



Subject:	Motion – Irish Language Street Signage Policy
Date:	4 th February, 2020
Reporting Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider a motion on graffiti, which will be referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 3 rd February.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider the motion and if the proposal is agreed a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed will be brought back.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	At the Council meeting on 3 rd February, the following motion was proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor McLaughlin:
3.2	<i>“This Council has one of the most restrictive policies of any council in the North in regards to Irish Language Street Signage Policy.</i>

	<p><i>Currently, the policy is that you need a 1/3rd of the eligible electorate in a street to sign a petition which starts the process. Once the process has been initiated, a letter is sent to everyone in that street who is on the electoral register asking if they consent to have bilingual signage installed. The resident has three options, namely, Yes, No and Don't Care. For the process to come to a successful conclusion, 2/3rds of the total electorate in the street need to consent to yes. If a letter is not returned, it is considered by the Council as saying that they don't consent for the bilingual signage. Furthermore, where residents send the survey back saying 'Don't Care, this is also considered to be a negative response.</i></p>
3.3	<p><i>If we, as Elected Members were held to the same standard as this policy in the Local Government elections, not one Member would have been returned to serve on this Council, as we would not have met those restrictive parameters. The Council's Language Strategy refers to increasing the visibility of the Irish Language in our City. However, it is essential not to impose the Irish language on residents if the majority of them in a street do not consent to it.</i></p>
3.4	<p><i>Therefore, this Council will amend its Irish language street signage policy to the following:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. continue with the 1/3rd of the eligible electorate in the street to initiate the process;</i> <i>2. change the policy to reflect that it will be the majority of respondents to the survey that will decide if the process has been successful. Therefore, it will be 50% +1 of respondents that will determine if the petition to erect bilingual signage has been successful. Non-respondents will not be considered as a negative response; and</i> <i>3. those respondents who respond as 'Don't Care' are not considered to be a negative response and will be treated as a void vote."</i>
3.5	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion will be referred without debate to the People and Communities Committee.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None</p>

4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None