

Languages Network Group Scotland (LANGS)
Minutes of meeting held on 09/06/2023

1. Welcome from Chair

- Sylvia Georgin, chairing, welcomed everyone.

2. Scottish Government Update

- Hélène Cornu, Scottish Government:
 - Ross Cumming has moved on, so Hélène is now the main SG contact.
 - Thanks to everyone who has responded to the annual 1+2 implementation survey. Had hoped to have started the analysis of it by now, but a few responses still awaited.

3. Education Scotland update

- Louise Glen, Education Scotland:
 - Curricular Support and the Inspectorate divisions of Education Scotland are separating. Jenny Gilruth, Cabinet Secretary for Education, has indicated that this is not a mere rearranging of deckchairs. Reorganisation should be complete by August 2024. LG now has responsibility for International Education.
 - There will be a review of the curriculum after the summer holidays. It is hoped that as many teachers as possible will contribute to it. What works and what doesn't? And how do we attract more language learners? Face to face meetings planned.
 - This year's Scotland's Languages Leadership Programme starts in a couple of weeks' time.
 - Reminder: there's a document in circulation, setting out the remits of Senior Education Officers at Education Scotland; what they can offer authorities, clusters, schools and departments. ES will come to you, if asked.
 - [View document.](#)

4. Keynote Speaker: Dr Thomas Bak, Edinburgh University

- A fascinating and inspiring keynote where Thomas Bak spoke about languages in a historical context and how that contextualises where we are today, whilst also contemplating AI developments and where that might lead us. He highlighted the importance of Scotland's language policy which promotes the learning of two additional languages and outlined why that triangulation of languages supports the learning and understanding of other languages.
- Comments from the floor included questions around how our curriculum design and teaching and learning approaches might alter to take account of this.
- Thomas shared his Twitter handle [@thbaketal](#) which people may like to follow and highlighted some interesting links:
 - <https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/doi/10.3828/ejlp.2017.10>
 - <https://www.meits.org/policy-papers/paper/healthy-linguistic-diet>

5. SCILT & CISS update:

- Fhiona MacKay:
 - SCILT's new [strategic plan](#) has been published. Due to the current financial climate, Scottish Government has had to reduce SCILT's core funding.

- The OU/SCILT partnership has had to come to an end; but this has been a highly successful venture; and many thanks to the OU (who will be continuing it on their own) for their excellent collaboration.
- *Espacios Increíbles* and *Le Foot et le Francophonie* will also no longer take place unless other funding can be found.
- The new [Professional Learning Menu](#) has been launched and was carefully crafted in consultation with the profession.
- LWS (Languages Week Scotland), on the theme of Languages and Sustainability will be from 29/01/2024 – 02/02/2024. Daily Challenges will be published ahead of LWS, to give teachers better time to prepare.
- CISS: hopefully five new Chinese Exchange Teachers are coming to Scotland; maybe more if they can be sourced. The summer 2024 immersion course for pupils will go ahead. Turing funding has been applied for; if this is successful, everything will be free; otherwise flights and visas will have to be paid for by pupils, though there will be some equity funding for those who wouldn't otherwise be able to go.
- If you don't have a Confucius Hub, the [Virtual Exchange Teachers](#) programme is still available to you: for the BGE this consists of a block of live streamed lessons direct from China, developed by SCILT and mapped to CfE.

6. Just a Minute updates

- Ed Welch, Aberdeen University/UCMLS:
 - Language mentoring pilot with Aberdeen University, SCILT and two Northern Alliance authorities, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Modern language university students working with schools in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire on core competences: encouraging pupils in S2 and S3, before they make senior phase language choices, to consider the power of languages and how they can influence future opportunities. Looking to expand this to other universities and roll out the scheme with them to other local authorities. Takes place online for equity and ease of access. Ed thanked all involved.
- Jennifer McHarrie, Bòrd na Gàidhlig:
 - Introduced as Principal Officer for Gaelic Education. There are two Education Managers and two DOs. Bòrd na Gàidhlig is more supporter than deliverer; awards/grants, and provides opportunities for immersion courses, especially for people transitioning to teach Gaelic Medium Education.
 - Encouraging that at the recent Education Awards, Health & Education Editor opened his speech in Gaelic.
 - We should be stressing the *disadvantages* of monolingualism, as much as the benefits of plurilingualism.
- Richard Tallaron, LFEE:
 - 100 teachers participated in immersion courses with LFEE last year. Erasmus funding largely over, now, though one or two small pockets of money left.
 - Just finishing a 2-year project on digital education and languages: 30 pupils from Glasgow were at the Cannes Film Festival (and also the Glasgow Film Festival), having learned how to put together an entire film festival (all aspects). This will all be put online to view.
 - <https://lfee.net/inspiring-pupils/>

- Power Language: authorities who bought it can go on using it in perpetuity; if you have still to do so, dossiers can still be bought at minimum cost.
 - <https://powerlanguage.school/resource-packs/>
- Sylvia Warnecke, Open University:
 - Noting the end of the OU/SCILT partnership; echoing and returning SCILT's appreciation.
 - Registration for all TELT modules: deadline for registration: 07/09/2023; course starts: 07/10/2023.
 - Impact study 2017-2022 will be published July 2023.
 - Pilot project with Banff Academy (on Scots) just completed. Evaluation completed; GTC recognition has been applied for.
 - [View slides.](#)
- Sylvia Davidson, French Film Festival UK:
 - Menu of French films (suitable for nursery–S6) can be streamed direct into schools; FOC; all come with Learning Packs. Teachers report an 80% positive impact on pupils. Programme goes live Nov/Dec; learning packs available from September. Sponsored by Institut Français. Last year's uptake doubled that of the previous year.
 - [View slides.](#)
- Caroline Cordier, Edinburgh College:
 - ML support offer: online H and AH workshops, funded by Franco Scottish Society. This year there have been 60 H and AH pupils, across 30 schools, across 15 authorities. One to one mock speaking exams offered (1 for H; 2 for AH); leading to increased confidence, pronunciation, core skills. Offer for next year still to be confirmed.
 - Free online courses for N5, H, AH in French, Spanish, German and Italian (though no N5 Italian at present); weekly group lessons twice/week; mostly Tues & Thurs. Pupils enrol with the College, but sit their exams at their school.
 - Noted there is a growing demand for German; also for N5 and H French.
 - [View slides.](#)
- Andrew McCulloch, Scottish Association for Language Teaching (SALT).
 - Andrew is PT MFL at Portobello HS and is the new Chair of SALT.
 - Committee is now set up to widen the offer to primary practitioners, whom they are keen to reach out to.
 - SALT is now free to join, though the annual conference still bears a charge, because of overheads.
 - SALT ran various successful events in May. Annual Conference will be on Saturday, 28/10/2023 at Strathclyde University; booking is now open. It will be hybrid. Can you offer a workshop? Let SALT know.
 - The SALT domain (website) has had to go; mostly operating now on Teams, Google Space and via Facebook and Twitter.
 - [View slides.](#)
- See also updates from
 - [Goethe-Institut Glasgow](#)
 - [Consejería de Educación](#)

7. Thanks:

- Sylvia, winding up today's meeting, remarked how she had been particularly struck by how the various things we are all doing, all slightly different, complement each other.

- And, of course, the networking available on a day such as this is always invaluable.
- She thanked the keynote speaker and everyone for attending, whether in person or online.
- Date of next meeting (online only) will be Thursday 9 November 2023.

8. **Meeting closed.**