

Highlights from the Language Strategy Action Plans 2018-present

1. Irish Language:

- **March 2019: Seachtain na Gaeilge / Irish Language Week** event for 160 children from six schools in the City Hall
- **August 2019:** Supported **Féile an Phobail's** Irish intensive language event for families in Falls Park
- **March 2020: Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish Language Week** event for 220 children from 8 schools in Belfast City Hall. Council assisted with transport for schools who could not afford this
- **February 2021:** Article on Interlink by staff member on speaking Irish for **Mother Language Day**
- **March 2021:** showcased four short videos on the Council's YouTube channel from people who work in the Irish language sector talking about their careers, in Irish, and the opportunities for young people who might be considering a career using the Irish language for **Seachtain na Gaeilge / Irish Language Week**
- **March 2021:** Hosted short testimonials from staff members on Interlink speaking about the importance of learning Irish for **Seachtain na Gaeilge / Irish Language Week**
- Council's representative on external language fora such as the **West Belfast Irish Language Network / Lónra Gaeilge Iarthar Bhéal Feirste; Belfast Irish Language Forum** and **Glór na nGael's Irish Language Business Awards Steering Group**

2. Ulster-Scots Language:

- **November 2019:** Funded a **Pocket Guide to Ulster-Scots Place Names in Belfast** published by the Ulster-Scots Agency. The Pocket Guide was launched during **Ulster-Scots Leid Week**
- **January 2020:** Organised a range of events including a schools event and a community afternoon tea event during **Burns' Week** in the City Hall in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency and the Ulster-Scots Community Network
- **January 2021:** article on Interlink promoting **Burns' Week**

3. Sign Languages:

- **March 2019:** Signed up to a **British Deaf Association British Sign Language & Irish Sign Language Charter**
- **May 2019:** Launch of the **Sign Video Pilot** scheme. The service can be accessed on the Council's website, Belfast Zoo and the Olympia Leisure Centre
- **2019:** Translated **Sign Language videos** introduced at Tropical Ravine and the Visitors' Exhibition at City Hall. The videos are accessed on the Council's YouTube account and are shown in three different languages; British Sign Language, Irish Sign Language and International Sign Language
- **March 2021:** article on Interlink for **Sign Language Week**
- Hold quarterly meeting of **Sign Language Users' Forum**

4. New Communities' Languages:

- **November 2019:** Support and launch of '**Valuing Languages**' film showcasing 15 languages used in Belfast
- **February 2020:** Organised event for **International Mother Tongue Day** with Arabic, Irish and African language speakers
- **February 2021:** Issued press release for **International Mother Tongue Day**; published an article on Interlink by staff member who speaks Tamil and Malay for **International Mother Tongue Day**

5. Languages and communications for disabled people:

- **December 2019:** Organised event for **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** in the City Hall in partnership with Employers' for Disability NI
- **April 2019:** Introduced new **portable hearing loop systems** at several Council venues including City Hall, Belfast Castle, Malone House and Roselawn Cemetery.
- **December 2020:** article on Interlink for **International Day for People with Disabilities**
- **2020:** development of **new dedicated web** page on Council website to **support people with disabilities**
- Hold quarterly meeting of **Disability Advisory Panel**

6. Staff training

- Compiled internal **audit** of related policies to inform policy development and staff capacity building
- **June 2019:** Held event for Council staff and representatives from other public bodies to discuss potential areas for collaboration in relation to the **Language Strategy**
- **October 2019:** Delivered pilot '**Introduction to British Sign Language**' course to Council front-line staff
- **December 2019:** Delivered two-hour pilot **General Awareness** staff training on linguistic diversity