

**e-SGOIL EVIDENCE OF IMPACT REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2025**

Report by Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services

**PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to inform members of e-Sgoil impact during academic session 2024-25.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 e-Sgoil continues to work closely with the Scottish Government to fulfil the 2021 manifesto commitment to establish a National Digital Academy (NDA). All e-Sgoil programmes are currently contributing to the evolutionary development of the NDA.
- 2.2 e-Sgoil's [Evidence of Impact Report](#) for 2024-25 provides a comprehensive overview of programme activity and impact for the past academic session.
- 2.3 During 2024-25 e-Sgoil has further developed a broad range of online programmes to support schools and learners from across Scotland. Live, interactive learning sessions covering all levels of the curriculum (including Gaelic Medium Education) have been positively evaluated.
- 2.4 e-Sgoil attracted a significant amount of external funding during financial year 2024-25. The total income for the year totalled £2.19M. £919,636 of this total was spent locally within the local authority area.
- 2.5 e-Sgoil continues to support CNES schools to broaden their curricular offer and ensure greater resilience during periods of staff absence.
- 2.6 e-Sgoil has continued to generate additional employment opportunities for 29 members of staff based within the Western Isles.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle note the Report.

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Appendix:

1. e-Sgoil Highlights
2. e-Sgoil Local Spend
3. e-Sgoil Courses Offer 2025-26
4. e-Sgoil Footprints
5. e-Sgoil Gaelic/Gaidhlig SQA Results

Background Papers: [e-Sgoil Evidence of Impact 2025.](#)



## IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

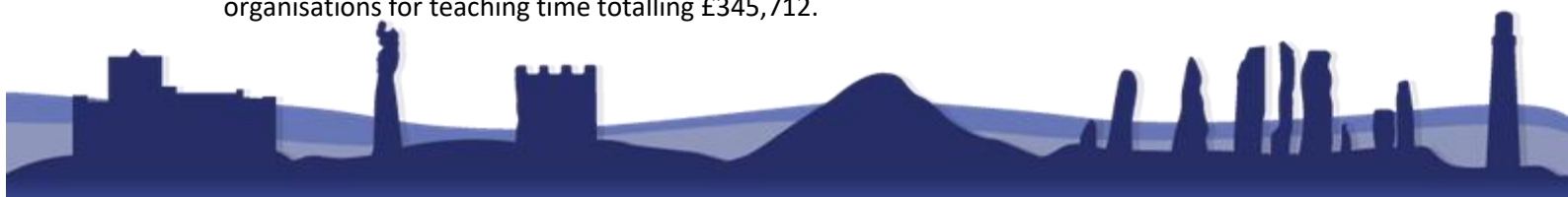
| Resource Implications   | Implications/None   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Financial               | None  |
| Legal                   | None  |
| Staffing                | None  |
| Assets and Property     | None  |
|                         |   |
| Strategic Implications  | Implications/None   |
| Risk                    | None  |
| Equalities/Child Rights | UNCRC Article 28 – Right to education<br>UNCRC Article 29 – Goals of education  |
| Corporate Strategy      | 2.1.3 – Schools are centres of lifelong learning and key assets to the community<br>3.1.1 – The Gaelic language, natural heritage and culture of our communities is supported and promoted. |
| Environmental Impact    | None  |
| Consultation            | None  |

## BACKGROUND

- 5.1 This Report provides members with an annual update of e-Sgoil activity and impact on both a local and national level.

## DETAIL

- 6.1 e-Sgoil is working in close collaboration with the Learning Directorate to realise the Scottish Government's 2021 manifesto commitment to establish a National Digital Academy (NDA). e-Sgoil's current suite of national programmes are fully funded as part of the National e-Learning Offer and other partnership arrangements. This work is contributing to the evolutionary development of the NDA. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar continues to retain a lead role in terms of innovative digital delivery across Scotland.
- 6.2 e-Sgoil's Evidence of Impact Report for 2024/25 was published in June 2025 and provides a comprehensive overview of programme activity for the past academic session. It can be viewed at [e-Sgoil Evidence of Impact 2025](#).
- 6.3 e-Sgoil continued to expand the scope and scale of its activities during session 2024/25, developing and offering live, interactive learning sessions delivered by GTCS registered, specialist teachers. Programmes cater for all levels of the 3-18 curriculum. In addition to school-age learners, e-Sgoil offers adult learners the opportunity to study certificated SQA courses in Gaelic (learners) at N5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels.
- 6.4 e-Sgoil's management team secured significant funding from a range of external organisations 2024/25. £1.7 million was received to deliver the live element of the National e-Learning Offer, with additional funding received from the Scottish Government for Gaelic projects. This resulted in a well-received, national programme of live offers to complement the work being done by schools in supporting the needs of all learners. (Appendix 1) e-Sgoil also derived income from invoicing other organisations for teaching time totalling £345,712.



