



Irish Language Services Advisory Committee

Minutes - Meeting 8 – 30 June 2023

LOCATION: Foras na Gaeilge, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1

DATE: Friday, 30 June 2023

TIME: 10:00 – 12:45

PRESENT:

Name	Organisation	Role	Means
Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Chairperson	On site
Sinéad Coleman	Public Appointments Service	Member	On site
John Howlin	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform	Member	On site
Superintendent Seán Glynn	An Garda Síochána	Member	On site
Mags Campbell	Department of Education	Member	Via Remote Connection
Seosamh Ó Coinne (on behalf of Breandán Mac Craith)	Foras na Gaeilge	Member	On site
John Prendergast	Gaeltacht Communities	Member	On site
Mairéad Ní Ghabháin	Irish Speaking Communities Outside of the Gaeltacht	Member	Via Remote Connection
Eithne Fox	Health Service Executive	Member	On site
Orlaith Mannion (on behalf of Niamh Kenny)	Department of Social Protection	Member	On site
Professor Breandán Mac Suibhne	University of Galway	Director, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (Item 5.1 only)	On site (Item 5.1 only)
Dr. Kerron Ó Luain	University of Galway	Research Fellow Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (Item 5.1 only)	On site (Item 5.1 only)
Emily Maloney	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Secretary	Via Remote Connection

Síora Kent	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	(Item 5.1 only)	Via Remote Connection (Item 5.1 only)
Rónán Ó Ceallaigh	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	(Item 5.1 only)	Via Remote Connection (Item 5.1 only)
Sadhbh Ó Cinnseala	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Acting Principal Officer of the Unit	On site

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES:

- Jim Molloy, representative of the Local Government Management Agency, was unable to attend the meeting.

KEY DECISIONS MADE:

- The minutes of the previous meeting, on 28 April 2023, were agreed;
- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 8 September 2023, in the Foras na Gaeilge building 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1;
- It was agreed that the Department would design and distribute a template to be completed by members of the Committee in relation to section 9A of the Act;
- It was agreed that a copy of the full B&A report would be distributed to the members of the Committee;
- It was agreed that Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge ("COFG") would be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

FULL AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSED:

1. Welcome from the Chairperson:

- The meeting began with an opening from the Chairperson of the Committee, Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormac;
- A special welcome was given to Seosamh Ó Coinne and Orlaith Mannion, who were standing in at the meeting for Breandán Mac Craith and Niamh Kenny respectively;
- It was also mentioned that the Minister of State for the Gaeltacht would not be able to attend the meeting due to circumstances beyond his control.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

- The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on Friday, 28 April 2023 were agreed.

3. Matters Arising:

3.1. Section 9A of the amended Act

- The Department mentioned:

- that sections 9A-9E of the Act as amended come into effect on 31 October 2023, which will place additional duties on public bodies in relation to the use and recording of names, addresses and titles in the Irish language, official forms, logos, names and logos of newly established statutory bodies, and public facing services;
- to that end, that a template would be put together to gain an understanding of the information and communications systems currently used by public bodies, in relation to the implementation of section 9A. (3) of the Act;
- that the members would be asked to consult their colleagues to identify those systems, and complete the template accordingly;
- that the individual obstacles that will exist through this method would be identified.
- It was agreed that the Department would design and distribute a template to be completed by the members of the Committee.

3.2. Results of the Survey – Awareness Campaign

- The Department went through the results of the survey it commissioned on the attitudes of young people towards careers with Irish and in the public sector;
- It was agreed that a copy of the full report would be distributed to the members of the Committee after the meeting.

3.3. Communications Roles with Irish

- The Department stated that a communications internship scheme through Irish was being considered, and that the relevant unit had prepared a draft business case in this respect, but when several various groups were consulted, it was clear that there were some issues in relation to the proposal;
- As a result, the concept of holding a separate competition for communications roles in Irish at Higher Executive Officer level was recently discussed with the Public Appointments Service;
- That the running of a competition in the autumn was being examined – in tandem with the launch of the awareness campaign, if possible;
- It was mentioned that the concept of creating structured internships and work placements for third level students is very worthwhile, and that this would be further explored as well.

3.4. Health Service Executive - Implementation of the Act

- It was stated that the HSE had recently made a presentation to the Department regarding the measures that are underway in that organisation on the implementation of the Act, and that it was clear that a lot of work was going on in the organisation, particularly as it relates to the provision of bilingual content and publishing notices in the Irish language.

3.5. Information Seminars

- It was stated that the Department, in conjunction with Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga, held information seminars on 28 June 2023, to remind people of the additional duties that have arisen and will arise from the implementation of the Act;
- That the provisions that have come into effect since the Act was enacted, together with the provisions that will come into effect on 31 October 2023, had been focused on;
- That over 600 State employees attended these information seminars.

3.6. Irish Language Network

- That the Department had a meeting with a specific organisation regarding the establishment of an Irish language network, in order to provide speaking opportunities for those within the system;
- That a business case had been submitted to the Department and is currently being considered.

3.7. Higher Options Event

- That the unit had a meeting with the Irish Times in relation to the Higher Options event, which will be held in the RDS on 20, 21 and 22 September 2023;
- That the setting up of a "mini-Gaeltacht" at the event this year was discussed, which would be dedicated to careers with Irish and third level courses through Irish;
- That it would provide students with a space to speak Irish, order food in Irish and socialise with other students through the medium of Irish.

4. Development of the National Plan:

4.1. Presentation by University of Galway – Research Work Programme

- Breandán Mac Suibhne introduced Dr. Kerron Ó Luain, Research Fellow employed by the University to lead the research for the National Plan, to the Committee. He also mentioned the difficulties of recruiting suitably qualified personnel to undertake such research;
- Dr. Ó Luain presented the work plan for the research to the Committee, and that work plan was very well received.

5. Commentary regarding the Committee in the Media:

- It was stated that there were various relevant articles in the media since the last meeting, as follows:
 - An article dated 27 April 2023 on the [Irish Times](#), regarding school children from five Gaelscoileanna in the Dublin area requesting that an all-Irish secondary school or Gaelcholáiste be established to accommodate their transition from primary education in the Dublin 2, 4, 6 and 8 areas;
 - An article dated 9 May 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](#) regarding Government's new strategy in relation to improving public services which was published by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, in which the Irish language was not mentioned;

- An item on [Liveline](#) on 29 May 2023, regarding the number of Government advertisements in the Irish language only on radio and television, and the 20% recruitment target;
- An article dated 5 June 2023 on the [Irish Times](#) publicising the Higher Options event referred to under item 3.7;
- An article dated 14 June 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](#) regarding further Irish language courses being discussed with educational institutions;
- An article dated 20 June 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](#) regarding the need to establish a research institute for the Irish language to combat the reduction in the number of speakers;
- An article dated 29 June 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](#) regarding the largescale national awareness campaign that is planned for this autumn onwards to inform the public about the duties and opportunities that exist with the Irish language under the Act.

6. Date of Next Meeting:

- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 8 September 2023, in the Foras na Gaeilge building 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.

7. Any Other Business:

- It was mentioned that a date must be set with Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge in order to present their recommendations/opinions to the Committee;
- It was agreed that Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge would be invited to attend the next meeting, on 8 September 2023.

Emily Maloney.

Secretary

29 September 2023

Date of Approval