

Task(s)	Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	Task Progress Comments
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.1.a) Monitor progress of the Scottish Government's development of a BSL Data Strategy and assess whether it is feasible to implement it or a similar strategy for the Western Isles.</b>	Johanna Morrison – Organisational Development Officer	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	The Scottish government website is periodically checked for any progress on a BSL Data Strategy. No new information is available at this point (Feb 2025). It is expected that the Scottish Government will report on progress in the BSL National Plan progress report due to be published in 2026.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.1.b) Monitor and update the existing information about BSL users in our organisation and community to support accessibility to our services for BSL users.</b>	Johanna Morrison – Organisational Development Officer	Completed	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Results of Scotland's Census 2022 show that there are 526 BSL Users overall in Na h-Eileanan Siar. Barra: 24 Benbecula: 41 Great Bernera: 12 Bernaraigh: 1 Eriskay: 4 Grimsay: 2 Isle of Lewis and Harris: 373 North Uist: 24 South Uist: 36 Vatersay: 2 Scalpay: 7 BSL Users in Localities (as defined in the Census as a group of high-density postcodes within a settlement) in the Western Isles are: Balivanich (17 BSL Users) Newmarket, Laxdale and Marybank (27 BSL Users) Sandwick (15 BSL Users) Stornoway (94 BSL Users)
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.2.iii) Continue to signpost students to a range of information, advice and guidance in BSL about their career and learning choices and the transition process.</b>	Dolina Smith - Employability Services Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	23/05/2024 - The employability and DYW team continue to work in partnership with the SDS CIG team to support with career guidance. This year has seen a real emphasis on local progression pathways delivered through social media campaigns, employer let face to face sessions and sectoral specific campaigns.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.3.a) Continue to work with early years staff to ensure that information about BSL and Deaf culture and the resources that are available in BSL, are made available where necessary to meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or Deafblind child.</b>	Donna C Murray - ASN Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Partnering with Highland Blind Craft is ensuring that staff can be supported with resources on Deaf culture and BSL. Resource packs have been identified and can be distributed to relevant settings when needed and work is ongoing to identify new families who may benefit from tailored support.

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<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.3.b) Support early access to BSL for deaf and deafblind children, young people and their families by promoting Early Years resources such as the BSL content for the Bookbug App.</b>	Carol Burns - Early Years Service Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Early Years Service has shared information regarding BSL on their Early Years and family Support Social Media pages. The service is planning to update the Nursery Parent Handbook to include links to BSL resources to support families.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.3.c) Investigate opportunities for early years workers to learn BSL up to the level of SCQF level 3 to inform our future work in this area.</b>	Carol Burns - Early Years Service Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	<p>The Early Years Service has spoken with the Manager of Complex Needs ASN regarding training staff in BSL. The Service currently have a small number of staff trained in BSL, but the majority are trained in Makaton. Online BSL courses for staff range in cost from £300-£800 depending on the level required. Further investigation on the availability of any free online courses that may be available is required.</p> <p>Previously the Service has contacted the Teacher for the Deaf, who provided online BSL classes for staff as well as in person support for staff and children where required. Before leaving post, some information was provided which is available for staff to access going forward.</p>
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.4.a) Continue to take forward advice developed by Education Scotland to improve the way that teachers engage effectively with parents who use BSL know how they can get further involved in their child's education.</b>	Donna C Murray - ASN Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Staff development sessions are planned to incorporate Education Scotland's guidance on engaging with BSL-using parents. Guidance is being prepared for schools on relevant communication procedures to include interpreter access where needed.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.5.a) Develop and implement a Sensory Strategy with Partners.</b>	Graeme Miller - Commissioning Services Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	<p>Despite a major setback in March 2024 when our commissioned sensory impairment support service 'Sight Action' went into Liquidation, we have since engaged Highland Blind Craft Sensory Services to work in partnership with local statutory and voluntary organisations in the development of a strategy to meet the needs of those with a sensory impairment.</p> <p>A local Partnership has been formed: 'Western Isles See Hear Improvement Group' who's membership includes: CnES Health &amp; Social Care and Education staff, NHS Western Isles Audiology and Visual Services, A peer support Group (DAHLIAS) The Department of Work and Pensions, Scottish Fire &amp; Rescue Service, Faire, Third Sector Interface and Highlands and Islands Fire Service.</p> <p>The Sensory Centre in Stornoway has also reopened offering practical</p>

