

YEAR ONE EXTERNAL REVIEW

Foreword

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It gives me great pleasure to attach a short foreword welcoming the review of the first year of e-Sgoil. I am also very pleased to support the development of the e-Sgoil project, based in the Western Isles, operating throughout Scotland and supported by the Scottish Government.

On a number of occasions, I have been able to observe how innovative and accessible the platform is for expanding learner opportunities across the curriculum. This is without doubt an important national resource and an increasing number of schools are taking advantage of the benefits offered by e-Sgoil.

e-Sgoil makes use of our national education intranet, GLOW and it is effectively using this to bring teachers and learners together no matter what their location. I would like to congratulate those involved at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar for their vision, energy and commitment in bringing this project forward in such a short period of time.

In concluding, I would like to commend this report to you and hope you are encouraged by the success set out in the following pages.

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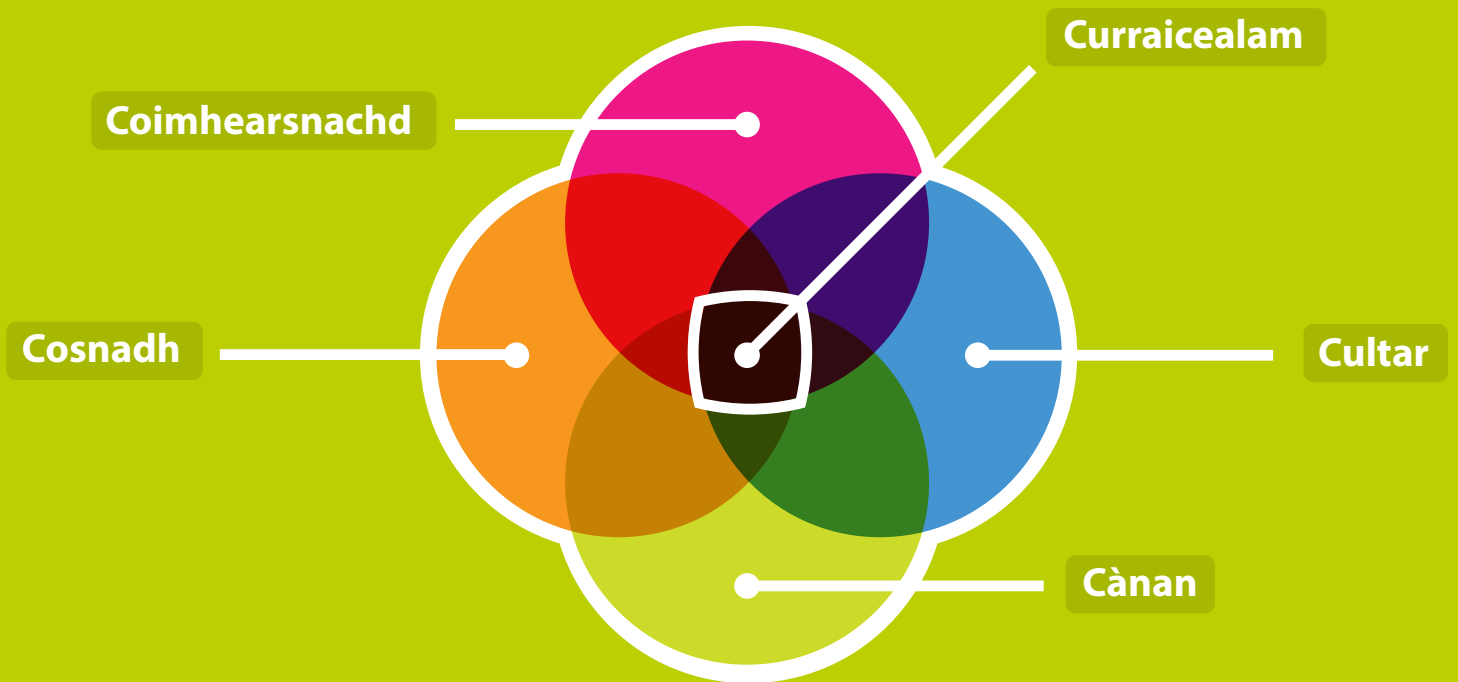


John Swinney
Deputy First Minister of Scotland



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

An independent review of the first year of the transformational change programme in Education and Children's Services in the Western Isles, with recommendations for development.



Report Authors:
Bruce Robertson and Martin Finnigan

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1.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has introduced a major transformational change programme in Education and Children's Services in the Western Isles which has the potential to enhance opportunities for learners, educators and the wider public. Harnessing the use of learning through technology alongside existing educational provisions creates wider curriculum choices, supports existing programmes of raising attainment, creates associated links in Gàidhlig language and culture, and is also a mechanism to address rural inequalities by widening opportunities for all.

1.2 This external review has been commissioned by the Director of Education and Children's Services to ensure that the project has strong foundations; and also to seek advice and direction as e-Sgoil further develops and starts its first implementation year. The agreed brief of the review/study can be seen in Appendix 1, and was developed from an earlier brief, aspects of which have been addressed in Section 6 and Appendix 4. Appendix 2 lists the individuals and agencies who contributed to the evidence on which we have drawn our conclusions.



2.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) is one of three Island Authorities in Scotland. As a Local Authority it has responsibility for a range of services, including Education and Children's Services. In this respect it acts as the Education Authority with statutory responsibilities and powers.

2.2 Despite the challenges of a sparse population scattered across island groupings, the educational reputation of CnES is strong with continuing high outcomes in the majority of national measures. In national terms, these schools would be viewed as mainly small to medium sized. Therefore CnES has a reputation of delivering on national education and children's services agendas within a unique context which includes Gàidhlig language and culture which the Comhairle is actively committed to fostering. All the pupils in CnES are either in Gaelic Medium Education (GME) classes or learn Gaelic as their second language to the end of broad general education.

2.3 The population of the Western Isles has seen steady decline for a number of decades and has an ageing demographic balance. Many young people leave the islands for study or work and in many cases do not return. The Comhairle and its partners have prioritised economic development across the islands and central to this is educational attainment and achievement for all learners.

2.4 The main challenges in planning and delivering education in CnES relate to the scattered nature of the population, the declining school rolls in most, but not all, of the communities, ensuring that there is a well qualified workforce available across the four secondary schools and 22 primary schools, and the provision of a curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. Like all Scottish Councils, CnES faces financial challenges in the current period of austerity and, like most Education Authorities, is also currently tackling teacher staffing shortages, exacerbated by the unique context of the Western Isles. The rolls for the four secondary schools for the previous three years and next three years are shown in Appendix 5.

2.5

Secondary education in CnES is delivered through four schools with large scattered catchment areas. The largest, The Nicolson Institute in Stornoway, has a roll of 1052 pupils, Sir E Scott on Harris has a 106 pupil secondary department, Lionacleit in Benbecula has 251 secondary pupils, and Castlebay in Barra has 54 secondary pupils. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges for CnES is ensuring equity of curriculum opportunity across all four schools, made even more difficult with the current national teacher staffing shortage. Specifically, in the case of Gàidhlig, there is a national challenge in providing a Gaelic Medium Secondary educational experience to the growing numbers of GME pupils across the country. Like all education authorities with GME provision, the ability to fill vacancies for GME teaching positions can be difficult despite the fact that CnES is part of the Gàidhlig heartland.

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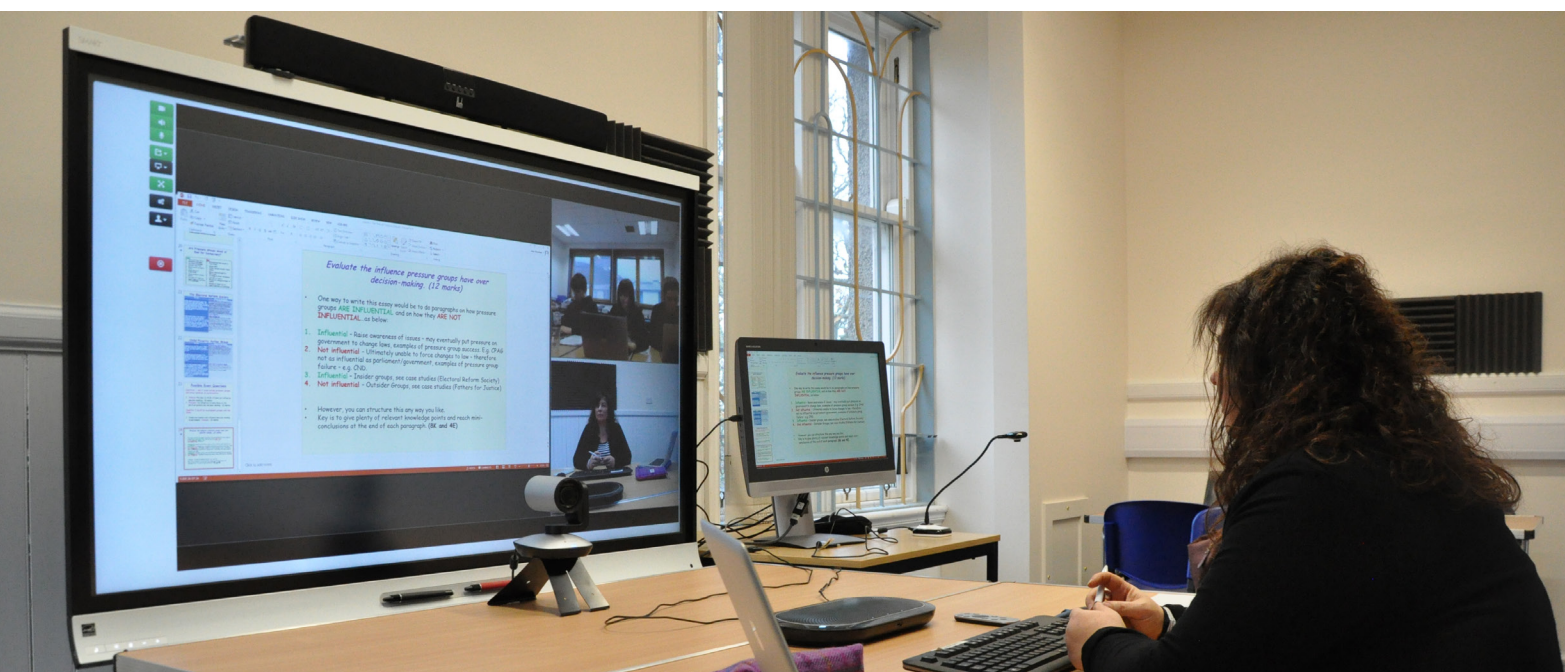
The Primary Schools across the Western Isles vary in size from 8 pupils in Bernera to 438 in Stornoway. While the quality of the educational experience is generally very good, the majority of schools are relatively isolated, have small staffing complements, and at times can find broader curriculum opportunities difficult either to access or support. Some excellent practice does exist in groups of schools collaborating to provide educational opportunities for children who benefit from peer group activities not always possible in their own location. There can be specific challenges in delivering the national STEM agenda along with the languages 2+1 initiative in rural schools such as those in CnES.

2.7

Set against this local and national context, CnES developed some very innovative thinking regarding how best to provide opportunities for all learners and their educators but also for the wider communities the Comhairle serves. A transformational change agenda is taking place to provide local improvement opportunities benefiting the Western Isles and also enabling national targets and policies to be delivered in their unique context. e-Sgoil is part of this transformational change and has much to offer the Western Isles and elsewhere in Scotland.

3.1 The World Wide Web has transformed many aspects of society, globally, since its inception in the late part of the 20th century. For education it has opened up almost immeasurable opportunities for learners and educators. Through this medium, opportunities are emerging for learners, of all ages, in communities, institutions and homes of varying size, type and interest. Harnessing e-learning alongside existing teaching and learning practice undoubtedly has massive potential for all education systems, but particularly for those in sparsely populated island communities.

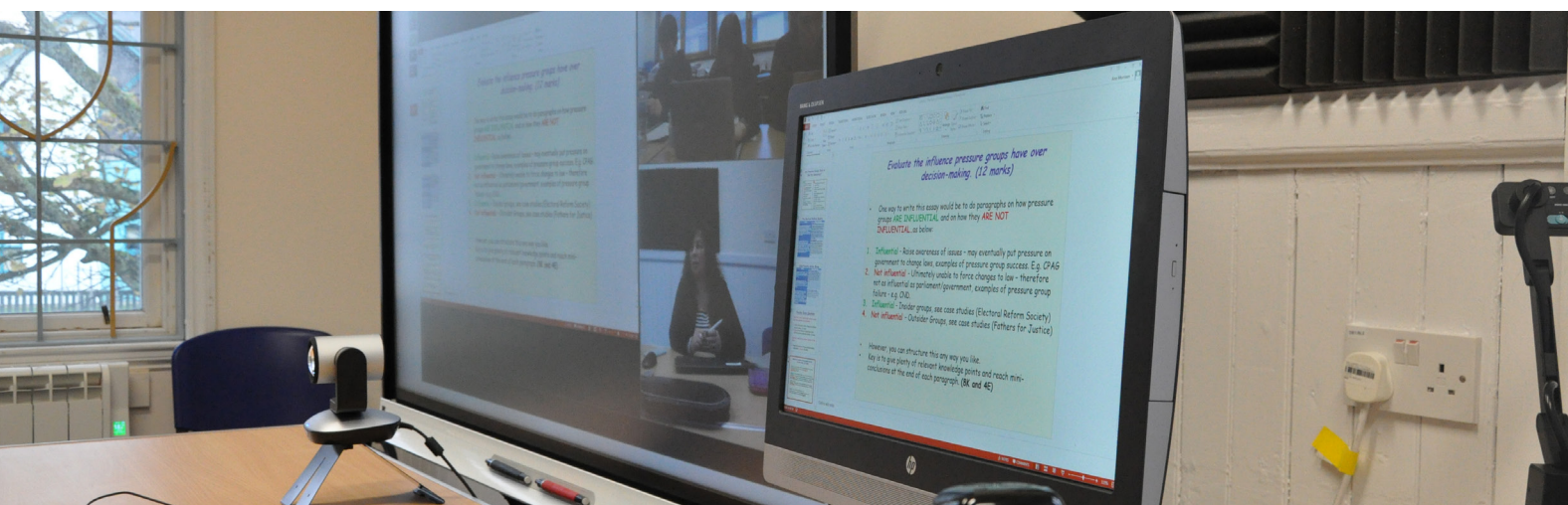
3.2 For some time, Education leaders in CnES have seen the enhanced opportunity that learning through technology could give their learners and educators, just as the Scottish Government has through its national investment plan in the Glow project. The concept of a virtual Gàidhlig school for Scotland was proposed, and accepted, by Scottish Ministers in 2014. Therefore, the combination of national and local interests, plus the transformational change agenda led by CnES, created the concept and vision of e-Sgoil. This would be a virtual school and learning environment adding value to existing educational establishments, opening up curriculum and pedagogical opportunities, and be a means through which attainment and achievement could be enhanced. The possibility to go beyond educational needs has also been considered so that its potential could impact on Cosnadh (employment), Cànan (language), Cultar (culture), and Coimhearsnachd (community).



3.3 The Chief Executive and Corporate Workforce Panel comprising The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, and Head of Human Resources formed an in-house strategic group which has provided the necessary support and direction for the programme, particularly in the core area of workforce planning. The Chief Executive has a special interest and commitment to the programme, including the wider agenda of DYW (Developing the Young Workforce), Teacher Training, Curriculum Redesign, and equally importantly, the underpinning business model. This has had a significant impact on the outcome of the programme to date and has facilitated constructive dialogue at both community, political and national level. As a result, e-Sgoil was the subject of much pre-planning and discussion at senior executive level in CnES and thereafter was taken forward through a Member Officer Working Group. Consequently, elected members were able to question the Executive Team as to the potential of e-Sgoil for their communities, as well as being able to influence its direction. This has proved to be a very useful policy development forum which has much potential in other areas of Comhairle work. The core purpose of e-Sgoil was to enhance curriculum opportunities, particularly in the senior phase and for GME provision. Bearing in mind the difference in curriculum and timetabling opportunities between The Nicolson Institute and the other secondary schools, as well as emerging opportunities surrounding Curriculum for Excellence and Developing the Young Workforce, this core purpose was eminently sensible and highly desirable.

3.4 Significant time was also spent with national agencies regarding the development of the vision and the associated potential for supporting national agendas. In this regard the Scottish Government Educational Infrastructure and Gàidhlig teams have been very helpful in supporting the development of the vision, as has Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Going forward, there is much to be gained from Education Scotland becoming more closely involved, given it has the national lead for learning through technology and Glow. Scottish Ministers have been extremely positive about the concept and have given e-Sgoil policy support as well as resource allocation. Establishing an e-Sgoil advisory board to help steer the project and make local and national policy links proved extremely useful and could be influential in the further development of the project.

- 4.1** The Director of Education and Children's Services has provided leadership, energy and enthusiasm to the vision and to establishing e-Sgoil. Recognising that this was a medium to long term project with significant potential but also with risks attached, he has put together the necessary building blocks for a large scale change programme. Through his leadership Comhairle support has been obtained, external funding sourced, then matched by CnES, additional management capacity assigned to the project, and considerable technical infrastructure directed to the operational delivery of e-Sgoil.
- 4.2** One very interesting feature in the leadership of the project has been the principle of using existing CnES resources, as well as national resources, to deliver increased opportunities and outcomes for children and young people. The Director summed up his requirements for the platform as providing "rigidity, flexibility of delivery, simplicity and universality".
- 4.3** School year 2016/17 was correctly identified as a preparatory, development year with the following school session planned for the start of implementation. Using the Scottish Government grant of £550,000, matched by CnES, considerable progress has been made in the creation of a small but necessary centre for e-Sgoil, associated infrastructure upgrades across the Western Isles, and also for the purchase of devices for use in schools. The Scottish Government SWAN (Scottish Wide Area Network) Programme has enabled increased bandwidth to all schools, necessary for taking full advantage of opportunities offered by e-Sgoil. It would be advisable to test bandwidth capability before full usage starts.



4.4 Using the £140,000 Bòrd na Gàidhlig grant, spread over two financial years, which was also match funded by CnES, it was possible to source the dedicated leadership capacity for the coordination and dissemination of the project. The appointment of a dedicated headteacher for e-Sgoil has proven to be extremely useful in bringing to the role a knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, associated curriculum planning and timetabling, as well as local experience which all helped to establish the e-Sgoil project. Alongside this post, an experienced education officer provided the role of programme coordinator which created the dedicated leadership required. The Education Department technology support team have also been vital in ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is in place.

4.5 The decision to use Glow as the platform for e-Sgoil is commendable given its availability across all 32 Scottish Local Authorities as well as the continuing national investment programme into the technology, run by the Scottish Government. The leadership team has taken the decision that, in the initial phase of the project simple use of technology is being advised. Thus far, the use of the Office 365 video conferencing app has been the main means of communication along with e-mail. One aspect of the development of e-Sgoil that should be considered as it evolves, is the need to add some capacity in the team for support and direction in pedagogy, with a view to ensuring that staff and pupils have the skills and confidence to get the most out of learning through technology.



4.6 In conjunction with the development of the infrastructure and technology, schools and authorities have developed plans to ensure that new systems are in place to enable the four secondary schools to work collaboratively where possible and necessary, on enhanced curriculum opportunities for their pupils and staff. To this end, the three smaller secondary schools have started to harmonise their timetables, thereby establishing opportunities for joint curriculum delivery. Curriculum mapping across the secondary schools is ongoing with the summer term considered to be critical as subject choice options are finalised, with e-Sgoil playing a core part in what is available for senior pupils. It is assumed that an earlier start to curriculum planning and timetabling options will be made in future years. As the project develops the necessary, active, involvement of The Nicolson Institute will add considerable opportunities to all of the islands' young learners.

4.7 Bearing in mind that the first few months of the 2016/17 school session largely involved technical set up, year one has seen some exceptional progress in terms of the building blocks and preparation for the first full year of delivery. However, along the way, opportunities have been taken to test the platform in real time educational and course delivery situations. While some aspects of this had been planned, others were opportunistic and in response to the needs of learners, schools, and other Education Authorities. Appendix 3 outlines the various situations within CnES and also across Scotland where e-Sgoil has offered real solutions to real challenges, and in the resultant evidence from the programme, suggests that this is a resource with great local and national potential.



5.1 The core vision and purpose of e-Sgoil was to enhance the curriculum opportunities, including Gàidhlig, at senior phase in particular, across the Western Isles, with a view to the potential of partnership working elsewhere in Scotland. The building blocks for this have been steadily put in place during 2016/17. Implementation on a larger scale commenced in August 2017 and opportunities have presented themselves for testing the use of the platform as well as considering the potential of e-Sgoil in other initiatives and programmes.

