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From: Hancemike@aol.com
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To: info
Subject: Submissions to the first stage of the consultation process[Scanned]

On 23 September I sent two submissions to the Cultural Commission by e-mail. Neither of these submissions, from the Cross Party Group on Scots in the Scottish Parliament and the Scots Language Resource Centre, are listed in the list of respondees in the Commission's interim report.

I am sending them again. Can you confirm that you have received them and that you will examine them as part of the consultation process?

Thank you.

Best wishes.

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**CROSS PARTY GROUP ON THE SCOTS LANGUAGE
SUBMISSION TO CULTURAL COMMISSION**

1. Education

- 1.1 There should be opportunities in all schools to learn about Scotland's cultural and linguistic heritage. All students should leave school understanding at least a little of each of the languages. There should be the opportunity for more advanced study where this is desired. Our languages are the keys with which the doors to our cultural heritage can be unlocked. Students should have the chance to learn something about the artistic treasures which each language contains. Each indigenous language should be treated with respect within the education system. Opportunities to study Scotland's languages should be increased at all levels.

2. Institutional infrastructure

- 2.1 The agencies which fund and support the arts should be required to produce language policies and strategies. Language is the basis for all cultural expression. Any society which is ambivalent about language or which gives additional status to one language rather than another disables its citizens and reduces their creative potential. All languages should be treated with respect and with parity of esteem. Each indigenous language should be funded appropriately and agencies should be established to promote the interests of each language group. This group is unsure if the Scottish Arts Council is best placed to fund Scots language agencies but this may be due to lack of funding rather than anything else. The Scottish Executive should develop a language strategy as soon as possible.

3. Delivery of services and access

- 3.1 It is important that the geographic and linguistic diversity of the Scots speaking community is recognised by those agencies delivering services to it. Many Scots speakers lack a sense of belonging to a language community. In the first instance, the aim of any properly funded Scots language agency must be to raise the consciousness of the language community itself. Scots must be seen to belong to the community of speakers and services should be developed which serve their needs rather than those of a research focussed academic community. Service delivery needs to engage particularly with those non-school attending members of the community who would like to learn more about the language in an adult-centred educational environment. Access must be encouraged through effective promotion of services and delivery at a local level in a non-threatening, non-academic environment.

4. Marketing and promotion

4.1 How should a language and the cultural artefacts associated with it be marketed? It is essential that the state and its agencies recognise in an official manner the multi-lingual nature of the community that they serve. A clearer understanding of this feature of Scotland's cultural identity will lead to greater respect for, and understanding of, our cultural heritage and improve access to its products. Multi-lingualism is something of which we should be proud. It enables our citizens and gives them access to a treasure chest of cultural riches. Multi-lingualism is a common feature of cultural life in many European countries – there is only one obvious example of a monolingual European state, Iceland, and even tiny Luxembourg has more than one official language.

4.2 Scots must be named in official documents and treated with respect by government and its agencies. A culture cannot be promoted when the language that contains it remains un-named and unrecognised by the government and its agencies. The attitude of, for example, visitscotland, towards the language must be challenged. That agency's almost fetishistic approach to the promotion of Scotland as an English-speaking holiday destination needs to be challenged. We believe that there is a market for visitors interested in experiencing a real living culture and that visitscotland should exploit the opportunities that this market offers when developing its strategies. We would like to see the development of a promotional campaign which emphasises Scotland's cultural distinctiveness and linguistic diversity.

5. Encouraging creativity

5.1 We know from history that the Scots language has enormous creative potential – the poetry of Robert Burns alone stands testament to that claim. Our languages and music are inextricably linked and the cadences of speech can be found echoed back at us in our traditional music. Our languages make us unique. Their potential as vehicles for creative expression remain untapped for as long as they are funded unequally and, in the case of Scots, subjected to routine denigration. The potential of the Scots language could be more readily realised if the language was given a place in our education system and if understanding of the language was improved through its increased visibility as a written form of communication. The Cultural Commission should take a lead in this process by giving proper recognition to the language. In its last statement on cultural policy, the Executive asserted that, in forming policy, it would give due regard to the Gaelic language and culture. It failed to make any mention of Scots despite the fact that, compared with Gaelic, it has a vast literature and is well known as a vehicle for cultural expression to most citizens of Scotland – just think of the Scots songs which so many of us love to sing. It is unacceptable that this essential component of our cultural life should continue to be ignored. If it is, we will have a cultural policy which amounts to nothing more than language assassination by stealth and cultural deracination by government edict.

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