

**EFFICIENCY WORKING GROUP**  
**COMMEDAGH ROOM, DOWNSHIRE CIVIC CENTRE**  
**MONDAY 6 JUNE 2016**

**In attendance:(Councillors)**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor M Carr
Councillor P Clarke	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor G Craig
Councillor C Enright	Councillor H Harvey
Councillor J Macauley	Councillor G Stokes
Councillor J Tinnelly	

**In attendance**

**(Officials)**

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive  
 Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
 Mr E Curtis, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance  
 Mr C O'Rourke, Director of Regulatory and Technical  
 Mrs M Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism  
 Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities  
 Ms C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Human Resources)  
 Mr J McBride, Change Manager  
 Mr K Montgomery, Finance  
 Mrs C Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

**1. Introduction and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors P Brown, D Curran, T Hearty and R Mulgrew.

In the absence of the Chair of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee, Councillor P Brown, Councillor Stokes proposed Councillor G Craig would Chair the meeting. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

**Agreed:**            **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Harvey, that in the absence of the Chair, Councillor P Brown, Councillor G Craig would Chair the meeting.**

**2. Comparative Analysis of the Staffing Levels between the new Council and Predecessor Structures**

**Read:**            Report by Ms C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Human Resources) (circulated at meeting)

Ms Miskelly advised Members that there were 932 employees who had transferred from the legacy councils of Newry & Mourne and Downpatrick, to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. She said there were 5 employees who had transferred from Group Environmental Health, Armagh Southern Environmental Health and Eastern Group Environmental Health. 44 staff had transferred over from Planning Service and there had been one new start on 1 April 2015. She said the number of staff as of 30 April 2016 was 957.

Questions from Members were answered as follows:

- There had been no additional staff yet as a consequence of community planning, although it had been agreed as part of the rates estimates process 2015/16 that additional staff may be required.
- Retention of jobs within Local Government was a priority, which meant going through the process of the 6 stages of recruitment.
- The figure of 957 staff included the additional planning staff.
- 932 staff had transferred from the 2 legacy councils.
- The RPA voluntary severance scheme would run up to 2019.
- Restructuring was a lengthy process involving defining new roles, job matching, internal competition, external advertisement, etc.
- A target regarding reduction of headcount had not been set. There were some staff still interested in voluntary severance, although a business case is required for all RPA redundancies.
- The departments in the new council differed to those in the old councils in terms of responsibilities and duties, and it was therefore difficult to directly compare the two.

Ms Miskelly undertook to bring back information on the number of staff who had left council employment.

Councillor Enright requested figures on staffing numbers for each legacy council by department and for each department in the new council.

In response to Councillor Enright's query regarding 'back office' departments such as HR, payroll, IT and finance, Mrs Miskelly undertook to bring back comparison information on staffing numbers in departments as far as possible.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed that the information would be brought back on the following:**

- **The number of staff who had left council employment.**
- **Staffing numbers for each legacy council by department.**
- **Staffing numbers for the new council by department.**

### **3. Overview of Council Expenditure**

**Read:** Report by Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 6 June 2016, regarding the Council Expenditure (circulated previously)

Mrs Carville advised that figures available were for period 11 as the year-end figures were currently being finalised. She referred to Drumanakelly and Aughnagunn landfill sites, saying there was a requirement to discount any year end provisions and up until now, the Northern Ireland Audit Office had said council must use the discounted rate provided by the Treasury. If this was the case, it could impact upon reserves by £3m. Mrs Carville went on to say that all 11 councils in Northern Ireland would be affected by this and had been working together and had engaged treasury advisors who had recommended councils would use a longer term borrowing rate, which would increase reserves by £230k. She said CIPFA had given their backing to this from an accountancy perspective and the opinion of the Northern Ireland Audit Office had been sought.

In response to a query from Councillor Enright regarding income from the wind turbine and gas, Mr Montgomery explained that he was in the process of working out the gas receipts on a cash flow basis over the next 20 years.

Councillor Craig suggested the wind turbine and gas production could be dealt with through the relevant committees.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed that the wind turbine and gas production could be dealt with through the relevant committees.**

### **4. Recommended Rates Estimates Process 2017/18**

**Read:** Report by Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 6 June 2016, regarding the Proposed Improvements to the Estimates Process (circulated previously)

Mr Montgomery explained the proposed improvements to the estimates process to the Members, referring to the Medium Term Financial Plan, saying the basic requirement was for a capital programme to be developed over that period. He advised that the directorates programme needed to be costed out over the next 3-4 years as to costs, income and efficiencies at directorate level, from which the prudential code indicators would be worked out to give an affordable borrowing limit. This would provide Members with information on the total capital available to spend, what constituted the total affordable borrowing and then a rate devised which would be adjusted annually by inflation or changes to accounting. This would allow a more pragmatic and costed view of what the revenue and capital programmes would be over a longer period of time.

Councillor Craig said the medium term plan was the course of action that Members had previously requested.

**Noted:**        **The report of the Recommended Rates Estimates Process 2017/18 was noted.**

## **5. Recommended Efficiency Initiatives for 2016/17**

**Read:**        Report by Mr J McBride, Change Manager, dated 26 May 2016, regarding Recommended Efficiency Initiatives for 2016/17

Mr McBride advised the following efficiency initiatives had now been worked up for recommendation:

- Advertising and Communications
- Agency Workers
- Budget Centralisation
- Hospitality and Catering
- Insurance
- Casual Overtime
- Voluntary Recruitment Controls
- Travel Expenses

In response to Councillor Enright's comments, Councillor Craig advised there had to be political agreement to proceed with the efficiency initiatives. He said it was now up to Directors and Members to work collectively together to look at additional areas to find further savings across the organisation.

Councillor Carr welcomed the report.

**Agreed:**        **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Carr, seconded by Councillor Harvey, that the following efficiency initiatives for 2016/17 be approved:**

- **Advertising and Communications**
- **Agency Workers**
- **Budget Centralisation**
- **Hospitality and Catering**
- **Insurance**
- **Casual Overtime**
- **Voluntary Recruitment Controls**
- **Travel Expenses**

## **6. Update on the Agency Worker Tender**

Ms Miskelly provided a verbal update on the Agency Worker Tender, saying following agreement at Strategy, Policy and Resources



Committee in February 2016, she had been working with the Procurement Manager to explore how best to access agency labour at least risk and least cost to Council and she was exploring the procurement of agency workers through a national framework. Ms Miskelly advised that she would bring further information to the Strategy, Policy and Resources meeting regarding this.

Councillors welcomed the report, Councillor Carr saying casual overtime and agency workers should be looked at in a different light.

In response to Councillor Craig's query, Ms Miskelly advised that sickness absence, including incident numbers and reasons would be discussed at the forthcoming SMT meeting to be held on 7 June 2016 as well as at Corporate Health and Safety meetings, where stress in the workplace was discussed. Ms Miskelly advised that there was no evidence to suggest a correlation between the merger and sickness absence.

## **7. Update Progress to date of Acuity IT**

Mrs Carville said Acuity IT had undertaken a presentation to Council in May to advise of their scope of work. She said they were due to deliver their findings at the end of June, although they were 1 week behind target. She advised that SMT would consider the findings and bring them back to the Efficiency Working Group and Council.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Mr McBride advised that the next meeting was due to be held in July, but that no committee meetings were being held that month, so he would be sourcing another date.

Councillor Craig encouraged Members to think about any further areas which should be covered by the group.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 4.22pm.

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16/06/2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Report on Irish Language Community Audit
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Regina Mackin Assistant Director: Corporate Planning and Policy
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Ursula Mhic An tSaoir Irish Language Development Officer

<b>Decisions required:</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background:</b>
1.1	To assist Newry, Mourne and Down District Council meet the evidenced needs of the Irish Language Community, Council commissioned Quarter Consultancy to undertake an audit of existing Irish Medium services to help inform its approach to best meeting its obligations in relation to the Irish language. The Audit will inform the development of an Irish Language Strategy for the period 2016-2019, taking account of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the Irish Language and the financial restraints of the current economic climate.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues:</b>
2.1	<p>Council commissioned an audit of the existing and emerging Irish Language evidenced needs within the Council. In order to ensure a holistic approach to this analysis, the review team considered the perspectives of the main constituent groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish Language Community within the area</li> <li>• Key Stakeholders</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Management</li> <li>• Elected members</li> </ul> <p>To maximise the social, economic and physical regeneration potential of the NMDDC Irish language community the review team identified a range of recommendations for consideration by the Council.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations:</b>
3.1	<p><b>Recommendation One:</b> The existing commitment to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as evidenced by the Bilingualism Policy should continue and be developed.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Two:</b> As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme 2013-2016 designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council. In addition given the Council's location, consideration should be given to developing a European funding application to explore best practice and shared learning in relation to communities whose first language is a minority language.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Three:</b> Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish</p>

Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to use the information provided by the audit to target limited resources based on the community background and language capacity of the different wards. This approach will provide a framework in which the effectiveness of interventions can be more easily measured.

**Recommendation Four:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to enable local communities to develop their capacity to explore their Early Years language provision.

**Recommendation Five:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to explore how best the Council can continue to develop its existing support for the provision of Council wide competitions and schools programmes designed to explore the significance of culture, language and social history in developing civic pride and a sense of place in the Council area.

**Recommendation Six:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to encourage attendance at the annual Irish Language Careers convention held by Forbairt Feirste for post-primary pupils studying Irish to deepen their understanding of the range and breadth of job and career opportunities available through the medium of Irish.

**Recommendation Seven:** Consideration should be given to the Council ensuring that the Irish Language Unit has access to the necessary technical support to provide a framework for dissemination of information around the logistics (e.g. time, location, level, and cost) of classes available in the area.

**Recommendation Eight:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit liaising with the Education Authority to ensure that they are aware of all the existing and emerging youth services in the area. This will ensure effective signposting to support the development and growth of quality Irish youth service provision in the Council area.

**Recommendation Nine:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit providing a framework for the development of Irish Language community led networks which would bring together groups interested in developing and sustaining a community development approach to supporting existing and emerging Irish Language communities in the Council area. The additional benefits of this approach ensure that:

- It would be peer led therefore ensuring development of the sector's capacity
- It is a cost effective mechanism for other departments within the Council to engage with a sizable constituent group
- It facilitates dissemination of relevant information with a particular emphasis on training and funding opportunities
- It would develop connectivity across the Council area.

It should be noted that any community led network should be cognizant of the

	<p>Council’s District Electoral Area Fora.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Ten:</b> Consideration should be given to the Council’s Irish Language Unit working with the GAA’s county Irish Language committees to best support their volunteer network of language and cultural officers to maximise the impact of their language support within the Council area.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Eleven:</b> Consideration should be given to the Council’s Irish Language Unit working with the relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to maximising the potential availability of external funding to collectives able to demonstrate a collaborative multi-agency partnerships approach to the promotion and delivery of cultural and heritage events.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Twelve:</b> Consideration should be given to developing the role of the Council as an enabler to support, connect and encourage existing groups. Voluntary and statutory organisations should be facilitated to work collaboratively to maximise the impact of their collective human, fiscal and intellectual resources.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Thirteen:</b> A three year Irish Language Strategy is developed and appropriately resourced to ensure the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the development of the Irish Language community throughout the District.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Fourteen:</b> Consideration should be given to the Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with the Human Resources team in the Council to develop an Irish Language developmental opportunity for staff who wish to contribute to the Council’s Bilingualism Policy commitments.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Fifteen:</b> The existing Irish Language development posts within the Council should be resourced accordingly to enable the provision of a quality developmental support service to both internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Sixteen:</b> Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a full Social Return on Investment analysis in respect of language development in the area to capture the economic benefit of the Council’s investment in the promotion of the Irish Language.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	<p>Many of the recommendations in this report build on the work that is currently carried out by the Irish Language Unit (ILU). However additional resources will be required to implement the Irish Language Strategy when it is developed. Many of the recommendations cannot be undertaken within the current structures and budgets, therefore additional financial and human resources will be required to deliver on the strategy. These resources will be detailed in the Strategy when developed and presented to Council.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	<p>The implementation of this strategy will be delivered taking account of the Council’s duty to promote a good or harmonious working environment, affirmative actions and Section 75 statutory requirements.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: The Irish Language Audit Report 2016

## **AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA**

Joanne Kinnear  
QUARTER CONSULTANCY

**AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA**

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## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

### Executive Summary

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. With a population of 175,403 and a coastline of approximately 100 miles, the Council is the third largest Council area in Northern Ireland.

Within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Area there is a significant Irish Language Community. People with knowledge of Irish in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area constitute 16.05% of the overall Council population (as recorded in the 2011 Census). This compares favourably with the regional figure of 10.65% recorded in the same 2011 Census.

To assist the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council best meet the evidenced needs of the Irish Language Community, the Council has commissioned Quarter Consultancy to undertake an audit of existing Irish Medium services to help inform its approach to best meeting its obligations in relation to the Irish Language.

As part of the commission the review team undertook an audit of the existing and emerging Irish Language evidenced needs within the Council. In order to ensure a holistic approach to this analysis, the review team considered the perspectives of the main constituent groups:

- ❖ Irish Language Community within the area
- ❖ Key Stakeholders
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Management
- ❖ Elected members

To gather this information we undertook:

- ❖ Desk research
- ❖ Face to face meetings
- ❖ Phone interviews
- ❖ Staff survey

During the consultation and engagement process the audit team identified that an extensive range of services, ranging from Early Years provision through to Social Inclusion projects designed to meet the needs of older isolated members of the community, were being delivered through the medium of Irish across the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

Our initial analysis indicates that the social and economic impact of the Irish Language community in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area is extensive with a conservative analysis indicating that the sector employs 110 people, engages 468 volunteers and provides developmental support to the 27,531 residents who have knowledge of Irish in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.



**AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA**

In order to maximise the social, economic, and physical regeneration potential of this community the review team have identified the following recommendations for consideration by the Council:

- ❖ **Recommendation One:** The existing commitment to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as evidenced by the Bilingualism Policy should continue and be developed. (Section 2.3)
  
- ❖ **Recommendation two:** As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme 2013-2016 designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council.