5.2 The leadership team in CnES Education and Children's Services department are to be commended for seeking opportunities to test the e-Sgoil platform during the setup year, and their active desire to help other authorities and schools in difficult situations has also been impressive. Appendix 3 outlines the complete list of activities in this respect and some highlights have included: the partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Hazlehead Academy for the delivery of a Gàidhlig course, thereby ensuring the continued opportunity for the pupils in the face of a staffing shortage; the links with Bishopbriggs Academy in East Dunbartonshire again addressing a staff shortage for a three month period; the RMPS higher course delivered from The Nicolson Institute to Sir E Scott school in Harris. These and other examples have not only proven the platform can work, but they have also provided very positive feedback. As confidence has grown in the use of e-Sgoil during the course of the year, other associated uses have been introduced such as providing part of an Easter study programme and employing mainland based supply teachers on short term contracts when staff illness and absence occurred in CnES schools.

5.3 One particularly innovative approach within CnES has been the use of e-Sgoil for professional development purposes within Education and Children's Services. This innovative thinking has demonstrated the potential for the delivery of training to larger groups in a number of locations across the Western Isles. Bearing in mind travel time and associated costs, this may well prove to be a highly effective use that can be replicated in other CnES and local partner services, as well as elsewhere in Scotland. In particular, the other two island authorities could benefit greatly from this initiative.

5.4 Universities are becoming more flexible in the planning and delivery of teacher education opportunities at all levels. Some aspects of Initial Teacher Education have already been delivered by distance learning methodology across the Western Isles. The advantage that e-Sgoil brings, with every school having access, means that CnES has the ability to have teacher education delivered locally and efficiently. This will give far more residents who have an interest in becoming a teacher the chance to do so, and tackle a long-standing equalities issue not only in the Western Isles but elsewhere in rural Scotland. Further exploration of these workforce planning opportunities should take place not only for Education and Children's Services but also, where possible, for award bearing courses in other departments of the Comhairle. Clearly this will require some careful planning and consideration and should not detract from the core vision and purpose of e-Sgoil.

5.5 Part of a dynamic senior phase curriculum in Scotland is the blend of academic and applied learning. The delivery of such opportunities can be very challenging for remote communities and schools because of local economic profiles. CnES has been enthusiastic in its adoption of The Developing the Young Workforce initiative (DYW) while also recognising the inherent challenges it can bring. Alongside this sits the opportunity to introduce a modern apprenticeship programme as part of the Comhairle's workforce planning programme. Where traditional approaches would have directed young people to Stornoway or perhaps the mainland to gain such experiences, the potential that e-Sgoil provides suggests a far more even distribution of opportunities across the islands. There are economic benefits which are set out below with such plans, and careful consideration of the requirements and capacity of the e-Sgoil infrastructure is needed. However, the potential seems extremely positive.



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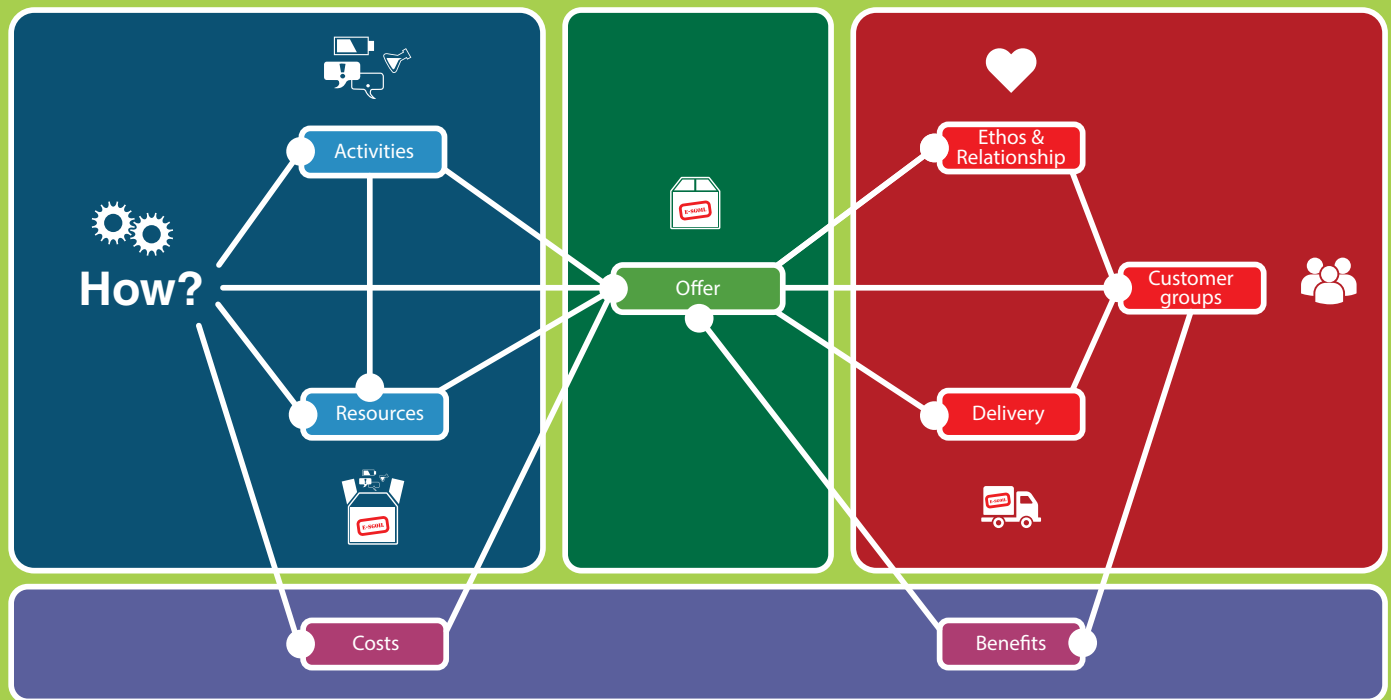
The unique culture and heritage of the Western Isles is well known but can be difficult to access in some respects. It is important for the local population of the islands to be able to access opportunities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of their traditions and heritage, as it is for interested parties in Scotland and across the world. There are a range of historical societies and heritage groups scattered across the Western Isles and there is potential to coordinate and jointly share their resources on a platform such as e-Sgoil. Similarly, there is the potential to use e-Sgoil as a conduit to Gàidhlig language resources creating a one stop shop for teachers and educators, providing Gàidhlig learners of all ages easy access to a range of nationally available materials. While early discussions have taken place, considerable consultation and planning is still required. Again, the potential for such dimensions directly linked via e-Sgoil is very attractive and a detailed scoping of the possibilities is required, particularly on the infrastructure impacts.



- 6.1** Many other authorities across Scotland have shown interest in the innovations evolving within the Education and Children's Services at CnES. During initial discussions about the scope of this study, it became necessary to identify a way of describing the CnES business model to a wide audience of professionals.
- 6.2** Given the multi-faceted nature of the business model - and the pace of adoption, evolution and growth - a flexible common language and structure is required that can be applied to the whole or to individual parts of the Education and Children's Services Department.
- 6.3** Many models exist in the literature to describe businesses and other organisations, each with its advantages and shortcomings. The simple yet comprehensive template described in the book 'Business Model Generation' by Osterwelder and Pigneur provides a tool for articulating the value that a service provides to its users, and connecting that with the resources and activities needed to deliver the service.
- 6.4** The great strength of this template is that it focuses on service users and the value that the organisation creates for them. It is obvious that this 'service focus' lies at the heart of the transformation happening within the education service. We have modified the template for use in a modern public sector Education and Children's Services context and use it in this report.
- 6.5** It is neither the intention nor the purpose of this representation to capture every single facet or activity carried out by CnES Education and Children's Services. The purpose is to provide a visual canvas which the Director and Senior Staff can use to demonstrate:
- The concepts underpinning the business model transformation that is underway;
 - The key components, including their economic and social benefits;
 - The customer/user groups and how their needs are being addressed;
 - The resources, activities and delivery channels being deployed; and
 - The ethos and relationships being developed.

6.6 This is a dynamic tool, intended to be used in a dynamic situation. We envisage it being used to map, track and articulate progress as the new business model evolves and embeds.

6.7 The Concept of the Value Offer



6.8 The central question of the Business Model template is the concept of the 'Value Offer'. This describes how the service being provided is of value to the user/customer. The notion of value can be summarised as something which either provides 'gains' for the recipient, or which relieves 'pains'. For example, an aspect of an Education and Children's Services Department might provide 'gains' by:

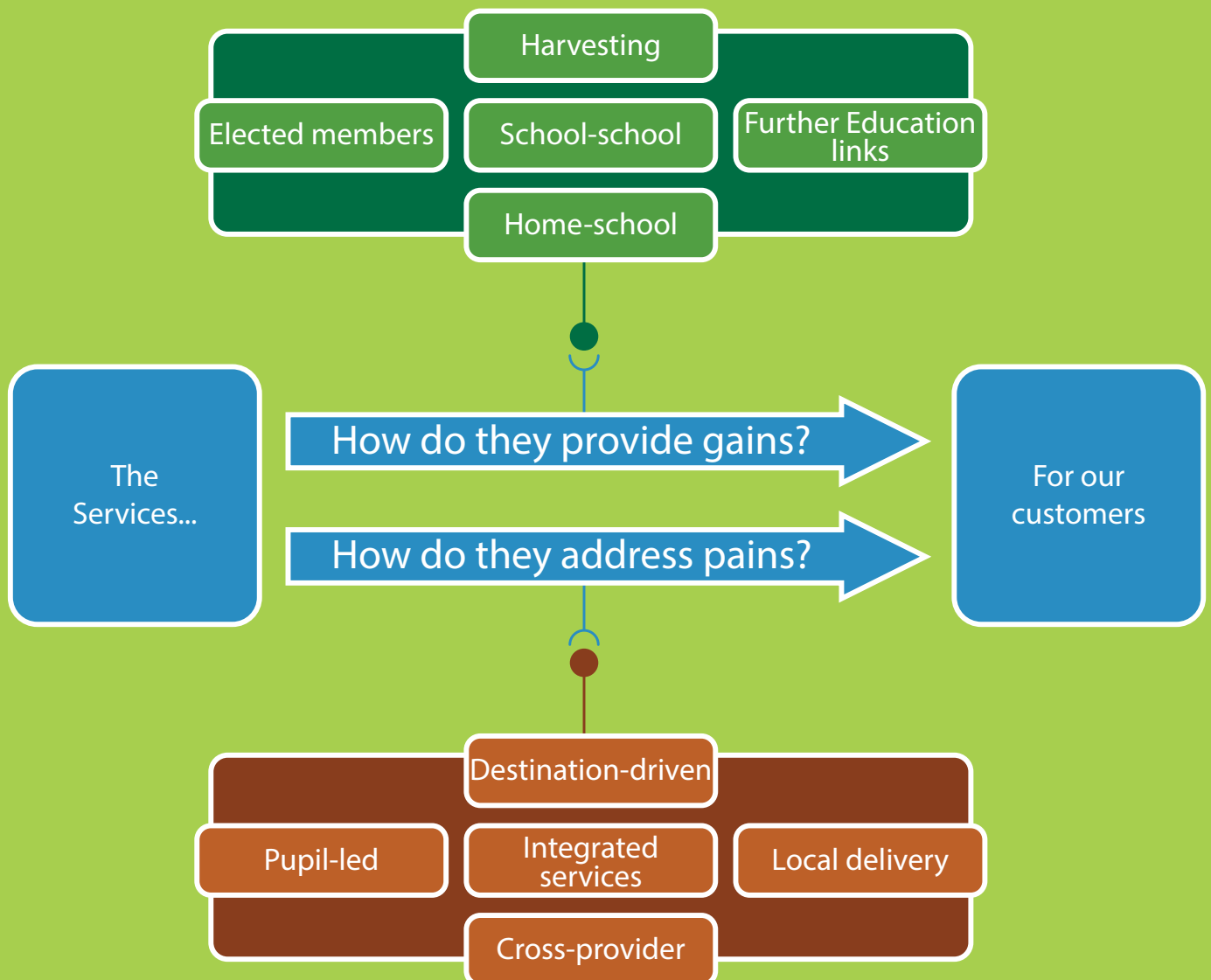
- improving attainment;
- offering a wider curriculum; or
- delivering career development opportunities.

6.9 An education service might relieve 'pains' by:

- overcoming barriers to participation;
- providing peer support; or
- reducing the need for travel.

6.10 Clearly, in a complex public service context, the model will need to be able to cope with multiple services, multiple beneficiaries, and therefore multiple (and potentially overlapping) Value Offers.

6.11 Thus, we can describe each Value Offer by identifying the products or services being provided, the customers/users, and the way in which it delivers gains or addresses pains from their perspective.



6.12 The Value Offer and its place in the overall Business Model template

6.13 The Value Offer rests in a wider organisational context which we refer to as the Business Model.

6.14 The elements of the Business Model are illustrated above and explained below.

6.15 Customer Groups

6.16 Customers (or users) are at the heart of any business model. Unless the needs of customers are being met, the model will not survive for long.

6.17 In order to better understand and meet the needs of customers, an organisation may group them into distinct segments with common needs, common behaviours, or other attributes.

6.18 A business model may define one or several large or small Customer Segments.

6.19 In a commercial context, an organisation must make a conscious decision about which segments to serve and which segments to ignore. Public service providers rarely have this flexibility because of the regulatory and political environment in which they exist.

6.20 Customer groups in a public service context represent separate segments if:

- their needs require and justify a distinct offer;
- they are reached through different channels;
- they require different types of relationships;
- they have substantially different costs and benefits; and
- they have different revenue sources and conditions attached to those revenues.

6.21 Channels

6.22 These are the means by which the organisation communicates with and reaches its Customer Segments to deliver a Value Offer. In a commercial context this will include communication, distribution and sales channels which comprise a company's interface with customers. In a public service context, this may include the facilities used to deliver the service and channels of communication between the organisation and its users.

6.23 Channels serve several functions, including:

- raising awareness among customers/users about an organisation's products and services;
- helping customers/users evaluate the organisation's Value Offer;
- allowing customers/users to commit to using the organisation's services;
- delivering the Value Offer to customers/users; and
- providing support to enable customers to move on and benefit from other Value Offers.

6.24 Ethos and Relationships

6.25 To fully describe its Business Models, an organisation must set out the type of ethos and relationship it wants to establish with each Customer Segment. Ethos and relationships can range from personal one-to-one relationship (such as support services), to group settings where an ethos of positive sharing and mutual support is encouraged (such as in the classroom), to a highly automated or dispassionate relationship (such as voting systems).

6.26 Customer relationships and ethos in the public service context may be driven by a wide range of considerations such as:

- equality of provision and access to services;
- openness and transparency;
- regulatory compliance;
- opportunities or constraints presented by geography or local economic considerations; and
- national targets and initiatives.

6.27 Resources

6.28 Every business model requires Resources which enable the organisation to create and present its Value Offers, reach its customers/users, maintain relationships with them, and ultimately to deliver the benefits it is seeking.

6.29 Different Resources may be required depending on the Value Offer. In a public education service context these may include:

- school buildings, classrooms;
- well trained teachers;
- support services; and
- technology and communications systems.

6.30 Activities

6.31 Any business model requires Activities to be performed by, or to use, the Resources to create its Value Offer, to build and maintain the Relationships with its customers/users, and to ensure that the Value Offer reaches the customers/users.

6.32 Different Activities may be required depending on the Value Offer. In a public education service context these may include:

- delivery of learning and teaching in a range of contexts;
- development of materials and techniques for learning and teaching;
- IT support;
- liaison with partner organisations to facilitate and coordinate delivery mechanisms;
- liaison with employers;
- staff training, support, development and management; and
- coordination of teaching resources across a number of facilities.

6.33 Key Partnerships

6.34 Organisations forge partnerships for many reasons. Partnerships are a cornerstone of many public sector delivery models and their importance is emphasised in the national Delivery Plan for Scottish Education. Examples in the current context could include partnerships between and/or with:

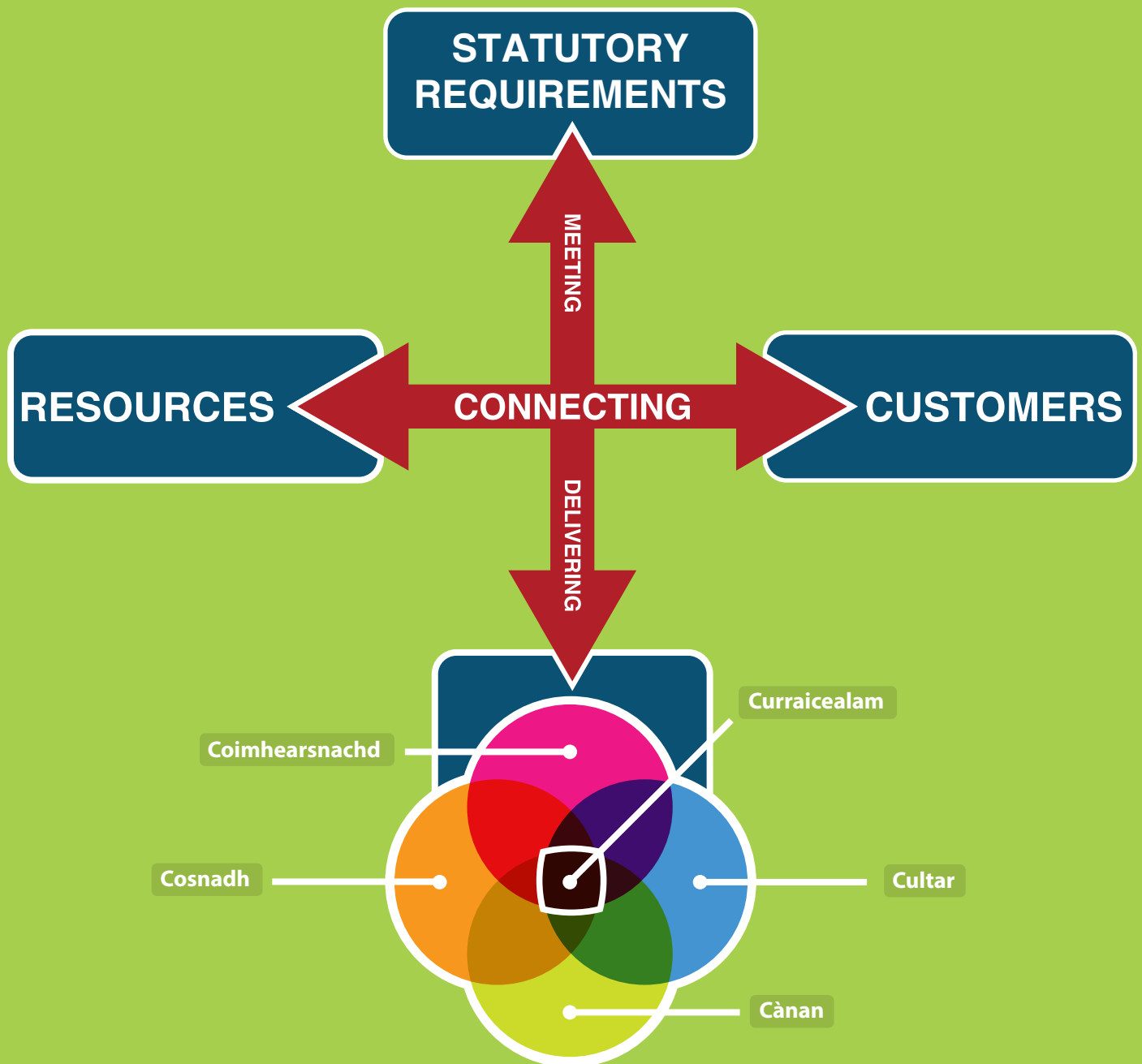
- other public sector organisations, for example through the Northern Alliance;
- third sector bodies as service providers or employers;
- teachers' associations;
- parent groups;
- employers; and
- colleges.

6.35 Thus, the Business Model template provides a complete canvas on which we can map out the multiple Value Offers and customer/user groups served by CnES Education and Children's Services.

