



Irish Language Services Advisory Committee

Minutes - Meeting 10 – 27 October 2023

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

DATE: Friday, 27 October 2023

TIME: 10:00 – 13:00

PRESENT:

Name	Organisation	Role	Means
Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Chairperson	On Site
Sandra Cairns (on behalf of 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	Via Remote Connection
Eithne Fox	Health Service Executive	Member	Via Remote Connection
Breandán Mac Craith	Foras na Gaeilge	Member	On Site
John Prendergast	Gaeltacht Communities	Member	Via Remote Connection
Mairéad Ní Ghabháin	Irish Speaking Communities Outside of the Gaeltacht	Member	Via Remote Connection
Niamh Kenny	Department of Social Protection	Member	On Site
Mags Campbell	Department of Education	Member	Via Remote Connection
Edel Mhic Amhlaidh (on behalf of Jim Molloy)	Local Government Management Agency	Member	On Site
Emily Maloney	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Secretary	On Site
Sadhbh Ó Cinnseala	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Acting Principal Officer of the Unit	On Site
Dr. Kerron Ó Luain	University of Galway	Research Fellow Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge	On Site (items 4 & 5 only)

KEY DECISIONS MADE:

- The minutes of the previous meeting, on 29 September 2023, were agreed;
- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 24 November 2023, in the Foras na Gaeilge building, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1;
- It was agreed that the Department would prepare terms of reference for the technical working group that would be established pursuant to section 9A of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act, 2021.

FULL AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSED:

1. Welcome from the Chairperson:

- The meeting began with an opening statement from the Chairperson of the Committee, Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic;
- A special welcome was given to Edel Mhic Amhlaidh who was standing in for Jim Molloy, and Sandra Cairns who was standing in for Sinéad Coleman at the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

- The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on Friday, 29 September 2023 were agreed.

3. Matters Arising:

3.1. Section 9A of the Amended Act:

- It was stated that the concept of establishing a technical working group pursuant to this provision was discussed within the Department and that it was favourable to such;
- The options regarding relevant bodies that would be represented on the working group were discussed;
- It was agreed that the Department would draft terms of reference for the technical working group for approval at the next meeting of the Committee.

3.2. Communications Roles with Irish:

- It was mentioned that the final details of the information booklet are being discussed between the business unit and the Department of the Taoiseach;
- That the wording of the Act is incorporated in that booklet, which may be useful to the Public Appointments Service (PAS) for future competitions;
- That the draft business case and the information booklet are to be approved by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (D/PENDR) after that;
- That it is hoped that the competition will be held before year-end, but that this must be discussed with the PAS and D/PENDR.

3.3. Irish Language Network:

- It was mentioned that the business case for the proposal has been submitted to the Minister of State for approval;
- That the network is expected to be launched in Quarter 1 2024.

3.4. Meeting with Maynooth University:

- It was mentioned that there was a meeting between two business units in the Department with those of Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) in Maynooth University on 25 October 2023 to discuss the possibilities of increasing the TEG capacity;
- The voluntary scheme for teachers was mentioned, as well as the additional €1m received under the allocation for the Irish language and the Gaeltacht for that voluntary scheme;
- TEG systems and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages were discussed afterwards, and it was recommended that mandatory language awareness and rights modules be developed for public servants.

3.5. Meeting with an Garda Síochána:

- It was mentioned that there was a meeting between the business unit and representatives of An Garda Síochána on 23 October 2023 regarding the measures that are underway in that organisation in regard to the implementation of the Act, mainly as it relates to recruitment;
- Section 9A-9E of the Act was also discussed, in the context of the systems in place in the organisation;
- The good news that ten people with competence in the Irish language being recruited recently with the ability to provide a service through the medium of Irish was also mentioned;
- The challenges relating to new Garda Síochána recruits were discussed in the context that it is not policy for new recruits to be based in their native area.

4. Presentation – University of Galway Research Team:

- The Chairperson welcomed Dr. Kerron Ó Luain, Research Fellow and Head of the research team for the National Plan for Irish-medium Public Services, who was in attendance to present the current status of the research to the Committee;
- Following the presentation, there was a questions and answers session;
- The Committee praised the work and the members thanked Dr. Ó Luain for the update.

5. Development of the National Plan:

- It was mentioned that, following a recruitment process held by the University of Galway in September for a second Research Fellow, the successful candidate had been informed, and that the appropriate processes were in place before they commence the role in mid-November 2023.

6. 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:
 - Various Articles in relation to Budget 2024 and the allocation for the Irish language and the Gaeltacht:
 - Dated 11 October 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) - which included an additional €0.5m for the full successful implementation of the language legislation;
 - Dated 12 October on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie).
 - An article dated 13 October 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding the research carried out by B&A for the Department on the attitudes of young people towards careers with Irish and careers in the public sector as a whole.
 - An article dated 17 October 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) in relation to a [previous article](#), and clarifying that the research being carried out for the National Plan for Irish-medium Public Services would be published in its entirety.
 - An article dated 25 October 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding a review to be undertaken on the Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative so as to focus on the recruitment needs in Ireland together with those in the European Union, and the awareness campaign that will be rolled out in the coming period.
 - An article dated 25 October 2023 on [Seachtain](https://www.seachtain.ie) of the Irish Independent regarding various careers with Irish, and the recruitment target of the legislation.
 - Interviews dated 25 October 2023 on TG4's [7 Lá](#) with the Director of Irish and the Chairperson of the Committee, and another with John Prendergast, representative of Irish language communities within the Gaeltacht, in relation to the survey commissioned by the Department, which will form the baseline for the awareness campaign.
 - An article dated 25 October 2023 on [Mayolive.ie](https://www.mayolive.ie) regarding ten individuals with Irish language competence who were recruited to An Garda Síochána through the dedicated Irish language stream.
 - An article dated 26 October 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding a parliamentary question that was transferred from Minister Harris to the Minister of State for the Gaeltacht in relation to the recruitment target of the legislation.

7. Date of Next Meeting:

- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 24 November 2023, in the Foras na Gaeilge building, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.

8. Any Other Business:

- It was mentioned that an invitation was received from Comhchoiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus Phobal Labhartha na Gaeilge to come before it on 22

November 2023, to discuss the current work of the Advisory Committee in relation to its progress.

Emily Muloney.

Secretary

24 November 2023

Date of Approval