In addition given the Council's location, consideration should be given to developing a European funding application to explore best practice and shared learning in relation to communities whose first language is a minority language. (Section 2.3)

- ❖ **Recommendation three:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to use the information provided by the audit to target limited resources based on the community background and language capacity of the different wards. This approach will provide a framework in which the effectiveness of interventions can be more easily measured. (Section 3.1)
  
- ❖ **Recommendation four:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to enable local communities to develop their capacity to explore their Early Years language provision. (Section 4.2)
  
- ❖ **Recommendation five:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to explore how best the Council can continue to develop its existing support for the provision of Council wide competitions and schools programmes designed to explore the significance of culture, language and social history in developing civic pride and a sense of place in the Council area. (Section 4.3)
  
- ❖ **Recommendation six:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to encourage attendance at the annual Irish Language Careers convention held by Forbairt Feirste for post-primary pupils studying Irish to deepen their understanding of the range and breadth of job and career opportunities available through the medium of Irish. (Section 4.5)



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- ❖ **Recommendation seven:** Consideration should be given to the Council ensuring that the Irish Language Unit has access to the necessary technical support to provide a framework for dissemination of information around the logistics (e.g. time, location, level, and cost) of classes available in the area.(Section 4.6)
- ❖ **Recommendation eight:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit liaising with the Education Authority to ensure that they are aware of all the existing and emerging youth services in the area. This will ensure effective signposting to support the development and growth of quality Irish youth service provision in the Council area. (Section 4.8)
- ❖ **Recommendation nine :** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit providing a framework for the development of Irish Language community led networks which would bring together groups interested in developing and sustaining a community development approach to supporting existing and emerging Irish Language communities in the Council area. The additional benefits of this approach ensure that:
  - ❖ It would be peer led therefore ensuring development of the sector's capacity
  - ❖ It is a cost effective mechanism for other departments within the Council to engage with a sizable constituent group
  - ❖ It facilitates dissemination of relevant information with a particular emphasis on training and funding opportunities
  - ❖ It would develop connectivity across the Council area.

It should be noted that any community led network should be cognizant of the Council's District Electoral Area Fora. (Section 4.9)
- ❖ **Recommendation ten:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the GAA's county Irish Language committees to best support their volunteer network of language and cultural officers to maximise the impact of their language support within the Council area. (Section 4.10)
- ❖ **Recommendation eleven:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to maximising the potential availability of external funding to collectives able to demonstrate a collaborative multi-agency partnerships approach to the promotion and delivery of cultural and heritage events. (Section 4.11)
- ❖ **Recommendation twelve:** Consideration should be given to developing the role of the Council as an enabler to support, connect and encourage existing groups. Voluntary and statutory organisations should be facilitated to work collaboratively to maximise the impact of their collective human, fiscal and intellectual resources. (Section 5.4)
- ❖ **Recommendation thirteen:** A three year Irish Language Strategy is developed and appropriately resourced to ensure the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the development of the Irish Language community throughout the District. (Section 5.4 )

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- ❖ **Recommendation fourteen:** Consideration should be given to the Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with the Human Resources team in the Council to develop an Irish Language developmental opportunity for staff who wish to contribute to the Council's Bilingualism Policy commitments. (Section 5.4)
- ❖ **Recommendation fifteen:** The existing Irish Language development posts within the Council should be resourced accordingly to enable the provision of a quality developmental support service to both internal and external stakeholders. (Section 5.4)
- ❖ **Recommendation sixteen:** Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a full Social Return on Investment analysis in respect of language development in the area to capture the economic benefit of the Council's investment in the promotion of the Irish Language. (Section 7.4)



**AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA**

**Section 1: Introduction and Background**

**1.1 Introduction**

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. With a population of 175,403 and a coastline of approximately 100 miles, the Council is the third largest Council area in Northern Ireland.

Although primarily made up of the former Newry, Mourne and Down District Council areas, the new Council also includes the electoral ward of Ballyward which was transferred from the former Banbridge District Council area.



The Council area is home to a population of just over 175,000 people living in a mix of urban and rural communities who are served by 41 Councillors elected in the 7 District Electoral Areas (DEAs) of:

- ❖ Crotlieve
- ❖ Downpatrick
- ❖ Mourne
- ❖ Newry
- ❖ Rowallane
- ❖ Slieve Croob
- ❖ Slieve Gullion

## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

### 1.2 Background

Within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Area there is a significant Irish Language Community. People with knowledge of Irish in the Newry, Mourne and Down Council area constitute 16.05% of the overall Council population (as recorded in the 2011 Census). This compares favourably with the regional figure of 10.65% recorded in the same 2011 Census.

This means that in 2011 of the 184,898 people who have some ability of the Irish Language within the region, 27,531 of them lived in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

There are currently 86 schools registered with the Department of Education as providing pre-school, primary and post-primary education for some 5,000 children through the medium of Irish. Twelve of these providers are based in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

The Irish Language is protected in domestic legislation by the Education Order 2000 and by international instruments including the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. These international instruments are binding upon the ratifying States, and have implications for all Stormont Departments and associated bodies, including district Councils.

To assist the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council best meet the evidenced needs of the Irish Language Community, the Council has commissioned Quarter Consultancy to undertake an audit of existing Irish Medium services.

As part of the commission the review team undertook an audit of the existing and emerging Irish Language evidenced needs within the Council area. In order to ensure a holistic approach to this analysis, the review team considered the perspectives of the main constituent groups:

- ❖ Irish Language Community
- ❖ Key Stakeholders
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Management
- ❖ Elected members

In order to gather this information we undertook:

- ❖ Desk research
- ❖ Face to face meetings
- ❖ Phone interviews
- ❖ Staff survey



## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

### Section 2: Strategic Context

#### 2.1 Introduction

There are a number of European and Regional Policies which must also be taken into consideration if Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is to avoid breaching their obligations. The most relevant strategies considered by the audit team were;

- ❖ The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (2001)
- ❖ The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)
- ❖ Human Rights Act (1988)
- ❖ The Good Friday Agreement (1998)
- ❖ The St Andrews Agreement (2006)
- ❖ DCAL: Strategy to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language (2015-2035)
- ❖ DCAL Líofa 2015 (2011)
- ❖ Community Planning
- ❖ OFMDFM - T:BUC
- ❖ Peace IV
- ❖ Conradh na Gaeilge Strategic Plan
- ❖ Foras na Gaeilge Strategic Plan

The needs of the Irish Language communities in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area were considered in relation to a range of priorities identified in the policies and plans to provide a strategic context to this document.

The detailed analysis contained in Appendix 2 identified a number of potential areas of synergy which should be reflected in any new Strategic Plans developed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council with the necessary reassurance that provision of a progressive developmental support framework to support their Irish Language Community is in keeping with both the regional and European policy landscape.

#### 2.2 Local Strategic Context

As part of the restructuring following the Review of Public Administration, which saw the existing twenty six Councils amalgamate to form eleven new Super Councils, the local policy landscape was reviewed and each Council began the process of developing new, fit for purpose strategic and governing documents. The most relevant of those considered by the audit team were:

- ❖ Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan (2015-2019)
- ❖ The Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate Business Plan (2015-2016)
- ❖ Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Irish Language Strategy 2015/16

## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

### 2.2.1 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan (2015-2019)

In order to guide the activities planned, how resources are allocated within the Council between 2015 and 2019, and to provide a monitoring and evaluation tool to test the Council's performance a new Corporate Plan was developed

The Vision of the Council as detailed in the corporate plan is for them to:

***“Create opportunities for local people and local communities to thrive by supporting sustainable economic growth over time and helping them to lead fulfilling lifestyles...That our District is, or grows to be a place:***

- ❖ *that is attractive to visit and do business in*
- ❖ *where people and communities can unlock their enterprising spirit as well as play their part in contributing to its social and economic development*
- ❖ *that facilitates and encourages healthy lifestyles*
- ❖ *that offers a good quality of life for young and old, especially for those groups who may need more support than others*
- ❖ *where our communities are cohesive, actively engaged in civic life and where people live safe from crime and disorder*
- ❖ *with a protected natural environment that can be enjoyed today, but in a way that is also sustained for future generations*
- ❖ *that offers access to a range of modern, affordable services that make use of new technologies and are delivered to recognised quality standards*
- ❖ *where we work collaboratively and in partnership with a range of stakeholder and partner organisations to secure better outcomes for all*
- ❖ *that is proud of its Council, what it stands for and what it represents.”*

The Mission of the new Council as detailed in the corporate plan is:

***“to lead and serve a District that is prosperous, healthy and sustainable.”***

The Mission of the new Council as detailed in the corporate plan is for the Council to be:

- ❖ citizen focused
- ❖ accountable
- ❖ collaborative
- ❖ sustainable
- ❖ fair

In order to achieve its Vision and Mission the following eight strategic priorities were identified:

- ❖ becoming one of the premier tourism destinations on the island of Ireland
- ❖ attracting investment and support the creation of new jobs



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- ❖ supporting improved health and wellbeing outcomes
- ❖ protecting our natural and built environment
- ❖ leading the regeneration of our urban and rural areas
- ❖ advocating on residents' behalf
- ❖ empowering and improving the capacity of local communities
- ❖ transforming and modernising the Council, providing accessible, as well as value for money services

To ensure the delivery of these strategic priorities the work of the Council was divided into five directorates each of which will be both individually and collectively responsible for the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan. The five Council departments responsible for plan delivery are:

- ❖ Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism (ERT)
- ❖ Active and Healthy Communities (AHC)
- ❖ Regulatory and Technical Services (RTS)
- ❖ Corporate Services (CS)
- ❖ Strategic Planning and Performance (SPP)

### 2.2.2 The Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate Business Plan (2015-2016)

Within this new structure the Irish Language Unit is situated within the Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate which incorporates:

- ❖ Corporate Policy and Planning
- ❖ Community Planning
- ❖ Transformation, Innovation and Performance
- ❖ Estates and Capital Projects
- ❖ Strategic Programmes

### 2.2.3 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Bilingualism Policy

The Council have committed to continuing the best practice of Newry and Mourne District Council who led the way in terms of recognising their responsibilities under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which requires parties to base their policies on:

- ❖ The need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them; and
- ❖ The need to facilitate and encourage the use of regional or minority languages in speech and writing in private and public life

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The practical provisions of the European Charter are mainly contained in:

- ❖ Part II which contains general objectives and principles by which public authorities are required to base their policies, legislation and practice
- ❖ Part III which contains specific undertakings for measures relating to public authorities along with education, media, culture, economic and social life.

The languages nominated by the British Government in respect of both Parts II and III of the Charter are:

- ❖ Irish
- ❖ Scottish Gaelic
- ❖ Welsh

Article 12 of the Charter applies to cultural activities and facilities. To the extent Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is competent, have power or play a role, they should:

- ❖ Encourage initiatives specific to Irish and foster access to works produced in Irish
- ❖ Ensure that bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities within the Council make appropriate allowance for incorporating knowledge and use of Irish in their activities
- ❖ Promote measures to ensure that the bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities within the Council make appropriate allowance for incorporating knowledge or use of Irish in their activities
- ❖ Promote measures to ensure that the bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities have at their disposal staff who have a full command of the Irish language, as well as of the languages of the rest of the population
- ❖ Encourage and facilitate direct participation by the Irish language community in the design, development and implementation of facilities and the planning of cultural activities

In order to comply with the Charter the Council has developed a Bilingualism Policy to facilitate and encourage the promotion of both the Irish Language and the English Language in the Council area.

### 2.2.4 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Irish Language Strategy (2015/16)

The Council's Bilingualism Policy is implemented through the Irish Language Strategy, the overarching vision for which is:

***"To create a supportive environment for the use and regeneration of the Irish Language in public, personal, economic and community life"***



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The four overarching aims of the Strategy are:

- ❖ to support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish Language
- ❖ to enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish Language
- ❖ to encourage the future sustainability of Irish Language networks and communities
- ❖ to promote the Irish Language in a way that will contribute towards the building of a strong and shared community.

There are eight strategic objectives which have been identified as indicators of the success of the current strategy, each of which have a series of associated Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound (S.M.A.R.T) actions. The commissioning of this audit is an action associated with the first of these objectives:

- ❖ meeting all the obligations towards the Irish Language under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

### 2.3 Conclusion

Existing policy documents relating to the Council's commitment to its minority language responsibilities and its awareness of the relevant strategic landscape in which it operates are, in the review team's opinion, some of the best within local government. Going forward it recommends that this best practice is continued and developed with any and all future Irish Language strategies developed by the Council continuing to have a direct, clear, correlated synergy with the relevant regional and European strategies detailed in this section.

***Recommendation: The existing commitment to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as evidenced by the Bilingualism Policy should continue and be developed.***

***Recommendation: As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme 2013-2016 designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council.***

***In addition given the Council's location, consideration should be given to developing a European funding application to explore best practice and shared learning in relation to communities whose first language is a minority language.***



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**Section 3: Language Profile**

This section looks at the language profile of the Council based on the statistical data available from the 2011 Census.

In the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area, amongst the population aged 3 years old and over, the 2011 Census recorded that:

- ❖ 16.05% had some knowledge of Irish
- ❖ 4.45% had some knowledge of Ulster-Scots
- ❖ 3.03% of people speak a language other than English as their first language

For the purposes of comparison, we benchmarked the most relevant statistics in relation to this commission from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council data against the NI average data set and noted the variation when the difference was more than 1%.

- ❖ The percentage of residents who had a knowledge of Irish was recorded as **6.50%** above the NI average
- ❖ The percentage of residents who had a knowledge of Ulster Scots was recorded as **6.63%** below the NI average
- ❖ The percentage of residents who had an Irish National Identity was recorded as **15.96%** above the NI average
- ❖ The percentage of residents who had a British identity was recorded as **19.88%** below the NI average

Census Data in relation to Language	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	NI Data	Variation
Knowledge of Irish	16.05%	10.65%	6.50% above the NI Average
Knowledge of Ulster Scots	4.45%	8.08%	3.63% below the NI Average
English was not a first Language*	3.03%	3.14%	.11% below the NI Average

\*This is not specific to Irish but includes other languages

These overarching statistics indicate the existence of a very strong vibrant Irish Language community in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. A sizable number of wards recorded significantly above the already higher than regional average Council figure of 16.05%. The twenty-five wards which have the highest concentration of individuals with a knowledge of Irish are:

- ❖ **Silverbridge** ward is **29.2%**
- ❖ **Castlewellan** ward is **21.1%**
- ❖ **Creggan** ward is **29.1%**
- ❖ **Daisyhill** ward is **19.7%**
- ❖ **Camlough** ward is **27.2%**
- ❖ **Tollymore** ward is **19.2%**
- ❖ **Forkhill** ward is **27%**
- ❖ **Derrymore** ward is **18.9%**
- ❖ **Drumalane** ward is **24.5%**
- ❖ **Donaghmore** ward is **17.1%**



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- ❖ **Burren** ward is **24.2%**
- ❖ **Rostrevor** ward is **23.9%**
- ❖ **Crossmaglen** ward is **23.4%**
- ❖ **Derryleckagh** ward is **22.9%**
- ❖ **Fathom** ward is **22.6%**
- ❖ **Seaview** ward is **21.4%**
- ❖ **Clonallan** ward is **21.5%**
- ❖ **Spelga** ward is **21.5%**
- ❖ **Drumgullion** ward is **19.7%**
- ❖ **Lisnacree** ward is **19.3%**
- ❖ **Mayobridge** ward is **19.2%**
- ❖ **St Patricks** ward is **18.0%**
- ❖ **St Mary's** ward is **17.3**
- ❖ **Windsor Hill** ward is **17.0%**
- ❖ **Tullyhappy** ward is **16.5%**

There is also a secondary tier of wards, which although recording below the Council wide percentage of individuals with knowledge of Irish, still record a higher percentage than the regional figure of 10.65%. These nineteen wards include:

- ❖ **Ballybot** ward is **15.9%**
- ❖ **Newtownhamilton** ward is **15.0%**
- ❖ **Donard** ward is **14.5%**
- ❖ **Audleys Acre** ward is **14.1%**
- ❖ **Bessbrook** ward is **13.8%**
- ❖ **Shimna** ward is **13.5%**
- ❖ **Quoile** ward is **13.2%**
- ❖ **Ballyward** ward is **13.0%**
- ❖ **Ardglass** ward is **12.9%**
- ❖ **Ballymote** ward is **12.9%**
- ❖ **Cathedral** ward is **12.4%**
- ❖ **Kilkeel South** ward is **12.4%**
- ❖ **Strangford** ward is **12.3%**
- ❖ **Dundrum** ward is **12.1%**
- ❖ **Binnian** ward is **12.1%**
- ❖ **Annalong** ward is **11.9%**
- ❖ **Murlough** ward is **11.7%**
- ❖ **Killough** ward is **11.05%**
- ❖ **Drumaness** ward is **11.2%**

The remainder of the wards record a knowledge of Irish below both the Council and Regional percentages.