Business Model Template Applied to CnES Education and Children's Services and e-Sgoil 7

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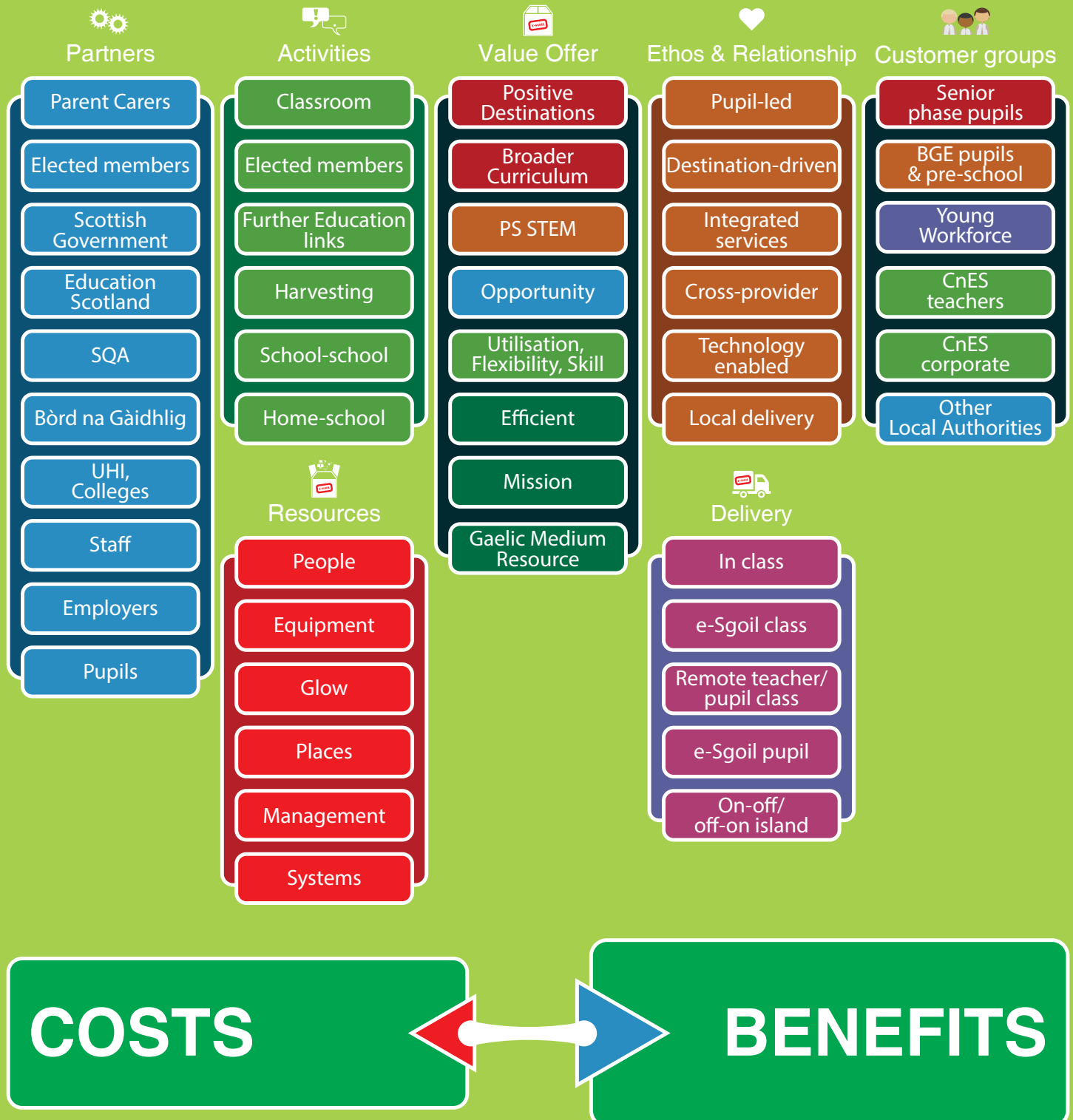
The diagram below summarises CnES responsibilities, connecting resources with users of the services, meeting the statutory and regulatory requirements, and delivering the wider ambitions, to sustain and grow the islands' culture, communities, language and economy.



Business Model Template Applied to CnES Education and Children's Services and e-Sgoil 7

7.2

We have taken this, and some of the key themes that have emerged during the course of this study, and applied them to the template described above. This has helped us develop high level representation of CnES Education and Children's Services Business Model, as shown below.



Business Model Template Applied to CnES Education and Children's Services and e-Sgoil 7

7.3

The complexity of this picture illustrates that several Customer Groups exist and that the Value Offer to each group is different. The Customer Groups are:

- Senior phase pupils on the islands;
- BGE and pre-school pupils on the islands;
- The young workforce;
- Educators and other staff of CnES;
- CnES body corporate;
- CnES communities; and
- Other local authorities.

7.4

These share some partners, activities, resources, relationships and delivery mechanisms but others are distinct.

7.5

In Appendix 4 we document the Business Model for each Customer Group at the present time in this 'proof of concept' year. This is done in a way that can be easily communicated to partners, highlighting where costs and benefits should be measured to ensure that excellent outcomes are secured for all learners in the Outer Hebrides.

“e-Sgoil provides the ability for learning and teaching to happen anywhere, without being tethered to the classroom”



8.1 The potential for e-Sgoil to generate positive economic impacts arises in different ways from different aspects of the business model. Some of these impacts arise:

- as a general consequence of the benefits of educating young people through the medium of Gàidhlig and thereby protecting and enhancing Gàidhlig language and culture within the islands;
- from the benefits of delivering a broader curriculum generally, regardless of the language used;
- from developing the young workforce; and
- from improving skills and support for teachers and educators in the islands, including teaching of - and in - Gàidhlig.

8.2 A detailed assessment of the economic impacts of e-Sgoil for 2016/17, 2017/18 and in the longer term has been carried out and is contained in Appendix 6. This found that the economic impact of e-Sgoil is already measureable, although much of the activity so far has been geared towards creating the conditions in which future impacts can be nurtured.

8.3 Consultation on the Third National Gaelic Plan (2017-22) has just closed. It is clear that e-Sgoil has the potential to contribute to several objectives of the plan including:

- increase the rate of growth for Gàidhlig in Scotland;
- further develop partnership working with local authorities and other public bodies;
- taking a fresh look at supporting Gàidhlig in areas where it is already spoken; and
- widening access and increasing links through the use of technology.



8.4 Economic Baseline

- 8.5 The local economic baseline as it relates to education is widely recorded in other documents, most recently in the comprehensive proposal to the Scottish Government for developing the Outer Hebrides Young Workforce Regional Group. For this reason we will not repeat the full details here. The salient points are:
- The Outer Hebrides has an area of approximately 306,916 ha, an extensive coastline of approximately 2,700 km (at the high water mark) and comprises an archipelago of around seventy named islands of which fourteen are currently inhabited. It has the lowest density of population in Western Europe with fewer than nine people per square kilometre.
 - Future projections from National Records of Scotland estimate that the islands are set to see a further population decline of 14% over the next twenty-five years. The decline in broad age groups is as follows:
 - Children – 28% decline (largest decline in Scotland);
 - Working age – 21% decline (largest decline in Scotland);
 - Pensionable age – 11% increase.
 - The employment rate in the Outer Hebrides was 81.4% from July 2015 to June 2016, while for the whole of Scotland it was 77.2%. Self-employment is generally higher in the islands, however, self-employment has decreased since the census to 10.9% in comparison to 8% in the whole of Scotland.
 - Forty-five percent work in higher level occupations, but there is a much lower share of employment in the private sector compared to Scotland as a whole. Gross weekly pay and Gross Value Added per head are consistently among the lowest in Scotland.
 - The proportion of 2014-15 school leavers who were in a positive destination in October 2015 was 95.4%, which rose to 96.8% in the follow-up survey in March 2016.

8.6 The Value Of Gàidhlig

8.7 The baseline document for quantifying the economic value of Gàidhlig is the 2014 HIE report “An Stòras Gàidhlig - The economic and social value of Gaelic as an asset”.

8.8 This report surveyed the economic value of Gàidhlig to a wide range of businesses. It points out that while Gàidhlig clearly has a tangible social and economic value, the ways in which this value manifests itself vary greatly throughout the wide range of businesses that report Gàidhlig as an asset. For some businesses surveyed in that study Gàidhlig is core to the business, for others it enhances the brand. Many participants in the study found it difficult to provide any quantitative assessment of the value of Gàidhlig to their businesses, yet there was broad agreement that the value is genuine.

8.9 The study placed a tentative value of £3.1 million (turnover) and 36 FTE jobs for Na h-Eileanan an Iar, specifically excluding Gàidhlig organisations that are reliant on public sector support.

8.10 Education and learning was regarded by many consultees as critical to future development opportunities around Gàidhlig as an asset, and general Gàidhlig development.



8.11 The Value of a Broader Curriculum

8.12 The Curriculum for Excellence was founded on the principle that sustainable economic growth could only be achieved if young people have the knowledge and skills for learning, life, and work that they need.

8.13 Clearly this generality applies for Na h-Eileanan an Iar as much as anywhere. In the more remote parts of Scotland including Na h-Eileanan an Iar, small secondary schools mean few teachers and therefore greater challenges in delivering a wide range of subjects. Teacher isolation, especially among head teachers, is a commonly expressed concern, and the difficulties in recruiting teachers, subject specialists in particular, in smaller and more remote schools is widely reported.

8.14 However, the effects of these challenges are not obvious in the data. As the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Commissioning (2017 Version) states:

“analysis of the 2016 leaver data indicates that young people in the Western Isles are outperforming their virtual comparators and national counterparts in almost all aspects of each National Benchmarking Measure.”

8.15 Thus, it seems that despite the challenges listed, young people in the Western Isles are leaving school as well equipped for the future as any in Scotland. At this stage we can only speculate why this might be. Perhaps the culture of close-knit island communities and the value traditionally placed on education provides a sound context for the delivery of education, perhaps analysis of school-level data would differentiate between aspects of performance of schools of different sizes, or perhaps other benefits outweigh the challenges.

8.16 What is clear, however, is that addressing the challenges of delivering a full curriculum, especially in the upper stages, will widen the options for future study and careers for young people, whether on the islands or elsewhere.

8.17 There is a continuing trend for young people to leave the islands for further education or employment¹. This represents a leakage of potential economic activity and points to the importance of the next issue: Developing the Young Workforce (DYW).

8.18 The Importance of DYW

8.19 The CNES DYW funding application² summarised the position as follows:

“For a community to continue to export its brightest and most able young people constitutes an unsustainable model. In-house research however also revealed that in every age category (20-30, 30-40 and 40-50 year olds) a majority sought to live and work in the Outer Hebrides. This helped inform and drive a series of strategies to match the aspirations and abilities of young people with economic opportunities on the islands.”

8.20 This view is supported by the HIE research report ‘Our Next Generation 2015’³ which found that young people are clear about what they want and their aspirations. The report made the following conclusions in respect of young people across the HIE area:

- 43% want to stay in the region;
- 11% reluctantly have to leave due to lack of opportunity;
- 56% think the Highland and Islands have a good educational offering;
- 37% would like to work in the Western Isles; and
- 60% think living in the Highlands and Islands means compromising on career opportunities.

¹ <http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/factfile/population/>

² Proposal to Scottish Government – Developing the Outer Hebrides Young Workforce Regional Group – February 2017

³ OUR NEXT GENERATION Young people and the Highlands and Islands: Attitudes and aspirations research - June 2015

8.21 On the back of these findings, the report made the following recommendations which are directly relevant to e-Sgoil:

- To widen the school subject offering, particularly for rural schools, and raise the profile of UHI and colleges with school pupils;
- To broaden UHI's offer across the region, especially Higher Education and postgraduate opportunities. Part of this involves attracting high calibre lecturers and researchers, and extending its collaborative work with businesses. It also involves greater promotion of areas of excellence;
- The need to capitalise on the benefits of Next Generation Access broadband to further expand remote learning opportunities for Further Education/Higher Education. In some parts of the region, a very high proportion of school leavers wish to attend university and not all wish to go away to do so;
- Ensuring that the impact of the Inverness Campus is not limited to Inverness / Inner Moray Firth, and that efforts are made to extend its influence more widely outwards to the rest of the Highlands and Islands; and
- Further promotion and targeting of apprenticeships in areas where opportunities are perceived to be poorest, to increase the number of apprenticeships and/or awareness of their availability.

8.22 Training, Development and Support of Teachers and Educators

8.23 The report⁴ to the CnES HR sub-committee on the proposal to support employees through PGCE and the subsequent report⁵ confirming levels of support, together summarise the challenges facing the Comhairle in recruiting for key teaching positions in the islands' schools.

⁴ CnES Human Resources Sub Committee - Proposal to Support Employees through a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, 11 February 2016

⁵ Offer of Support to Individuals Willing to Participate in the Postgraduate Diploma in Education, 24 March 2016

8.24 As discussed earlier in this section, lack of availability of specialist subject teachers has a direct impact on pupils, their subject choices, and therefore the options open to them when they leave school. It follows that this, and the difficulties in pursuing some options beyond school, may be leading some young people to leave the islands who would otherwise choose to stay.

8.25 There are currently 155.4 FTE primary teachers and 158.2 FTE secondary teachers employed by CnES. The use of e-Sgoil as part of a planned workforce development programme to ensure a steady supply of locally trained and skilled teachers will have a major economic benefit across the islands.

8.26 Impact of 2016/17 and 2017/18 activities

8.27 An Economic Impact Study (Appendix 6) compared the current position with a scenario in which e-Sgoil does not exist and where students are faced with the choice of studying on the mainland or working on the islands without the qualification.

8.28 It estimates that the impact on the wages of each student who would otherwise have remained on the island without studying is between £1,718 and £2,811 per annum. This wage difference persists until the individual concerned acquires the qualification or skills by another means, or changes job. If fifteen of the current cohort fall into this category then the wage impact would be between £25,770 to £42,165 per annum.



8.29 It is costly to send a student to the mainland, estimated at £12,000 annually in travel, subsistence and accommodation costs. This would normally be met either by the student themselves (perhaps paid for by a student loan and part-time work) or by the student's family. The impact of the former situation is difficult to quantify in terms of its impact on the islands because the cashflows occur off-island. The latter situation is common and has a clear economic impact on the islands. In each case £12,000 is leaving the islands that might otherwise be spent locally. If a quarter of the students in the current cohort would otherwise leave and be supported by their parents, then the annual impact on the islands' economy could be up to £180,000 if the full amount was spent on the islands.

8.30 This does not take into account the impact of lost income to the islands from students who leave to study and never return.

8.31 Impact of activities beyond 2018

8.32 The study (Appendix 6) notes that e-Sgoil's greatest opportunity to create a meaningful economic impact lies in its potential to strengthen and grow local businesses.

8.33 The requirement to equip the islands' young people with the skills the islands need is significant. It is estimated that replacement demand will result in 2500 openings across all sectors between 2016 and 2024, whilst 1200 jobs will need to be created by 2020 in order to maintain employment at the 2010 level. Many of these must be in the private sector because of public sector budget cuts.

8.34 Assuming a base case of fifty completed apprenticeships per annum, split equally between existing jobs and new jobs, the annual GVA impact is estimated to be between £1.4 million and £2.5 million..

8.35 Nothing in the data suggests that the benefits of completing an apprenticeship degrade over time so we can assume that these annual benefits will continue to accrue for as long as the individual remains in a similar industry.

8.36 Monitoring and Measuring Progress

8.37 The Education and Children's Services Department already gathers a wide range of metrics to set its strategic direction and manage its performance⁶. This 'Whole Systems' approach to service development identifies a dataset of Impact Data Units used to monitor progress and test pilot studies on a quarterly basis.

8.38 Specific initial targets for e-Sgoil (linked to the objectives set by funders) have been set and include:

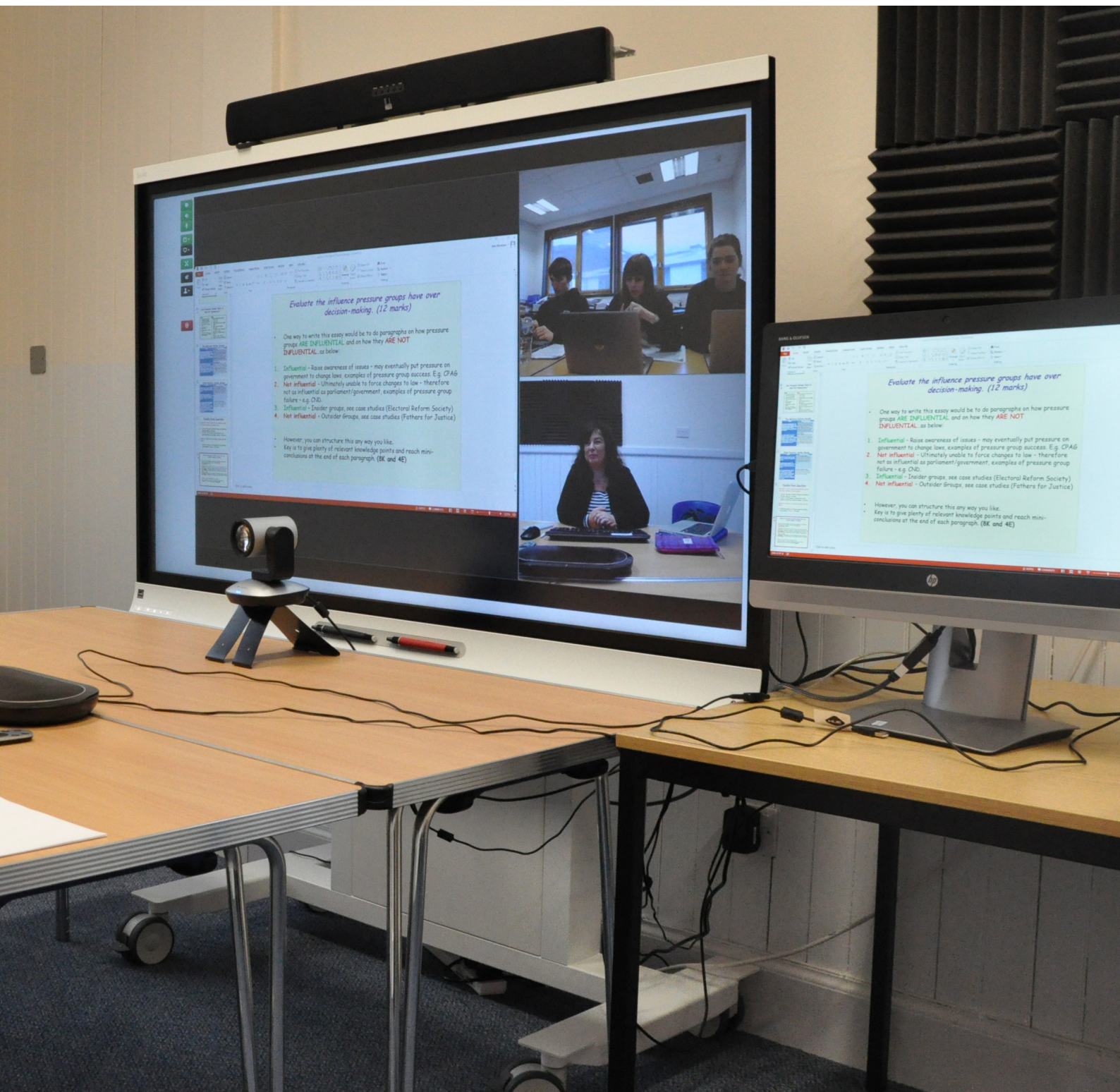
- increase the use of digital technology and opportunities for pupils;
- widen access to Gàidhlig by delivering six subjects through the medium of Gàidhlig;
- widen access to the full curriculum through English medium; and
- work with other local authorities and interested partners to extend the reach of the programme.

8.39 Within the dataset are several metrics that will enable aspects of economic impact to be monitored, specifically those relating to attainment, Gàidhlig and sustainable development. Since the availability of suitable housing at an appropriate price is often cited as a barrier to young adults, the housing metrics should also be monitored from an economic impact perspective. In addition the impacts of the recently agreed modern apprenticeship recruitment programme of the service should be tracked.

⁶ Transformational Change Through Data-led Performance Management, Director of Education and Children's Services, November 2016

8.40 Achieving wider economic and social impact

8.41 In order to help achieve inclusive growth and long-term benefit for the islands, future development of e-Sgoil should continue to align with the priorities set out by the Scottish Government and articulated by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.



8.42 The SG Prospectus, ‘Empowering Scotland’s Islands Communities’⁷, notes how the creative and cultural industries make a substantial contribution to driving economic activity within the islands and offer a significant opportunity for future economic growth and diversification. This is recognised by the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), which has constituent colleges on each island area and which has Creative and Cultural Industries as one of its eight subject networks. The longer term benefits of the e-Sgoil project will provide an excellent strategic fit to HIE’s priorities for the area:

1. Supporting businesses and social enterprises to shape and realise their growth aspirations;

Producing the skilled workforce for tomorrow is a key strand of the e-Sgoil project. This will provide the future skills needed to enable existing businesses to grow and new businesses to be created.

2. Strengthening communities in fragile areas;

Creating the environment for young people to learn and meet their ambitions whilst staying on the Islands will enable these communities to grow and become sustainable in the long term.

3. Developing growth sectors, particularly distinctive regional opportunities;

A key pillar of the deal is to ensure rural businesses are encouraged to grow and have better access to markets. Once e-Sgoil is well-established, it is anticipated that partnerships will be sought with specific industries into the next phase of growth.

4. Creating the conditions for a competitive and low carbon region.

Boosting productivity is a key strand of Scottish economic strategy and e-Sgoil will help to upskill the future workforce and make use of the upgrading of digital infrastructure across the region through the rollout of superfast broadband as part of The Inverness and Highlands regional City Deal.

Other aspects of the City Deal, such as the Northern Innovation hub and affordable housing programme will also play a part in strengthening sustainable communities.

⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/local-government/Islands/EmpoweringIslands>

8.43 We suggest that monitoring of long-term and specific economic targets and measures should be discussed with stakeholders represented on the Steering Group as the project moves forward. These should look for evidence of positive impacts, demographic and economic, that could indicate that the hoped-for benefits of e-Sgoil are happening, such as:

- increasing the number of working-age workers and families on the islands;
- increasing medium term productivity;
- increasing the mean wage in the islands;
- increase in business “births” and new business survival;
- diversity of employment sector;
- increase in Gaelic enabled businesses;
- increased Gateway engagement and assistance for self-employment.