- 6.5 £919,636 has been spent locally with staff employed across all areas of the Western Isles. This additional funding, which has been sourced to supplement normal budgets, represents a significant cash injection into the local economy. (Appendix 2) Over the course of the last five years e-Sgoil has contributed £4.58M to the local economy, with £535,337 of this total going towards Comhairle salary costs out with e-Sgoil.
- 6.6 During the 2024/25 academic session e-Sgoil delivered supply teaching into 3 out of 4 Comhairle Secondary schools, ensuring that learning was not impacted by local staffing challenges. In addition to online delivery, e-Sgoil also facilitated in-person teaching in both Castlebay and Sir E Scott schools by sourcing teachers, willing to temporarily relocate for a number of months, to take classes when no local alternative supply cover was available. Most Comhairle Primary schools also benefitted from being able to access a range of online curricular inputs in both Gaelic and English. (Appendix 3)
- 6.7 29 members of staff based across the local authority area have benefitted from being able to access additional employment opportunities through e-Sgoil. National learner and staffing footprints also demonstrate the widespread impact of e-Sgoil operations. (Appendix 4)
- 6.8 Demand for e-Sgoil's Evening and Easter Study Support webinars continues to increase year on year. 31,800 webinar registrations were received last session from 7435 individual S4-6 learners representing 331 schools. 167 CNES learners registered for e-Sgoil's 2024/25 Evening Study Support programme. Study Support programmes consist of online webinars providing live, interactive consolidation and revision for 50 webinar groups covering 25 subjects across Nat 4, Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels.
- 6.9 The scope and scale of the e-Sgoil Gaelic team's 3-18 provision, plus adult learning activities, has continued to develop with significant impact on SQA national qualification uptake, especially for Gaelic learners. (Appendix 5)
- 6.10 As part of a UNCRC Innovation Fund project funded by Scottish Government, e-Sgoil worked closely with 5 groups of learners at risk of not having their rights realised. One of the groups comprised secondary Gaelic Medium pupils from across Comhairle secondary schools. Working alongside Feisean nan Gaidheal, Comhairle pupils considered what the secondary Gaelic Medium experience should ideally look like. Further information is [available here](#).
- 6.11 i-Sgoil, the e-Sgoil programme that caters for interrupted learners from P2 – S6 who do not attend school for prolonged periods, continues to attract a high number of referrals from across the country. A broad range of subjects is on offer, allowing for young people to re-engage with learning. In addition to core subjects, i-Sgoil staff are able to provide pastoral support, facilitate virtual work experience and host partner inputs from organisations such as Skills Development Scotland. i-Sgoil classes are timetabled to align with Comhairle Foundation Apprenticeship classes, broadening curricular choice and improving learner pathways. Currently 7 secondary learners from Comhairle schools are part of the i-Sgoil programme, with other referrals awaiting processing.
- 6.12 The accredited social value platform [Social Value Engine](#) calculates that i-Sgoil provides a social return of £107 for every £1 invested. This equates to a benefit of £128M over 3 years for a total annual investment of £1.2M. The proportional benefit to the Western Isles for the 7 learners currently supported equates to £4.98M over 3 years.



- 6.13 Adding value to what is being offered by schools both locally and nationally is a key feature of e-Sgoil provision. This takes the form of expanding the range of subjects on offer in schools, and co-ordinating inputs from more than sixty partner organisations and employers through the Developing the Young Workforce programme, DYW Live. This partnership bridges the gap between the classroom and the workplace and has been well received by schools across Scotland.
- 6.14 e-Sgoil continues to offer Comhairle staff a range of opportunities for professional development in digital pedagogy and other aspects of the wider curriculum. This can take the form of observing or facilitating sessions being delivered remotely by teachers or partner agencies. Working within e-Sgoil has provided a number of Comhairle teaching staff with opportunities to further develop leadership and management experience. This builds capacity within the workforce and has enabled career progression.
- 6.15 Enabling teachers to live and work in their own local communities continues to be a main driver for e-Sgoil and the Comhairle. Efforts are made to ensure that teachers with capacity, who agree to deliver online, in addition to delivering face-to-face lessons in local schools, are afforded opportunities to derive additional income through e-Sgoil teaching.
- 6.16 All e-Sgoil operations are quality assured in line with best practice: observations, data analysis, stakeholder feedback, monitoring of planning, moderation etc. e-Sgoil has been subject to local, national and international scrutiny since its inception leading to improvements in the learner experience.

## CONCLUSION

- 7.1 e-Sgoil's impact at a national level demonstrates how the Comhairle continues to play a significant part in shaping future delivery models for education, which are both accessible and equitable. Partnership working and Comhairle backing have been key factors behind sustained growth and development. e-Sgoil continues to support the Scottish Government to develop a National Digital Academy for Scotland.