### 3.1 Conclusion

The review team consider that the relevant statistics, in relation to the percentage of individuals within the Council area who have a knowledge of Irish, falls into three distinct groups, those wards where the percentage average is higher than the Council figure, those wards where the percentage average is higher than the regional figure and those wards with a lower than average knowledge of Irish when compared with both the Council and regional data. This information will be useful to ensure the targeted and focused development of services and programmes.

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to use the information provided by the audit to target limited resources based on the community background and language capacity of the different wards. This approach will provide a framework in which the effectiveness of interventions can be more easily measured.***



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### Section 4: Preliminary Community Audit Findings

#### 4.1 Introduction

Although the statistical data provided in Section 3 supports the need for a strong investment from the Council in terms of strategic planning, statistics cannot explain the cultural significance, richness and value of promoting and providing for the Irish Language locally and in the wider Council area.

It is important to recognise that teaching of the Irish Language is not restricted to formal Irish-medium education. In order to contextualise the variety and breadth of language integration in the **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council** area we conducted an audit of existing provision, considering:

- ❖ Early Years Provision
- ❖ Primary Sector Provision
- ❖ Irish Language provision in English Medium Primary schools
- ❖ Irish Language provision in English Medium Post Primary schools
- ❖ Third Sector Irish Language Provision
- ❖ Informal Education
- ❖ Youth Services
- ❖ Community Development
- ❖ Employment
- ❖ Sports Provision
- ❖ Cultural and Arts Provision

#### 4.2 Early Years Provision

The strategic function of the Early Years provision is incredibly important in any language revival. Not only is it the initial gateway for many families to engage with the Irish Language, but it is also vital in creating a vibrant Irish-medium primary school sector. The viability of these schools and their ability to attract capital funding is directly related to the numbers of children entering them from Irish-medium preschool providers.

Irish-medium nursery units perform an important function in engaging parents and families with their children's education. They provide training and volunteering opportunities which have the potential to improve the life prospects of families wishing to embrace Irish as the language of choice in which to raise their children. They also deliver social cohesion, provide opportunities for community development and engage people in the growth of Irish as a living community language.

The seven Irish-medium preschool providers in the Council area are:

- ❖ **Naíscoil an Chreagáin (Silverbridge)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil an Iúir (Newry)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil Chill Locha (Killough)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil Dhún Pádraig (Downpatrick)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil mBeann Cill Chaoil (Kilkeel)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil Shliabh gCuilinn Baile an Chláir (SlieveGullion)**
- ❖ **Naíscoil Uachtar Tíre Caisleán Uidhilín (Castlewellan)**

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Engagement with representatives from each of the seven Irish-medium Preschool organisations provided the details recorded in 6.2.

Naíscóil details	Pupils	Classes	Staff
Naíscóil an Chreagáin	16	1	3
Naíscóil an Iúir	16	1	3
Naíscóil Chill Locha	14	1	2
Naíscóil Dhún Pádraig	35	2	4
Naíscóil na mBeann Cill Chaoil	64	2	6
Naíscóil Shliabh gCuilinn Baile an Chláir	24	1	4
Naíscóil Uachtar Tíre Caisleán Uidhilín	65	2	3

*Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to enable local communities to develop their capacity to explore the viability of their Early Years language provision*

### 4.3 Irish-medium Primary Education Provision

There are currently five primary schools educating children through the medium of Irish in the Council area. All are directly linked to the Naíscóil provision detailed above:

- ❖ **Bunscoil an Iúir (Newry)**
- ❖ **Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche (Castlewellan)**
- ❖ **Bunscoil Mhuire is Pádraig (Downpatrick)**
- ❖ **Gaelscoil na mBeann (Kilkeel)**
- ❖ **Gaelscoil Phádraig Naofa (Crossmaglen)**

Engagement with representatives from each of the five primary schools educating through the medium of Irish (Gaelscoil/Bunscoil) provided the details recorded in 6.3.

Gaelscoil /Bunscoil details	Pupils	classes	Staff
Bunscoil an Iúir	87	4	4
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	85	5	13
Bunscoil Mhuire is Pádraig	99	4	6
Gaelscoil na mBeann	46	3	7
Gaelscoil Phádraig Naofa	125	5	6



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### 4.4 Irish in the English-medium Primary Education Sector

In addition to local provision in the Irish-medium sector, there are a further 38 English-medium primary schools in the area which have varying levels of Irish Language provision:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ❖ Anamar Primary School                  | ❖ St Clare's Abbey Primary School      |
| ❖ Ballyholland Primary School            | ❖ St Colman's Primary School           |
| ❖ Carrick Primary School                 | ❖ St Colmcille's Primary School        |
| ❖ Christ the King Primary School         | ❖ St Dallan's Primary School           |
| ❖ Clonalig Primary School                | ❖ St Francis' Primary School           |
| ❖ Cloughoge Primary School               | ❖ St Joseph's Convent Primary School   |
| ❖ Dromintee Primary School               | ❖ St Joseph's Primary School           |
| ❖ Grange Primary School                  | ❖ St Laurence O'Toole's Primary School |
| ❖ Holy Cross Primary School              | ❖ St Macartan's Primary School         |
| ❖ Holy Family Primary School             | ❖ St Malachy's Primary School          |
| ❖ Jonesborough Primary School            | ❖ St Mary's Primary School             |
| ❖ Killeen Primary School                 | ❖ St Michael's Primary School          |
| ❖ Killowen Primary School                | ❖ St Nicholas' Primary School          |
| ❖ Moneydarragh Primary School            | ❖ St Oliver Plunkett's Primary School  |
| ❖ Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School | ❖ St Oliver's Primary School           |
| ❖ Sacred Heart Primary School            | ❖ St Paul's Primary School             |
| ❖ St Brigid's Primary School             | ❖ St Peter's Primary School            |
| ❖ St Bronagh's Primary School            | ❖ St Ronan's Primary School            |
| ❖ St Caolan's Primary School             | ❖ St Teresa's Primary School           |

It is evident from the previous data that the Irish Language is an integral part of the cultural and social fabric of the community in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

The teaching of Irish to children at primary school age is most effective, especially if conducted at Key Stage 2 level, and encourages children to excel in Irish at secondary school and choose it as an academic subject.

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to explore how best the Council can continue to develop its existing support for the provision of Council wide competitions and schools programmes designed to explore the significance of culture, language and social history in developing civic pride and a sense of place in the Council area.***

### 4.5 Post Primary Schools

The Irish-medium provision in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area is outlined in Table 6.5 with a breakdown of how many pupils are studying at each level.



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As can be seen from the data, the number of pupils learning the Irish Language is significant in the English-medium post-primary sector in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. In most cases the schools also indicated that this formal education is also supplemented through extracurricular involvement in quizzes, competitions, social occasions and Gaeltacht excursions.

Current IMP in English Medium Post Primary Schools	GCSE	GCSE+	AS	A2
St Colman's College	100	0	13	12
St Paul's High School	49	0	8	9
Abbey Grammar School	95	4	10	11
Sacred Heart Grammar School	74	0	12	12
Our Lady's Grammar School	110	3	7	9
St Joseph's High School (Newry)	6	0	0	0
St Joseph's High School (Crossmaglen)	39	0	4	0
St Louis High School	31	0	7	4
St Mark's High School	40	0	0	0

*Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to encourage attendance at the annual Irish Language Careers convention held by Forbairt Feirste for post-primary pupils studying Irish to deepen their understanding of the range and breadth of job and career opportunities available through the medium of Irish.*

### 4.6 Informal Irish Language Learning Provision for Adults

The review team found that there is extensive Irish Language provision for adult learners in the area. Engagement with local groups identified a number of opportunities across the Council area. The classes which were provided at different times of the day and evening to accommodate individual work and caring responsibilities are as follows:

Irish Language classes	Beginners	Improvers	Advanced	Dianchúrsa
Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail	✓	✓		✓
Páirc na Mara	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tí Chulainn				✓
Glór Uachtar Tíre	✓	✓		✓
Grúpa Gaeilge an tSrutháin	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cumann Gaelach Leath Chathail	✓	✓	✓	
Glen GLC	✓	✓	✓	
University of the Third Age (Newry)	✓	✓	✓	
Naíscóil Dhún Pádraig (Downpatrick)	✓	✓		
Coláiste Bhlinne (Camlough)	✓	✓		
Coláiste Dhroichead Mhaigh Eo (Mayobridge)		✓	✓	
Ardscóil Mhaolmhaodhóg (Castlewellan)			✓	
An Ríocht CLG	✓	✓	✓	
Campa Chormaic an Iúir	✓	✓	✓	
Bessbrook Community Association	✓	✓	✓	



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Irish Language classes (cont )	Beginners	Improvers	Advanced	Dianchúrsa
Campa Chormaic an Dúin	√	√	√	
Craobh ó Méith de Conradh na Gaeilge	√	√	√	√
Ciorcal Comhrá Shaileogai	√	√	√	

It should be noted that there is little or no coordination of language class provision in the area. For instance seven groups in the area undertook to host Dianchúrsaí (one day intensive language courses) throughout the year but there seemed to be no harmonisation of activities in order to reduce duplication of learning opportunities.

In addition to weekly classes a number of organisations provide Irish Language Summer Schools for children. These experiences provide participants with a mini Gaeltacht experience within the Council area. The summer colleges operating in the Council area include:

- ❖ Ballyholland Primary School
- ❖ Coláiste Áit Tí Chathail (Attical)
- ❖ Coláiste Bhlinne (Camlough)
- ❖ Coláiste Bhoirche Íochtar (Annalong)
- ❖ Coláiste Airt (Mullaghbawn)
- ❖ Coláiste Samhraidh Bhoirche Íochtar (Lower Mourne)
- ❖ Coláiste Uí Fhiaich (Cullyhanna)
- ❖ Colaiste Lorcáin Uí Thuatháil (Belleek)
- ❖ Coláiste Leath Chathail (Downpatrick)
- ❖ Coláiste Uachtar Tíre (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Coláiste Shliabh gCuillinn (Drumintee)
- ❖ Coláiste Dhroichead Mhaigh Eo (Mayobridge)

**Recommendation:** Consideration should be given to the Council ensuring that the Irish Language Unit has access to the necessary technical support to provide a framework for dissemination of information around the logistics (e.g. time, location, level, and cost) of classes available in the area.

### 4.7 Third Level Education

The adult courses provided by Irish Language organisations are often an introduction to formal education, such as the Ulster University Diploma course which is currently available in the Southern Regional College's Newry Campus. The current numbers attending the two year Diploma course in the area are as follows:

- ❖ The first Year has 17 students enrolled
- ❖ The second Year has 14 students enrolled

### 4.8 Youth Services

There are a two main types of Irish-medium youth provision currently in the Council area at present. One is the provision of weekly term time youth club and the second involves Irish-medium Summer Scheme provision. 14 groups are attempting to meet the needs of children attending Irish-medium Education.



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4.8 Youth Provision	Term Time Provision	Holiday Provision
Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail (Newry)	✓	
Páirc na Mara (Annalong)	✓	✓
Tí Chulainn (Mullaghbawn)	✓	
Glór Uachtar Tíre (Castlewellan)	✓	
Cumann Óige an Iúir (Newry)	✓	
Club Óige an Chaisleáin Nua (Newcastle)	✓	
Ógras Oiriaila (Crossmaglen)	✓	
Coláiste Shliabh gCuillinn (Drumintee)	✓	✓
Coláiste Leath Chathail (Downpatrick)	✓	✓
Coláiste Uachtar Tíre (Castlewellan)	✓	✓
Coláiste Samhraidh Bhoirche Íochtar (Lower Mourne)	✓	✓
Coláiste Samhraidh Dhroichead Mhaigh Eo (Mayobridge)	✓	✓
Campa Chormaic an Iúir (Newry)	✓	✓
Campa Chormaic an Dúin (Downpatrick)	✓	✓

**Recommendation:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit liaising with the Education Authority to ensure that they are aware of all the existing and emerging youth services in the area. This will ensure effective signposting to support the development and growth of quality Irish youth service provision in the Council area.

#### 4.9 Irish Language Community Development

Irish Language communities are organically growing up across the area primarily as a result of increased intake in Irish-medium schools and higher numbers participating in night classes.

This increased interest in the Irish Language provides new opportunities to bring about a range of real social, educational and community benefits. These can have a very positive contribution to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of a wide range of people by adopting a cradle-to-the-grave approach to provision.