8.44 Conclusion

8.45 Research indicates that there is demand from young people for opportunities to study and work on the islands, but that this demand is not being fully met.

8.46 Research also indicates that a significant number of people will require to be employed/trained if levels of employment are to be maintained in the face of an aging workforce and declining public sector budgets.

8.47 Taken together, enhancing the Gàidhlig offer, widening the range of study options (both traditional and applied learning) and identifying new opportunities for young people to pursue positive destinations within the islands, has the potential to meet this demand and in doing so to slow population decline and strengthen the economy.

9.1 While the 2016/17 school year was the preparatory period prior to e-Sgoil being delivered on a larger scale from August 2017, considerable progress has been made, and opportunities taken, to road test the platform and deliver educational opportunities, albeit on a relatively small scale. It is important to note that this concept has been in the planning stage for a few years with important building blocks being developed in relation to the vision and principle of the initiative.

9.2 The support from the Elected Members of CnES as well as the senior executive team, led by the Chief Executive, has been fundamental to the vision and principles of e-Sgoil taking shape. This enabled the Director and his team to put in place the necessary ground work for the project. In particular, the role of the Member Officer Working Group in discharging governance and scrutiny of the proposals has been a model which the new administration of CnES may well wish to consider for future policy developments.

RECOMMENDATION 1: AS E-SGOIL DEVELOPS AND BROADENS ITS IMPACT, THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE COMHAIRLE SHOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REGULAR REPORTS OF PROGRESS.

9.3 The leadership of the Director, more than anything, has seen the concept of e-Sgoil become a reality. The energy, enthusiasm and commitment shown to the project have been impressive, in addition to the ability to see opportunities for new delivery models which will benefit individuals and communities in the Western Isles. The successful funding applications to external bodies have given the project significant additional resources and thereafter enabled much needed investment in ICT infrastructure and learning devices for schools. The external funding, matched by CnES, has also allowed for the creation of a small coordinating team and a small bespoke centre for e-Sgoil. This team is led by experienced senior officers which is having a very positive impact on the project. The terms of the grants from external funders have been met and necessary reporting of progress to the funders has also been discharged.

9.4 There is little doubt that e-Sgoil has the potential to be the conduit for a number of activities in the field of education, and beyond, which will benefit from the opportunities the platform affords. The principle of linking learners and educators regardless of location is fundamental to the project and it is necessary that the core purpose and rationale for e-Sgoil are successfully delivered in the schools and communities of the Western Isles and, where opportunities occur, across Scotland.

RECOMMENDATION 2: THE SUCCESSFUL FIRST STEPS IN THE E-SGOIL JOURNEY ARE TO BE APPLAUDED BUT IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT A BALANCE NEEDS TO BE STRUCK BETWEEN THE DELIVERY OF THE CORE VISION AND PRIORITIES, ALONGSIDE POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCLUDE NEW DIMENSIONS OF THE PROJECT.

9.5 Communications are key to most significant strategic matters in the public sector and this is certainly the case with the e-Sgoil initiative. There are key partners with real interests: pupils, parents, the wider public, teachers, the Comhairle, and national agencies. Considerable interest has also been shown from Local Authorities across Scotland. The Director and his colleagues have shared the concept, attended public meetings, and outlined the opportunities of e-Sgoil with these partners. In most cases, the interested parties see the advantage that the new learning platform offers young people, particularly in regard to the wider curriculum. The headteachers of the secondary schools were enthusiastic in outlining the benefits of e-Sgoil especially at senior phase, but also for wider collaboration and for addressing long-standing staff recruitment and training difficulties. However, it was reported that some teachers are still unclear on the role e-Sgoil can play in their careers as well as the wider vision for education in CnES.

RECOMMENDATION 3: AN ONGOING PLANNED COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY TARGETING KEY PARTNERS IS RECOMMENDED. THIS SHOULD HAVE A FOCUS BOTH WITHIN THE WESTERN ISLES AS WELL AS IN EDUCATION AUTHORITIES ELSEWHERE WITH SIMILAR CHALLENGES.

9.6 As the specifics of the curriculum offer for the 2017/18 school session become known, it is important that the e-Sgoil team are proactive in advising other local authorities in Scotland of what could be made available. e-Sgoil could facilitate all Local Authorities across Scotland in the implementation of their responsibilities under the 2016 Education Act and its statutory Guidance. A concerted push is required in the next few months particularly on the Gàidhlig curriculum potential as well as in developing real partnership working with like-minded schools and local authorities. This is particularly the case for Gaelic Medium secondary subjects.

9.7 This potential should also be included in an overall communication and engagement strategy for 2017/18. However, the successful steps taken thus far, as outlined in Appendix 3, are very impressive and deserve to be celebrated because of the benefits already seen and the innovative approach taken to very difficult challenges and circumstances.

RECOMMENDATION 4: THERE SHOULD BE A SPECIFIC NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION IN COLLABORATION WITH BÒRD NA GÀIDHLIG , EDUCATION SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, WITH A VIEW TO EXPANDING SECONDARY GME SUBJECT OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS SCOTLAND.

9.8 e-Sgoil is aimed at expanding opportunities in core curriculum planning and delivery in Western Isles schools, and naturally, priorities have been at senior phase, where the harmonisation of timetables across the three smaller schools has started. Further planning and co-delivery is required across all four secondary schools in order to maximise opportunities for all learners.

RECOMMENDATION 5: THE EXCELLENT START AT CURRICULUM PLANNING AND TIMETABLING SHOULD BE FURTHER DEVELOPED AND EXTENDED ACROSS ALL FOUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS. AN EARLIER START TO PLANNING THE 2018/19 OPTIONS SHOULD BE MADE DURING THE NEW SCHOOL SESSION.

9.9 The platform lends itself to a variety of uses, currently mainly via Vscene video conferencing to small groups. Other pedagogical uses could be developed to the benefit of additional audiences. Within Western Isles schools it is an exciting opportunity to consider linking smaller remote primary schools together for a curriculum enhancement in such areas as languages, music and heritage. With proper planning, this could support many aspects of raising attainment and tackling remote and rural inequalities. This should be a natural next step in the development of the project.

RECOMMENDATION 6: A PLAN TO EXTEND THE USE OF E-SGOIL ACROSS ALL THE SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN ISLES SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO ENSURE THAT ALL LEARNERS OF ALL ABILITIES AND IN ALL LOCATIONS BENEFIT FROM THIS EXCELLENT RESOURCE. IN SO DOING A FOCUS ON A MIX OF DELIVERY AND PEDAGOGY IS RECOMMENDED.

9.10 The exploration of workforce development activities supported by e-Sgoil is something that certainly has much potential whether it be in the close association of teacher education or more diverse areas such as modern apprenticeships. Early evidence on its application in teacher education would suggest that there are very real possibilities for that area and other activities. A comprehensive workforce planning strategy is required where e-Sgoil is a medium for learning.

RECOMMENDATION 7: THE POTENTIAL OF E-SGOIL TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF A WORKFORCE PLANNING STRATEGY FOR THE WESTERN ISLES SHOULD BE ASSESSED.

9.11 While expansion of delivery is something that undoubtedly will occur over the next few years, there is a need for the e-Sgoil team, and the technical support teams, to be clear on their capacity to deliver on additional business beyond the original priorities. This is particularly important when assessing impacts on infrastructure and bandwidth.

RECOMMENDATION 8: AN ONGOING REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF THE GROWTH OF E-SGOIL ON THE SWAN NETWORK AND BANDWIDTH IN SCHOOLS IS REQUIRED.

- 9.12** There is great potential for positive economic, social and cultural impacts from e-Sgoil throughout the Western Isles, where it can be a driver of a much bigger set of drivers for improved opportunities for employment and training. e-Sgoil should focus on its role as an enabler for inclusive growth, helping island businesses strengthen and expand, and providing meaningful employment opportunities for young people who choose to stay on the islands, those who leave and wish to return, and those living on the islands for the first time.

RECOMMENDATION 9: THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT E-SGOIL OFFERS SHOULD BE ASSESSED AND ENCOURAGED, AND THE ASSOCIATED BUSINESS MODEL CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATED TO MAXIMISE THE OPPORTUNITIES THEY AFFORD. A FRAMEWORK SHOULD BE DEVELOPED THAT CAN GATHER AND EVALUATE E-SGOIL'S FULL RANGE OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACTS THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THE ISLANDS.

- 9.13** This is a complex project with a series of dependencies, all crucial if it is to maximise its potential. While it is right and proper to have taken the opportunities to test the platform during the course of this year, as well as to look for areas where it can support the wider aspirations of CnES, a three year project plan is required. This will aid the Comhairle and its officials to plan the strategic direction and operational activities required to build on this early success. It will also aid investment priorities and enable partners internally and externally with their plans for using e-Sgoil as part of their future operation.

RECOMMENDATION 10: A THREE YEAR PROJECT PLAN SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR E-SGOIL. IN DEVELOPING THIS THE COMHAIRLE SHOULD SEEK TO WORK WITH LOCAL AGENCIES AND NATIONAL PARTNERS SUCH AS THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, EDUCATION SCOTLAND AND BÒRD NA GÀIDHLIG TO BROADEN THE IMPACT LOCALLY AND ACROSS SCOTLAND.

10.1 The energy and commitment of those involved in the e-Sgoil project is most impressive, as is the very significant progress made in such a short period of time. The foundations continue to be laid for the uplift in use in the Western Isles and elsewhere. The trialling of the platform in various locations and for various purposes across Scotland has been extremely successful. This is reassuring not only for the Western Isles but for the ongoing development of the use of GLOW and e-learning nationally. One slightly disappointing feature has been that despite much interest and visits to CnES from local authorities, little by way of real partnership activity through the platform has occurred at this stage.

10.2 As we approach the end of the planning year and significantly, the first year of senior phase delivery across the four schools of the Western Isles, there is good basis for optimism. Given the continued buy-in locally, and also assuming there is national involvement in schools across Scotland, e-Sgoil has the potential to place the Western Isles at the centre of national policy development and associated transformational change, and in so doing, be a key part of what education in Scotland does to enhance opportunities for all learners and educators, no matter their location.



Appendices

- Appendix 1 – e-Sgoil Report Brief
- Appendix 2 – Contributors to the Review
- Appendix 3 – Activity versus Funding Objective Matrix
- Appendix 4 – Applied Business Model Template
- Appendix 5 – School Roll History and Forecasts
- Appendix 6 – Economic Impact Report

Appendix 1

e-Sgoil Report Brief

1 Background

- 1.1** e-Sgoil is approaching the end of year one in terms of taking the Vision through to the Planning and Implementation phases. During this time much has been achieved and the initial core targets have been significantly augmented in a variety of ways.
- 1.2** There is a great deal of local and national interest and expectation in this project with significant funding and resourcing coming from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Scottish Government and its agencies.
- 1.3** The project is at a key stage in its development with operational activity, already in place to some extent, about to significantly increase.
- 1.4** With this in mind, a year one evaluation is well timed with a view to outlining successes, ongoing challenges, new and expanding opportunities, as well as acting as an independent report for funders.

2 The Report

- 2.1** The report will deliver an independent review on the progress to date and the recommended next steps to aid project leaders and partners in their planning.
- 2.3** The report will be useful in advising, and formally reporting, internally and externally on the progress made and use of resources therein.
- 2.4** While the core vision of the project relates to educational planning and delivery, other dimensions have emerged during its first year. Therefore, the report will outline the educational, economic, and social implications locally in the Western Isles and also in the wider context of Scotland.

3 Timescales and Report Authors

- 3.1** If there is agreement on the overall benefit of this approach, then some scoping and agreement is required to finalise the brief. Assuming that can be done fairly quickly, the research activity could be undertaken in late April, into May with a draft report available at the end of May. If all goes well, the final product will be available by the end of June. This would be subject to agreement and timescales.
- 3.2** Bruce Robertson will lead on the educational dimensions of the evaluation. If required, Caledonian Economics would lead on the economic benefits of the project.

Appendix 2

Contributors to the Review

Grateful thanks to the individuals and organisations below, who agreed to be interviewed and contributed to the review.

Bernard Chisholm,

Director of Education and Children's Services, CnES.

Angus MacLennan,

Ceannard, e-Sgoil, CnES.

Allan Smithyman,

Senior Education Officer, CnES.

Stuart Pescodd,

Scottish Government Learning Directorate, Gaelic Division.

Jonathan Moore,

Scottish Government Learning Directorate, Infrastructure Division.

James Simpson,

Teacher, Castlebay School, CnES.

Aileen Macsween,

Headteacher, Sir E Scott School, CnES.

Kyle, Martin and Andrew,

senior RMPS pupils, Sir E Scott School, CnES.

Gordon Young,

Headteacher, Lionacleit School, CnES.

Anne Maclean,

Headteacher, Castlebay School, CnES.

Frances Murray,

Headteacher, Nicolson Institute, CnES.

Mona Wilson,

Director of Gaelic Education, Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Laurence Findlay,

Director of Education and Children's Services, Moray Council.

Appendix 3

Activity versus Funding Objectives Matrix

SG objectives/outcomes (per award letter):

- 1** To help create the environment and infrastructure necessary to enable the development and operation of e-Sgoil which utilises digital learning and teaching to provide equality of opportunity and choice for secondary level pupils in the Outer Hebrides;
- 2** To widen access to Gaelic and allow more pupil choice by the delivery of six subjects through the medium of Gaelic across the e-Sgoil network;
- 3** To allow more pupil choice by ensuring they have access to the full curriculum and range of subjects through the medium of English across the e-Sgoil network;
- 4** To roll out, following proving trials, e-Sgoil as a shared service to other education authorities.

SG targets/milestones (per award letter):

- Completion of the work required to convert the former Francis Street School, Stornoway, into the base of e-Sgoil by December 2016;
- Receipt of 900 computers (or a combination of laptop computers and tablets) to enable student access to learning via e-Sgoil by end of December 2016.

Update: As advised to SG, money was used to ensure the ICT infrastructure in schools could cope with the future demands of e-Sgoil delivery, the setup of the Francis Street Building, and also for 81 laptops for pupils entering S1 GME provision in August. This will give each of these youngsters their own device. Also upgraded the Nicolson Institute wifi infrastructure to cope with the additional demand arising from e-Sgoil activity.

BnG objectives/outcomes:

(these aren't particularly clearly set out in the award letter, but what follows represents my understanding of the objectives)

- 5** Coordination of Gaelic dimension of e-Sgoil;
- 6** Expansion of secondary subjects delivered in Gaelic;
- 7** Expansion of GME in general (other than secondary subjects);
- 8** Expansion of related arts, music and cultural initiatives.

Key:

x = where an activity meets one of the funder objectives set out above

(x) = an activity that hasn't gone ahead yet, but which will meet a funder objective if it goes ahead

e-Sgoil involvement to date

<i>Subject / Focus</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Impact</i>
<i>RMPS Higher</i>	The Nicolson Institute –Sir E Scott (Harris)	RMPS delivered remotely to SES for the first time. Pupils have all passed their prelim and feedback is positive. Delivered through the medium of English.
<i>Gàidhlig</i>	Shawbost (Lewis) – Hazlehead Academy, (Aberdeen)	S1 –S5 Gàidhlig delivered from Aug 2016. Technology has worked very well from e-Sgoil end. Despite a few issues with regard to technology in Hazlehead, the teacher has found ways of addressing these.
<i>Gàidhlig</i>	e-Sgoil – Bishopbriggs Academy, (East Dunbartonshire)	S3 –S5 Gàidhlig delivered for 2/3 month period until a teacher took up the post. Slightly more challenging as a result of having to use Glowmeet rather than Vscene.
<i>Physics</i>	e-Sgoil – Plockton	Teacher trained and infrastructure established but Highland Council decided not to proceed with the provision.
<i>Brass</i>	The Nicolson Institute – Sir E Scott (Harris)	Pilot project re. tuition of trombone and trumpet on-going.

<i>Subject / Focus</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Impact</i>
<i>Fiddle</i>	e-Sgoil – Uig Primary School (Lewis)	Pilot project going very well and will be extended to other primary schools in term 4.
<i>Melodeon</i>	e-Sgoil – Sgoil an Taobh Siar and Sgoil Shiaboist (Lewis)	Initial face-to-face sessions have been taught and online delivery will commence at the start of term 4. A bespoke curriculum is being designed with online tutorial sessions.
<i>Chemistry</i>	Castlebay (Barra) – Sir E Scott (Harris)	Due to an intermittent absence pattern, various strategies have been put in place to provide cover for classes: Vscene facilities in teacher's home; Remote inputs from Castlebay and Dumbarton.
<i>Chemistry</i>	Supply teacher (Dumbarton) – Sir E Scott (Harris)	
<i>German</i>	Castlebay (Barra) – Lionacleit School (Uist)	Support for senior phase pupils delivered remotely. Issues with connectivity hampered this provision initially but Castlebay School has now been connected to the SWAN network.

<i>Subject / Focus</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Impact</i>
<i>Maths / Physics</i>	Castlebay School and e-Sgoil – all 4 presenting centres.	Easter Study support available to all Nat. 5 & Higher Physics pupils, and Nat. 5 Maths pupils in the Wester Isles. Physics support delivered from Barra and maths from Stornoway.
<i>Gàidhlig</i>	e-Sgoil – 4 island presenting centres and inter-authority work	Liaison through Vscene with regards to approaches to literacy across the curriculum is being planned but firewall issues are still to be resolved.
<i>Moderation of P7 talking and listening in Gaelic</i>	e-Sgoil	All P7 GME pupils will be assessed in talking and listening skills by an independent panel, through e- Sgoil. Individual, school cohort and generic reports will be produced. Examples of performance at each level will be filmed and share with teaching colleagues for moderation purposes.
<i>Gàidhlig / GM History</i>	e-Sgoil Perth – Islay	A Perth based teacher is now on e-Sgoil's supply list and has been trained. Teacher will trial GM History lessons to SES and Islay at the start of term 4 in order to ensure competence. Vscene / Glow connectivity between schools has been established.
<i>Gàidhlig / GM Subjects</i>	e-Sgoil – Oban High School	

<i>Subject / Focus</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Impact</i>
<i>GM Subjects</i>	e-Sgoil – Tìree	Initial discussion re. possibility of running pilot lessons during current term has taken place. Possibility of subjects other than Gaelic also being discussed.
<i>Gàidhlig</i>	e-Sgoil – Lochaber Cluster	Arrangements made in the light of request for assistance with moderation and transition activities but this hasn't been taken up as yet.
<i>Language 1+2</i>	e-Sgoil – 6 island primary schools	Fully resourced, structured talking and listening pilot activities, which will enable pupils from small island schools to interact with peers in other areas. This project will be evaluated and, if deemed to be successful, can be offered to other schools and authorities.
<i>Gàidhlig</i>	e-Sgoil – Perth and Kinross	Following direct enquiries from parents in Perth and Kinross, services have been offered to the local authority but there has been no uptake as yet.

Teachers' database

We are currently building up a national database of staff willing to teach through e-Sgoil. The main focus is on Gaelic but we are also recruiting and training staff in subjects ranging from Physics to Graphic Communication, Maths, RMPS, etc.

Procedures and protocols with regards to employing staff on this flexible basis are being designed in conjunction with our Business Manager and HR Department.



