



An Chart Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh

Feidhmiú na Cairte i leith na Gaeilge 2009 - 2013

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Application of the Charter in Respect of the Irish Language 2009-2013



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Gluais

BTTÉ	Bord Turasóireachta Thuaisceart Éireann
CATT	Comhaireacht Thuaidh-Theas
CBÉ	Comhairle na Breataine-na hÉireann
CCG	Ciste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge
CETRM	Cairt na hEorpa do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh
CICB	Coimisinéirí Ioncaim agus Custaim Na Banríona
COMEX	Coiste na Saineolaithe ar an Chairt
CTR	Comhalta an Tionóil Reachtúla
ENR	Eagras Neamhrialtasach
GIFC	Grúpa Idir rannach ar Fheidhmiú Na Cairte
MTC	Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais
OTAG	Oiliúint Theicniciúil agus Ghairmiúil
OTB	Oideachas Trí Bhéarla
OTG	Oideachas Trí Ghaeilge
PAD	Páirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach
PAU	Páirtí Aontachtach Uladh
PSDLO	Páirtí Sóisialta agus Daonlathach an Lucht Oibre
RA	Ríocht Aontaithe
RCEF	Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta
RFF	Roinn Fostaíochta agus Foghlama
RFR	Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí
ROTÉ	Roinn Oideachais TÉ
SF	Sinn Féin
TOIC	Teastas Oideachais IarChéime
TRM	Teanga Réigiúnach nó Mionlaigh

Glossary

BIC	British-Irish Council
COMEX	Committee of Experts on the Charter
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DEL	Department of Employment and Learning
DENI	Department of Education NI
DRD	Department of Regional Development
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
EME	English-Medium Education
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
ICIG	Interdepartmental Charter Implementation Group
ILBF	Irish Language Broadcast Fund
IME	Irish-Medium Education
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NITB	NI Tourist Board
NSMC	North-South Ministerial Council
PGCE	Post graduate Certificate of Education
RML	Regional or Minority Language
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SF	Sinn Féin
TVT	Technical and Vocational Training
UK	United Kingdom
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

1.0

Tuairiscí POBAL chuig Coiste na Saineolaithe (COMEX)

I mí Aibreáin 2013, le cuairt suímh ar an Cheathrú Timthriall Faireacháin ar an Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh (CETRM) a éascú, chuir POBAL, scátheagras abhcóideachta na Gaeilge, réamh-dréachtcháipéis ar fáil do Choiste na Saineolaithe (COMEX) de chuid Chomhairle na hEorpa. Ina dhiaidh sin, chuir muid anailís agus ábhar breise leis agus sheol an críocheighneacht go foirmeálta chuig an COMEX. Mar sin, tugann an tuairisc seo cuntas is mionsonraithe ar na ceisteanna a éiríos as an dóigh ar fheidhmigh an Ríocht Aontaithe (RA) an CETRM maidir le Gaeilge le linn an Cheathrú Timthriall Faireacháin, go Bealtaine 2013.

2.0

Tráchtairacht POBAL ar Cheathrú Tuairisc Thréimhsiúil an Ríocht Aontaithe ar fheidhmiú na Cairte

2.1

B'éigean do rialtas an RA an Ceathrú Tuairisc a chur ar fáil i mí Bealtaine 2012. Ach, níor cuireadh isteach í go mí an Mhárta 2013, deich mí mall. Seo an dara tréimhse faireacháin as a chéile lenar tharla moill den chineál.

2.2

Sa Tríú Tuairisc ag COMEX, Coiste na Saineolaithe ar an Chairt (Aibreán 2010), chuir na Saineolaithe a n-imní in iúl (parag 12, leath 5) nár chuir an RA tuairisc shásúil ar fáil sa Tríú Timthriall Faireacháin (2005-2008). Is ábhar imní é nach bhfuil i gCeathrú Tuairisc Faireacháin an RA ach 60 leathanach agus í gann ar chomhtháthú agus ar bhuneolas i dtaca le dualgais dhíreacha an Stáit i leith an CETRM. Ina áit sin, is cosúil nach bhfuil sa Tuairisc ach ionchur ó na riaracháin chineachta sa Bhreatain Bheag, in Albain, chomh maith le rud beag eolais faoi Pháirt II ar an Choirnis agus ar Ghaeilge Mhanann. Céim siar é, dar linn, an ganntanas eolais seo ar dhualgais an RA faoin CETRM.

1.0

POBAL's reports for the Committee of Experts (COMEX)

In order to facilitate the site visit in April 2013 for the Fourth Monitoring Cycle on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), POBAL, the umbrella advocacy organisation for the Irish speaking community made available a draft preliminary document to the Committee of Experts (COMEX) of the Council of Europe. We subsequently added additional analysis and material and sent this finalised submission formally to the COMEX. This report therefore provides a detailed account of issues arising from the application by the UK of the ECRML in respect of Irish during the Fourth monitoring cycle, up to May 2013.

2.0

POBAL's Commentary on the UK's Fourth Periodical Report on the Application of the Charter

2.1

The UK government was required to provide its Fourth Report in May 2012. However, it was not submitted until March 2013, ten months late. This is the second consecutive monitoring period in which such delays have occurred.

2.2

In the third COMEX report (April 2010), the Experts express concern (parag 12, page 5) at the failure of the UK in the Third Monitoring Cycle (2005-2008) to provide an adequate report. It is a matter of concern that the UK's Fourth Monitoring Report consists of only 60 pages and lacks coherence and basic information regarding the State party's direct responsibilities in respect of the ECRML. Instead, the bulk of the report appears to consist of input from the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland, as well as some information under Part II on Cornish and Manx. We regard the lack of detailed reporting on UK responsibilities under the ECRML as a step backwards.

2.3

I gcás na Gaeilge i dTuaisceart na hÉireann, níl eolas i dtuairisc an RA ach ar ghlacadh an stáisiúin teilifíse Ghaeilge (nach bhfuil á chistiú ach ag an rialtas Éireannach), agus ar an Chiste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge TÉ (atá á chistiú ó Westminster). Is ábhar 'coimeádta' í an chraoltóireacht agus is cuí go dtagródh rialtas an RA di. Ach, ní hí an chraoltóireacht an t-aon ábhar 'coimeádta', agus is ábhar díomá é nár luaigh rialtas an RA a chuid dualgas eile i dtaca leis an teanga Ghaeilge faoin CETRM, maidir le freagracht fhoriomlán an RA, mar shampla, leis an CETRM a chur i bhfeidhm; maidir le gealltanais chonartha idirnáisiúnta don Ghaeilge i gComhaontuithe Aoine an Chéasta agus Chill Rìmhinn; maidir le Comhlachtaí Corónach RA, teagasc na Gaeilge i gcóras oideachais na Sasana, teorainneacha agus inimirce agus réimsí eile forchoimeádta.