The main community led organisations currently delivering Irish Language development programmes in the Newry, Mourne and Down Council area are:

- ❖ Cairde Bhunscoil an Iúir (Newry)
- ❖ Cairde Ghaelscoil Phádraig Naofa (Crossmaglen)
- ❖ Cairde Naíscóil an Chreagáin (Silverbridge)
- ❖ Glór na Croise (Crossmaglen)
- ❖ Cairde Naíscóil an Iúir (Newry)
- ❖ Cairde Naíscóil Shliabh gCuillinn (Jonesborough)
- ❖ Grúpa Gaeilge an tSrutháin (Bessbrook)
- ❖ Club Leabhar Líofa (Newry)
- ❖ Cumann Óige an Iúir (Newry)
- ❖ Gaeltacht Oirdheisceart Uladh (South Armagh)
- ❖ Gaelarás Mhic Ardghail (Newry)
- ❖ Tí Chulainn (South Armagh)
- ❖ Glór Uachtar Tíre (Upper Mourne)
- ❖ Ciorcal Comhrá Chaisleán Uidhilín (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Gradam an Iúir (Newry)
- ❖ Grúpa Tuistí is Tachrán (Hilltown)

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- ❖ Craobh an Iúir de Chonradh na Gaeilge (Newry)
- ❖ Club Óige Chaisleáin Nua (Newcastle)
- ❖ Cumann Siúlóide Caisleán Uidhilín (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Cumann Gaelach Leath Chathail (Downpatrick & Drumanness)
- ❖ Páirc na Mara (Lower Mourne)
- ❖ Craobh Bhoirche Íochtair de Chonradh na Gaeilge (Lower Mourne)
- ❖ Grúpa Siúlóide Uachtar Tíre (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Grúpa Tuistí is Tachrán (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Ógras Oirialla (Crossmaglen)
- ❖ Scoil Samhraidh Shéamais Uí Néill (Castlewellan)
- ❖ Teanga Trí Chairdeas (Warrenpoint)

The Community Development services provided by these groups are designed to support existing and emerging Irish Language communities develop their skills, knowledge and confidence. This is a bespoke process, and in most cases an organic response to an emerging need, but the main activities can be grouped together as follows:

### 4.9.1 Social Inclusion Programmes

These are programmes or services designed to ensure parity of access to everyday service provision to individuals and communities who choose to engage through the medium of Irish. Examples of how this is undertaken in the Council area include:

- ❖ advocacy
- ❖ lobbying
- ❖ promotion of language rights
- ❖ community activism

### 4.9.2 Community Cohesion Programmes

Examples of programmes designed to develop a common vision and sense of belonging by all Irish Language community members within the Council area include:

- ❖ social events
- ❖ conversation circles
- ❖ reading groups

### 4.9.3 Health and Wellbeing Programmes

Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of health and wellbeing in the Irish Language community within the Council area include:

- ❖ walking groups
- ❖ mindfulness programmes



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### 4.9.4 Support for Formal Education

Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of capacity in Irish Language students within the Council area include:

- ❖ Gaeltacht readiness
- ❖ Inter-school quiz
- ❖ youth clubs
- ❖ summer schools
- ❖ revision exam classes

**4.9.5 Regeneration Programmes:** Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of capacity amongst the Irish Language community within the Council area include:

- ❖ skills development
- ❖ knowledge development
- ❖ confidence development

**4.9.6 Early Years Programmes:** Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of early years' provision in the Irish Language community within the Council area include:

- ❖ preschools readiness preparation
- ❖ parent and toddler groups
- ❖ puppet shows

### 4.9.7 Environmental Programmes

Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased awareness of the natural and built environment within the Council area include:

- ❖ geology tours
- ❖ coastal walks

### 4.9.8 Developmental Support for non-Irish speaking parents of children attending Irish-medium Education

Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of capacity amongst the families of children attending Irish-medium Education within the Council area include:

- ❖ extracurricular afterschool provision
- ❖ PTA Fundraising activities
- ❖ homework clubs
- ❖ parents' networks
- ❖ parents' classes
- ❖ highlighting useful resources
- ❖ helping with learning for parents which includes songs and stories

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### 4.9.9 History and Culture

Examples of programmes designed to develop an increased sense of shared community experiences within the Council area include:

- ❖ cross community programmes
- ❖ cultural activities
- ❖ cultural diversity programmes
- ❖ cross border engagements
- ❖ website promoting local dialect
- ❖ Irish speaking Television shows
- ❖ Irish-medium Radio
- ❖ intergenerational programmes
- ❖ place-name promotion
- ❖ historical discussions
- ❖ cultural exchange visits to promote the historical significance of the area

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit providing a framework for the development of Irish Language community led networks which would bring together groups interested in developing and sustaining a community development approach to supporting existing and emerging Irish Language communities in the Council area. The additional benefits of this approach ensure that:***

- ❖ ***It would be peer-led therefore ensuring the sector's capacity***
- ❖ ***It is a cost effective mechanism for other departments within the Council to engage with a sizable constituent group***
- ❖ ***It facilitates the dissemination of relevant information with a particular emphasis on training and funding opportunities***
- ❖ ***It would develop connectivity across the Council area.***

***It should be noted that any community led network should be cognizant of the Council's District Electoral Area Fora.***

### 4.10 Sport

The opening lines of the GAA's Official Guide state that active support of the Irish Language and culture is central to the GAA's business. Clubs are tasked with promoting culture and heritage in their local communities. In order to achieve that aim each of the 54 Clubs in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area has a dedicated Irish Language and Cultural Officer whose key role is to develop, promote and sustain cultural and language activities in the Club.

Every GAA Club is encouraged take part in the annual Scór, a cultural framework allowing people to participate in activities right across the cultural spectrum, within a clear, community-based amateur context through the medium of Irish. Participants have the added benefit of moving on to represent their Club at county, provincial and national levels.



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The GAA Clubs actively promoting the Irish Language in the Newry, Mourne and Down Council area are:

- ❖ CLG Achadh Lios na bhFiann (Aughlisnafin)
- ❖ CLG Chraobh Rua (Camlough)
- ❖ CLG Áth Bhriain (Bryansford)
- ❖ CLG Bhaile Coinnleora (Ballykilner)
- ❖ CLG Bhreachtáin (Bright)
- ❖ CLG Chláirseacha Bhaile Úí Thuathaláin (Ballyholland)
- ❖ CLG Chú Chulainn (Mullaghbawn)
- ❖ CLG Dhún Droma (Dundrum)
- ❖ CLG Emmet (Dorsey)
- ❖ CLG Eoghain Rua (Kilcoo)
- ❖ CLG Loch an Oileáin (Loughinisland)
- ❖ CLG Lorcáin Uí Thuathail (Belleeks)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Eoin (Newry)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Maolmhaodhóg (Castlewellan)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Mochai (Darragh Cross)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Muire (Glasdrumman)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Pádraig (Cullyhanna)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Pádraig (Saul)
- ❖ CLG Pheadair Uí Dhoirnín (Forkhill)
- ❖ CLG Raonaithe na Croise (Crossmaglen)
- ❖ CLG na Ríochta (Greencastle)
- ❖ CLG Sheáin Mhic Dhiarmada (Maghera)
- ❖ CLG Sheáin Mistéil (Newry)
- ❖ CLG Sheáin Uí Mháirtín (Glen)
- ❖ CLG Thomáis Dháibhis (Corrinshego)
- ❖ CLG Áit Tí Chathail (Attical)
- ❖ CLG Ard Ghlais (Ardglass)
- ❖ CLG Beann Dhearg (Kilclief)
- ❖ CLG Bhaile Mhic Giolla Mhártain (Ballymartin)
- ❖ CLG Chláirseacha (Silverbridge)
- ❖ CLG Chluain Daimh (Clonduff)
- ❖ CLG na Clioche Fhada (Longstone)
- ❖ CLG Dhroichead haigh Eo (Mayobridge)
- ❖ CLG Éanach Chluana (Annaclone)
- ❖ CLG Chlann na hÉireann (Lissummon)
- ❖ CLG Ghormacha Bhaile (Cullaville)
- ❖ CLG Lorcáin Uí Thuathail (Belleek)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Cillian (Whitecross)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Mícheál (Killeen)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Mícheál (Newtownhamilton)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Moninne (Killeavy)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Pádraig (Carrickcruppen)
- ❖ CLG Naomh Pádraig (Drumgath)
- ❖ CLG Pheadair Naofa (Warrenpoint)
- ❖ CLG na bPiarsach (Ballycrummy)
- ❖ CLG Réamainn Uí Anluain (Poyntzpass)
- ❖ CLG Shabhail (Saval)
- ❖ CLG Sheamróga an Iúir (Newry)
- ❖ CLG Sheáin Uí Néill (Camlough)
- ❖ CLG Thigh Chon Connacht (Rossc Connor)
- ❖ CLG Wolfe Tone (Killyleagh)

**Recommendation:** *Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the GAA's County Irish Language committees to best support their volunteer network of language and cultural officers to maximise the impact of their language support within the Council area.*

### 4.11 Culture and Heritage

Culture and heritage play an important part in language development in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. Events are regular and diverse in both their subject and constituent groups. Examples of existing groups who are currently providing events, programmes and services based on Irish Language culture and heritage development in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are:



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- ❖ Fleadh Rua
- ❖ An Cumann Scoildrámaíochta
- ❖ Campa Chormaic an Dúin
- ❖ Coiste na Gaeilge CLG Ard Mhacha
- ❖ Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann (An Caisleán Nua)
- ❖ Cuimhneamh
- ❖ Cumann Cultúrtha Chill Shléibhe
- ❖ Féile Lúnasa
- ❖ Soma Festival, Castlewellan
- ❖ CCÉ An Bonnán Buí
- ❖ Aisteoirí Oirghialla
- ❖ Campa Chormaic an Iúir
- ❖ Coiste na Gaeilge CLG an Dúin
- ❖ Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann (Craobh an Iúir)
- ❖ Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann (Rinn Mhic Giolla Rua)
- ❖ Cumann Cultúrtha Chluain Daimh
- ❖ Cumann Pobail Áit Tí Chathail
- ❖ Féile Scoildrámaíochta an Iúir
- ❖ CCÉ Ring of Gullion
- ❖ Gaelphobal Ard Mhacha Theas

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to maximising the potential availability of external funding available to collectives able to demonstrate a collaborative multi-agency partnership approach to the promotion and delivery of cultural and heritage events.***

### 4.12 Conclusion

The audit team identified that an extensive range of services ranging from Early Years provision through to Social Inclusion projects designed to meet the needs of older isolated members of the community were being delivered through the medium of Irish across the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

This range of community led language revival projects provides a strong, cost effective, sustainable community development model for language promotion and protection. What is missing, however, is a strategic overview and this is a role that the Council could provide. The audit findings indicate that the service provision, promotion and developmental support required extends beyond the language and cultural support traditionally offered by the Council, but rather includes sports, leisure, community services, economic development and environmental services.

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to developing the role of the Council as an enabler to support, connect and encourage existing groups. Voluntary and statutory organisations should be facilitated to work collaboratively to maximise the impact of their collective human, fiscal and intellectual resources.***

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### Section 5: Preliminary Internal Council Audit Findings

#### 5.1 Policy Response

The Council's policy development in respect of its responsibilities is strong with a clear commitment to the protection of Irish as a recognised minority language clearly evident within the fabric of the Council's infrastructure.

#### 5.2 Practical Responses

The transitions brought about through the transformation of local government have been unavoidably disruptive on all aspects of Council life and the impact on the Irish Language Unit has been no exception. It is anticipated that this temporary position will be rectified as a commitment has been made by the management and staff directly involved with the Irish Language Unit to develop a clear understanding of the expectations of the Irish Language Unit.

#### 5.3 Staff Survey

In total **107** responses were received to the Staff Attitude Survey, which represents **14%** engagement of the overall workforce. This response is acceptable in terms of providing us with relevant information, but caution should be taken in using the findings as the sole analysis of Irish Language competency or evidence of developmental needs within the Council. Rather it should be considered as a snapshot at a particular point in time from a limited number of respondents. It should be noted that the percentages in the tables relate to the percentage of overall responses as not every respondent provided a response to every question. The responses to this survey were as follows:

##### Q 1: Do you have any Irish Language qualifications?

Responses to question one identified that **44%** of respondents held a formal qualification in Irish.

##### Q2: Do you have Irish Language skills (but no formal qualification)?

Responses to question one identified that **21%** of respondents, despite having no formal qualification, considered themselves to have some skills in relation to the Irish Language.

##### Q2A: If yes, please indicate in the boxes below the nature of your skills

Spoken Irish Skills	21%
Written Irish Skills	15%
Reading Irish Skills	12%

<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 35% of respondents did not reply to this question



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**Q3. If you have Irish Language skills, how would you classify your competence in the Irish Language?**

Basic – a few phrases | Intermediate- some fluency | Advanced – fairly fluent

Responses to Q3	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
Spoken Irish Skills	42%	21%	2%	65%
Written Irish Skills	50%	14%	1%	65%
Reading Irish Skills	41%	23%	1%	65%

<sup>2</sup>

**Q4. If you answered yes to Questions 1 or 2, how confident are you in using your language skills?**

Responses to Q4	Not Confident	Fairly Confident	Confident	Total
Spoken Irish Skills	48%	14%	2%	65%
Written Irish Skills	54%	7%	1%	65%
Reading Irish Skills	49%	15%	1%	65%

**Q5. Would you be willing to deal with enquiries from the community through the medium of Irish within your department?<sup>3</sup>**

Yes	17%	No	47%
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<sup>4</sup>

**Q 6. Would you be interested in learning Irish or developing your Irish Language skills?**

Response to question six:

Yes	98%	No	2%
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**Q7. Which of the following courses would best suit your needs? (Please feel free to select more than one)**

Response to question seven:

Language Awareness Course (History, Place-names & Surnames)	44%	Taster Course (one off session)	21%
Basic Course (10 lessons)	40%	Intermediate Course (10 Lessons)	26%
Advanced Course (10 lessons)	11%	Accredited Course ( 1 year)	16%

**8. What time would best suit your needs?**

Responses to question eight:

<sup>2</sup> 65% of respondents answered Q3 & Q4

<sup>3</sup> Additional discussion suggested that persons who completed this question were responding based on their existing levels of confidence.

<sup>4</sup> 64% of respondents answered Q5



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Immediately before work	16%	Immediately after work	19%
Lunch Time	29%	Evening	16%
During Working Hours	20%		

## 5.3.1 Additional Comments

A section was provided for consultees to add additional comments, a sample of which is provided in this section.

*“Although I would be willing to deal with enquiries from the community through the medium of Irish within this department, I would need to develop my Irish skills in order to do this. The main reason why I haven’t developed my skills is that I cannot find a course that suits time wise with my family life, therefore, during working hours would be ideal if possible.”*

*“I go to Irish classes twice a week.”*

*“I would be very interested in learning Irish. I did Irish at school for a few years and have cousins that go to the Bunscoil so I am able to say a few words and phrases”*

*“If this is something that I may need to have for my future within the Council I would be interested in doing a basic course to see how it would go and maybe do an advanced course at a later stage”*

*“I would be very keen to develop my Irish as I have three daughters at Irish-medium school but due to work and family commitments I cannot attend classes”*

*“I would like to deal with enquiries in Irish when my Irish improves. I work shifts so night classes are difficult for me”*

*“As I meet various people from differing cultural backgrounds I would like to learn a little conversational Irish”*

*“It is something I would like to improve but finding the time is very hard. It is great having Ursula and co to help with translations, etc.”*

*“I have a young family and would not be able to give up my free time to learn Irish but I would be interested in developing my Irish Language skills as part of my job if the Council thought it appropriate. I think that as a bilingual Council it would be good for staff to have a better understanding of the language. My current skills stretch to a few words remembered from school.”*

*“As the Council has an Irish Language Policy, I believe more should be done to educate and encourage staff to learn and use the language.”*

*“Although I have a GCSE qualification in Irish Language I never used it since leaving school over 20 years ago. I would like to get some basic knowledge and understanding again in the language”*

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*"I finished my Diploma 3 years ago and it feels I have forgotten everything I learnt. During the 2 years the course lasted we had very little chance to practice our oral skills"*

*"I try to speak with colleagues at work"*

*"I would love to spend time in the Gaeltacht"*

*"As an adult, Irish is not an easy language to master, but willing to give it a go at Taster level"*

*"Beidh ar an Chomhairle traenáil a sholáthar d'fhoireann na Comhairle ionas go mbeidh an Chomhairle in ann seirbhísí a sholáthar do phobal na Gaeilge ina gceantar féin mar a gealladh nuair a glacadh leis an Pholasáí Dátheangachais" ("The Council should provide training for the Council staff so that the Council can provide services to the Irish language community as promised when they adopted the Bilingualism Policy")*

### 5.4 Conclusion

The development of the new three year Irish Language Strategy (2016-19) will provide both the elected members, management, and officers with a collective understanding of what the anticipated outcomes (what will change) as a result of the Council's decision to lead the way in terms of a local government response to the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages through the development of their Bilingualism Policy.