<i>Visits from other local authorities</i>	
<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Focus</i>
Orkney Islands Council	IT development / Fact finding
Moray Council	Fact finding
Highland Regional Council	IT development / Fact finding
Borders Regional Council	Fact finding
Shetland Islands Council	Partnership working / Sharing good practice
Argyll & Bute	ICT / Fact finding
East Renfrewshire	Pending

Partner agencies delivering through e-Sgoil		SG Outcomes				BnG Outcomes						
Agency	Impact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
CnES Child Protection 360 Internet Safety course	Course delivered successfully to 21 classrooms, in 10 schools, simultaneously with input from several classes. Much wider coverage provided across the islands because of availability via Vscene. Input from Police Scotland.	●								●	●	
Probationer Training Day – LCC / CnES	Due to adverse weather, probationers from Uist and Barra were unable to come to Stornoway. One probationer, from the West Side of Lewis, was unable to attend due to child care issues. Despite these challenges, we were able to connect them all to the meeting using Vscene and they were able to participate fully in discussions and presentations.	●								●	●	
Angus Macleod Memorial Lecture	Planning delivery of event to various local and national venues via Vscene. Without e-Sgoil, the lecture would be attended by approximately 30 - 40 people and the average age profile would be 50 plus. We intend to attract a much wider and balanced audience in terms of age groups. Speaker will be Donalda Mackinnon, Head of BBC Scotland.	●			●	●			●	●	●	●

DYW
 Staff developments
 Other pupil benefits

Partner agencies delivering through e-Sgoil		SG Outcomes				BnG Outcomes						
Agency	Impact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
Risk Assessment Training - CnES	Ongoing training provided centrally and remotely. An increasing number of staff are joining in remotely.	●									●	
Sportscotland	Delivery of health and fitness training to teachers, sports coaches and community volunteers throughout the islands. Very positively received. Without e-Sgoil support, these sessions would have had very limited geographical coverage and would not have been accessible to people in the Southern Isles.	●									●	
CnES Subject Network meetings for teachers and music instructors	Regular and cost effective meetings of specialist staff to plan and share best practice. This programme has been particularly successful as e-Quip training is delivered to staff cohorts and Yammer groups have been set up for them to share resources and engage in professional discussion and collaboration.	●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●

DYW
 Staff developments
 Other pupil benefits

Partner agencies delivering through e-Sgoil		SG Outcomes				BnG Outcomes						
Agency	Impact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
Learning and Development Associates - Professional Managers Course	CnES staff training delivered centrally and remotely. e-Sgoil technology has been utilised to make this course more accessible.	●									●	
Stòrlann	Sharing of staff member and work programme. A cooperative and strategic approach to resource development has come about as a result of sharing staff and expertise.	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Finance Department - CnES	Online accountancy training. Improved through the use of better hardware and Vscene platform.	●									●	
Lews Castle College / UHI	Modern Apprenticeship Gaelic courses delivered through e-Sgoil. This would not be happening if e-Sgoil hadn't taken a lead. A significant number of MAs will now be classified as Gaelic essential and all MAs will be encouraged to undertake Gaelic modules.	●										●

DYW
 Staff developments
 Other pupil benefits

Partner agencies delivering through e-Sgoil		SG Outcomes				BnG Outcomes						
Agency	Impact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
Accredited Training and Skills Department	e-Sgoil is the venue for Apprenticeship Week and ongoing support for the Modern Apprentice programme. We have been heavily involved in the planning of training programmes for up to 50 MAs.	●										●
Food Hygiene – Yvonne Richardson	Training of catering staff. Training is now more cost effective as staff from remote areas are able to join in through Vscene.	●									●	
Harmeny School	Planning of strategy for ensuring continuity in educational experience of pupils requiring off-island residential placement. Harmeny will be providing a day's training for CnES staff this term and this will be followed up with Vscene sessions.	●		●						●	●	
Western Isles Health Board	CAMHS delivered Mental Health First Aid, with Vscene used for remote delivery.	●									●	

DYW
 Staff developments
 Other pupil benefits

Partner agencies delivering through e-Sgoil		SG Outcomes				BnG Outcomes						
Agency	Impact	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
Pupil Equity Meeting	The Director of Education and Children's Services has engaged with HTs throughout the islands with regard to PEF through Vscene, as deadlines were tight and it was not practical to have meetings in each area.	●									●	
Inclusion and equity	A series of meetings has been held with Adult Learning, CLD and Dyslexia Scotland to discuss how the sessions which they deliver can be made accessible throughout the islands. This will include specialist lectures, parent support workshops, evening classes etc.	●				●	●	●		●	●	
CnES Head Teachers' Meetings and Conferences	Regular meetings hosted centrally or remotely. This has improved attendance rates at regular meetings and enabled HTs and DHTs to convene meetings at short notice in order to address various issues.	●									●	

DYW
 Staff developments
 Other pupil benefits

Appendix 4

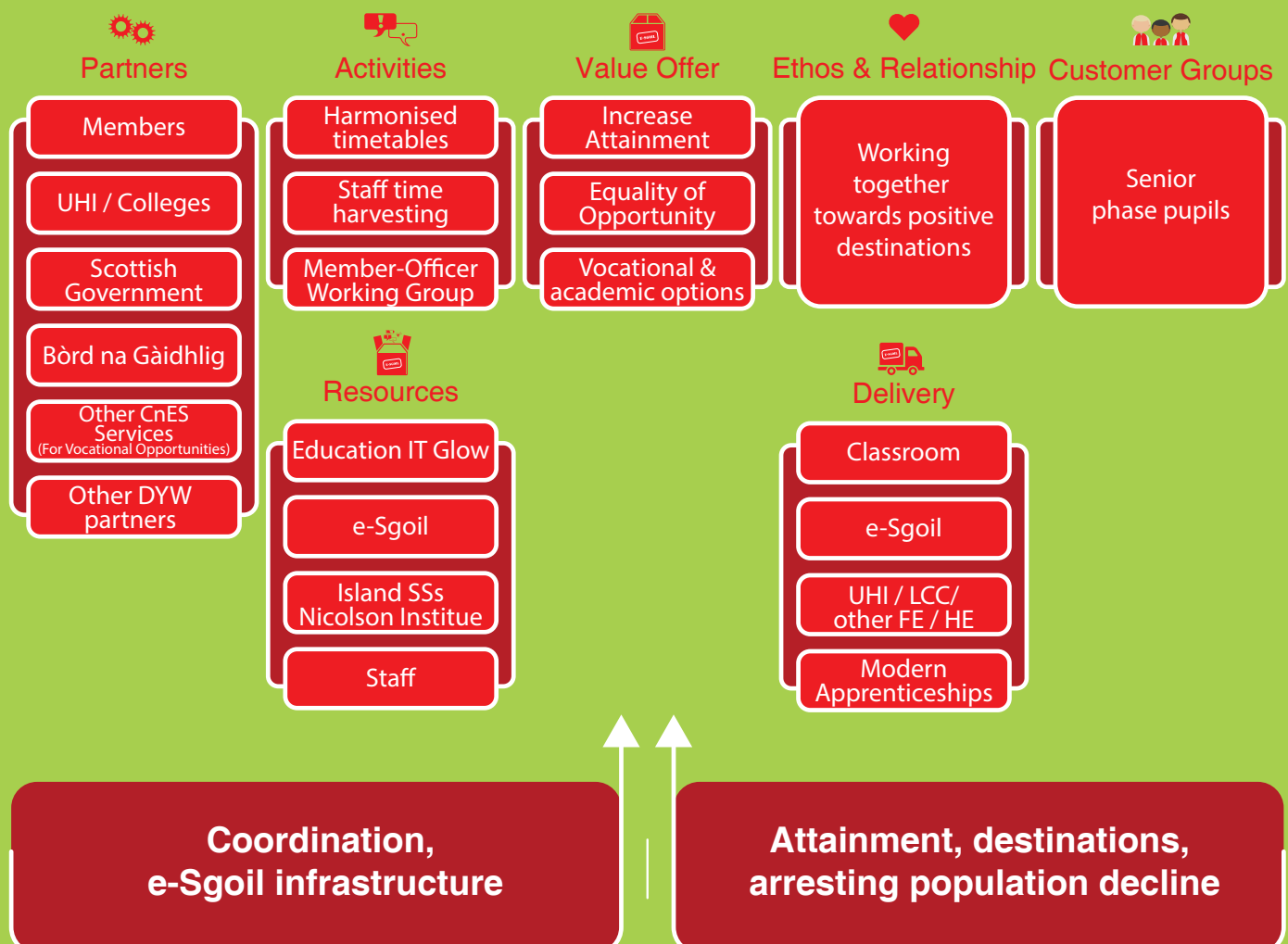
Applied Business Model Template

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In Appendix 4 we document the Business Model for each Customer Group at the present time in this ‘proof of concept’ year. This is done in a way that can be easily communicated to partners, highlighting where costs and benefits should be measured to ensure that excellent outcomes are secured for all learners in the Outer Hebrides.

“e-Sgoil – provides the ability for learning and teaching to happen anywhere, without being tethered to the classroom.”

2 SENIOR PHASE PUPILS

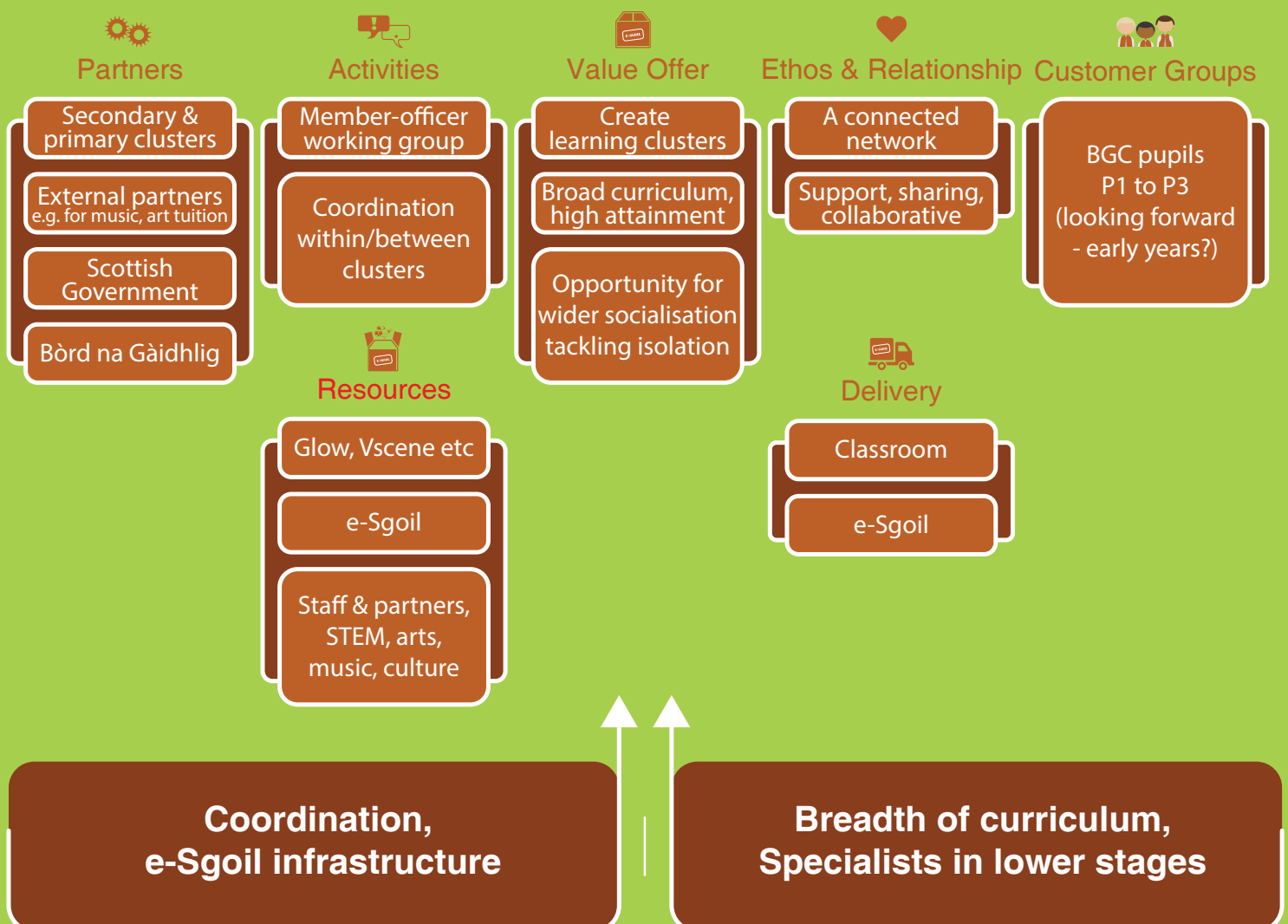


Appendix 4

Applied Business Model Template

- 2.1** The Value Offer to senior phase pupils is that location should not be a barrier to learning. Using e-Sgoil, the Comhairle is aiming to give pupils in the senior phase throughout the islands access to the same opportunities to attain and achieve, including applied learning, as pupils in The Nicolson Institute or in schools on the mainland.
- 2.2** The classroom will always be the core delivery mechanism for this group, but it is to be expected that e-Sgoil, partnerships between schools and with other providers, and links into Modern Apprenticeships will become increasingly important.
- 2.3** To embed support for e-Sgoil it will be important to emphasise an ethos built around equity of provision and effective use of the available resources, be they teaching resources or technology.
- 2.4** Activities to ensure successful delivery include making further progress on the harmonisation of timetables and continuing to seek opportunities to utilise subject specialists efficiently, especially those with Gàidhlig teaching qualifications.

Broad General Education Pupils, P1 to S3

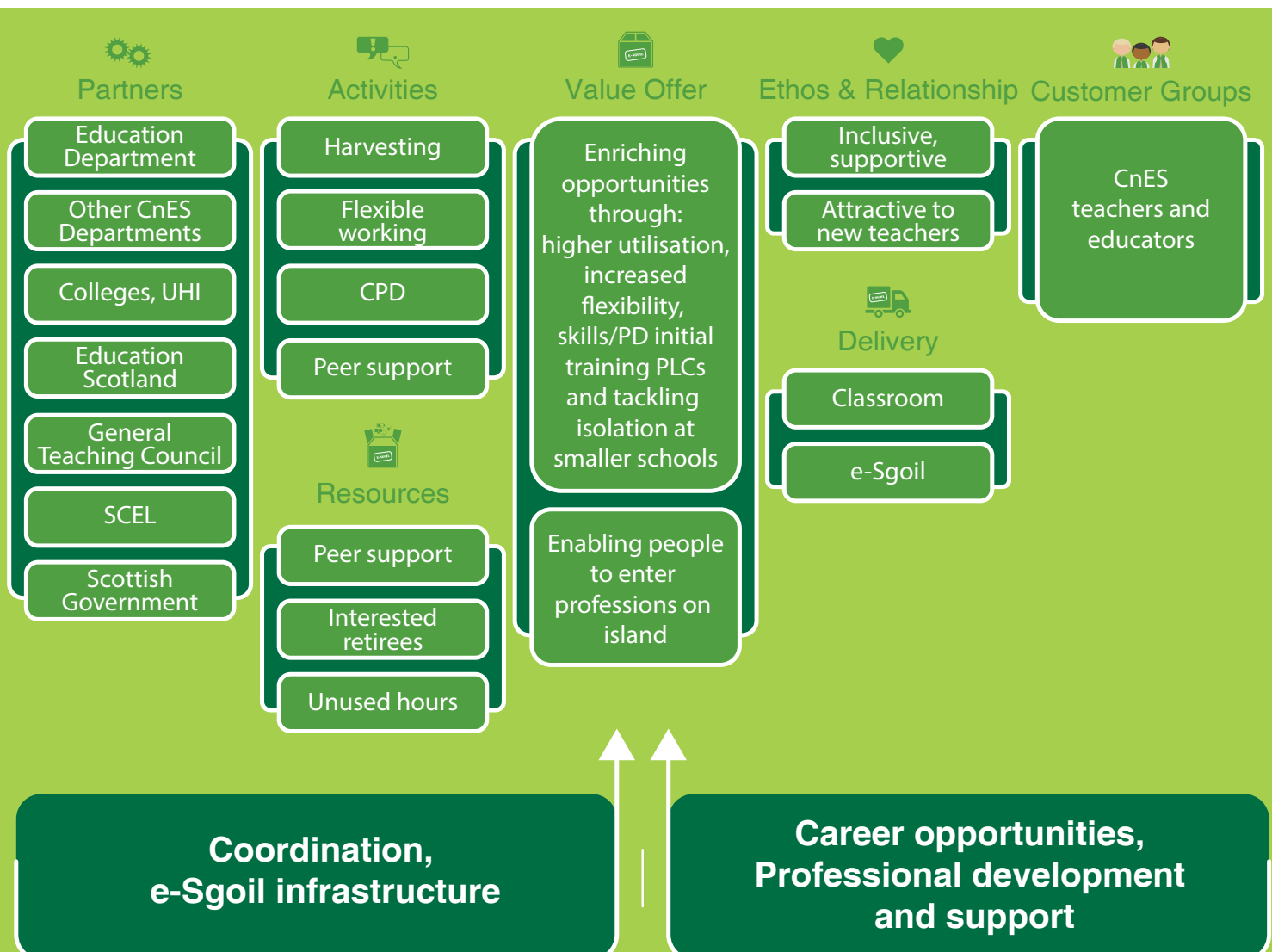


Appendix 4

Applied Business Model Template

- 2.5** The Value Offer to BGE phase pupils is similar to that for senior phase pupils, albeit with more of an emphasis on core subjects and less on destinations.
- 2.6** There is a clear opportunity to use e-Sgoil to strengthen Gàidhlig music, art and culture throughout the Gàidhealtachd and beyond, and this can happen at the very earliest stages of schooling.
- 2.7** Similarly, there is an opportunity to strengthen the delivery of STEM subjects and languages into primary schools, especially smaller ones.

Teachers and Educators within CnES



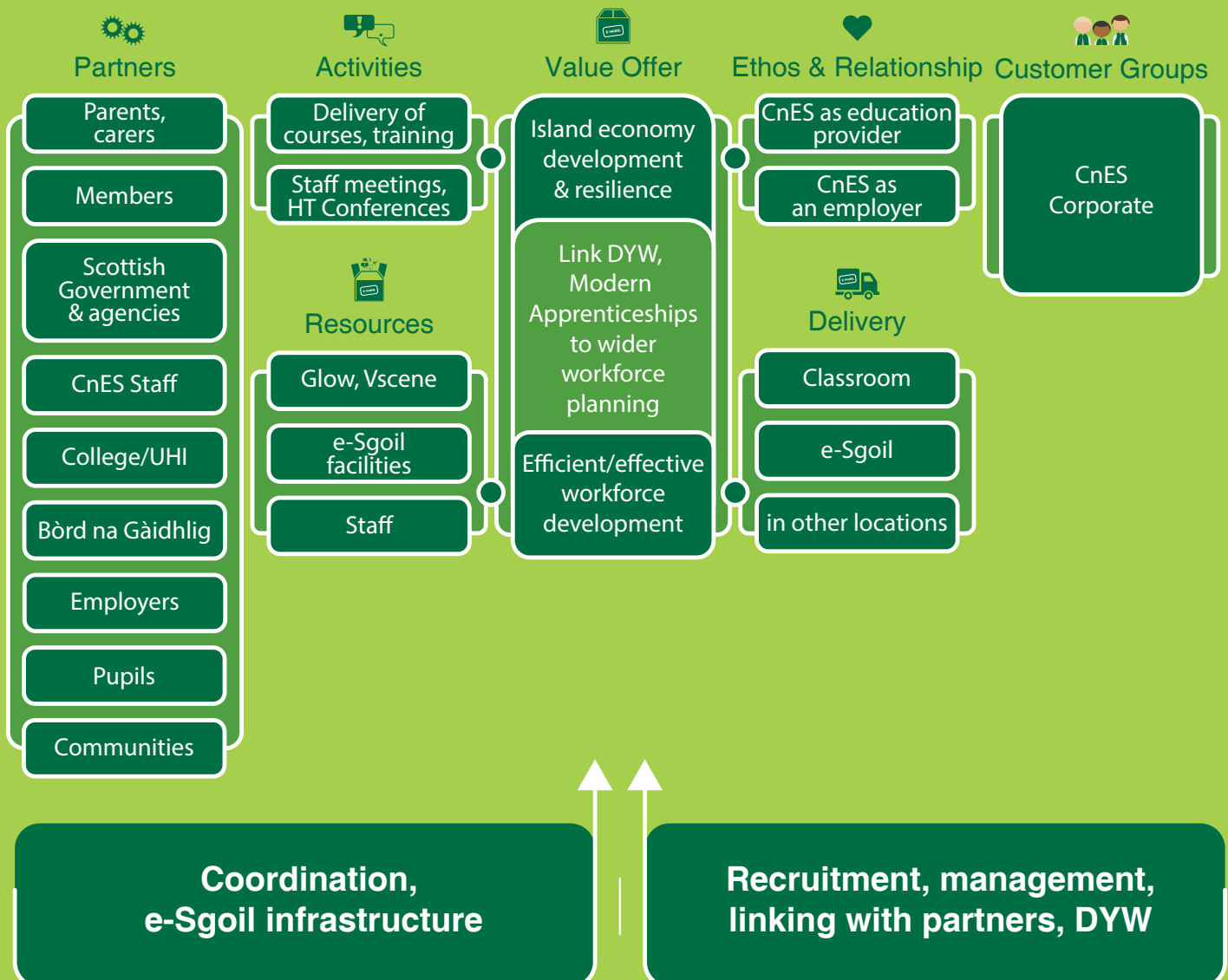
Appendix 4

Applied Business Model Template

2.9 The Value Offer to teachers and educators within the CnES ecosystem has several facets, and it will be important that e-Sgoil continues to strengthen learning and teaching within the islands for the benefit of staff, pupils and the islands as a whole.

2.10 For staff involved in teaching in the present time, the central Value Offer is one of enrichment. The availability of e-Sgoil will enable staff, especially those in specialist subjects and in the smaller schools, to work with a wider range of pupils at a wider range of levels than would otherwise be the case. It provides opportunities for professional development to happen without the need to travel, and it creates ways of developing learning communities, especially within subject specialisms that would be difficult otherwise.

