



cnpduneideann@gmail.com
By email

14.10.2022

Shirley-Anne Somerville a charaid

Re: follow up to meeting on Thursday 6 October 2022

Many thanks for meeting with us on Thursday 6 October. We very much appreciated you taking the time to listen to our concerns, answer our queries and discuss the development of GME in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

We note our shared agreement that planning for a GME high school needs to move forward and at pace, and that we all wish to see the flourishing of GME in Edinburgh. We both recognise that the opportunity to work towards a GME high school is vital for Gaelic.

We understand that the Scottish Government has confirmed that there are no sites in their portfolio that could be used for the school. You noted that you would be happy to share further information and we would appreciate this.

We note that the Scottish Government's offer to support a City of Edinburgh Council feasibility study of sites is still available. We would suggest that this is highlighted to the Council so that they too can provide a comprehensive overview of sites to demonstrate which are available and which are not. This would allow GME families to see a detailed, transparent and good faith process of due diligence, which would help to build trust and move the discussions forward.

As clarified in the meeting, there are two strands of potential financial support available from the Scottish Government: £4m Gaelic capital fund which could support renovation projects and the larger capital investment programme which would be appropriate for a new build.

We also note, crucially, that in order for there to be commitment around financial support from Scottish Government, there first needs to be a proposal from the Council to discuss. We have highlighted repeatedly to the Council the need for a strategic approach, robust planning and parental engagement in the creation of a proposal that best meets the needs of GME pupils now and in the future. The educational benefit of establishing a new school should be central to the proposal, underpinned by ensuring conditions such as locations, staffing, teaching and immersion are in place.

We would appreciate any help you can give in progressing the project. For example, Scottish Government participation in a Short Life Working Group (distinct from the Gaelic Implementation Group) may be an option. We hope that the newly formed Education, Children and Families Committee provides a fresh opportunity to make headway in these pressing discussions and to find common ground that we can tread together.

Le dùrachdan

Comann nam Pàrant