***Recommendation: A three year Irish Language Strategy is developed with appropriate resources to ensure the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the development of the Irish Language community throughout the District.***

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with the Human Resources team in the Council to develop an Irish Language developmental opportunity for staff who wish to contribute to the Council's Bilingualism Policy commitments.***

***Recommendation: The existing Irish Language development posts within the Council should be resourced accordingly to enable the provision of a quality developmental support service to both internal and external stakeholders.***



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### Section 6: Consultation and Engagement Findings

#### 6.1 Introduction

In order to inform this audit it was essential that the views of those actively involved in the development of the Irish Language in the Council area were provided with an initial platform to inform future policy developments.

To that end we engaged with a range of representatives from a range of relevant stakeholders to capture their initial thoughts on how best the Council might provide developmental support to the Irish Language sector in their area. A full list of those who contributed to the development of this position paper are listed in Appendix 1.

For ease of reference we have grouped the contributions into the following categories:

- ❖ School Age Education
- ❖ Sumer Schemes
- ❖ Informal Education
- ❖ Community Development
- ❖ Employment
- ❖ Sport
- ❖ Culture and Heritage

The quotes provided are representative of the feedback from individuals and are a personal perspective therefore they should only be considered as a small part of the overall audit.

#### 6.2 School Age Education

*“Provision of weekly additional classes for GCSE students who are studying Irish in the local English-Medium schools in the absence of a Meánscoil is very important”*

*“We would love to work with the Council on loads of issues that fit with our curriculum but we feel we are left out because we educate through the medium of Irish... We should be engaging with all of the Council departments not just the Irish Language team.”*

*“Local children who attend Irish-medium Primary schools should have the option of continuing their education through the medium of Irish locally “*

*“In terms of support from the Irish-medium Team at Council, we would like to see them sponsor a schools drama festival. ...”*

#### 6.3 Summer Schemes

*“We've just been talking today in relation to the Irish summer scheme which we hold every year. ...We held a fundraiser which just puts more pressure on the same people... We used to get some funding from the Council but this ceased many years ago... The new Council needs to show leadership by providing or identifying funding for these vital services.”*

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*“Two months is too long a period for children who don’t live in a house with Irish without support... Summer schemes are therefore essential to their language development...”*

### 6.4 Adult Classes

*“If the Council could circulate a programme around the Irish Language community that would be great showing all that is happening that would be a great help ...”*

*“I teach two levels - beginners and post beginners on a voluntary basis. The demand is there for all levels - no doubt about it, but I only have a couple of hours to give a week.”*

*“We can’t keep up with the demand for weekly Irish Language classes which cater for all adult learner requirements and levels...”*

*“Provision of weekly additional classes for GCSE students who are studying Irish in the local English-Medium school in the absence of a Meánscoil is very important...”*

### 6.5 Youth Provision

*“One of our main priorities must be to nurture and strengthen the language in every aspect of community life, particularly amongst young people and to offer provision and opportunities for young people and children to use their language skills. Both in formal and informal language settings ...”*

*“Youth Clubs are a great immersion tool for young Gaels ....”*

### 6.6 Community Development

*“We need a mother and baby group.... We have tried to set something up for Irish speaking parents but there was no statutory support for it and it is difficult to do in a voluntary capacity “*

*“Encourage the use of the language in the heart of the community as natural growth from generation to generation.”*

*“The funding available is very low and the paperwork disproportionately onerous. We need to be able to draw down funding for whatever we are doing regardless of what language is being spoken“*

*“We are so busy on the ground that we don’t get a chance to see the bigger picture...it would be great If the Council could do that for us ...”*

### 6.7 Sports Development

*“The GAA is the natural partner for the Council we have the whole area covered and we have a willing committed volunteer network.”*

*“Sport is a great introduction to language for people from different community backgrounds... a way to experience language in a fun environment ...”*



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### 6.8 Culture, Arts and Heritage Development

*“Irish Language signage is less prominent in the new Council despite a Bilingualism policy. How are we going to promote the region to tourists if we have no sense of culture or heritage?”*

*“We produce a series of mini-websites on local dialects and the history of the Irish Language which is very popular...It is definitely something the Council should be focusing on. The tourism potential from our local history could be phenomenal “*

*“In terms of support from the Irish-Medium team at Council, we would like to see them sponsor a schools drama festival. ...”*

### 6.9 The Council

*“We are very aware of the work of the Irish Language team and keep in contact with the staff to inform them of our work and areas where the Council may be able to assist communities...”*

*“Sensitivity needs to be shown to members of the community who don’t have an association with the Irish Language...”*

*“The Council should not try to make Ulster Scots and Irish the same... they are not and there is no need for the Council to try and make them so...”*

*“The Council should work with the local schools to enhance the service of both statutory bodies...We have the staff and the physical building and a local connection. The only thing we are missing is the money...”*

*“Language should not be politicised. It is for all the people to enjoy and use should they wish to”*

*“Most Irish Language organisations are run entirely by volunteers and we don’t get a chance to step back and look at the big picture...If the Council could provide this framework it would be great.”*

*“The Irish Language Unit in the Council haven’t been able to be as effective as before (through no fault of their own) the merger... However this hopefully is changing now that things have settled down”*

*“If the Council are serious about promoting Irish then they need to have a dedicated funding stream, not for post or overheads, but for ordinary people to help make learning Irish more accessible. For example if they worked with other language organisations to promote and support Gaeltacht scholarships. “*

*“Bilingual signage is an issue...It shouldn’t be put up in wards where the local people don’t have an affinity with the Irish Language...It causes ill feeling and leads to vandalism.”*

*“Mici and Ursula are very good at information sharing and providing all types support in general...but it would be great if they had a small pot of discretionary funding available to use.”*

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*“Great communication from the team... and they attend a lot of our events. Recommendation to give the Irish Language team a budget which they could offer to financially assist or support groups. More funding/resources.”*

*“The Irish Language Unit in the Council have undertaken great work...punching well above their weight....They promote the language in a very sensitive measured way.”*



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**Section 7: Impact**

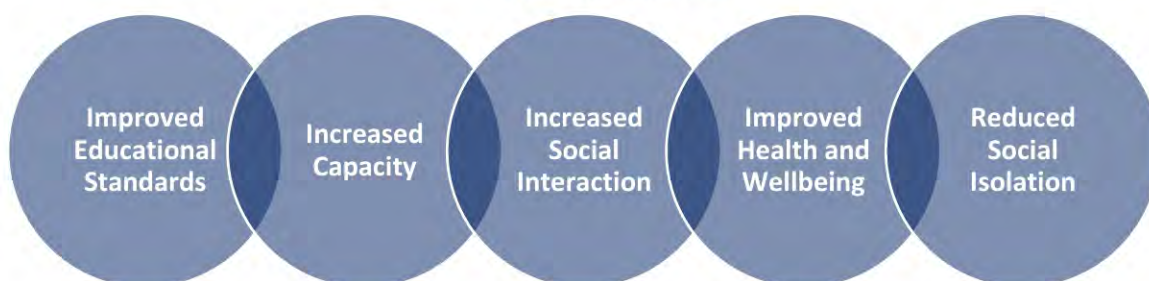
**7.1 Introduction**

It is important to capture the impact of the work undertaken through the medium of Irish in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area and in order to do so the review team undertook initial high level scoping exercise to identify the true value of the interventions undertaken.

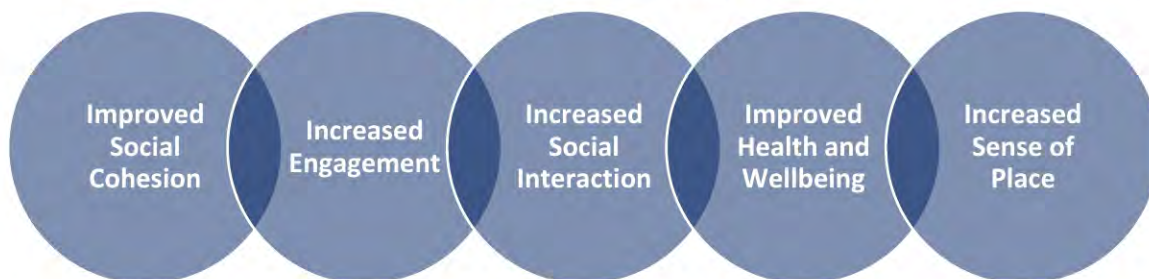
**7.2 Social Impact**

The initial audit of Irish Language provision in the Council area identified the social impact of the Irish Language community in area as of significant potential. The following three diagrams provide details of the beneficiaries and the identified impact of the promotion and development of the Irish Language on each constituent group.

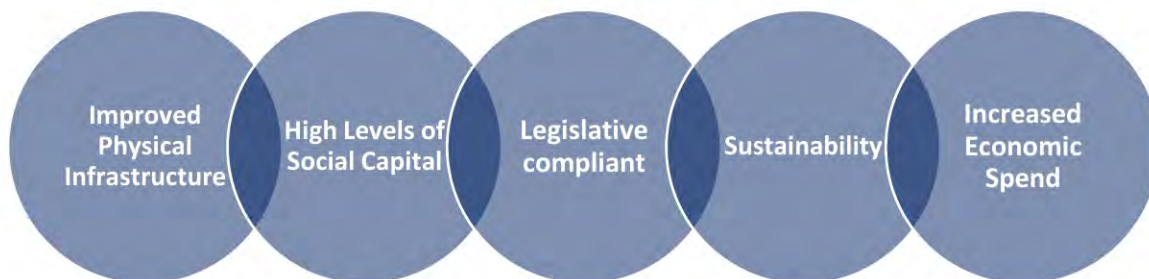
**Impact on Individual**



**Impact on Engaged Community Members**



**Impact on Wider Community**



Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a principle-based method for measuring extra-financial value (i.e. environmental and social value not currently reflected in conventional financial accounts) relative to resources invested. A full Social Return on Investment report would provide a monetary benefit of the identified social impacts.

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### 7.3 Enterprise and Employment Change

The Council area is easily accessible from both Belfast and Dublin. The strength of the Irish Language should be considered in terms of social benefit, but also as an economic driver. To this end we have detailed the employment created as a direct result of the sustained growth of the language within the Council area.

Table 7.3	Full Time Positions	Part time positions	Volunteers
Ancillary Support Staff in Education Settings	32	6	65
Teaching	41	12	52
Community Development	10	5	210
Administrative	4	5	60
Environmental	0	0	20
Sport	2	5	57
Media	10	5	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>464</b>

All of the positions identified are associated with projects which operate in the **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council** area, each of which have a corresponding budget which is mainly used to purchase goods and services in the locality. These budgets range in scale from the purchase of refreshments once a week through to large organisations delivering statutory functions with the corresponding purchasing power.

The geographical location of the Council has attracted Irish Language organisations and at least one private sector media company who deliver their services on an all island basis to locate in Newry:

- ❖ Conradh na Gaeilge
- ❖ Glór na nGael
- ❖ Oireachtas na Gaeilge
- ❖ Big Mountain Productions

### 7.4 Tourism

The organic link between tourism and a strong language and culture brand is recognised and developed the world over. The potential is as immense, and as yet untapped in any real sense, in this area of scenic beauty with the Mountains of Mourne at its centre and enclosed on the east by Strangford and Carlingford Loughs and on the west by Slieve Gullion and Slieve Croob. In addition to these outstanding natural assets, the area also houses a number of significant built heritage assets including:

- ❖ Annalong Cornmill and Harbour
- ❖ Killeavy Old Church(South Armagh)
- ❖ Down Cathedral(Downpatrick)
- ❖ Ballykeel Dolmen(South Armagh)
- ❖ Annaghmare Court Cairn (South Armagh)



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- ❖ Struell Wells(Downpatrick)
- ❖ Creggan Churchyard(South Armagh)
- ❖ Dundrum Castle
- ❖ Ballymacdermot Court Cairn (South Armagh)
- ❖ Drumena Cashel(Castlewellan)
- ❖ Bagenal's Castle (Newry)
- ❖ Bloody Bridge (Newcastle)
- ❖ Clontygora Court Cairn (South Armagh)
- ❖ Clough Castle
- ❖ North and South Cairns and Passage Grave(Slieve Gullion)
- ❖ Moyry Castle (South Armagh)
- ❖ Maghera Old Church and Round Tower(Dundrum)

Linkage between the indigenous language, culture and art of the area and these unique physical attractions is as yet untapped and has the potential to significantly contribute to the tourism draw of the Council area making the area a destination to travel to, not through.

**7.5 Conclusion**

Our initial analysis indicates that the social and economic impact of the Irish Language community in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area is extensive with conservative analysis indicating that the sector employs 110 people, develops 468 volunteers and provides support to the 27,531 residents who have knowledge of Irish in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. The completion of a full Social Return on Investment report would quantify the fiscal contribution that the Irish Language makes to the prosperity of the wider locality.

***Recommendation: Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a full Social Return on Investment analysis in respect of language development in the area to capture the economic benefit of the Council's investment in the promotion of the Irish language.***

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**Section 8: Conclusion and Recommendations****8.1 Conclusion**

The audit has identified that there is a strong vibrant Irish Language Community living, working and socialising in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. In order to maximise the social, economic, and physical regeneration potential of this community it is necessary for all interested stakeholders to work collaboratively. The key stakeholders are:

- ❖ Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
- ❖ Foras na Gaeilge
- ❖ Conradh na Gaeilge
- ❖ Educationalists
- ❖ Education Authority
- ❖ Local Communities
- ❖ Economic Interests

**8.2 Recommendations**

In order to maximise the social, economic, and physical regeneration potential of this community the review team have identified the following recommendations for consideration by the Council:

- ❖ **Recommendation One:** The existing commitment to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as evidenced by the Bilingualism Policy should continue and be developed.
- ❖ **Recommendation two:** As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme 2013-2016 designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council. In addition given the Council's location, consideration should be given to developing a European funding application to explore best practice and shared learning in relation to communities whose first language is a minority language.
- ❖ **Recommendation three:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to use the information provided by the audit to target limited resources based on the community background and language capacity of the different wards. This approach will provide a framework in which the effectiveness of interventions can be more easily measured.