CnES Body Corporate

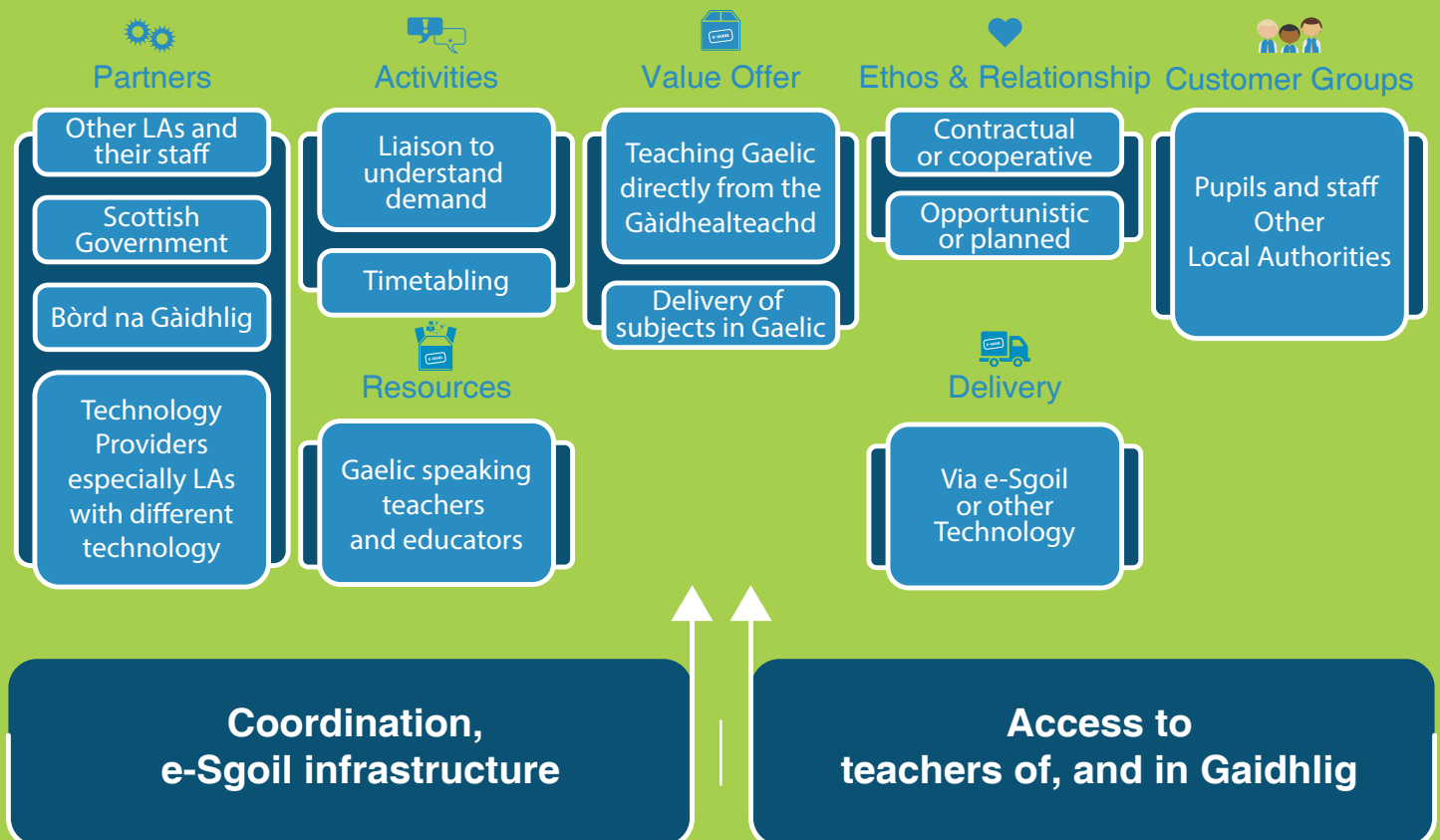


Appendix 4

Applied Business Model Template

- 2.11** By providing an alternative to in-class delivery, it presents opportunities for teachers in other locations or circumstances to deliver education. This includes retired staff who may wish to continue on a part-time basis, or staff who require flexibility to fit with planned or unplanned family care responsibilities.
- 2.12** The Value Offer for the Comhairle (as a corporate body with responsibilities to discharge and a vision for the growth and development of the islands) is that the Business Model provides clear links between the education of the young people, the economy of the islands, and the growth and development of the language and culture.
- 2.13** e-Sgoil is already proving to be a very effective tool for linking students and the young workforce, and in time it is to be hoped that its use as a tool for delivering education, and for connecting people and opportunities will grow. This will have a clear and direct impact on the economy of the islands.

Other Local Authorities – pupils and staff



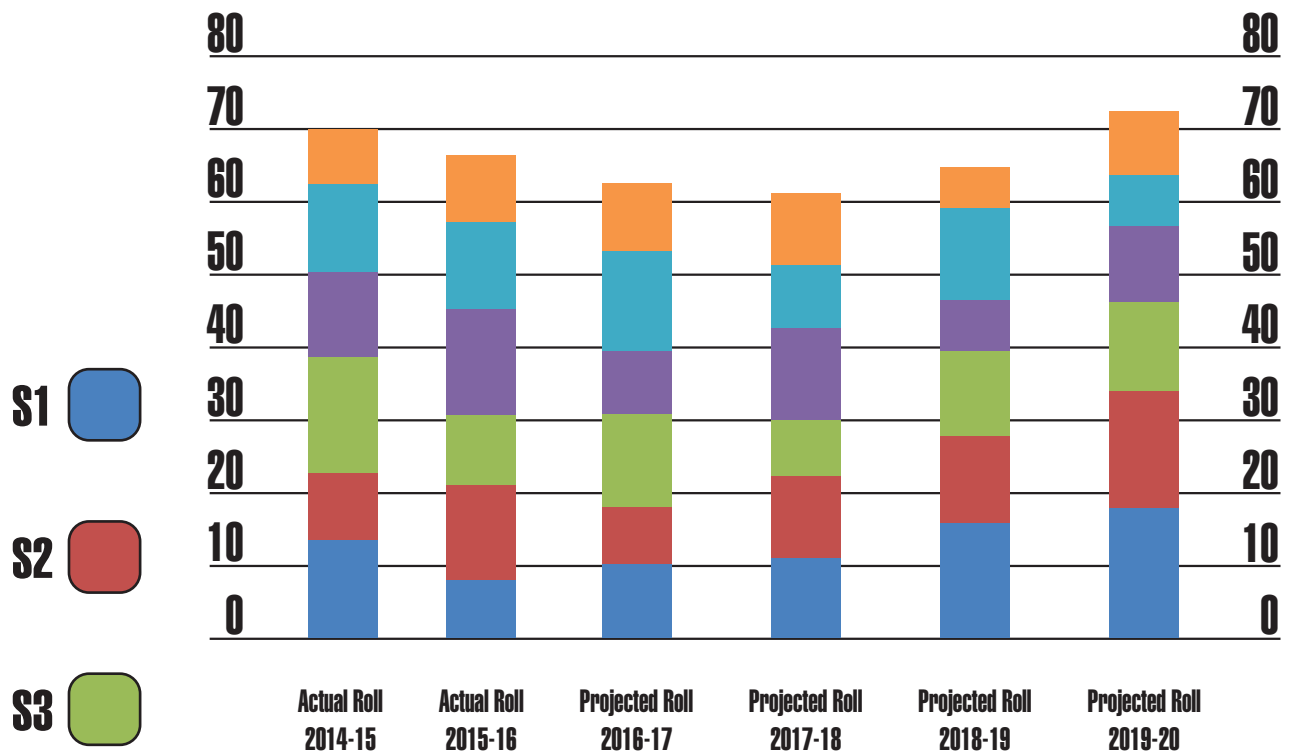
Appendix 4

Applied Business Model Template

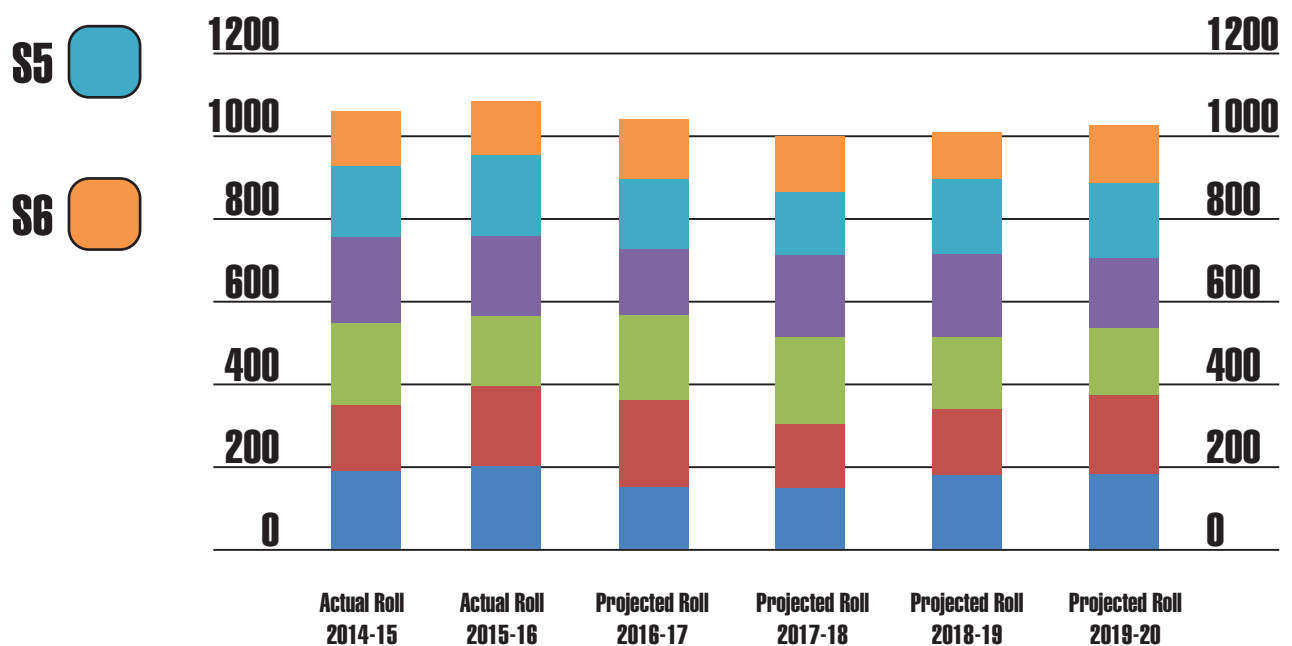
- 2.14** The Value Offer to authorities and pupils beyond the islands is becoming more clear as the first year of testing comes to completion, although this is an area that we expect to develop in the coming years.
- 2.15** Central to this is the opportunity e-Sgoil provides to deliver a wider range of subjects in the medium of Gàidhlig, especially to authorities where demand exists, but where either subject qualified teachers are not available, or where pupil numbers are low.
- 2.16** e-Sgoil is also demonstrating its value for authorities by providing a channel for the delivery of Gàidhlig teaching as a subject and we expect that this will grow as demand for GME is strong throughout Scotland.



Castlebay



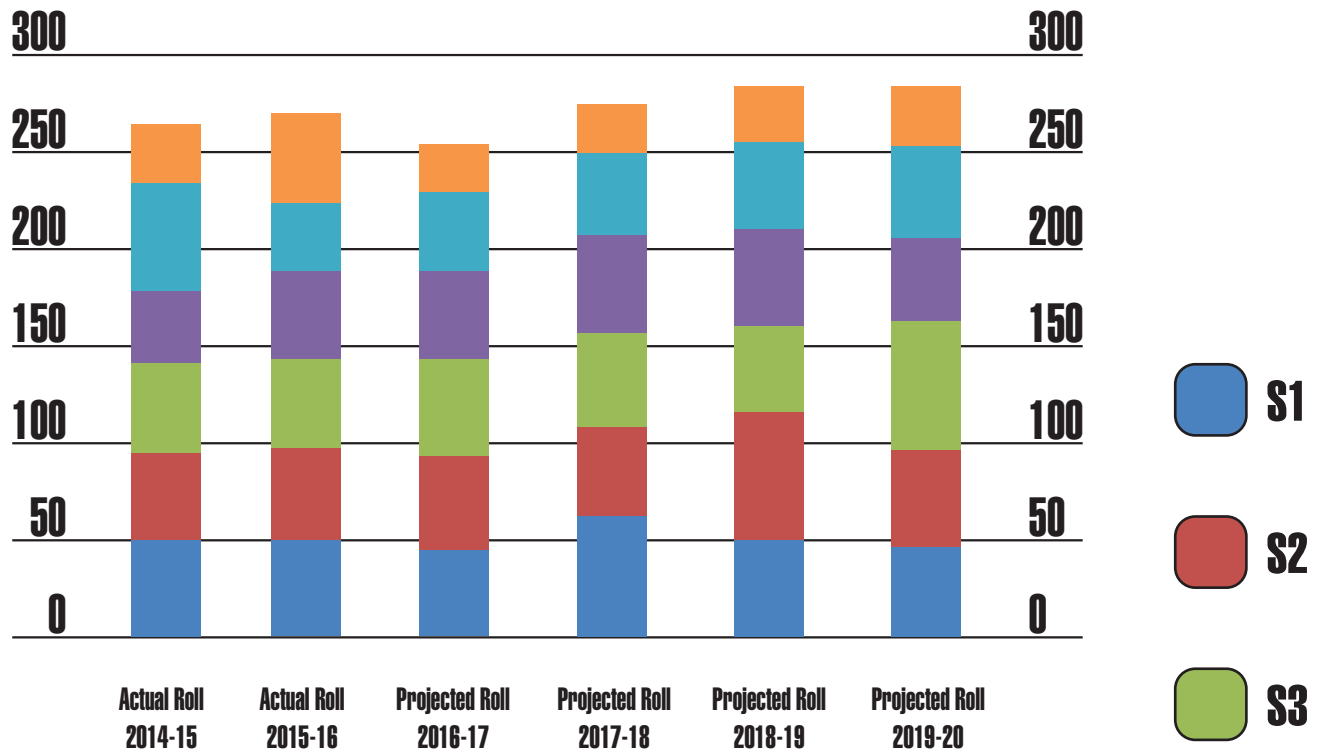
The Nicolson Institute



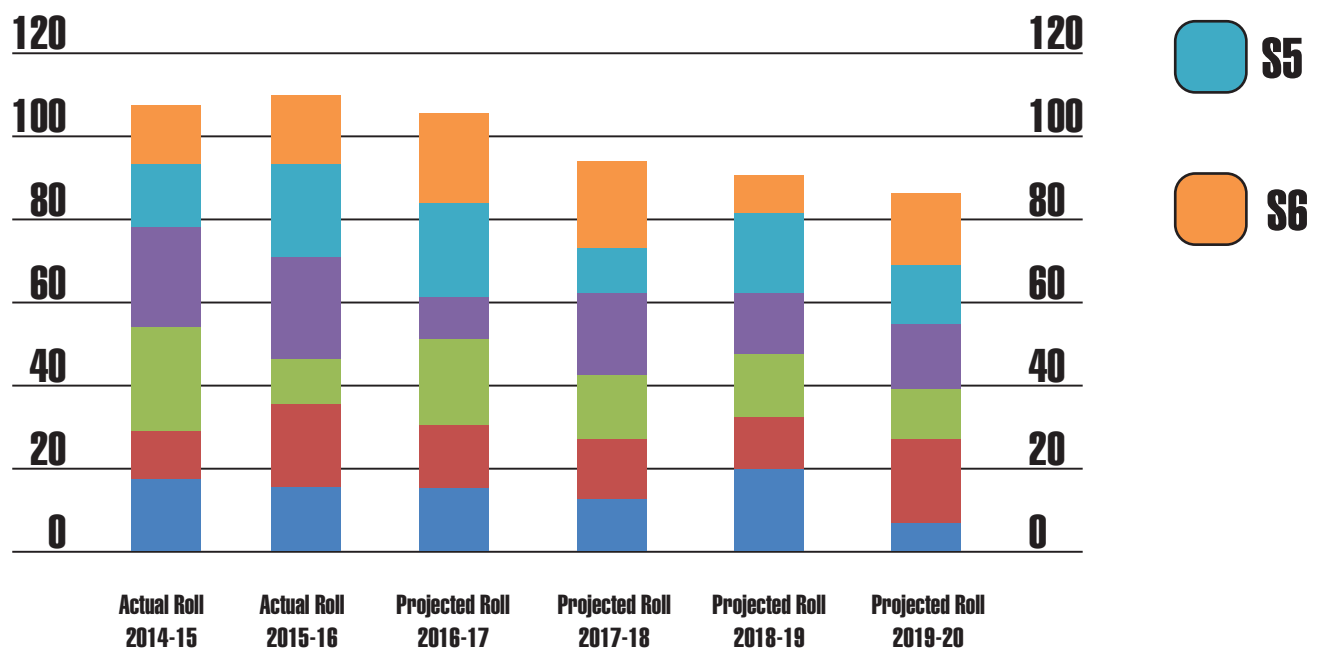
Appendix 5

Secondary School Roll History and Forecasts

Sgoil Lionacleit



Sir E Scott





COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Caledonian Economics

Economic Impact Assessment of e-Sgoil and related Service Transformation

27 September 2017

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Caledonian Economics

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Economic Impact Report

Caledonian Economics

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Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Introduction

1

1.1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Caledonian Economics Ltd on instruction of the Director of Education and Children's Services at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

1.2 The Aims of this Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the economic impacts of the transformational Business Model that has been developed within the Education and Children's Services Directorate of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

The transformation has been far-reaching. It has included significant reconfiguration of the school estate, adoption of new management practices, and rethinking of the ways services are provided to young people throughout the islands.

e-Sgoil has been the focus of much attention and is a key component of the transformation. But its role has not been so much as an electronic adjunct to traditional classroom learning, but rather as a tool that has enabled learning and teaching to happen anywhere, for anyone, without being tethered to the classroom.

The pilot year has been completed very successfully and e-Sgoil will be at the centre of the next stage of service transformation, with a vision to place "the periphery at the centre". As part of this vision, e-Sgoil will deliver certified learning and training in Gàidhlig and vocational subjects nationally, and will enable people of all ages to receive education in subjects and levels that in the past would have required them to leave the islands.

1.3 Background

The energy and commitment to service transformation has been matched by a carefully managed approach that links activities to clear social and economic objectives which include strengthening Gàidhlig language skills and broadening its use.

The transformation process is already delivering productivity gains and service improvements, as evidenced by the impressive reductions in overall costs and budget surpluses generated. These productivity gains are being used wisely to invest in a range of activities and assets that will enhance the educational experience of learners, be they school pupils, Comhairle staff, or others living in the islands.

It is widely accepted that there is a correlation between education, productivity and income. It follows that the service transformation within CnES will deliver economic benefits. However, the economic return on education is diffuse, long-term and influenced by many external factors.

Leakage of the economic impact is a particular factor in the Western Isles where the population is traditionally mobile and many young people leave the islands to study, work and settle.

By explicitly linking education to the needs of island employers the Comhairle is matching local supply and demand for skills, fostering inclusive growth in the private sector, which is already identified as a key focus for the Western Isles' economic strategy to replace a reducing public sector headcount.

1.4 Development of the Transformational Business Model

The Business Model is part of a process of development that began with the implementation of the findings of a 2010 review of the school estate. Developments carried out as part of the Western Isles Schools Project (WISP) delivered further efficiencies and improvements in the condition of schools.

Another important component of the transformation has been in relation to young people with the most challenging additional support needs. In the past, significant numbers of pupils spent time in residential establishments on the mainland because their needs could not be met locally. Developments in capacity and capability have almost eliminated the need for off-island placements, and have done so within the constraints of the available budgets.

By the start of session 2015-16 the service was in a position to start preparing for the next stage of the transformation which included putting plans in place to establish e-Sgoil and to push ahead with the workforce planning initiative.

2016-17 was the pilot year for e-Sgoil and saw it being used to deliver a range of educational activities within the islands and beyond. These were reported in detail in the *e-Sgoil Year One External Review*¹.

2017-18 will be the first full year of operations of e-Sgoil and its associated business model. Key to this next phase is the roll-out of an extensive programme of apprenticeships and vocational qualifications delivered on the islands, many for the first time.

It is this programme of vocational training (being described in shorthand as apprenticeships but including a range of qualifications and experiences leading to launched careers) and the possibility that e-Sgoil provides to deliver them throughout the islands, that underlie the most significant quantifiable economic impacts of the transformational business model.

¹ e-Sgoil: Year One External Review, 28 June 2017, Robertson and Finnigan for CnES

1.5 Summary of Activities to Date

A full list of activities was included in the e-Sgoil external review. In summary, these are:

- initiatives that broaden, strengthen and stabilise the educational offer to pupils in the upper secondary years;
- initiatives that broaden the cultural aspects of the educational offer to primary and BGE secondary aged pupils;
- initiatives that increase flexibility within the educational community;
- initiatives to minimise unproductive time for teaching and support staff;
- a programme of apprenticeships and other training including certifying additional teaching staff; and
- programme to develop staff to meet the increase in pre-school provision to 1140 hours.

1.6 Future Developments

The level of activity in 2017-18 is possible because of retained financial funds available to the education service. It is estimated that this will sustain a level of CnES activity for a few years, but additional sources of funded candidates will need to be identified if the level of activity, and the economic benefits coming from it, are to be sustained in the longer term.

The longer term developments will involve:

- e-Sgoil becoming an accredited training provider for a syllabus of training modules relevant to island employers in the public and private sectors;
- developing a client base in the private sector that will sustain levels of activities and in due course become a revenue generator; and
- building the volume of these courses that are delivered to other public sector bodies in the islands, notably NHS Western Isles, over the medium-to-long term.