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					advice and specialist equipment, including hearing aid batteries and home safety devices. Trained Outreach staff carry out home assessment visits, with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service installing smoke detectors. The Hub is also used for peer support meetings.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.5.b) Improve access to the Comhairle's BSL pages and translation services through increased signposting on web pages.</b>	Johanna Morrison - Organisational Development Officer	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Since the Cyber-attack in November 2023, the Comhairle has been running a temporary website. The new, fully accessible website is now up and running and still under active development. It is planned to liaise with Web Support to discuss options.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.5.c) Continue to signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL.</b>	Graeme Miller - Commissioning Services Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Every public-facing policy, procedure, guidance, etc. is meticulously accessibility checked. British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using contact contactSCOTLAND-BSL.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.5.d) Continue to take steps to improve access to information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities.</b>	Iain GG Campbell - Sports Development Services Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Staff are advised on how to deal with customers and service users with sensory impairments through staff training. Scottish Disability Sport has provided training for Sports Development staff and further training will be sought. Staff working with school children liaise with school staff to ensure that any pupils with sensory impairments can be included in all activities, with any required adaptations implemented. Facilities staff deal appropriately with customers with sensory issues to help improve their experiences within our facilities and with our activities. When additional training becomes available on LearnPro staff will be directed to complete relevant modules to increase knowledge. Promotional material and signage to be regularly checked to make sure it is current.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.5.e) Liaise with Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland and seek advice on meeting BSL training standards among Care Staff, based on local needs.</b>	Emma MacSween - Chief Officer, Community Care and Partnership Services	Completed	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Bespoke training is undertaken by relevant staff groups to meet individual service user need and outcomes. This is the approach taken across services and the training accessed is based on best practice and guidance. This approach is subject to review should circumstances change.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.6.a) Develop an accessibility training course for the Comhairle's in-house training program, LearnPro, to support accessibility standards of the Comhairle's website.</b>	Johanna Morrison - Organisational Development Officer	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Documents provided by Visibility Scotland will be used to create an accessibility training course for the Comhairle's in-house training program, LearnPro. Liaised with Legal and Training Department for combined input re contents of training course.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.6.b) Support the uptake of SignPort, an online portal for</b>	Johanna Morrison - Organisational	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	SignPort is currently still under development. Progress will be monitored periodically.

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<b>BSL/English interpreter bookings, within the Scottish Government and public bodies once it has been launched for public use.</b>	Development Officer				Contact established with deafaction.org regarding access to SignPort webinar and discussing questions. Webinar very informative about app functionality. Discussion to extend to all Comhairle premises. It is planned to contact e.g. Social Work, Resettlement, Benefits, etc. in the next instance.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.7.a) Work with Local arts centres to identify demand for BSL within culture and the arts locally.</b>	Murdo MacKay - Dev - Development Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Officers are in the process of engaging with supported local Arts Centres (e.g. An Lanntair, Taigh Chearsabhagh) to determine demand. Heads of 'Creative Places' and 'Arts Communities and Engagement' from Creative Scotland have also reached out to various groups, including CnES, and an initial meeting took place in September 2024. An Lanntair has had two successful BSL performances this year (2024) and are currently planning another in cooperation with Dogstar Theatre Production.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.7.bi) Continue to support BSL users to take part in authority led cultural events (Library Service) as participants, audience members and professionals.</b>	Renee Mason - Libraries Manager	In Progress	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	Libraries provide free access to thousands of items such as books and DVDs. Some DVDs have subtitles. We also offer a 24-hour virtual library where members can download eBooks, newspapers and magazines for free, as well as access to free online resources for research, family history or learning other new skills. Free Wi-Fi and free computer access are available at all our libraries.
<b>BSL 2024-2030 3.7.bii) Continue to support BSL users to take part in authority led cultural events (Heritage Service) as participants, audience members and professionals.</b>	Colin George Morrison - Team Leader - Heritage and Culture	Not Started	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	BSL translator can be engaged as required and by request in partnership with Sight Action Western Isles Sensory Centre.
<b>BSL2024-2030 3.2.ai) Continue to signpost pupils to a range of information, advice and guidance in BSL about their career and learning choices and the transition process.</b>	Donna C Murray - ASN Manager	Completed	01-Apr-2024	31-Mar-2027	When needed, procedures are in place so that any pupils would be signposted to My World of Work BSL resources and local transition support materials are being reviewed to ensure they are accessible in BSL. Partnership work with Skills Development Scotland supports inclusive transition planning.