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- ❖ **Recommendation four:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to enable local communities to develop their capacity to explore their Early Years language provision..
- ❖ **Recommendation five:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to explore how best the Council can continue to develop its existing support for the provision of Council wide competitions and schools programmes designed to explore the significance of culture, language and social history in developing civic pride and a sense of place in the Council area.
- ❖ **Recommendation six:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to encourage attendance at the annual Irish Language Careers convention held by Forbairt Feirste for post-primary pupils studying Irish to deepen their understanding of the range and breadth of job and career opportunities available through the medium of Irish.
- ❖ **Recommendation seven:** Consideration should be given to the Council ensuring that the Irish Language Unit has access to the necessary technical support to provide a framework for dissemination of information around the logistics (e.g. time, location, level, and cost) of classes available in the area.
- ❖ **Recommendation eight:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit liaising with the Education Authority to ensure that they are aware of all the existing and emerging youth services in the area. This will ensure effective signposting to support the development and growth of quality Irish youth service provision in the Council area.
- ❖ **Recommendation nine:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit providing a framework for the development of Irish Language community led networks which would bring together groups interested in developing and sustaining a community development approach to supporting existing and emerging Irish Language communities in the Council area. The additional benefits of this approach ensure that:
  - ❖ It would be peer led therefore ensuring development of the sector's capacity
  - ❖ It is a cost effective mechanism for other departments within the Council to engage with a sizable constituent group
  - ❖ It facilitates dissemination of relevant information with a particular emphasis on training and funding opportunities
  - ❖ It would develop connectivity across the Council area.

It should be noted that any community led network should be cognizant of the Council's District Electoral Areas Fora.



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- ❖ **Recommendation ten:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the GAA's county Irish Language committees to best support their volunteer network of language and cultural officers to maximise the impact of their language support within the Council area.
- ❖ **Recommendation eleven:** Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to maximising the potential availability of external funding to collectives able to demonstrate a collaborative multi-agency partnerships approach to the promotion and delivery of cultural and heritage events.
- ❖ **Recommendation twelve:** Consideration should be given to developing the role of the Council as an enabler to support, connect and encourage existing groups. Voluntary and statutory organisations should be facilitated to work collaboratively to maximise the impact of their collective human, fiscal and intellectual resources.
- ❖ **Recommendation thirteen:** A three year Irish Language Strategy is developed and appropriately resourced to ensure the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the development of the Irish Language community throughout the District.
- ❖ **Recommendation fourteen:** Consideration should be given to the Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with the Human Resources team in the Council to develop an Irish Language developmental opportunity for staff who wish to contribute to the Council's Bilingualism Policy commitments.
- ❖ **Recommendation fifteen:** The existing Irish Language development posts within the Council should be resourced accordingly to enable the provision of a quality developmental support service to both internal and external stakeholders.
- ❖ **Recommendation sixteen:** Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a full Social Return on Investment analysis in respect of language development in the area to capture the economic benefit of the Council's investment in the promotion of the Irish Language. (Section 7- page 36)



## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

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## Appendix 1: Organisations who contributed to the Audit

- ❖ Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail (GMA)
- ❖ Páirc na Mara (BÍ)
- ❖ Tí Chulainn (TC)
- ❖ Glór Uachtar Tíre (GUT)
- ❖ Gaeltacht Oirdheisceart Uladh
- ❖ Grúpa Gaeilge an tSrutháin
- ❖ Craobh an Iúir de Chonradh na Gaeilge
- ❖ Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
- ❖ Bunscoil an Iúir
- ❖ Naíscóil an Iúir
- ❖ Cairde Bhunscoil an Iúir
- ❖ Conradh na Gaeilge/ Comhaltas Uladh
- ❖ Glór na NGael
- ❖ Ulster GAA
- ❖ Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- ❖ Department of Education
- ❖ Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche
- ❖ Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
- ❖ Democratic Unionist Party
- ❖ Naíscóil Dhún Pádraig
- ❖ Scoil Mhuire& Phádraig
- ❖ Foras na Gaeilge
- ❖ Naíscóil Chill Locha
- ❖ Ardscoil Mhaolmhaodhóg
- ❖ Naíscóil Bheanna Boirche/Uachtar Tíre
- ❖ Ballyholland Primary School
- ❖ Coláiste Shliabh gCuilinn
- ❖ Coláiste Uí Fhiaich
- ❖ Social Democratic and Labour Party
- ❖ Cairde Naíscóil Shliabh gCuilinn
- ❖ Gaelscoil na mBeann
- ❖ St Colman's College
- ❖ St Paul's High School
- ❖ Abbey Grammar School
- ❖ Sacred Heart Grammar School
- ❖ Our Lady's Grammar School
- ❖ Naíscóil na mBeann
- ❖ Craobh Bhoirche Íochtar de Chonradh na Gaeilge (BÍ)
- ❖ Office of the First and Deputy first Minister
- ❖ Southern Regional College/ Ulster University
- ❖ Department for Culture Arts and Leisure
- ❖ Club Leabhar Líofa
- ❖ Grúpa Siúlóide Uachtar Tíre
- ❖ Ciorcal Comhrá
- ❖ Oireachtas na Gaeilge
- ❖ GRADAM an Iúir
- ❖ Glór Uachtar Tíre (GUT)
- ❖ Scoil Samhraidh Shéamuis Uí Néill
- ❖ Iontaobhhlás na Gaelscolaíochta
- ❖ Gaelscoil Phádraig Naofa
- ❖ Naíscóil an Chreagáin
- ❖ Naíscóil Shliabh gCuilinn
- ❖ Ciorcal Comhrá Ó Méith
- ❖ Ciorcal Comhrá Shailleogai
- ❖ Big Mountain Productions (TV)
- ❖ Alliance Party
- ❖ Education Authority
- ❖ An Cumann Scoildrámaíochta
- ❖ Cumann Óige an Iúir
- ❖ Traditional Unionist Party
- ❖ Club Óige, Caisleán Nua
- ❖ Grúpa Tuistí is Tachrán
- ❖ Conradh na Gaeilge
- ❖ Ógras Oirialla
- ❖ Feis an Dúin
- ❖ Sinn Féin
- ❖ Coláiste Bhlinne
- ❖ Campa Chormaic an Dúin
- ❖ Campa Chormaic an Iúir
- ❖ Ulster Unionist Party
- ❖ Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
- ❖ Cuimhneamh
- ❖ St Joseph's High School (Newry)
- ❖ St Joseph's High School (Crossmaglen)
- ❖ St Louis Grammar School (Kilkeel)
- ❖ St Mark's High School (Warrenpoint)
- ❖ St Mary's School (Newry)
- ❖ Cumann Cultúrtha Chluain Daimh
- ❖ Craobh Ó Méith de Chonradh na Gaeilge
- ❖ Cumann Gaelach Leath Chathail (CGLC)
- ❖ Coláiste Samhraidh Dhroichead Mhaigh Eo
- ❖ Cumann Gaelach Leath Chathail (CGLC)

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**Appendix 2 Strategic Relevance****2a An Overview of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML)**

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) is a European treaty (CETS 148) which was adopted in 1992 by the Council of Europe to protect and promote historical, regional and minority languages in Europe.

The Council of Europe is made up of representatives of 47 member countries whose purpose is to promote common and democratic principles based on The European Convention on Human Rights.

The Charter's purpose is primarily cultural and seeks to provide a structure by which state agencies and bodies can assist with the preservation of regional or minority languages.

It is now ratified across most of the EU and beyond, including non-EU countries such as Russia.

The Charter has been ratified by the UK which has recognised Welsh, Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Cornish, Manx, Scots and Ulster-Scots as regional and minority languages.

**2a1 Responsibilities that the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) places on Local Government.**

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages requires parties to base their policies on:

- ❖ The need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them; and
- ❖ The facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages in speech and writing in private and public life

The practical provisions of the Charter are mainly contained in:

- ❖ Part II which contains the Charter's general objectives and principles by which public authorities are required to base their policies, legislation and practice
- ❖ Part III which contains specific undertakings for measures relating to public authorities along with education, media, culture and economic and social life.

The languages nominated by British Government in respect of both Part II and III of the Charter are:

- ❖ Irish
- ❖ Scottish Gaelic
- ❖ Welsh



## AUDIT OF IRISH PROVISION IN THE NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

### 2a2 Relevance to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in respect of Part II of the Charter

The provisions relevant to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in relation to Part II of the Charter commits local Councils to the promotion of respect, understanding and tolerance of linguistic diversity. In practical terms this means that all Council policies and procedures should ensure:

- ❖ The facilitation and promotion of learning and research in respect of Irish and Ulster Scots
- ❖ That new or existing policy or procedures do not present a barrier to the promotion of either Irish or Ulster Scots
- ❖ The encouragement and facilitation of the use of Irish and Ulster Scots in speech and writing in public and private life
- ❖ The recognition of Irish and Ulster Scots as an expression of cultural wealth
- ❖ The need to take positive action to promote Irish and Ulster Scots in order to safeguard them both

### 2a3 Relevance to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in respect of Part III of the Charter

The provisions relevant to the Council in relation to Part III of the Charter can be found in Articles 10 and 12 respectively.

**Article 10** of the Charter applies in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council as the number of residents who are users of Irish justifies the measures specified below as far as this is reasonably possible:

- ❖ To ensure that users of Irish may submit oral or written applications/correspondence and receive a reply in Irish
- ❖ To ensure that users of Irish may validly submit documents in Irish
- ❖ To make available widely used administrative texts and forms for the population in Irish or in bilingual versions
- ❖ To encourage and permit the Council to draft documents in Irish
- ❖ To encourage and permit the use of Irish as well as English in debates in the Council chamber
- ❖ To encourage and permit the use of traditional and correct forms of place-names in Irish in respect of signage and logos containing place-names
- ❖ To allow the use of family names in Irish at the request of those concerned

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Article 12 of the Charter applies to cultural activities and facilities. To the extent Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is competent, have power or play a role, they should:

- ❖ Encourage initiatives specific to Irish and foster access to works produced in Irish
- ❖ Ensure that bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities within the Council make appropriate allowance for incorporating knowledge and use of Irish in their activities
- ❖ Promote measures to ensure that the bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities have at their disposal staff who have a full command of the Irish language, as well as of the language(s) of the rest of the population.
- ❖ Encourage and facilitate direct participation by the Irish Language community in the design, development and implementation of facilities and the planning of cultural activities

### **2a4: The relevance of the Charter in respect of Irish as opposed to other minority languages**

The Charter does not provide for the protection of migrant languages, which for example, could include Polish or Romanian, to name but two. The Charter protects only indigenous languages.

The speakers of those languages, and others, are protected via the normal domestic anti-discrimination legislation and safeguards which are in place were appropriate.

Therefore the only two languages which come under the umbrella of the Charter in Northern Ireland are Irish and Ulster Scots.

### **2b The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)**

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities to which the British Government is a party was drawn up within the Council of Europe by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Protection of National Minorities (CAHMIN). It was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 10 November 1994 and opened for signature by the Member States of the Council of Europe on 1 February 1995.

The Framework Convention is the first legally binding multilateral instrument devoted to the protection of national minorities. It contains a number of limited rights which are dependent upon numbers, need and demand.



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### 2c The Human Rights Act (1998)

The Human Rights Act 1998 includes the prohibition of discrimination in Article 14 which states:

*“The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this European Convention on Human Rights shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.”*

This right is only actionable against the State and public authorities as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998 and must be pleaded in relation to some other substantive right in the Convention. It should be noted that it is not necessary to establish an actual violation of another Article; if the claim comes within the ambit of another protected right then it is possible for the applicant to succeed on discrimination alone, even if the primary violation has not been established, or the Member State’s action has been found to come within one of the permissible exceptions to that right e.g. Belgian Linguistic Case (1967).

### 2d The Good Friday Agreement (1998)

The Good Friday Agreement (Section marked Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity: Economic, Social and Cultural Issues) also gives particular recognition to the Irish Language and sets out significant provisions for its public use in a new society. Specific pledges made by the British Government within the document state that:

*“In context of active consideration currently being given to the UK signing the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the British Government will in particular in relation to the Irish Language, where appropriate and where people so desire it:*

- ❖ *Facilitate and encourage the use of the language in speech and writing in public and private life where there is an appropriate demand*
- ❖ *Seek to remove, where possible restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of this language.”*

### 2e: St Andrew’s Agreement (2006)

In 2006, additional provisions for Irish were made in the St. Andrew’s Agreement - Annex B. This agreement makes explicit reference to the need for an Irish Language Act for Northern Ireland.

Whilst this commitment has yet to be realised in full, the commitment forms part of the strategic landscape in which the Council must operate.

### 2f: Department of Culture Arts and Leisure: Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language 2015 2035

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has published a Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language 2015-2035.



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In its Programme for Government 2011-2015, the Northern Ireland Executive included a Strategy for the Irish Language as a key building block under Priority 4 'Building a Strong and Shared Community'. This followed agreements between the British and Irish Governments, which led to the Northern Ireland (NI) Act 1998 being amended in 2006 to include a requirement for the Executive to "*adopt a Strategy setting out how it proposes to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language*".

The Irish Language Strategy sets out a roadmap for the language over the next 20 years in areas such as education, public services, the community and media, taking account of the needs of the Irish Language community and international best practice.

The key aims of the Strategy are to:

- ❖ support quality and sustainable acquisition and learning of the Irish Language
- ❖ enhance and protect the status and visibility of the Irish Language
- ❖ deliver quality and sustainable Irish Language networks and communities
- ❖ promote the Irish Language in a way that will contribute towards building a strong and shared community

Under the heading marked 'Administration' the Strategy refers specifically to local authorities, stating that they should:

- ❖ ensure that following the implementation of the Review of Public Administration and in line with the requirements of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages they provide effective Irish Language services
- ❖ maximise the provision of services through Irish including the use of Irish Language resources developed by Foras na Gaeilge such as the Helpline, Freagra, Aistear, and the Panel of Accredited Translators and Editors
- ❖ adopt Irish Language policies and plans and appoint Irish Language Officers
- ❖ initiate or expand facilities for the use of Irish in their Council and committee meetings
- ❖ increase the visibility of the Irish Language by publicising the availability of their Irish Language services
- ❖ provide an Irish or bilingual version of publications, official documents and forms in line with the approach of this Strategy and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- ❖ facilitate the proper preservation and signposting of Irish place-names and the naming of new housing developments; and
- ❖ encourage tourism and cultural initiatives through Irish

### 2g Department of Culture Arts and Leisure: Líofo 2015

In July 2011 Líofo 2015, a campaign promoted by the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure designed to encourage more people to speak the language, and break down the barriers around it was launched

Líofo, which means 'fluent' in Irish, aims to encourage people from all walks of life to sign up to be fluent in Irish by 2015. The original target was 1,000 participants. This has proved so successful that the target now sits at 10,000; with an expectation that it will be exceeded.