Details of the vocational/professional training to date and in-hand can be found in Appendix 1, broken down by year, funding source and location.

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Measuring Economic Impact

2

2.1 Introduction

Gross Domestic Product or GDP is a standard measure of the size of an economy. GDP increases with time in a growing economy, and decreases in a contracting one.

There are several ways of calculating GDP but the standard approach is to add all the money spent in the economy over a period of time. The formula is as follows:

$$GDP = C + I + G + (X - M)$$

Where: C = consumer spending, I = business spending, G = government spending, X = exports, M = imports.

Figure 1

Gross Domestic (or Regional) Product

The standard measure of the size of an economy
Bounds of measurement are important: local vs national

GDP =

Household
Spending

+

Investment

+

Government
Spending

+

Net Exports*

'net' exports is the value of UK exports **to other countries minus UK imports **from** other countries*

Whilst GDP can be applied at regional level, its value is limited because it includes cashflows that can only be meaningfully aggregated at national level such as taxes and subsidies.

For this reason it is more usual to use Gross Value Added (GVA) at regional or industry sectoral level. The formula for GVA is:

$$GVA + Taxes - Subsidies = GDP$$

The Scottish Government publishes GVA^2 data for a range of sectors

² <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Economy/Input-Output/Downloads/IO1998-2014Latest>

2.2 Economic Impact and Productivity Gains

Government spending is spread across a vast range of areas. In some areas it can be a catalyst for growth, in others it can be argued it crowds out the private sector. A significant portion is spent on transfer payments and subsidies. Whilst each area of government spending makes a contribution to GDP, each will have a differing effect on economic growth.

Where it is suitably invested, it can be an enabler for economic growth. This argument is used to justify government borrowing to invest in infrastructure. For example, borrowing to invest in transport infrastructure can be justified on the basis that it enables goods and people to move around more efficiently which aids economic growth and in turn generates additional incomes, profits and tax revenues that more than cover the cost of the initial borrowing.

Other public sector spending adjustments may improve efficiency (or productivity) within government. By doing more with less, the public sector can increase the social or economic impacts of its activities. This is exactly what CnES has done with e-Sgoil: reducing unproductive travel time for Comhairle staff allows more time to be spent delivering ‘front line’ services which have a positive impact.

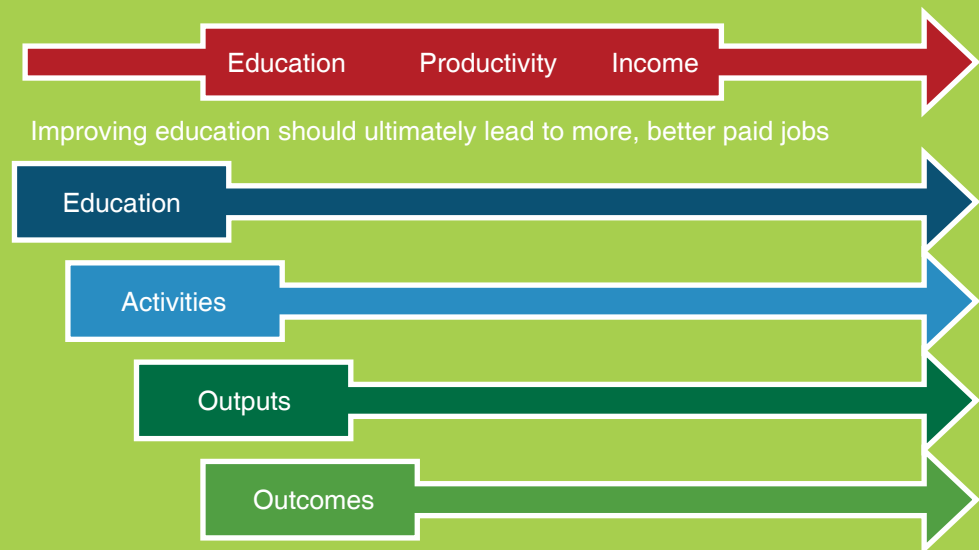
2.3 Investment in Education – from Inputs to Outcomes

Investment in education is another important way in which the public sector creates conditions conducive to economic growth. Many studies have been made into the link between education, productivity and income.

Government investment and resources are the ‘inputs’ allowing ‘activities’ to happen, including creating learning spaces, employing staff, and learning and teaching. The activities create ‘outputs’ such as subjects delivered, courses completed and skills gained, and these ‘outputs’ in turn generate the desired long term ‘outcomes’ which could be factors such as reductions in unemployment, demographic change, or income, as illustrated below in Figure 2.

Figure 2

The economic impact of public spend on education is delivered over the long term



The distinction is important here, because while CnES and the Education and Children's Services Department have introduced significant improvements in efficiency in the face of reducing budgets, it is not necessarily the case that they generate direct economic impacts.

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Measuring Economic Impact

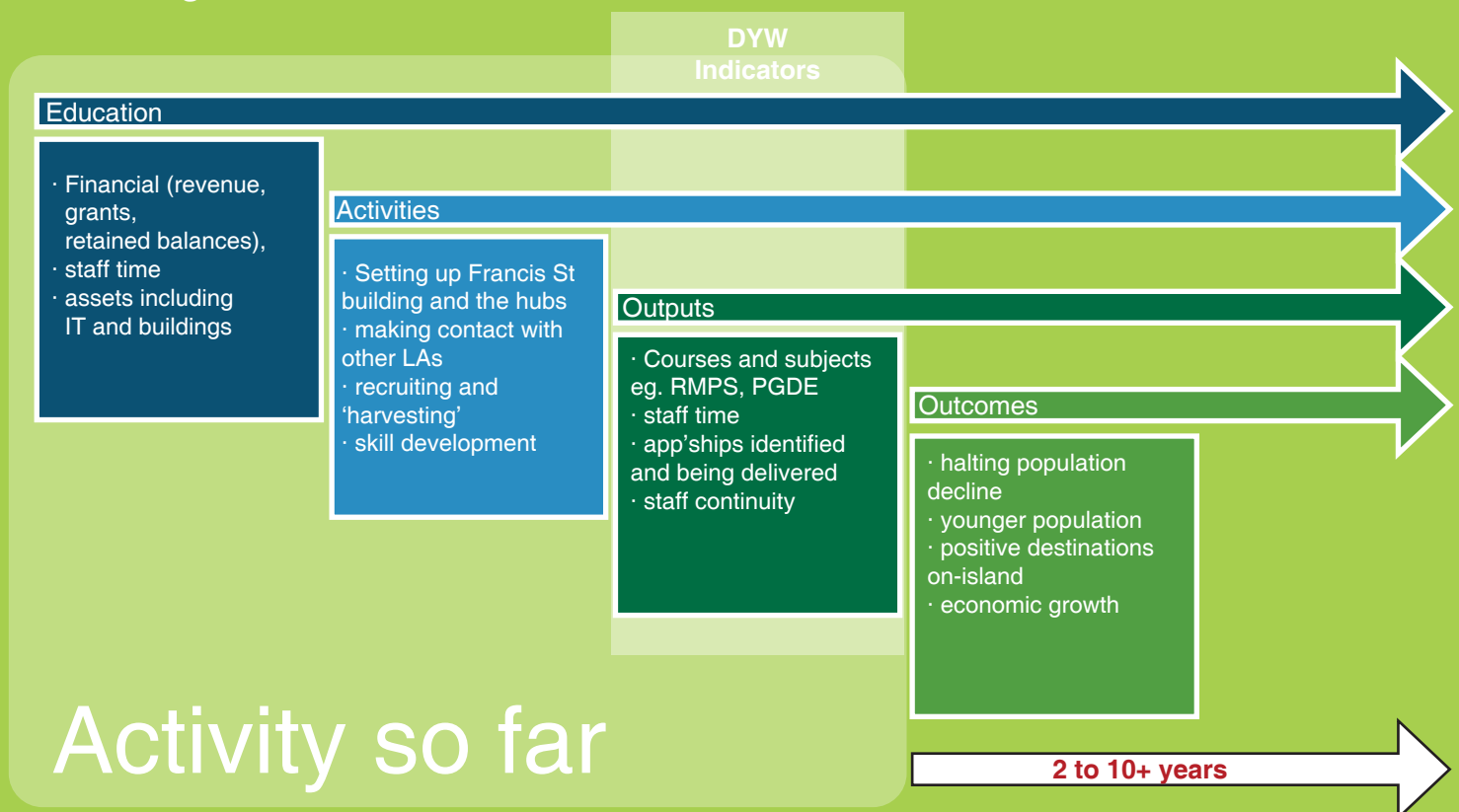
2

2.4 e-Sgoil

Figure 3 below applies this model to e-Sgoil.

Figure 3

For e-Sgoil, this looks like



Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Measuring Economic Impact

2

Activity in the pilot year (2016/17) and current year has concentrated on the first three parts of this. It is clear that the outputs from the pilot year have been positive and it is hoped that this will continue to grow, along with the delivery of the 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) objectives.

It is noticeable that many of the Key Performance Indicators identified for the Outer Hebrides in the presentation to the DYW National Group in April 2017 are linked to outputs, for example:

- number of employers engaged with DYW;
- number of pathways to employment;
- increase in school attendance; and
- number of students in Gaelic Medium Education.

These KPIs measure outputs rather than outcomes. KPIs based on outputs are very valid for the purpose of directing resources towards improving performance against these particular measures.

One early recommendation of this study is that e-Sgoil should have a wider set of KPIs measuring the desired outcomes such as population size and age profile, and number of school leavers settling on the islands long term.

It should also develop a mechanism that measures and reports on the value and impact of social and cultural aspects of its activities.

3.1 Introduction

It is the vocation/professional training aspects of e-Sgoil that have the most immediate and quantifiable benefits, and it is these that we focus on in the following section.

3.2 Local versus National Impacts

Many of the activities have a different economic impact according to the point of measurement. This is especially the case where activities are being ‘repatriated’ to the islands that would previously have required the student to travel to the mainland. Examples include the current Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PDGE) students and classroom assistants.

In the national sense, this is economically neutral due to displacement since there is no net difference in either Government Expenditure or Consumer Expenditure. In other words the total cost to government is the same and the total spent by the student (the consumer in this case) is the same.

However, at island level there is clearly a positive impact on consumer expenditure as explained below in Section 3.6.

3.3 The Benefits to School Pupils

The most direct beneficiaries of the pilot year of e-Sgoil and service transformation are the pupils whose educational experience has been enhanced.

This includes the group who studied RMPS Higher, the Chemistry and German students who benefitted from improved access to specialist staff, Easter study support group (Maths and Physics), and various activities related to the teaching of, and in, Gàidhlig.

The future income of these students will be influenced by many factors. One positive contributing factor will be improved education which delivers improved outcomes leading to economic impact through improvements in employability and income.

The impact on the islands will be maximised if the qualifications are matched to the demand for skills on the islands.

3.4 The Benefits to School Staff

School staff are benefitting in two ways from the e-Sgoil activities:

1. by accessing training, development and management activities that would otherwise have been impractical they are likely to improve their effectiveness. Reducing the amount of travel time and cost to attend events should also improve productivity;

2. various initiatives are also in place to improve staff flexibility as part of the service transformation process. These include providing the ability to work remotely using e-Sgoil and requirements for new staff to work across the Comhairle area.

These activities should also have a positive economic impact through their contribution to the quality of education.

3.5 Benefits to Apprentices and other Students

Evidence from a National Audit Office (NAO) study on the subject³ finds that apprentices forego a salary in the short run in order to receive higher earnings later on.

The NAO study found wage premia once apprentices have qualified varied according to the level of the apprenticeship, but were on average between 11% and 18% compared to those with no apprenticeship.

Since the apprentices in the current year are all either public sector employees or in organisations funded largely by the public sector, the immediate direct impact beyond an increase in public sector wages is likely to be limited. However, by increasing the value of jobs on the islands and by improving the prospects of the apprentices, the Comhairle is increasing the long-term likelihood of them remaining settled on the islands.

3.6 Costs Avoided and Wages Increased

The annual accommodation, subsistence and travel costs of a single student from the islands studying on the mainland has been estimated as £12,000⁴. This cost would normally be borne by the student her/himself or by the student's family.

In 2016/17 and 17/18 approximately sixty students have been able to study a course on the island which would otherwise have required the student to travel. Various uncertainties present challenges in quantifying the impact here, falling into four categories as follows:

1. some of these students may have remained on the island and pursued the same career, but without gaining a vocational qualification. For this group we know that they are likely to be paid less without an apprenticeship. Applying the methodology set out in Section 4.4.1 suggests that this is in the range £1,718 to £2,811 per annum;
2. some may have pursued other career paths. The impact of this cannot be quantified;
3. some would have left to study and been supported by their on-island parents. The impact of this on the islands is potentially £12,000 per student family, assuming that the full amount is spent in other ways on the islands;

³ National Audit Office, Adult Apprenticeships, 2012

⁴ Estimate provided by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Economic Impacts – 2016/17 and 2017/18

3

4. some may have left to study and paid their own costs perhaps using a student loan or part time work. This has no direct negative impact on the islands in cash terms, although one might speculate that this is a factor behind falling population on the islands.

In summary, we can only speculate what the students would be doing were it not for e-Sgoil, but if a working assumption is made that a quarter of the students fall into category 1 and the same number into category 3 above, the annual positive impact on the islands of local delivery would be over £200,000 per annum, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1	<i>Impact per student (annual)</i>	<i>Number of students (working assumption)</i>	<i>Total annual impact</i>
Category 1 - wages	£1,718 to £2,811	15	£25,770 to £42,165
Category 3 - costs	£12,000	15	£180,000
Total			£205,770 to £222,165

It is worth highlighting that these effects are amplified and concentrated in a small rural island community compared to an urban/mainland context. This is because staying at home to study has not hitherto been an option: any student with ambition had to leave to study and for those that chose to do so the parental support costs are higher because of the distances involved.

4.1 Introduction and Background

As discussed already, the main lever at the Comhairle's hand to encourage economic strength on the islands lies in its ability to create an environment for inclusive growth in which businesses can grow, increasing employment and incomes as they do.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise, in their economic profile of the Outer Hebrides⁵ comment that the:

“economy is characterised by a large number of small enterprises and a small number of key private sector employers.

The area enjoys distinct areas of comparative sectoral advantage which are principally based on natural resource, including renewable energy, and food and drink.

A range of economic challenges affect the islands, due to peripherality, insularity and sparseness of population.

The economy is reliant on a public sector facing significant budget challenges and is otherwise narrowly focused on specific areas of activity.”

The Scottish Annual Business Statistics⁶ elaborates on this view, commenting that:

“tourism-related industries sector play a particularly important part in the economies of some of the more rural local authority areas – for example, in 2014, 14.6% of [the islands'] non-financial business economy GVA was generated by the tourism related industries sector, this compares to 4.2% for Scotland as a whole.”

⁵ <http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/area-information/outer-hebrides/economic-profile.html>

⁶ Scottish Annual Business Statistics 2014, Scottish Government

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

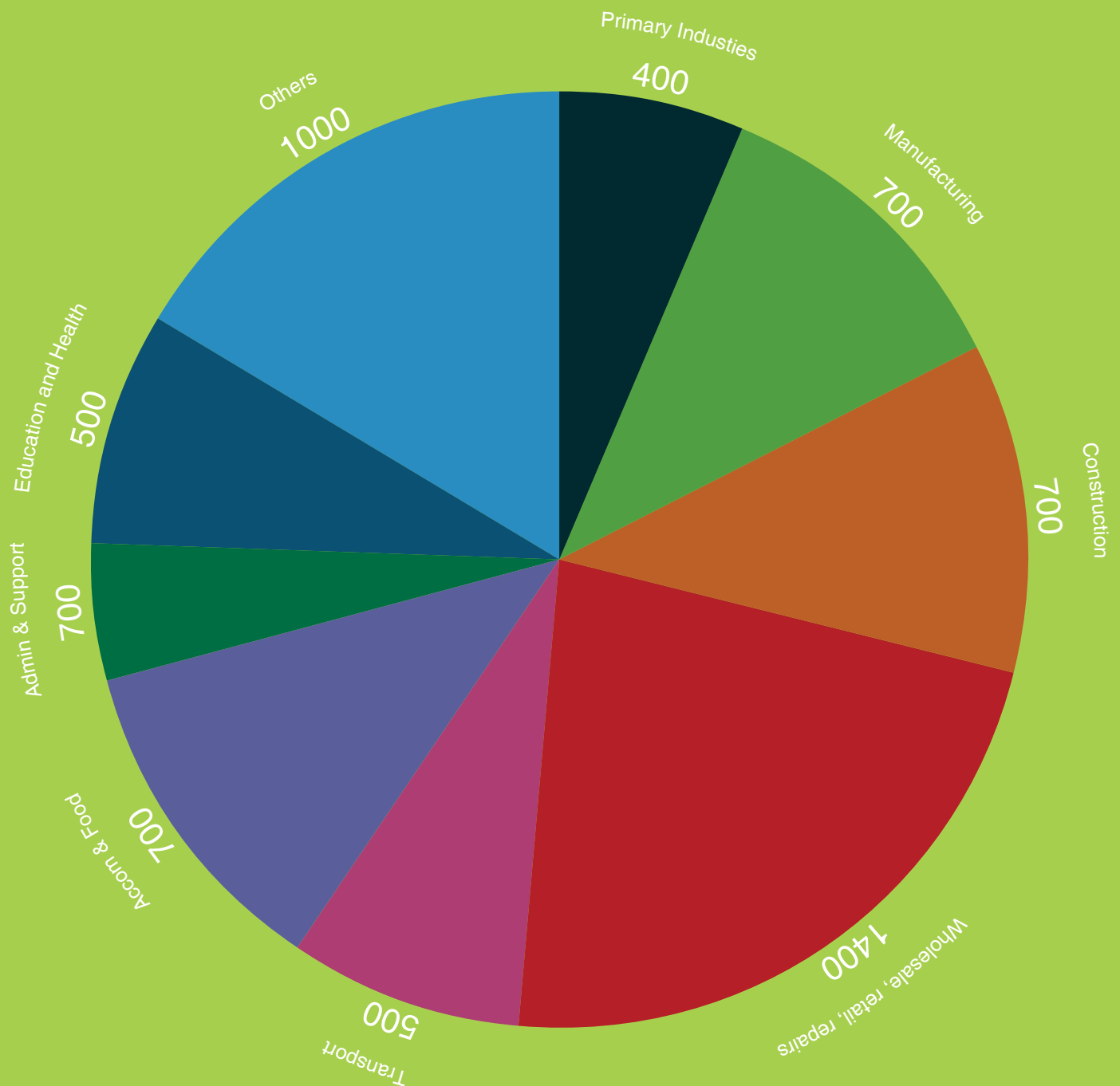
Economic Impacts – beyond 2018

4

Out of a population of around 27,000, approximately 6,200 work in the private sector per coverage of the Annual Business Survey, as shown in figure 4 below. Many of the activities within the sectors shown are linked to tourism and related activities.

Figure 4

Total Private Sector Employees = 6,200



(Source: Scottish Annual Business Survey)

Appendix 6

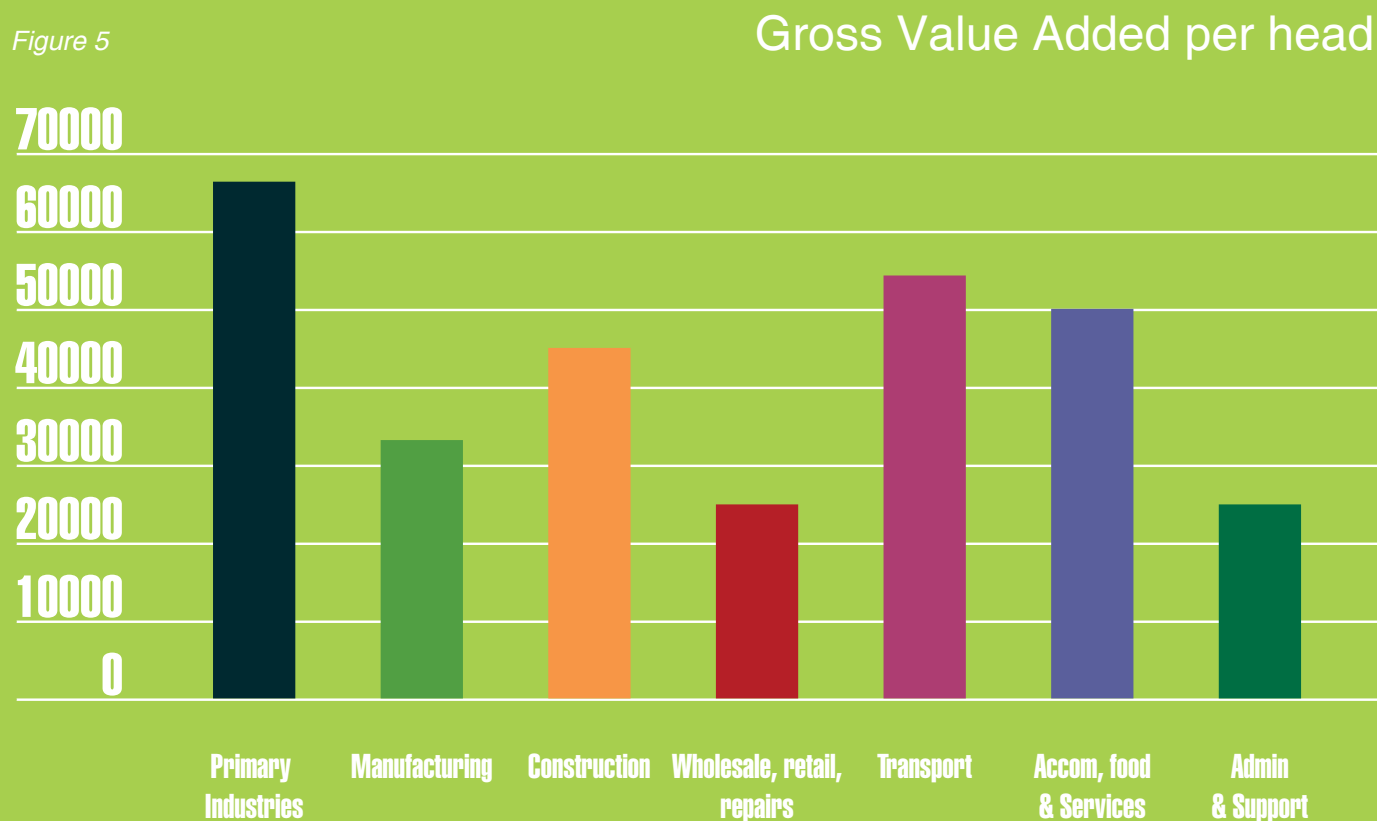
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Skills Development Scotland⁷ observed that this represents limited private sector activity, relatively low productivity, and dependence on primary industries and tourism.

