 12. Funding is secure for the publication, consultation and delivery of the Plan for the 2010/11 financial year through budgets in the agreed Operational Plan and funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund. However given the current economic climate, and the reductions in public spending, this is likely to have an impact on our ability to deliver the Plan in future years (both the current plan period, 2011-2016, and beyond). Should the current resources change, we will make appropriate provision and amendments for the resourcing of this Plan with regard to those services delivered directly by us.

Presentational Implications

- 13. The Draft Plan will require a formal public consultation before a final Gaelic Language Plan is prepared for approval by the Board in January 2011. A report will also be prepared, detailing any changes to the document and the reasoning and justification for the changes. All objections and comments received to the consultation will be reported back to the Board for their consideration. The Draft Plan will be available on the CNPA website and there will also be hard copies.

Implications for Stakeholders

- 14. The Gaelic Language Plan will set a benchmark and consistency on the use of Gaelic by the CNPA. We will also work with the Brand Management Group and partners to get agreement on use of Gaelic with the brand. The CNPA's Gaelic Language Plan and our delivery of it should seek to be seen as 'good practice' by other organisations.

Next Steps

15. Following the close of the period for consultation, CNPA must consider all of the submissions received and decide whether to make any changes to the draft plan. The results of the consultation and the further changes proposed will be reported to a future board meeting in January 2011. Once approved by the Board the full plan will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in February 2011 for statutory approval.

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