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The strategy recognises that the Irish Language brings economic benefits to local areas through the role it plays in contributing to social, physical and social regeneration.

### 2h The Programme for Government 2011-2015

In its Programme for Government 2011-2015, the Northern Ireland Executive included a Strategy for the Irish Language as a key building block under Priority 4 'Building a Strong and Shared Community'. This followed agreements between the British and Irish Governments, which led to the Northern Ireland (NI) Act 1998 being amended in 2006 to include a requirement for the Executive to "*adopt a Strategy setting out how it proposes to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language*".

### 2i OFMDFM Good Relations Strategic Document - Together: Building a United Community (TBaUC)

This strategic document details four themes:

- ❖ **Our Children and Young People** - to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building Good Relations
- ❖ **Our Shared Community** - to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to all
- ❖ **Our Safe Community** - to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety
- ❖ **Our Cultural Expression** - to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity, and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced

Whilst all of the four themes are important and relevant to the Irish Language community living in, the fourth theme, Our Cultural Expression, designed to promote and protect cultural expression is of particular significance.

### 2j Community Planning

The statutory Community Planning responsibility for the area has transferred to the new Council. Community planning is a process led by Councils, in conjunction with partners and communities, to develop and implement a shared vision for their area; a long term vision which relates to all aspects of community life and which also involves working together to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives. It is essential that the Irish Language community in the Council area are part of this discussion and decision-making process.



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### 2k Conradh na Gaeilge

Conradh na Gaeilge is the democratic forum which works on behalf of the Irish-speaking and Gaeltacht communities to promote the language throughout the whole of Ireland and around the world. Since its foundation on 31 July 1893, members of Conradh na Gaeilge have been actively advancing Irish in every aspect of life in Ireland, from legal and educational affairs to the development of new media and services through Irish.

Conradh na Gaeilge currently has over 180 branches in addition to numerous individual members, and every member of Conradh na Gaeilge works hard to promote the use of Irish within their own community. The organisation encourages the people of Ireland to respect and value our unique linguistic heritage, and gives us a fresh perspective and understanding of our culture through:

- ❖ advocacy
- ❖ education
- ❖ empowering communities
- ❖ entertainment and festivals
- ❖ raising awareness
- ❖ representation

### 2l Foras na Gaeilge

Foras na Gaeilge, the body responsible for the promotion of the Irish Language throughout the whole island of Ireland, was founded in 1999 in consequence of the Good Friday Agreement. Foras na Gaeilge has a role in advising administrations, North and South, as well as public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors on all matters relating to the Irish Language. This entails facilitating and encouraging the speaking and writing of Irish in the public and private arena where there is appropriate demand, in the context of Part III of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. Foras na Gaeilge's main functions in regard to the Irish Language are:

- ❖ facilitating and encouraging its use in speech and writing in public and private life in the South and, in the context of Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in Northern Ireland where there is appropriate demand
- ❖ advising both administrations, public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors
- ❖ undertaking supportive projects, and grant-aiding bodies and groups as considered necessary
- ❖ undertaking research, promotional campaigns, and public and media relations
- ❖ developing terminology and dictionaries
- ❖ supporting Irish-medium education and the teaching of Irish

As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme (2013-2016) designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council.



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<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Website-Options for the Provision of an Irish Language Website
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	R Mackin Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	R Mackin Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy

**Decisions required: Members are asked to note the contents of the Report attached and give consideration and agreement to the recommendation outlined in 3.0-3.1 in terms of the option for the provision of an Irish Language Website.**

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background:</b>
1.1	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is currently developing its new Corporate website and has to consider how it implements this in accordance with its Bilingualism Policy and Equality Scheme commitments.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues:</b>
2.1	In keeping with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Bilingualism Policy Section 8.2 - The Council's website will include an English and Irish format with the Irish language text updated in the English text where possible. Those pages receiving most user traffic, for example main front pages, will be available initially in English and Irish format. Headings of dynamic sections will also be of English and Irish format.
2.2	There are 2 key options for consideration in relation to the Irish Language Website: Option A: To build a fully functional, navigational, reduced content Irish Language Website which will operate in conjunction with the English website. Option B: The use of Google Translation Service where translation into Irish would be handled dynamically in page by Google's Translation engines.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendation:</b>
3.1	It is recommended that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council adopts Option A and builds a fully functional, navigational and reduced content Irish Language Website which will operate in conjunction with the English Website. This option is in line with the agreed progressive realisation approach to implementing the bilingualism policy.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	Additional resources required for Option A are: Costings for the Irish Language Website detailing build and maintenance as well as management are: 1. I.T. element: Initial Outlay £15,000 with monthly recurring costs of £2,500 for technical platform. 2. Human resource element: Costs of creation, migration and translations of content - £50,000 circa
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	The Irish Language Website will be delivered taking account of the Council's statutory duties to have due regard towards the promotion of equality of opportunity and regard towards the promotion of good relations.



<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Website Options for the provision of an Irish Language Website Report.

## Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Website

### Options for the Provision of an Irish Language Website

May 2016

#### Background

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is currently developing its new Corporate website and has to consider how it implements this in accordance with its Bilingualism Policy and Equality Scheme commitments.

The Bilingualism policy sets out the Council's commitment to facilitate and encourage the promotion and use of both the Irish Language and the English Language in the Council area and to ensure linguistic equality for all who avail of and/or provide Council services as far as is reasonably possible.

The aim of this policy is to build on the Council's commitment to celebrate diversity by:

1. The delivery of equality of opportunity for all who avail of and/or provide Council services using progressive realisation.
2. To fulfil Council's obligations as contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

In keeping with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Bilingualism Policy Section 8.2

*The Council's website will include an English and Irish format with the Irish language text updated in the English text where possible. Those pages receiving most user traffic, for example main front pages, will be available initially in English and Irish format. Headings of dynamic sections will also be of English and Irish format.*

#### Options

The Council is now proposing the following 2 options for consideration in relation to the Irish Language website. The Irish Language site will in terms of structure and navigation be a clone of the main website.

**Option A** : To build a fully functional, navigational, reduced content Irish Language website which will operate in conjunction with the English website.

An Irish Language website, whereby in terms of build, every page tool and function is catered equally in both version of the website i.e. English and Irish but the onus on ensuring that both versions are later maintained equally, would fall on Council Policy and workflows. However, this option is based on the principle of full navigation and reduced content, that while every page on the English language site would also be available on the Irish language version, a number of those pages would be presented, instead of with actual content – with an informational message stating "***this page is not currently available in Irish, click here to view it on the English Language version of the site***".



This option is in line with the agreed progressive realisation approach to implementing the bilingualism policy.

This option requires building 2 websites – one in English one in Irish, putting in the navigational structures. The key issues are time, resources and management as both will be managed separately but have one overarching web master and incur both the development costs and the costs of the providing the service. There is a current budget of £100,000 for the English website which will now be reviewed as follows to address the following additional costs:

Costings for the Irish Language Website detailing the cost of build and cost of maintenance and management are as follows:

1. I.T. element: Initial Outlay £15,000 with monthly recurring costs of £2,500 for technical platform.
2. Human Resource element: Costs of creation, migration and translation of content - £50,000 circa.

**Option B** : The use of Google Translation service.

This option which does not incur any cost or additional resources from Council would see translation into Irish (and a multitude of other languages) being handled dynamically in page, by Google's Translation engines.

### **Comparisons**

A listing of approaches taken by the other Councils in Northern Ireland and from a selection of the larger Councils in Republic Of Ireland is provided in Appendix 1. There is also information on a number of Welsh Councils and how they manage and promote the use of the Welsh language.

### **Equality Assessment**

Section 6 of Council's approved Equality Scheme, outlines arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide. Council has committed to ensuring information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community, and acknowledges that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. To ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted, Council has committed to monitor across all our functions in relation to access to information and services, and is required to report annually to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to this.

The primary purpose of this options paper is to inform decision-making on the development of the Council's new website, and how best to mainstream commitments made within the Council's Bilingualism Policy and Equality Scheme. From an equality of opportunity and good relations perspective the key issue is access to information wherein the information is communicated and the communication is appropriate and relevant. The paper explores two options. While both options may address this to a varying degree, in this case Option A would seem

to provide an enhanced basis on which to do this, and also provide a firm basis by which to monitor access to information and services.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council adopts **Option A** as detailed above and builds a fully functional, navigational and reduced content Irish Language website which will operate in conjunction with the English website.

Regina Mackin

Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Policy



## **Appendix 1**

The Councils in the north have a variety of websites. As there is no legislation yet in place to protect the Irish language there is not guidance as to what Councils must provide. To date the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is the only instrument that offers guidelines for Councils in relation to the Irish Language. Recently DCAL has issued supplementary Guidance for Councils on seven key areas in respect of the obligations in the Charter.

Below is a sample of Irish language provision on Council websites in the north:

### **1. Belfast City Council**

Belfast City Council do not have any Irish on the website pages but offer a facility to choose a language in Google Translate.

### **2. Derry City and Strabane District Council**

Derry City and Strabane District Council has a trilingual corporate brand (English, Irish and Ulster Scots) and has a link to Irish language services on the homepage. This provides information on a variety of services for Irish language speakers that the Council provides. The contact details for the Irish language office are also provided along with acknowledgement that the services are provided through funding from Foras na Gaeilge. This page also provides a link to the Irish language Unit's magazine. The Seachtain na Gaeilge magazine (March 2016) is currently available. This site invites Irish language speakers to contact the ILU if they wish to make applications or write to the Council in Irish.

### **3. Mid-Ulster District Council**

Mid-Ulster District Council has a bilingual corporate brand and links to its Irish Language Services. The information on these pages is available in Irish and English. It also has a link to information on Irish language classes and courses that are run throughout the district.

### **4. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council uses Google Translate

### **5. Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council has no Irish on the homepage and offers a choice of languages on Google Translate including Irish.

### **6. Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Ards and North Down Borough Council has no Irish on its home page but under languages offers a range of languages including Irish through Google Translate.

### **7. Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council**

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council does not have any Irish on its website and does not appear to offer any choice of languages or use Google Translate.

## **8. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has a bilingual corporate brand. On its website it uses Google Translate offering a range of languages including Irish.

## **9. Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council**

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council has no Irish on the homepage and offers a number of languages in Google Translate.

## **10. Mid and East Antrim**

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has no Irish on the homepage and offer choice of languages including Irish on Google Translate

Outlined below is a sample of the Irish language provision on Council websites in the Republic of Ireland.

### **1 Dublin City Council**

Dublin City Council have an Irish language Development Officer who services several pages on their corporate website including information:

The Official Languages Act 2003 requires all public bodies to publish a Language Scheme DCC have their current scheme 2015-2018 on the website. Services available in Irish through their Customer Service Centre. Information on network of conversation circles held in Council run libraries throughout the City. Bilingual newsletter for primary schools. Language Rights. Irish language events, Dublin City Street names, On-line payment.

Do not use Google Translate

### **2 Cork County Council**

Very dated site, All pages available in Irish, News not up to date.

Does not use Google Translate

### **3 Galway County Council**

Fully functioning bilingual site , News pages up to date in both languages, On line payments transfers user to English language web-site but a lot of these online payment facilities are hosted by central government sites eg Motor tax, Household Charges etc and are only available in English.

Does not use Google Translate



#### **4 Donegal County Council**

Dual sites, No on-line payment facility on the website in Irish or English, News section not up to date with English pages.

Does not use Google Translate

#### **5 Kerry County Council**

Dual sites, News not completely up-to-date March , On line payment transfers you to central government payment facility for Motor tax or to English language pages.

Does not use Google Translate

The following is an example of how Welsh Councils have developed their websites

#### **1. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

Completely bilingual – online payments though managed through the English site also provides information in Welsh if you choose Welsh. The A-Z is takes into account in the fact that the Welsh alphabet has 28 letters many of which are different from the English alphabet. This site appears to be fully cloned.

Does not use Google Translate

#### **2. Bridgend County Borough Council**

Completely bilingual, A-Z – 28 letters in Welsh, Appears to be fully cloned.

Does not use Google Translate

#### **3. Caerphilly County Borough Council**

Completely bilingual however while the payments on line are all in Welsh when you click to make a payment you are transferred to a site that hosts the online payment and everything was in English only.

Does not use Google Translate

#### **4. Cardiff City Council**

Totally bilingual including payment on line

Does not use Google Translate

#### **5. Carmarthenshire County Council**

Completely bilingual including on line payment

Does not use Google Translate

#### **6. Ceredigion County Council**

Completely bilingual including on-line payments

Does not use Google Translate

### **7. Conwy Borough Council**

Completely bilingual including on-line payments

Does not use Google Translate

### **8. Isle of Anglesey County Council**

Completely bilingual and have a Council app appMôn that is available in Welsh and English which gives feedback on surveys, consultations etc, Also tweets in Welsh on home page

Does not use Google Translate.



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on Decade of Centenaries 2016 civic initiatives
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer

**Decisions required:**

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration and agreement to the following in relation to the civic initiatives to acknowledge / recognise the Centenaries of the Easter Rising and Battle of the Somme:

- Commemorative service to recognise the Battle of the Somme in Newcastle Centre
- Commemorative artwork to recognise Patrick Rankin - public art commission to be £30000.
- Agreement in principle to an overall budget of up to £40000 towards said initiatives.

**1.0****Purpose and Background:**

1.1

Council has agreed to organise a commemorative service to recognise the Battle of the Somme in September 2016 and, in relation to the Easter Rising, to commission an artwork in relation to Patrick Rankin.

At the Councillors' Decade of Centenaries Working Group meeting 13 May 2016 the following was agreed:

1. Agreement in principle to an overall budget of up to £40000 towards agreed civic initiatives to acknowledge / recognise the Centenaries of the Easter Rising and Battle of the Somme i.e. commemorative service to recognise the Battle of the Somme and Commemorative artwork to recognise Patrick Rankin.
2. Commemorative service to recognise the Battle of the Somme to be held in Newcastle Centre.
3. To proceed with public art commission for Patrick Rankin commemorative artwork at a value of £30000.

**2.0****Key issues:**

2.1

Council has not set aside monies in the 2016/17 budget in relation to the two proposed initiatives, Council is asked to agree in principle to an overall budget of up to £40000 towards the said initiatives.

**3.0****Recommendations:**

3.1

- Commemorative service to recognise the Battle of the Somme in Newcastle Centre
- Commemorative artwork to recognise Patrick Rankin - public art commission to be £30000.
- Agreement in principle to an overall budget of up to £40000 towards said initiatives.

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	<p>While Council has not set aside monies in the 2016/17 budget in relation to the two proposed initiatives, Council is asked to agree to an overall budget of up to £40000 towards the said initiatives.</p> <p>Council will seek to allay associated costs through Council's Good Relations Action Plan under the Our Cultural Expression theme, and the PEACE IV Programme.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	The Council programme will be delivered taking account of the Council's statutory duties to have due regard towards the promotion of equality of opportunity and regard towards the promotion of good relations.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: N/A



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Revised Terms of Reference for Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group.
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer

### Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration and agreement to the revised Terms of Reference for the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group.

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background:</b>
1.1	<p>The Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group is a facilitated discussion space, serving as a 'barometer of opinion', playing a role in considering and discussing politically sensitive and contentious issues, with a view of reaching a common understanding, agreement and actions which will enhance and promote equality of opportunity and good relations.</p> <p>The revised Terms of Reference seeks to build upon the allocation of membership which shall be respectful of the party political representation on the Council, take account of the changing positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and shall acknowledge majority/minority political party dynamics whilst taking account of the need to create a space for minority political voices. No single political party shall hold more than two membership places in any year, with the two largest political parties being entitled to hold two membership positions at all times.</p> <p>The revised term of reference outlines membership shall be composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Chairperson</li> <li>• Council Deputy Chairperson</li> <li>• One Councillor nominated from each of the following parties - Sinn Fein, SDLP, DUP, UUP, TUV, Alliance and 1 Independent member.</li> <li>• Further nominees, as required, from the two largest political parties in line with their entitlement to hold a maximum of two membership positions.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues:</b>
2.1	<p>The revised terms outlines that no single political party shall hold more than two membership places in any year, with the two largest political parties being entitled to hold two membership positions at all times. Implementing this change takes account of the changing positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, acknowledges majority/minority political party dynamics, and ensures and protects access for minority political party representation within this facilitated discussion space.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations:</b>

3.1	To agree to the revised Terms of Reference for the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	No resources implications are anticipated.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	The revised terms of reference takes of the Council's statutory duties to have due regard towards the promotion of equality of opportunity and regard towards the promotion of good relations. Membership shall be respectful of the party political representation on the Council, take account of the changing positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and shall acknowledge majority/minority political party dynamics whilst taking account of the need to create a space for minority political voices. No single political party shall hold more than two membership places in any year, with the two largest political parties being entitled to hold two membership positions at all times.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix I: Revised Terms of Reference for Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group.



## **COUNCILLORS' EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS REFERENCE GROUP**

### **- Terms of Reference -**

#### **Scope:**

The Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group will primarily be a facilitated discussion space. It will serve as a 'barometer of opinion', playing a role in considering and discussing politically sensitive and contentious issues, including those relating to events, centenaries, policy and procedure, single issues requiring specific consideration for advice, and guidance on the establishment of wider good relations fora etc with a view of reaching a common understanding, agreement and actions which will enhance and promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

#### **Membership:**

Membership shall be respectful of the party political representation on the Council, take account of the changing positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and shall acknowledge majority/minority political party dynamics whilst taking account of the need to create a space for minority political voices. No single political party shall hold more than two membership places in any year, with the two largest political parties being entitled to hold two membership positions at all times.

Membership shall be composed of:

- Council Chairperson
- Council Deputy Chairperson
- One Councillor nominated from each of the following parties - Sinn Fein, SDLP, DUP, UUP, TUV, Alliance and 1 Independent member.
- Further nominees, as required, from the two largest political parties in line with their entitlement to hold a maximum of two membership positions.

#### **Chairperson:**

Council Chairperson will chair meetings.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson will chair the meeting. If both are not present, the meeting will select a Chair from those present.

#### **Meetings:**

The Equality and Good Relations Reference Group does not have decision making powers, it makes recommendations only. Recommendations arising will be tabled at the Council's Strategic Planning and Resources Committee for consideration.

It does not operate to any quorum and meetings proceed regardless of numbers in attendance.

Meetings will be convened by the Chief Executive.

**Officers:**

Chief Executive, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance, Equality Officer.

**Press:**

Not open to the press.

**Public:**

Not open to the public.



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Request to extend Shopmobility Scheme in Newcastle
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Colin Moffett, Equality Officer Marie Ward, Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

### Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration and agreement to approve the recommendation outlined at section 3.

#### 1.0 Purpose and Background:

1.1 The predecessor Down District Council agreed at a CMT meeting in October 2014 to initiate a one year pilot Shopmobility scheme in Newcastle at a cost of £7000 via Council reserves.

The notice of motion considered by Down District Council was as follows:

*"Down District Council supports the introduction of a shopmobility scheme in Newcastle. Shopmobility is a scheme which lends manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters to members of the public with limited mobility to shop and to visit leisure and commercial facilities within a town. The proposed initiative will also be a positive attraction to tourists, some of whom have a disability. This particular user group will normally have additional family or friends who will also become users of the town's facilities."*

1.2 The scheme was based in Newcastle Leisure Centre, and managed by Council staff.

Shopmobility Belfast provided the equipment, including training for Leisure Centre staff and volunteers and servicing of the equipment. At a meeting on 13 November 2014, CMT was advised insurance liability was written into the Shopmobility contract.

1.3 The total cost of £7000 for one year included:

- 4 electric mobility scooters
- 3 manual wheelchairs
- 3 x six-monthly service for the scooters and wheelchairs
- servicing to include free call-outs, parts and labour
- training and management

#### 2.0 Key issues:

- 2.1
- The shopmobility scheme was used 80 times during the pilot period.
  - Council has not set an amount against said initiative in the 2016/2017 budgets.
  - This is a Single Tender Action.
  - Council does not provide financial assistance to a shopmobility scheme based in Newry at the Buttercrane Shopping Centre and the Quays Shopping and Leisure Complex.

	While a decision to continue with the scheme in Newcastle may raise expectation for expanding the service across the Council area, it must be borne in mind the pilot scheme was in relation to a specific service operated by Council from a Council facility.
2.2	<p>The initiative fits with the following Newry, Mourne and Down District Council strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become one of the premier tourism destinations on the island of Ireland.</li> <li>• Supported improved health and well-being outcomes.</li> <li>• Empowered and improved the capacity of our communities.</li> <li>• Transformed and modernised the Council, providing accessible as well as value for money services.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations:</b>
3.1	To extend the contract with Shopmobility to the end of March 2017.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	<p>The costing provided by Shopmobility Belfast to extend the Shopmobility Scheme in Newcastle is £7000, and will include service and equipment provision, maintenance, and training and management.</p> <p>Council has not set an amount against said initiative in the 2016/2017 budgets.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	<p>From a Corporate perspective this proposal takes account of the Council's Section 75 statutory duties, and is consistent with legal commitments made within Council's Equality Scheme requiring Council to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations within strategic and operational business plans.</p> <p>The initiative has potential to have a positive impact for people with mobility issues and fits with Council's disability statutory duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 which requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and</li> <li>• to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the proposed initiative will also be a positive attraction to tourists, some of whom have a disability.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	N/A



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	European Rural Network for Job Mobility – ERN4mob Project
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Justyna McCabe, Diversity & Inclusion Projects Co-Ordinator
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Eddy Curtis, Director of Strategic Planning & Performance

<b>Decisions required:</b>	
To consider recommendations outlined in 3.0	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose and Background:</b>
	<p>The project aims to connect rural municipalities from 6 different EU countries in order to lay down the foundations for the European Rural Network for Job Mobility particularly in the field of social inclusion with reference to ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Since January 2016 two project meetings have taken place and were attended by NMD Council representatives. 3rd meeting/conference is scheduled for September 2016 and will be hosted by the Portuguese partner. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council will host 4<sup>th</sup> project meeting/conference in December 2016.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Key issues:</b>
2.1	<p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is one of the 6 EU partners in the project. Our involvement and experience in previous European projects in the area of social inclusion is highlighted as being of particular benefit to the partnership.</p> <p>At the last project meeting in May 2016 it was agreed that it is crucial that future meetings are attended by the same representatives from partner organisations to ensure consistency in project delivery.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recommendations:</b>
3.1	It is recommended that the same Council representatives attend future project meetings (as per project plan) to ensure consistency in project delivery.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1	Project 100% funded by the EU.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications:</b>
5.1	The project has a positive impact on equality and good relations issues in the District with reference to minority ethnic communities.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	None

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategic Planning and Resources</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	PEACE IV
<b>Date:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager Justyna McCabe, Social Inclusion & Diversity Projects Coordinator

### **Decisions Required**

The following recommendations are for approval:

- The elected member representation on the Peace IV Partnership will reflect the Councils Equality and Good Relations reference group.
- Two applications to be submitted to SEUPB capital schemes for the first deadline Derryleckalgh (with a cross border element) and the second for Camlough and Ballynahinch (subject to group approval).

#### 1.0 **Purpose & Background**

##### 1.1 **Local Council plan:**

##### Final Partnership arrangement:

The proposal for the final partnership will be to reflect the Councils Equality and Good Relations working group (Updated terms of reference attached). This will make the composition up to 9 Elected Members (one year there will be 10) and 9 Social Partners. The Social Partner positions will be allocated as follows 1 for each DEA with an additional partner for each Newry and Downpatrick given the population densities. There will also be representation requested from the Statutory agencies within the District.

The Social Partner positions have been advertised with a closing date of 22 June with interviews to be held on 29 June. Elected members will be conducting the interviews with the assistance of Justyna McCabe. There will be an introductory meeting of the Partnership week commencing 4 July and another meeting in the last week in July prior to submission of the stage 2 plan.

The Partnership will link to the Community Planning Safety and Good Relations thematic group through a reporting mechanism.

Due to the restriction on the management cost for the Peace IV plan it will now be delivered over a 40 month period with 36 months delivery and 4 months for Post project evaluation and final claims.

##### Capital Schemes:

The opening date for the first round of capital applications will be October 2016 and the second round in January 2017. It is proposed to submit the Derryleckalgh Playing Fields in the first round of applications and create a cross border linkage with Louth County Council through the Memorandum of Understanding. The second round of applications would



	include the Camlough Community Centre and the Ballynahich scheme as one application with joined up programming. These will be subject to community participation in these applications and hence why they will be submitted in the second call for funding.
2.0	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
2.1	There are potentially a number of issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The management cost for the Council Peace plan submission is 12% and therefore the timeframe for implementation will be 40 months.</li> </ul>
3.0	<b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b>
3.1	Ongoing Officer time.
4.0	<b><u>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</u></b>
4.1	This will be included as part of the Stage 1 and 2 applications.
5.0	<b><u>Appendices</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Updated Terms of Reference for the Equality and Good Relations Reference Group</li> </ul>

## **COUNCILLORS' EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS REFERENCE GROUP**

### **- Terms of Reference -**

#### **Scope:**

The Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group will primarily be a facilitated discussion space. It will serve as a 'barometer of opinion', playing a role in considering and discussing politically sensitive and contentious issues, including those relating to events, centenaries, policy and procedure, single issues requiring specific consideration for advice, and guidance on the establishment of wider good relations fora etc with a view of reaching a common understanding, agreement and actions which will enhance and promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

#### **Membership:**

Membership shall be respectful of the party political representation on the Council, take account of the changing positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and shall acknowledge majority/minority political party dynamics whilst taking account of the need to create a space for minority political voices. No single political party shall hold more than two membership places in any year, with the two largest political parties being entitled to hold two membership positions at all times.

Membership shall be composed of:

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- Council Deputy Chairperson
- One Councillor nominated from each of the following parties - Sinn Fein, SDLP, DUP, UUP, TUV, Alliance and 1 Independent member.
- Further nominees, as required, from the two largest political parties in line with their entitlement to hold a maximum of two membership positions.

#### **Chairperson:**

Council Chairperson will chair meetings.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson will chair the meeting. If both are not present, the meeting will select a Chair from those present.

#### **Meetings:**

The Equality and Good Relations Reference Group does not have decision making powers, it makes recommendations only. Recommendations arising will be tabled at the Council's Strategic Planning and Resources Committee for consideration.

It does not operate to any quorum and meetings proceed regardless of numbers in attendance.

Meetings will be convened by the Chief Executive.

**Officers:**

Chief Executive, Director of Strategic Planning and Performance, Equality Officer.

**Press:**

Not open to the press.

**Public:**

Not open to the public.



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategy, Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<i>Sister Cities/Twinning</i>
<b>Date:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
<b><u>Decisions Required</u></b>	
The following recommendation is for approval:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocation of £1000 to Maidens of Mourne to assist with the participation of the Southern Pines maiden.</li> </ul>	
1.0	<b><u>Purpose &amp; Background</u></b>
1.1	As part of the annual Maidens of Mourne event they will be hosting a maiden from our Sister City Southern Pines. To assist the group to enable this it is proposed to allocate £1000 towards the event for the Southern Pines maiden participation. This will assist in further developing the relationship between the two Districts and widening out the participation in activity in the two areas.
2.0	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Without this assistance the group will not be able to host the maiden.</li> </ul>
3.0	<b><u>Resource Implications</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£1000 from the Sister Cities budget.</li> </ul>
4.0	<b><u>Appendices</u></b>
	None.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	Social Investment Fund
<b>Date:</b>	16 June 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Sonya Burns, Programmes Manager
<b><u>Decisions Required</u></b>	
The following recommendation is for approval:	
<p>Application to the Landfill Community Fund to solely be for Downpatrick Football Club and additional allocation required for Ballyhornan to be off set from Downpatrick Football Club allocation.</p>	
1.0	<b><u>Purpose &amp; Background</u></b>
1.1	Currently the Council are in receipt of a Letter of Offer from the Executive for the Community Operated Facilities. This letter covers three 3g pitches of which two are in the Council area. As part of Councils commitment to these schemes match funding has been allocated through the reserves for Ballyhornan (£105,000) and Downpatrick (£150,000). Another element of match funding for both at the time of submission was from the Community Landfill Fund (administered by the Ulster Wildlife Trust). As a condition of the letter of offer for these schemes Council has to secure the match funding. From the time of the original submission to now there has been a change in the regulations in relation to the Community Landfill Fund in that projects must be located within a 10 mile radius of the landfill site. In this situation it means that only the Downpatrick Football Club will meet this requirement. It is therefore proposed that one submission for Downpatrick Football Club is submitted for the full allocation (£153,115.15). This means Ballyhornan require £125,000 as their match fund from Council reserves and Downpatrick require £96,884.85 from reserves.
2.0	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
2.1	Drawing down the match funding in a timely manner.
3.0	<b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b>
3.1	A total of £221,884.85 from Councils reserves.
4.0	<b><u>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</u></b>
4.1	There is an inclusion of equality and good relations within the submission and Economic Appraisals.
5.0	<b><u>Appendices</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ None.</li> </ul>