In terms of Gross Value Added per head, the most valuable sectors are Primary Industry (including fishing and crofting) and Transport.



(Source: Scottish Annual Business Survey)

4.2 Growing the Island Economy

As observed already, while carefully targeted training and employment in the public sector has the potential to improve productivity and create the conditions to stimulate economic activity, the private sector must grow if an economy is to grow.

Skills Development Scotland estimate that replacement demand will result in 2500 openings across all sectors between 2016 and 2024, whilst the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership estimate⁸ that 1200 jobs will need to be created by 2020 in order to maintain employment at the 2010 level, taking into account demographic predictions and the impact of forecast reductions in public sector budgets.

⁷ Skills Development Scotland Skills Assessment, Na h-Eileanan an Iar, December 2016

⁸ Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership Economic Regeneration Strategy to 2020

Taken together and at face value, these statistics suggest that education and training will play a pivotal role in the islands' development in the coming years.

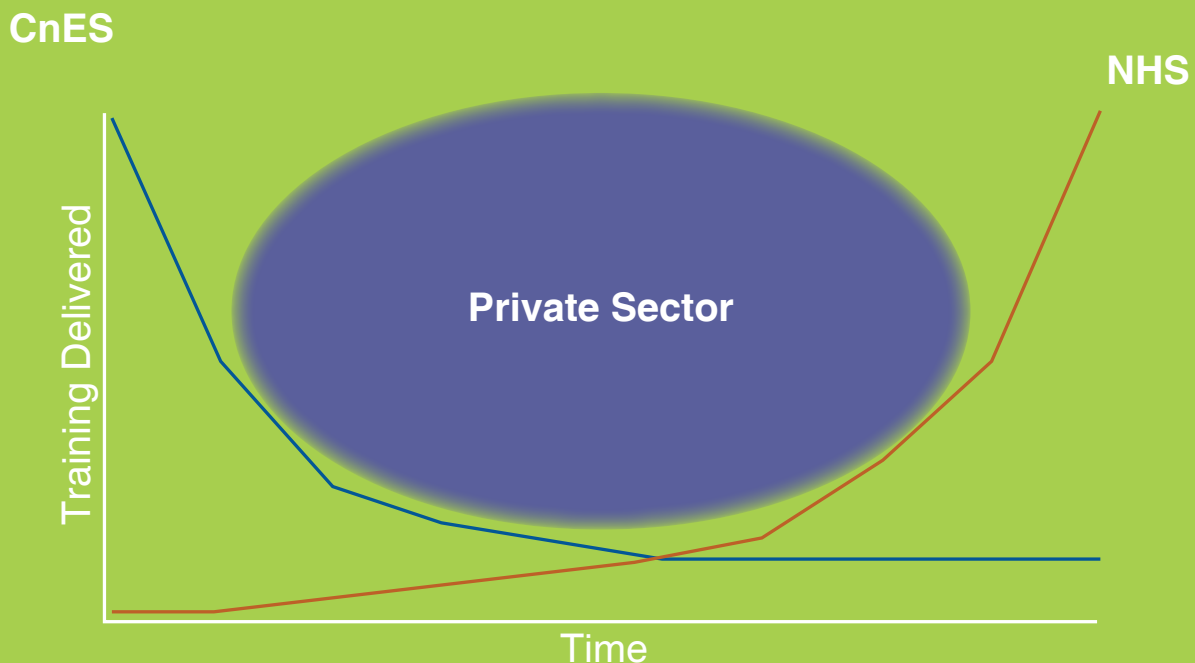
4.3 The Future Role of e-Sgoil

The conceptual model for the future of the vocational aspects of e-Sgoil as described by the Director of Education and Children's Services is illustrated below.

In the initial years, existing/retained budgets and external funding support have been - and are being - used to create the ability to deliver a range of vocational courses, mainly in schools and as identified by the Comhairle-wide workforce planning initiative.

However, this level of Comhairle-supported activity cannot be sustained within the existing core budgets and will inevitably fall. The vision for the future is for the number of private sector learners to grow quickly, with the NHS increasingly adopting e-Sgoil and on-island learning as a main route for staff development and training where appropriate.

Figure 6



This model is entirely consistent with the principle described earlier, that the greatest economic impact is delivered when private sector employment is created.

4.4 The Potential Impact of Private Sector Apprenticeships

Estimating the potential impact of apprenticeships in the private sector requires apprenticeships linked to existing jobs and new jobs to be considered separately.

4.4.1 Existing Jobs

As explained earlier in this report, evidence from a National Audit Office (NAO) study⁹ found wage premiums for apprentices of between 11% and 18% (according to the level of apprenticeship) compared to those with the same level of previous qualifications but no apprenticeship.

Using the 2016/17 Living Wage¹⁰ (£8.45) as an assumption, the approximate annual salary is £15,616, so the wage premium for each completed apprenticeship would be in the range £1,718 to £2,811.

To convert this to economic impact we need to apply an estimate of the ratio of employee compensation to gross operating surplus (assumed to be 1:1 for the purpose of this limited exercise) and relevant GVA Multipliers (Type II) which take into account the direct, indirect and induced impacts of increases in economic activity.

The Scottish Government GVA¹¹ multipliers in sectors relevant to the Western Isles range from 1.5 for textile manufacturing to 2.4 for fish processing. Note that the GVA multipliers apply at Scottish level, not island level. Therefore the impact on the islands may differ from the national impact because some of the economic benefits are external to the islands, for example where the employer is owned and based on the mainland or internationally. Similarly, some local impacts may be greater, for example it would be reasonable to speculate that the GVA multiplier for high value luxury Harris Tweed manufacture is greater than the general textile industry.

With that proviso, this analysis suggests that for existing jobs, the range of economic impacts per annum per completed apprenticeship will be between £5,153¹² and £13,492¹³ according to the level of qualification and the industry sector.

4.4.2 New Jobs

A similar calculation can be performed for completely new private sector jobs that also provide apprenticeships, except that in this case the GVA multiplier is applied to the total wage and its gross operating surplus contribution once the apprenticeship is completed.

⁹ National Audit Office, Adult Apprenticeships, 2012

¹⁰ Living Wage Foundation

¹¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Economy/Input-Output/Downloads/IO1998-2014Latest>

¹² Lowest wage premium, lowest GVA Sector

¹³ Highest wage premium, highest GVA sector

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Economic Impact Report

Economic Impacts – beyond 2018

4

Using the same assumptions for annual living wage-based salary, compensation-to-surplus ratio, apprenticeship premium and GVA multipliers, the range of economic impacts per job per annum per completed apprenticeship is between £52,002 and £88,449.

These findings are within the range identified in Annual Business Statistics data shown in Figure 5 which exclude the GVA multiplier.

4.4.3 Total Annual Impact

Assuming a base case of fifty completed apprenticeship per annum, split equally between existing jobs and new jobs, the annual economic impact is shown below.

Table 2	<i>Low Estimate Per app'ship</i>	<i>High Estimate Per app'ship</i>	<i>Low Estimate Per 50</i>	<i>High Estimate Per 50</i>
Existing Jobs	£5,164	£13,492	£128,832	£337,305
New Jobs	£52,001	£88,4049	£1,300,032	£2,211,225
Total			£1,428,864	£2,548,531

Thus the anticipated annual GVA impact for each year in which fifty apprenticeships are completed could be between £1.4 million and £2.5 million.

Nothing in the data suggests that the benefits of completing an apprenticeship degrade over time, so we can assume that these annual benefits will continue to accrue for as long as the individual remains in a similar industry. What is actually more likely, as evidenced in the NAO report, is that there is a long term compounding benefit, as apprentices progress through managerial structures and spin-off new businesses themselves.

4.5 The Impact of Investment in Apprenticeships in the very Long Term

A report¹⁴ on the Economic Impact of Apprenticeships carried out for the Skills Funding Agency found that when measured over a very long term, the economic impact of investment in private sector apprenticeships is very significant. Looking at apprenticeships since 1950, and estimating the extra employment associated with completion of these apprenticeships, it found that an investment of £1 in apprenticeships has yielded around £21 of benefits when Gross Value Added, reductions in unemployment benefit and other employer benefits are taken into account. The report comments that the benefits vary across sectors and by level of apprenticeship, but that this figure is generally consistent with the findings of a National Audit Office¹⁵ evaluation of the apprenticeship programme which found that the benefits were between £16 and £21 per £1 of public spending.

These figures are impressive and highlight the value of investment in apprenticeships, however, it must be remembered that they are measured over a time-span longer than a typical working life, and take into account benefits at national level (taxes raised, unemployment costs avoided) as well as direct salary benefits; they are also extrapolated from a relatively low level of public subsidy.

4.6 e-Sgoil, Culture and Society

The potential impacts of e-Sgoil go far beyond the dry economic impacts described in this report. It is part of a growing confidence in the islands that opportunities can be generated and realised, creating meaningful employment that young people can build their lives around.

No longer need education be the vehicle that people see as their way off the islands and onwards to a prosperous life on the mainland or beyond. The confluence of community land ownership with well resourced development companies, communications technology, good transport links and interest in Gàidhlig language and culture means that people are creating economically viable activities that were not possible in decades past.

The public, private and community sectors are finding new ways of working together to manage assets and to deliver services. This could be strengthened further by building quantifiable ‘social value’ metrics into many aspects of public sector activities including procurement, and e-Sgoil would be an ideal vehicle to deliver this as the next step in the transformation process.

¹⁴ Economic Impact of Apprenticeships, CEBR for the Skills Funding Agency, 2014

¹⁵ National Audit Office, Adult Apprenticeships, 2012

Such a framework would help ask and answer:

- What difference does e-Sgoil make (and to whom), and how does that enhance the viability and vitality of remote communities?
- Can informed choices be made about how it is shaped that enhance the desired outcomes?

For e-Sgoil, a hypothesis (from the first year of operation) could be developed, and a range of primary data gathered that would feed back into, and refine the hypothesis. This data could be in both numerical and narrative form. For example, you could track selected students¹⁶ and follow their educational/career journey over a number of years, to complement broader but less personal data-sets. Similarly, you could track involvement of local communities in cultural and historical activities and correlate that with research among visitors to understand whether these are motivating factors in their choice of destination.

Community Signature has provided an indication of which areas are of greatest interest, a platform such as the Social Value Portal could provide a tool to be used to take this to the next stage by developing a set of metrics that allow the social, community and cultural dimensions to be measured and monitored.

¹⁶ Ideally this group would encompass a range of students: gender-balanced, Gàidhlig or English medium education, a range of abilities and interests, and from all four secondary schools.

5.1 Discussion

The term ‘apprenticeship’ is used as a catch-all term to describe a diverse range of vocational and professional training activities being undertaken, or anticipated, under the broad umbrella of e-Sgoil. These range from SVQs to post graduate qualifications and Masters degrees.

This diversity presents challenges when seeking to quantify economic impact, and in many cases no primary research exists that can be referenced. However, good evidence exists in the UK for the economic impact of what are often referred to as ‘modern apprenticeships’ which feature a combination of structured on- and off-the-job training. In particular, the 2014 CEBR report on the Economic Impact of Apprenticeships provides an interesting reference point.

The findings of the CEBR report are the starting point for this study into the economic impact of e-Sgoil. We have made the assumption that collectively the benefits of the e-Sgoil activities are analogous to a similarly sized group of apprenticeships. While accepting this is an approximation, we believe it is valid because the range of subjects within the e-Sgoil programme is broad, as is the range of apprenticeships covered by the CEBR report. Also, all the e-Sgoil activities are explicitly linked to needs identified by the islands’ employers, as is the case for apprenticeships. In the words of the Director: they *“link the qualification to the vocation”*.

5.2 Findings

This report finds that the economic impact of e-Sgoil is already measureable although much of the activity to date has been geared towards creating the conditions in which future impacts can be nurtured.

5.3 Impact of 2016/17 and 2017/18 Activities

We compared the current position with a scenario in which e-Sgoil does not exist and where students are faced with the choice of studying on the mainland or working on the islands without the qualification.

We estimate that the impact on the wages of each student who would otherwise have remained on the island without studying is between £1,718 and £2,811 per annum. This wage differential persists until the individual concerned acquires the qualification or skills by another means, or changes job. If fifteen of the current cohort fall into this category then the wage impact would be between £25,770 to £42,165 per annum.

It is costly to send a student to the mainland, estimated at £12,000 annually in travel, subsistence and accommodation costs. This would normally be met either by the student themselves (perhaps

paid for by a student loan and part-time work) or by the student's family. The impact of the former situation is difficult to quantify in terms of its impact on the islands because the cashflows occur off-island. The latter situation is common and has a clear economic impact on the islands. In each case £12,000 is leaving the islands that might otherwise be spent locally. If a quarter of the students in the current cohort would otherwise leave and be supported by their parents, then the annual impact on the islands' economy could be up to £180,000 if the full amount is spent on the islands.

This does not take into account the impact on the islands of lost income, culture and social integrity for those students who leave to study and never return.

5.4 Impact of Activities beyond 2018

e-Sgoil's greatest opportunity to create a meaningful economic impact lies in its potential to strengthen and grow local businesses.

The requirement to equip the islands' young people with the skills the islands need is significant. It is estimated that replacement demand will result in 2500 openings across all sectors between 2016 and 2024, whilst 1200 jobs will need to be created by 2020 in order to maintain employment at the 2010 level, and many must be in the private sector because of public sector budget cuts. Assuming a base case of fifty completed apprenticeships per annum, split equally between existing jobs and new jobs, the annual GVA impact is estimated to be between £1.4 million and £2.5 million per annum.

Nothing in the data suggests that the benefits of completing an apprenticeship degrade over time so we can assume that these annual benefits will continue to accrue for as long as the individual remains in a similar industry.

5.5 Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are that:

1. e-Sgoil should focus on its role as an enabler for inclusive growth, helping island businesses strengthen and expand, and providing meaningful employment opportunities for young people who choose to stay on the islands, those who leave and wish to return, and those living on the islands for the first time;
2. a set of measures is needed that allow progress to be monitored against outcomes. For example, these could include population, number of local young people employed on the islands, age profile, use of Gàidhlig in the workplace, and growth in key economic sectors;

3. e-Sgoil's role in helping the public sector deliver more with less should not be underestimated. e-Sgoil should continue to seek opportunities to allow Comhairle staff to work more efficiently;
4. e-Sgoil has potential to help NHS Western Isles deliver training and development in places and ways that they might find challenging at present. Opportunities should continue to be explored;
5. Many of the benefits of e-Sgoil do not lend themselves to be quantified in the conventional sense, yet these are some of the most significant and potentially long-lasting impacts. e-Sgoil and the change of mindset it embodies has the potential to reverse many decades of population decline, erosion of cultural identity and reduction in the use of Gàidhlig. A framework such as the Social Value Portal could help gather the information needed to measure the social and cultural value of the work of e-Sgoil which would help guide future decision making.

Appendix 6

Economic Impact Report

Appendix 1

<i>How is training funded?</i>	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>
CnES	17	30
Skills Development Scotland	0	17
Other External Sources	0	6
Total	17	53

<i>How was post created?</i>	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>
Created by business transformation	6	33
Needed to cope with demographic changes		4
Created by early years increase to 1140 hours	2	2
Filling vacancies	9	7 ¹⁷
Historical society initiatives		4
New management posts		2
ESF support		1
Total	17	53

<i>Where is the training being delivered?</i>	<i>2016/17</i>	<i>2017/18</i>
Delivered locally	12	49 ¹⁸
Studying in Aberdeen	4	
Studying in Inverness	1	
Studying in Glasgow		2
Studying in Leicester		2
Total	17	53

¹⁷ all PGDE and Educational Psychology

¹⁸ of which 1 TBC and 12 Pedagogy year 1 only

Addendum

Since the completion of the main report the range of teaching being undertaken by e-Sgoil has increased considerably both in terms of delivery within the Western Isles and across Scotland.

(Appendix 1)

The Cairinish e-Sgoil hub was officially opened by John Swinney, Deputy First Minister, in August 2016 and a full time Principal Teacher has been appointed and based there. This will be a catalyst for further social and economic development in one of our most fragile rural communities.

To date, e-Sgoil has created employment for 26 individuals with 9 working full-time and the others on a flexible basis. This figure is likely to increase significantly as demand for services continues to grow.

In terms of Gaelic development, e-Sgoil has facilitated the teaching of Gaelic in Banchory Academy for the first time and we are about to begin pilot lessons in Nairn Academy.

We are also teaching classes in Oban High School, Islay High School, Lochaber High School and Dingwall Academy.

In addition, we are delivering Eachdraidh (History through the medium of Gaelic) to Perth Academy and Inverness Royal Academy.

Primary 1 pupils in Bunessan are now receiving daily Gaelic phonics lessons through e-Sgoil.

An opportunity to learn Gaelic, or improve their competency in aspects of Gaelic language relevant to their workplace settings is being provided for Modern Apprentices, at beginner, intermediate and fluent level, on a weekly basis. Gaelic language classes are also available for Early Years' supply staff. This will assist CnES in meeting its commitment to increasing the number of hours for accessible Early Years' provision.

Training sessions for staff in activities such as: Micro:bit, Food For Thought, Adult and Child Protection, Professional Managers' Course etc have been delivered from e-Sgoil. A wide range of training exercises for adults from other departments within CnES or for partner agencies is being facilitated. Feedback from participating staff has been very positive, and e-Delivery results in considerable savings in terms of travel, hiring of venues and subsistence costs, and also ensures equity of access for interested parties across the Western Isles. We are presently working with 6 local authorities and are in discussions with two that are looking to develop formal Service Level Agreements with regard to an e-Sgoil service provision.

Addendum

In partnership with e-Sgoil, Education Scotland and Skills Development Scotland are developing national pilot projects focussing on the delivery of Computing Science, Gaelic language and Enterprise. These aspects of e-Sgoil delivery are to be promoted by Education Scotland as exemplars of good practice.

A bid to Creative Scotland to improve equity in terms of music tuition throughout the islands has been successful and classes will start this term. Pilot activities such as the workshops delivered by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and D2 Percussion were very well attended with positive feedback from all participants. Pupils from all four secondary schools were involved in some of the workshops.

The annual Angus Macleod Memorial Lecture, delivered by Donalda Mackinnon, Director of BBC Scotland, was facilitated by e-Sgoil this year, as was the National Gaelic Debate. Both events were live streamed and there was good audience uptake from both island and mainland sites.

e-Sgoil staff are leading on the Dileab project. This will form part of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Iolaire commemorative events programme. 8 Heritage and Media Apprentices are working with local schools, Comuinn Eachdraidh and musicians to produce a number of performances throughout the islands and ensure that such activities generate a legacy in terms of local history learning and teaching materials.

Traditional music online workshops and ceilidhs have been run by e-Sgoil in conjunction with Fèisean nan Gàidheal, An Comunn Gàidhealach and LCC Benbecula. These pilots have proved successful and popular with pupils from throughout the islands participating. It is envisaged that this type of activity will become a regular occurrence.

Welsh Government representatives have visited the Western Isles and are liaising with CnES consultants as they plan to set up an e-Sgoil equivalent in Wales.

e-Sgoil has been instrumental in establishing Secondary Teachers' Network Groups for all subject areas across the authority. Staff are encouraged to work collaboratively, reflect on interesting practice, and use technology increasingly to exchange information with their colleagues.



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR



e-sgoil



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR