



Subject:	Draft Language Strategy Action Plan
Date:	24 th May 2024
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Russell Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer Michael Johnston, Language Officer Colm McGuigan, Irish Language Officer

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 20%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report or summary of main issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on recent progress on the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this report; • Approve the amended version of the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	Belfast City Council conducted a consultation on the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan between 16 th October 2023 and 22 nd January 2024. The public and interested parties were encouraged to give feedback through an online survey available in English and Irish and were able to make submissions in writing. A range of consultation sessions and stakeholder engagement sessions were also conducted by Council officers.
3.2	The consultation resulted in a range of amendments to the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan. This revised plan was presented to members at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 19 th April 2024.
3.3	While there was broad agreement with the revised Action Plan, members suggested some further amendments to the Action Plan, specifically, actions in relation to the development of a Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme and recurring annual funding for a large-scale event to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge.
3.4	The proposals in relation to Seachtain na Gaeilge also included a commitment to compiling and publishing a comprehensive programme of events for all events, not just those organised by Council. It was also proposed that the Council would organise a comprehensive calendar of events and place particular emphasis on Irish language branding, posters, exhibitions in City Hall and use of Irish at Council meetings during the festival.
3.5	These proposals are likely to require additional significant resource commitments, including staffing resource. It is therefore proposed that there is a commitment to undertaking exploratory work on these proposals as part of the Action Plan. A detailed report will come to the Language Strategy Working Group in relation to Seachtain na Gaeilge 2025 in the coming months.
3.6	Members will note that the amendments suggested at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee have been changed slightly for their inclusion in the Draft Language Strategy

	Action Plan. This is to give officers the opportunity to explore the full scope of these suggested amendments and the operational and resource issues associated with them.
3.5	<p><u>Next steps</u></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the amended version of the Draft Language Strategy Action Plan;
	Monitoring and Reporting
3.6	A quarterly progress update will be brought to the Language Strategy Working Group outlining progress in the implementation of the Action Plan.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.7	None associated with this report.
	Equality, good relations or rural needs implications
3.8	The Draft Language Strategy Action Plan has been subjected to a Section 75 Equality Screening and to a Rural Needs Impact Assessment.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Draft Language Strategy Action Plan