2.4

Níl aon eolas i dtuairisc an RA faoi ábhair 'chineachta' sa Tuaisceart. Ina thuairisc i mí an Aibreáin 2010, luaigh COMEX nár thug rialtas an RA tuairisc cheana féin ar Thuaisceart na hÉireann, agus áitíonn sé ar údarais an RA seasamh lena n-oibleagáid de réir Airteagal 15 an CETRM. Creidimid gur sháraigh rialtas an RA arís eile riachtanais atá ina gceangal dlí orthu faoi Pháirt IV den CETRM. Is ábhar imní dúinn, cionn is gur theip air a chinntiú go gcomhlíonfaí a n-oibleagáidí tuairiscithe, gur tarraingíodh amhras ar an phróiseas faireacháin taobh istigh den CETRM féin, agus dá bharr sin, ar an mheicníocht feidhmithe. Luann tuairisc an RA, 'd'ainneoin gur iarr Rialtas an RA arís agus arís, níor aontaigh an rialtas cineachta i dTuaisceart na hÉireann ar chion a chur leis an tuairisc seo a léireodh tuairimí agus gníomhaíochtaí Fheidhmeannas Thuaisceart na hÉireann a bhaineann leis na ceisteanna sin a bhfuil siad freagrach faoi bheartas astu. Is trua le Rialtas an RA gur mar sin atá agus tá súil aige dáiríre go réiteofar an cás in am don chéad tuairisc thréimhsiúil eile.' Ach ní thugann sé tuairisc ar aon ghníomhaíocht leis an chás a fheabhsú.

2.3

In the case of the Irish language in Northern Ireland, the UK Report contains information only on reception of the Irish language Television station (funded entirely by the Irish government), and the NI Irish Language Broadcast Fund (funded by Westminster). Broadcasting is a 'reserved' matter and it is appropriate for the UK government to comment on it. However, broadcasting is not the only 'reserved' matter, and it is disappointing to see that the UK government has made no comment on its other responsibilities in respect of the Irish language under the ECRML, for example in relation to UK responsibility overall for the implementation of the ECRML; in relation to the international treaty commitments to the Irish language in the Good Friday and St Andrews' Agreements; in relation to UK Crown bodies, the teaching of Irish in the education system in England, borders and immigration and other 'reserved' areas.

2.4

The UK report contains no information about 'devolved' matters in the North. In its April 2010 report, the COMEX notes the previous reporting failure of the UK government in respect of Northern Ireland, and urges the UK authorities to comply with their obligation in accordance with Article 15 of the ECRML. We believe that the UK government is once more in breach of its legally binding requirements under Part IV of the ECRML. We are concerned that this failure to ensure that reporting obligations are fulfilled compromises the monitoring process within the ECRML itself, and therefore the mechanism for enforcement. The UK report notes, 'despite repeated requests from the UK Government, the devolved administration in Northern Ireland has been unable to agree a contribution to this Report reflecting the views and actions of the Northern Ireland Executive relating to those issues for which they have policy responsibility. The UK Government expresses its concern at this outcome and sincerely hopes that this can be remedied in time for the next periodical report.' It does not however outline any actions to ameliorate this situation.

2.5

Nuair a theip air tuairisc iomlán a thabhairt ar fheidhmiú an CETRM ag an RA sa Cheathrú Timthriall léiríodh a oiread is a bhí a fhreagracht séanta aige le cur chun cinn 'diongbháilte' na Gaeilge a chinntiú, rud a gheall sé i gComhaontú Aoine an Chéasta agus an CETRM.

2.6

Is é a chreideann POBAL gur comhartha í teip tuairiscithe Thionól TÉ den teannas daingean i bhfeidhmiú an CETRM agus sa dóigh a gcaitear leis an teanga Ghaeilge taobh istigh den riarachán polaitiúil ó athbhunú na déabhlóide in 2007. Mholfaimis go bhfiafródh COMEX cad iad na bearta gníomhach agus dearfach a dhéanfas rialtas an RA leis na teannais faoin Ghaeilge i dTuaisceart na hÉireann a scaoileadh agus le tuairisciú sásúil ar gach ceist faoin CETRM a chinntiú.

2.7

Nuair nár tugadh tuairisc mhionsonraithe ar 30 paragraf den CETRM tarraingíodh amhras ar iarratais ar eolas ó COMEX, a rinneadh sa Tríú Tuairisc aige (COMEX 2010) agus tá sé seo tubaisteach go háirithe nuair a chuimhnítear gur athbhreithnigh na Saineolaithe torthaí a fuarthas roimhe seo agus i roinnt cásanna gur athraigh siad an toradh 'comhlionta'. Sa chéad rannóg eile den tuairisc seo, thug muid faoi eolas éigin a thabhairt ar na ceistanna seo.

2.8

Ar leath. 20, mar chuid den tuairisc ar ais ón Bhreatain Bheag, tá eolas ar shraith cruinnithe agus cinní a rinneadh i gcomhthéacs Chomhairle na Breataine-na hÉireann (CBÉ) a bhain le Teangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh (TRMannas). Cé go bhfuil ról ag an Bhreatain Bheag i riaradh obair theanga CBÉ, tá sé sonrath nach léirítear obair CBÉ i rannóga na tuairisce a ceapadh le hionchur Westminster ar chomhordú agus ar fheidhmiú an CETRM a mhíniú.

2.5

The UK government has consistently failed to address the damage done to the Irish language since 2007. Its inability to report fully on the UK application of the ECRML in the Fourth Cycle is an indication of the extent to which it has relinquished its responsibility to ensure the 'resolute' promotion of the Irish language, to which it commits in the Good Friday Agreement and the ECRML.

2.6

It is POBAL's belief that the reporting failure at the NI Assembly is symptomatic of deep-rooted tensions in the application of the ECRML and in the treatment of the Irish language within the political administration since the re-establishment of devolution in 2007. We should like to suggest that the COMEX ask what active, positive measures the UK government will take to resolve the tensions around the Irish language in Northern Ireland and to ensure adequate reporting of all matters under the ECRML.

2.7

The lack of detailed reporting on 30 paragraphs of the ECRML compromises the requests for information from the COMEX, made in its Third Report (COMEX 2010) and this is particularly unfortunate given the step taken by the Experts in reviewing and in some cases altering the previous finding of 'fulfilled' in a number of cases. In the next section of this report, we have attempted to provide some information on these issues.

2.8

On p. 20, as part of the report back from Wales, there is information about a series of meetings and decisions made in the context of the British-Irish Council (BIC) relating to Regional or Minority Languages (RML). Whilst there is a Welsh role in administering the Language work of the BIC, it is noticeable that the sections of the report intended to outline Westminster input into co-ordination and implementation of the ECRML do not also reflect the work of the BIC.

2.9

I mbabhtáí faireacháin roimhe seo, thrácht COMEX ar dhifríoctaí reachtacha idir teangacha Pháirt III san RA. Ina chéad tuairisc, d'admhaigh an RA na difríoctaí sin. Ón am sin, áfach, achtaíodh Acht na Gàidhlig 2005 in Albain agus Beart na Breatnaise 2011 sa Bhreatain Bheag. Mar sin, fiú dá n-aontódh rialtas an RA an CETRM a dhaingniú i ndlí an RA, ní réiteofaí fós an difríoct déileála agus cosanta idir teangacha Pháirt III. Iarrann POBAL ar COMEX, dá bhrí sin, go gcomhlíonadh an RA gealltanais Chill Rímhinn le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge a achtú. Dá ndéanfaí sin, bheadh COMEX ag teacht le moladh Chomhairle Eacnamaíoch agus Shóisialta na Náisiún Aontaithe (CESNA), 'go nglacfaidh páirtí an Stáit nó an rialtas cineachta i dTuaisceart na hÉireann, le hAcht Gaeilge'¹ agus ag teacht le moladh chun gníomhú láithreach an Choiste Comhairleach ar an Chreatchoinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta le,

Reachtaíocht chuimsitheach ar an teanga Ghaeilge a fhorbairt i dTuaisceart na hÉireann agus bearta diongbháilte a dhéanamh le cearta teanga daoine de phobal labhartha na Gaeilge a chosaint agus a chur i bhfeidhm ar dhóigh níos éifeachtaí.²

2.10

Sa Tríú Tuairisc aige, luann COMEX (parag. 13, leath. 5), 'Léiríonn an socrú déabhlóide in TÉ constaicí áirithe ar chur chun cinn agus chosaint teangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh.' Tugann na Saineolaithe le fios ansin gur theip ar rialtas an RA Acht Gaeilge do TÉ a achtú mar a gheall sé i gComhaontú Chill Rímhinn 2006. Deir na Saineolaithe gur cosúil 'mar atá cúrsaí fá láthair, gur éadócha go ndéanfaidh Tionól TÉ reachtaíocht ar chosaint agus chur chun

¹ Comhairle Eacnamaíochta agus Shóisialta na Náisiún Aontaithe, E/C.12/GBR/CO/5, 22 Bealtaine 2009, ibid, parag 37.

² An Coiste ar an Chreatchoinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta, 3ú Tuairim ar an RA, Strasbourg, 22 Nollaig 2011, ACFC/OP/III(2011)006.

2.9

In previous monitoring rounds, the COMEX has commented on legislative disparities between Part III languages in the UK. In its first report, the UK has itself acknowledged these disparities. Since this time, however, the Gaelic Language Act 2005 has been enacted in Scotland and the Welsh Measure 2011 has been passed in Wales. Therefore, even if the UK government should agree to ratify the ECRML within UK law, the disparity of treatment and protection between the Part III languages would not be resolved. POBAL therefore asks the COMEX to recommend the fulfilment by the UK of the St Andrews' commitment to enact Irish language legislation. In so doing, the COMEX would be in line with the recommendation of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO) that either, 'the State party or the devolved administration in Northern Ireland, adopt an Irish Language Act'¹ and in line with the recommendation for immediate action of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, to

Develop comprehensive legislation on the Irish language in Northern Ireland and take resolute measures to protect and implement more effectively the language rights of persons belonging to the Irish-speaking community.²

2.10

In its Third report, the COMEX notes (parag 13, page 5) that, 'The devolution settlement in NI presents certain obstacles in the promotion and protection of regional or minority languages.' The Experts go on to outline the failure of the UK government to enact the Irish Language Act for NI to which it commits itself in the St Andrews' Agreement 2006. The Experts note that it appears that 'as things currently stand, legislation on the protection and promotion

¹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/C.12/GBR/CO/5, 22 May 2009, ibid, parag 37.

² Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 3rd Opinion on the UK, Strasbourg, 22 December 2011, ACFC/OP/III(2011)006

cinn na Gaeilge. Thiofadh le Parlaimint an RA, áfach, sin a dhéanamh faoina hinniúlacht chomhthreomhar.’ Áitíonn na Saineolaithe ansin ar údaráis an RA, ‘bonn oiriúnach reachtach a sholáthar i gcomhair chosaint agus chur chun cinn na Gaeilge in TÉ’ (parag 15, leath 6).

2.11

Ba mhaith linn a chur ar a súile do Choiste na Saineolaithe, ainneoin go bhfuil atmaisféar níos tacúla don Ghaeilge fá láthair sa Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF) ná a bhíodh nuair a tuairiscíodh an Tríú Timthriall Faireacháin, go maireann an diúltachas agus an doicheall céanna fós i Ranna eile agus i gcuid de struchtúir na bhforas cineachta.

2.12

Ag rannóg 3.7.b sa tuairisc seo, pléifimid cinneadh an Aire láithreach Forbartha Réigiúnaí, Danny Kennedy, deireadh a chur le gach anailís agus forbairt a d'éirigh as comhairliúchán poiblí ar chomharthaí dátheangacha bóthair a thionscnaigh a réamhtheachtaí Sinn Féineach. Mar thaca lenár ndearcadh, luaimid miontuairisc ó 26^ú cruinniú an Ghrúpa Idir-Rannach um Fheidhmiú na Cairte (GIFC) ar 4^ú Samhain 2010, ag pointe 4.2, áit a ndeir ionadaithe roinne, ‘Nótáladh go bhfuil méid chur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus Albainis Uladh ag brath ar thiomantas na nAírí faoi seach don teanga/do na teangacha.’³ (féach aguisín 1A)

of the Irish language is unlikely to be made by the NI Assembly. It could however be made by the UK Parliament under its parallel competence.’ The Experts go on to urge the UK authorities, ‘to provide an appropriate legislative base for the protection and promotion of Irish in NI’ (parag 15, pg 6).

2.11

We should like to point out to the Committee of Experts that whilst there is currently a more supportive atmosphere for the Irish language within the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure than was the case during reporting for the Third Monitoring cycle, the same negativity and hostility towards the Irish language persists in other Departments and throughout some of the structures of the devolved institutions.

2.12

At section 3.7.b in this report, we shall discuss the decision by the current Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) Minister for Regional Development, Danny Kennedy, to end all analysis and development arising from a public consultation on bilingual road signs initiated by his Sinn Féin (SF) predecessor. In support of our view, we further note a minute from the 26th meeting of the Inter-Departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG) on 4th November 2010, at point 4.2, where departmental representatives state, ‘It was noted that the degree of promotion of Irish and Ulster-Scots is dependent on their respective Minister’s commitment to the language(s).’³ (see Appendix 1A)

³ 26^ú cruinniú GIFC, 4^ú Samhain 2010, 4.0 Uasdátaí ó Ranna ar Chúrsaí Teanga Mionlach, fophointe 4.2, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, íoslódáil deiridh 13.05.2013.

³ ICIG 26th meeting, 4th November 2010, 4.0 Updates from Departments on Minority Language Matters, sub point 4.2, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, last downloaded 13.05.2013

2.13

Deir miontuairisc ó 27^ú cruinniú an Ghrúpa Idir-Rannach um Fheidhmiú na Cairte (GIFC), a tionóladh mí dhéag anonn, ar 13^ú Deireadh Fómhair 2011, an méid seo a leanas,

Leanann **bunús** na Ranna le héascú iarratas ar aistriú. Athraíodh Aire roinnt de na Ranna agus tugadh faoi deara go mbíonn méid chur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus Albainis Uladh ag brath ar thiomantas na nAirí faoi seach don teanga/do na teangacha. Dúirt RCEF athuair gur chóir do na Ranna cloí lena 'gCóid Chúirtéise **oiread agus is féidir**.
(le POBAL an bhéim⁴) (féach aguisín 1B).

Léiríonn an dá shliocht seo gur beo go fóill léirmhíniú agus feidhmiú neamhsheasmhach an CETRM de réir dhearcadh pholaitiúil an Aire, mar a d'aithin POBAL cheana féin sa Tríú Tuairisc Faireacháin againn agus nár athraigh an cás faoi thoghcháin Bhealtaine 2011 nuair a athdháileadh cuid de na Ranna ar pháirtithe éagsúla polaitiúla. Cé go molaimid na hiarrachtaí a rinne cuid de na hAirí le forálacha an CETRM a fheidhmiú i gcomhréir lena nádúr forásach, ní chreidimid go dtig le cur chuige ad hoc seo Ranna áirithe imeallú na Gaeilge sna forais pholaitiúla a cheartú. Maireann go fóill an cleachtas go léirmhíniú an CETRM de réir dearcaí polaitiúla, agus i bhfírinne, is cosúil ón dara sliocht thuas gur féidir go bhfuil feidhmiú féin an CETRM in amhras i roinnt cásanna.

2.14

Fágann crosadh dúbailte gafa an Tionóil chomhshochíochtúil go n-éilíonn saincheisteanna leathana, reachtaíocht, mar shampla, leis an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a chosaint, comhaontú pháirtithe polaitiúla uilig an Tionóil. Caithfidh POBAL a aibhsiú nár tharla aon athrú foriomlán, dar linn, i gcás na Gaeilge sa Tionól ó thoradh COMEX 2011, a luadh thuas, gurbh féidir go n-achtófaí aon reachtaíocht sna forais chineachta.

2.13

A minute from the 27th meeting of the Inter-Departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG), held eleven months later, on 13th October 2011, states the following,

The **majority** of Departments continue to facilitate translation requests. Several Departments have had a change in Minister and it was noted that the degree of promotion of Irish and Ulster-Scots is dependent on their respective Minister's commitment to the language(s). DCAL reiterated that Departments should abide by their 'Codes of Courtesy' **as much as possible**.
(POBAL's emphasis)⁴ (see Appendix 1B)

These two quotes show that the inconsistent interpretation and application of the ECRML according to the political views of the Minister which POBAL identified in our Third Monitoring report remains and has not been altered by the May 2011 elections which saw a re-allocation of some departments to different political parties. Whilst we commend the efforts made by some Ministers to apply the provisions of the ECRML in conformity with its progressive nature, we do not believe that this ad hoc approach by certain departments can redress the marginalisation of the Irish language within the political institutions. The practice of interpreting the ECRML according to political views persists, and in fact, it appears from the second quote above that the application of the ECRML may itself be in doubt in some cases.

2.14

The locked-in double veto of the consociational Assembly means that cross-cutting issues, such as legislation to promote and protect the Irish language, require the agreement of all Assembly political parties. POBAL must emphasise that, in our view, there has been no overall change in the position of Irish within the Assembly since the COMEX finding of 2011, referred to above, regarding the likelihood of legislation being enacted in the devolved institutions.

⁴ 27^ú cruinniú GIFC, 13^ú Deireadh Fómhair 2011, 3.0 Uasdátaí ó Ranna ar Chúrsaí Teanga Mionlach, fophointe 3.2, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, íoslódáil deiridh 13.5.2013.

⁴ ICIG 27th meeting, 13th October 2011, 3.0 Updates from Departments on Minority Language Matters, sub-point 3.2, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, last downloaded 13.5.2013

Is eochaircheist i gcónaí ag pobal na Gaeilge í ceist na reachtaíochta, agus is ionann teip leanúnach rialtas an RA beart dearfach a dhéanamh, dar linn, agus idirdhealú éagórach agus constaic ar fhorbairt na teanga. Mholfaimis le meas go gcoinneodh COMEX leis an ábhar seo ar bhonn práinne le rialtas an RA.

2.15

Thairis sin, is mian linn a lua go bhfuil an teanga Ghaeilge go fóill eisiata ó fhorálacha craoltóireachta i reachtaíocht an RA, ní hionann agus an Ghàidhlig in Albain agus an Bhreatain sa Bhreatain Bheag agus, chomh maith le difríochtaí cistithe, gur mhéadaigh seo sa Cheathrú Tréimhse Fhaireacháin, agus BBC Alba, stáisiún digiteach Ghàidhlig na hAlban, ag craoladh leis.

2.16

Níl sásamh sa mhéid a deir an RA fan bhagairt ar chistiú leanúnach don Chiste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge (CCG). Cuirfear críoch ar an chéadbhabhta cistithe don chomhlacht seo in 2014/15, agus mhaífeadh an taití ó bhabhtaí roimhe seo gur féidir go n-éireodh faomh tuilleadh cistithe ina chnámh spairne. Is é a áitimid gur chóir an ciste a bheith buan.

3.0

Tuairisc COMEX 2010, iarratais ar eolas breise

I dtuairisc COMEX 2010 tá roinnt iarratas ar eolas breise. Ós rud é nach dtugann tuairisc an RA aghaidh ar cheann ar bith de na ceistanna seo, féachfaimid le tuilleadh eolais a sholáthar ar na hábhair a ardaíodh i dtaca le hAirteagal 10.

3.1

COMEX parag 349

Maidir le soláthar na dtéacsanna reachtaíochta is tábhachtaí i nGaeilge, d'iarr COMEX tuilleadh eolais. Ach níor tugadh sin i dtuairisc an RA. Fá láthair, ar shuíomh gréasáin an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta tá na téacsanna seo a leanas i nGaeilge: Oideachas (Ordú TÉ) 1998 – Cuid A agus Cuid B Caibidlí agus Sceidil 1-6; Ordú Chomhlachtaí Feidhmithe Thuaidh/Theas; Acht 1998 – Caibidil 47. Ag cuimhneamh ar na deacrachtaí in aimsiú na dtéacsanna seo, mar a luaigh muid roimhe seo i dtuairiscí Faireacháin a dó agus a trí, fáiltimid roimh

The issue of legislation remains a key issue for the Irish speaking community, and the continuing failure of the UK government to take positive action represents, in our view an unjustified distinction and an obstacle to the development of the language. We respectfully suggest that the COMEX continue to pursue this matter urgently with the UK government.

2.15

In addition, we wish to note that the Irish language remains excluded from broadcasting provisions in UK legislation, unlike Gaelic in Scotland and Welsh in Wales and this, along with funding disparities have increased in the Fourth monitoring period, as BBC Alba, Scotland's Gaelic language digital station has continued to broadcast.

2.16

The UK makes no adequate comment on the threat to continued funding for the Irish Language Broadcast Fund. The initial round of funding for this body will end in 2014/15, and experience from previous cycles suggests that approval of continued funding may become a political football. It is our contention that the fund should be made permanent.

3.0

COMEX report 2010, requests for further information

The COMEX report of 2010 contains a number of requests for further information. Since the UK report does not address any of these issues, we shall seek to provide information on the points raised in respect of Article 10.

3.1

COMEX parag 349

In relation to the provision of the most important statutory texts in Irish, the COMEX asked for further information. However this is not provided in the UK report. Currently, on the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) web site, the following texts appear in Irish: Education (NI Order) 1998 – Part A and Part B Chapters and Schedules 1-6; North / South Implementation Bodies Order; 1998 Act – Chapter 47. Given the difficulties in accessing these texts, which we have reported on previously in our second and third monitoring reports, we welcome the publication

fhoilsiú na dtéacsanna seo ar shuíomh gréasáin RCEF, cé nach feasach muid gur cuireadh in iúl don phobal leitheadach go bhfuil siad ar fáil. Is cosúil nach bhfuil siad ar fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin an Roinn Ceartais, ná ar shuíomh gréasáin an Roinn Oideachais, ná níl eolas orthu ar aon nasc follasach ar cheachtar den dá shuíomh.

I mí Feabhra 2011, chuir POBAL litir scríofa chuig an Roinn Ceartais agus chuaigh muid i dteagmháil leo fosta ar shuíomh gréasáin na Roinne leis na téacsanna seo a leanas i nGaeilge a fháil: Acht Chill Rímhinn 2006 agus Acht Riaradh an Cheartais (Teanga) (Éire). Cuireadh cóip den iarratas seo fosta chuig Seirbhís Chúirteanna TÉ. Níl tuairisc ag POBAL go bhfuarthas freagra ar na hiarratais seo. Ní fios dúinn ar cuireadh Gaeilge ar aon téacs eile, seachas iad siúd ar shuíomh gréasáin RCEF, sa tréimhse iomlán ó dhaingnigh an RA an CETRM in 2001.

3.2 COMEX parag 355

I dTríú Tuairisc COMEX, dar leis na Saineolaithe, 'is cosúil nár tugadh isteach cur chuige córasach trasna rialtas TÉ le hiarratais béil agus scríofa i nGaeilge a láimhsiú; agus dá bharr sin nach gcloítear i mbunús cásanna le fiú na gcaighdeán is lú a éilíonn an Cód.⁵ Is cúis aiféala é gur threisigh miontuairiscí chruinniú GIFIC leis an dearcadh sin (féach parag 2.9 sa cháipéis seo) a aithníonn nach n-éascaíonn cuid de na Ranna aistriú agus go gcuirtear an cháipéis threorach i ngníomh 'oiread agus is féidir' ag brath ar thuairimí polaitiúla chuid de na hairí.

I mí an Mhárta 2012, d'fhiafraigh duine den phobal ar thug Leabharlann Iúr Cinn Trá isteach Cód Cúirtéise d'úsáideoirí, agus fuair siad freagra scríofa (le cóip den cháipéis Treoir d'Fhostaithe sa tSeirbhís Phoiblí 2005 ar tagraíodh dó níos luaithe sa cháipéis seo) a dúirt 'Níl 'Cód Cúirtéise' fá láthair ag

of these texts on the DCAL website, although we are not aware that their availability has been made known widely to the public. These texts do not appear to be available on the Department of Justice web site, nor on the Department of Education website, and nor is there information about them or an obvious link on either website.

In February 2011, POBAL wrote to the Department of Justice by post and we also contacted it through the departmental web site to make an application for the following texts in Irish: The St Andrews Act 2006 and the 1737 Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland). A copy of this request was also sent to the NI Courts Service. POBAL has no record of any response at all to these requests. We are not aware that any additional texts other than those available on the DCAL website have been translated into Irish in the entire period since the ratification of the ECRML by the UK in 2001.

3.2 COMEX parag 355

In the Third COMEX report, the Experts commented that, 'it does not appear that a systematic approach to handling oral and written applications in Irish has been introduced across the NI administration; and consequently in most cases even the minimum standards required by the Code⁵ are not kept.' It is regrettable that this view has been further reinforced by the minutes of the 27th meeting of the Inter-departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG) (see parag 2.9 in this document) which recognise that some departments do not facilitate translation and that the guidance document is put into practice 'as far as possible' given the political views of some ministers.

In March 2012, a member of the public inquired as to whether Newry Library had introduced a Code of Courtesy for users, and received a written reply (with a copy of the Guidance for Public Servants 2005 document referred to earlier in this document) saying 'Libraries NI do not currently have a 'Code of

⁵ Tagraíonn sé seo do cháipéisí Treoir d'Fhostaithe sa tSeirbhís Phoiblí 2005, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, íoslódáil deiridh 13.5.2013.

⁵ This refers to the Guidance for Public Servants documents 2005, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/european_charter.htm, last downloaded 13.5.2013

Leabharlanna TÉ (LTÉ) mar tugadh isteach é sular cuireadh LTÉ ar bun agus ní raibh a fhios againn é a bheith ann.⁶

I mí an Mhárta 2011, ag baint le comhfhreagras le ranna rialtais, chuir POBAL litreacha i nGaeilge chuig gach roinn rialtais ag cur roinnt ceisteanna ag baint le feidhmiú na Cairte, san áireamh, bearta le húsáid cheart an chomhartha idirdhealaitheach, an síneadh fada, i nGaeilge a chinntiú; úsáid cheart ainmneacha agus sloinnte a chinntiú, cáipéisí i nGaeilge, comhordú agus aon athrú i láimhseáil comhfhreagrais bhéil nó scríofa sa tréimhse roimhe. D'fhreagair an 12 roinn uilig. D'fhreagair 5 cinn i nGaeilge. D'fhreagair 6 cinn sa dá theanga. D'fhreagair roinn amháin, an Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Infheistíochta, i mBéarla amháin (féach Tábla 1).

I dtaca le glacadh le cumarsáid bhriathartha, ghlaigh muid ar na ranna. Ní raibh cainteoir Gaeilge ar fáil ag ceann ar bith acu. Bhí seirbhís ghlórphoist ag 7 roinn (féach Tábla 2).

3.3 COMEX parag 359 agus 361

3.3.a I mí an Mhárta 2011, rinne POBAL athbhreithniú ar shuíomhanna gréasáin na ranna rialtais (féach Tábla 3). Níor thaispeáin suíomhanna gréasáin le leathanach baile ach beagán Gaeilge nó Gaeilge ar bith. Tá naisc Ghaeilge ar a gcuid leathanach ag beirt den 12, Roinn Oideachais TÉ (ROTÉ) agus Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Forbartha Tuaithe (RTFT). Tá lógó trítheangach ag cúigear, an dá cheann thuas san áireamh. Bhí méideanna beaga éagsúla cáipéisí Gaeilge ar dheich suíomh gréasáin, cé go raibh a lán de na cáipéisí, in am an athbhreithniú, as dáta, siar go 2000. Cé go bhfuil cáipéisí Gaeilge le fáil ar roinnt suíomhanna gréasáin rialtais áitiúil agus comhairlí, is minic a bíos siad as dáta agus is doiligh teacht orthu, rud a éilíonn úsáid inneall cuardaigh agus léarscáileanna suímh. Ba chuidiú nuashonrúcháin, comhordú agus naisc shoiléire.

Courtesy' as it was introduced before NI Libraries Association (NILA) was set up and we were unaware of it's existence (sic).⁶

In March 2011, in relation to correspondence with government departments, POBAL sent letters in Irish to all departments asking a number of questions relating to implementation of the Charter, including measures to ensure correct use of the diacritic mark, the síneadh fada, in Irish; correct use of names and surnames, documentation in Irish, co-ordination and any changes to handling of oral and written correspondence in the previous period. All 12 departments replied. 5 replied in Irish. 6 replied bilingually. 1 department, the Department of Enterprise, Trade agus Investment, replied in English only. (See Table 1)

Regarding accepting verbal communications, we rang the departments. None of them had an Irish speaker available. 7 departments had voicemail services. (See Table 2)

3.3 COMEX parag 359 and 361

3.3.a In March 2011, POBAL carried out a review of government department websites. (See Table 3). Home page websites showed little or no Irish. Two of the 12, Department of Education NI (DENI) and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), have Irish language links on their pages. Five, the abovementioned included, have a trilingual logo. Varying small amounts of Irish language documents could be found on ten websites, although at the time of this review, a lot of these documents are out of date, dating back to 2000. Although Irish language documentation can be found on a number of local government and council web sites it is often out of date and difficult to find, requiring use of search engines and site maps. Updates, coordination and clear links would help.

⁶ R-phost ó Bhainisteoir Brainse Leabharlann an Iúir chuig ball den phobal, 26ú Márta 2012.

⁶ E-mail from Newry Branch Library Manager to member of the public, 26th March 2012,

3.3.b

I ndiaidh thoghcháin an Tionóil in 2011, d'athraigh ceannaireacht a lán de na ranna rialtais, agus Airí úra agus Airí ó pháirtithe éagsúla polaitiúla tofa. I gcás an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF), a fuair Aire úr ó Shinn Féin, tharla athrú áirithe in úsáid na Gaeilge ar an suíomh gréasáin. Ar 24.4.2013, mar shampla, tá preaseisiúint dhátheangach le feiceáil ar leathanach baile shuíomh gréasáin na roinne agus eolas úr leis faoi thogra Líofa 2015, tionscnamh de chuid an Aire a dhíríonn ar 2,000 duine a chlárú le líofacht sa Ghaeilge a bhaint amach fá 2015. (Tá tuilleadh eolais le fáil i rannóg 5.9 ar Líofa 2015). Aithnímid go mbíonn ábhar dátheangach in amanna ag an Roinn, agus fáiltímid roimhe, ach is doiligh a thaispeáint a thuar. Mar shampla, sna 3 seachtaine ó 24.4.2013, ní raibh preaseisiúintí dátheangacha ar bith eile le feiceáil ar Leathanach Baile RCEF.

3.3.c

Maidir leis an Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí (RFR), dar ceapadh aire úr, ball den Pháirtí Aontachtach Uladh (PAU), tharla laghdú éigin in úsáid na Gaeilge ar an suíomh gréasáin, agus cuireadh lógó aonteangach i mBéarla in áit an lógó tritheangach. Ar 24.4.2013, ní raibh Gaeilge ar bith ar leathanach baile an tsuímh ghréasáin, agus is cosúil gur athraíodh liosta na bhFormáidí Teanga Eile do cháipéisí sa dóigh go bhfuil Albainis Uladh anois ag barr liosta na bhformáidí teanga. Is cosúil gur ó ré an Aire roimhe a tháinig na cáipéisí Gaeilge atá ar fáil ar an nasc seo.

3.3.d

Deir dréachtstraitéis an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF), Iúil 2012, gur chóir cainteoirí Gaeilge 'a éascú i ndéileáil, ó bhéal agus i scríbhinn, leis an earnáil phoiblí lena n-áirítear údaráis áitiúla.' (4.6.3. leath 25), ach ní thugtar aon mheicníocht leis seo a éascú agus ní thugtar aon mhionsonra a thaispeánfadh slí shoiléir chun tosaigh ón chás láithreach.

3.3.b

Following the Assembly elections in 2011, many of the government departments changed hands, with new Ministers and Ministers from different parties being elected. In the case of the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), for which a new Sinn Féin Minister was appointed, there has been some increase in the use of Irish on the website. On 24.4.2013, for example, a bilingual press release features on the home page of the departmental website, and new information has been added about the project Líofa 2015, a Ministerial initiative geared at registering 2,000 people to reach fluency in Irish by 2015. (Further information follows in section 5.9 on Líofa 2015.) Whilst we recognise that the Department carries bilingual material on occasion, and we welcome this, its appearance is difficult to predict. For instance, in the 3 weeks following 24.4.2013, no further bilingual press releases have been carried on the DCAL Home Page.

3.3.c

In respect of the Department for Regional Development (DRD), for which a new Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) Minister was appointed, there has been some decrease in the use of Irish on the website, and the tri-lingual logo has been replaced with a mono lingual logo in English. On 24.4.2013, there was no Irish on the home page of the website, and the list of Alternative Language Formats for documentation appears to have been changed so that Ulster-Scots is now at the top of a list of language formats. The Irish language documents available on this link appear to date from the time of the previous Minister.

3.3.d

The Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) draft strategy of July 2012 states that Irish speakers should be 'facilitated in dealing with the public sector including local authorities both orally and in writing' (4.6.3. page 25), but no mechanism is outlined to facilitate this and no detail is given that would lead to clear progression from the current situation.

3.3.e

Ó thuairisc COMEX 2010, creideann POBAL nach dtáinig aon fheabhsú córasach, trasrannach sa chur chuige do chomhfhreagras briathartha agus scríofa, ná do sholáthar cáipéisí i nGaeilge, ar an ghréasán chomh maith. Ná níl aon fhianaise i miontuairiscí an Ghrúpa Idir-Rannach um Fheidhmiú na Cairte (GIFC) go ndearnadh breithniú suntasach ar chomhordú straitéiseach don cheist seo. I bhfírinne, mar a luadh cheana féin, deir miontuairiscí 27^ú cruinniú GIFC nach n-éascaíonn ach **cuid** de na ranna iarratais ar aistriú, ag brath ar thuairimí an Aire (féach parag 2.14 thuas, agus Aguisín 1 A agus B).

3.4

COMEX parag 362, 367

I mí an Mhárta 2011, chuir POBAL litreacha chuig gach comhairle áitiúil ag cur roinnt ceisteanna a bhain le comhordú córasach i dtaca le cumarsáid bhriathartha agus scríofa. Níor fhreagair ach 14 cinn de na 26 comhairle. D'fhreagair 10 gcinn i nGaeilge. D'fhreagair 4 cheann i mBéarla amháin (féach Tábla 4).

I mí an Mhárta 2011, rinne POBAL athbhreithniú ar shuíomhanna gréasáin na gcomhairlí. Níor thaispeáin suíomhanna gréasáin le leathanach baile ach beagán Gaeilge nó Gaeilge ar bith. Bhí lógónna tritheangacha ag 2 cheann (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh), bhí naisc le leathanaigh Ghaeilge ag 3 cinn agus bhí innill aistrithe ag 3 cinn, cé nach n-aistríonn siad sin mar is ceart i gcónaí. Thiocfadh teagmháil a dhéanamh i nGaeilge ar 4 shuíomh gréasáin. Bhí cineálacha éagsúla cáipéisí Gaeilge agus dátheangacha ar fáil ar 8 suíomh gréasáin. Thug 5 comhairle eolas ilteangach agus pacáí fáilte in suas le 11 teanga, ach gan rogha Gaeilge ar fáil (féach Tábla 5). Maidir le labhairt leis na comhairlí i nGaeilge agus úsáid ghlórphoist, i mí Eanáir 2013, ghlaigh POBAL ar na 26 comhairlí uilig agus labhair i nGaeilge. D'fhreagair cainteoir Gaeilge ár nglaoch in aon chomhairle amháin, Dún Geanainn. Bhí seirbhísí glórphoist ag 8 gcinn de na 26 comhairle, ach i gcuid de na cásanna ní raibh mionsonraí na seirbhíse glórphoist ar fáil agus b'éigean do POBAL fanacht le glaoch ar ais le mionsonraí glórphoist a fháil (féach Tábla 6).

3.3.e

POBAL believes that since the COMEX report 2010, there has been no systematic, departmental-wide improvement in the approach to verbal and written correspondence, nor to the provision of documentation in Irish, including through the web. Nor is there any evidence in the minutes of the Inter-Departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG) that there has been significant consideration given to strategic co-ordination on this issue. In fact as noted earlier the minutes of the 27th meeting of the ICIG state that only **some** departments facilitate translation requests, according to the views of the Minister. (see parag 2.14 above, and Appendix 1 A and B)

3.4

COMEX parags 362, 367

In March 2011, POBAL sent letters to all local councils asking a number of questions relating to systematic co-ordination in regards to oral and written communications. Only 14 of the 26 councils replied. 10 replied in Irish. 4 replied in English only. (see Table 4)

In March 2011, POBAL carried out a review of council websites. Home page websites showed little or no Irish. 2 had trilingual logos (Irish, English & Ulster Scots), 3 had links to Irish language pages and 3 had language translation engines, although these do not always translate properly. Contact in Irish was available on 4 web sites. 8 websites had various types of Irish language and bilingual documentation available. 5 councils offered multilingual information and welcome packs in up to 11 languages, but without an Irish language option. (see Table 5) Regarding speaking to the councils in Irish and using voicemail, in January 2013, POBAL rang all 26 councils and spoke in Irish. Our call was answered by an Irish speaker in 1 council, Dungannon. 8 of the 26 councils had voicemail services, although in some cases the details of the voicemail service was not available and POBAL had to wait for a ring back with voicemail details. (see Table 6)

3.5

COMEX parag 372, 373, 374

Rinne POBAL teagmháil le comhairlí agus le hoifigigh Ghaeilge faoi úsáid na Gaeilge ag cruinnithe comhairle. Ón eolas a fuair muid, níl aon chleachtas seasmhach sna comhairlí, ach i roinnt ceantar, is féidir go n-úsáidfeadh comhaltaí comhairle a bhfuil Gaeilge acu méid áirithe den teanga le linn cruinnithe. Bunaithe ar an eolas atá faighte againn, áfach, is cosúil go mbíonn úsáid seo na Gaeilge measartha gann i mbunús cásanna, teoranta d'úsáid beannachtaí nó teideal seachas a bheith á húsáid mar chuid rialta den fhíor-idirphlé nó nósanna imeachta. Is cosúil fosta go mbíonn úsáid na Gaeilge teoranta do cheantair chomhairle ina bhfuil ionadaithe tofa agus labhairt na Gaeilge acu. Ní heol dúinn go bhfuil aon bhearta á ndéanamh le húsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn ag cruinnithe comhairle.

Dúirt Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire go dtairgeann sí aistriúchán comhuaineach ar iarratas. Tá trealamh aistriúcháin chomhuainigh ag Comhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn.

In 2012, d'iarr ionadaí de chuid POBAL labhairt i nGaeilge le Coiste Straitéise agus Acmhainní Chomhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste. Éascaíodh an cruinniú seo trí ateangaireacht chomhleanúnach.

3.6

COMEX parag 384, 385

Sa Triú Tuairisc aige, gríosáinn COMEX (parag 385, leath 54) 'na húdaráis le saoráidí aistriúcháin chomhuainigh idir Gaeilge agus Béarla a chur ar fáil i dTionól TÉ'. Níl ateangaireacht chomhuaineach le fáil go fóill ag comhaltaí Thionóil TÉ do dhíospóireachtaí agus chruinnithe. Cruthaíonn sé seo fadhbanna, mar a tharla ar 10.10.2011, nuair a dúradh le Dominic Ó Brolcháin, CTR de chuid an PSDLO (Páirtí Sóisialta agus Daonlathach an Lucht Oibre) nach nglaofaí chun labhartha air i seomra an Tionóil ar feadh tamaill áirithe i ndiaidh gur cuireadh ina leith gur labhair sé i nGaeilge ar feadh 'ró-fhada' gan aistriúchán a thabhairt. Faoin chóras atá i bhfeidhm i dTionól TÉ ó 2000, caithfidh comhaltaí atá ag iarraidh Gaeilge a úsáid féinaistriú a dhéanamh. Cé go bhfuil córas aistriúcháin chomhuainigh sa seomra díospóireachta, níl gléas cinn ar fáil ach ag an Cheann Comhairle (féach Aguisín 2).

3.5

COMEX parags 372, 373, 374

POBAL contacted councils and Irish language officers about the use of Irish in council meetings. From the information we have received, there is no consistent practice within the Councils, although in a number of areas, Irish speaking council members may use some amount of Irish during meetings. Based on the information we have received, however, it appears that this use of Irish is quite limited in most cases, being confined to greetings or titles rather than used as a regular part of substantive discussion or proceedings. The use of Irish also appears to be confined to council areas where there are elected representatives who speak the language. We are not aware of any active measures being taken to promote the use of Irish in council meetings.

Derry City Council stated that it offered simultaneous translation when requested. Newry and Mourne Council has simultaneous translation equipment.

In 2012, a POBAL representative asked to address the Strategy and Resources committee of Belfast City Council through Irish. This meeting was facilitated through consecutive interpretation.

3.6

COMEX parag 384, 385

In its Third report, the COMEX (parag 385, pg 54) 'encourages the authorities to provide facilities for simultaneous interpretation between Irish and English in the NI Assembly'. Simultaneous interpretation is still not available to members of the NI Assembly for debates and meetings. This raises problems, such as on 10.10.2011, when Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) MLA Dominic Bradley was told he would not be called to speak in the assembly chamber for some time after he was accused of speaking in Irish for 'too long' without giving a translation. Under the system which has been in place in the NI Assembly since 2000, members wishing to use Irish must self-translate. Although there is a simultaneous translation system in the debating chamber, headsets are only provided to the Speaker. (see Appendix 2)

3.7.a

COMEX parag 375-378

Dhá iarratas ar shráidainmneacha dátheangacha i gComhairle an Bhaile Mheánaigh, do Bhóthar Bhaile Uí Scolláin agus Pháirc an Iarnróid, tá siad gan réiteach le 8 mbliana, cé go bhfuil siad ag teacht san iarratas le riachtanais bheartais na Comhairle féin. Tugadh neamhaird ar iarratais as a chéile, iarratas shaoráil faisnéise san áireamh atá gan freagairt ó comhadaíodh 2 bhliain ó shin é.

Ar an Chreagán, Co Aontroma, diúltaíodh d'iarratas ó chónaitheoirí ar chomhartha fáilte dátheangach.

I gCarn Tóchair, Co Dhoire, d'iarr An Carn, grúpa Gaeilge a chuireann turasóireacht dhátheangach chun cinn sa cheantar, Comhartha Donn (comhartha turasóra) agus diúltaíodh dóibh go dtí seo.

I mBéarla amháin atá painéalchomharthaíocht turasóra Chomhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste in Iarthar Bhéal Feirste, ainneoin an ardlíon cainteoirí agus tograí Gaeilge sa cheantar agus gur ansin atá an 'ceantar Gaeltachta' mar a deirtear (féach Aguisín 3).

In 2012-3, rinne POBAL suirbhé ar shráidchomharthaíocht Ghaeilge i gceantair chomhairle áitiúla le fáil amach cá raibh sí seo, cén céatadán de chomharthaí sráide in aon chomhairle ar leith a bhí dátheangach agus cá mhéad acu, an raibh iarratais ar bith ag feitheamh lena chur i bhfeidhm. D'fhreagair 16 de na 26 comhairle (61.5%) ár litir. I gcásanna áirithe, tá ráite ag comhairlí nach eol dóibh cá mhéad sráidainm atá fáil láthair sa cheantar áitiúil chomhairle, ná níor thug siad an t-eolas seo. Is léir gur doiligh dúinn a dhearbhu cén céatadán den tsráidchomharthaíocht fhoriomlán atá dátheangach. San áit ar thug comhairle na figiúirí foriomlán, thug muid an céatadán idir lúibíní. Is fiú a chur in iúl as an chuid a thug freagra, gur Béal Feirste an chomhairle is mó sa Tuaisceart ó thaobh daonra; Lios na gCearrbhach sa dara háit; Doire an tríú ceann is mó; an tIú agus Múrna sa cheathrú háit; Fear Manach an 12^ú ceann; Léim a' Mhadaidh an 19^ú ceann agus Baile Monaidh an 25^ú ceann is mó.

3.7.a

COMEX parag 375- 378.

2 requests for bilingual street names to Ballymena Council, for Ballyscullion Road and Railway Park, have been outstanding for 8 years, despite the fact that the council's own policy requirements are met in the application. Repeated requests have been ignored including an unanswered freedom of information request that was filed 2 years ago.

In Creggan, Co Antrim, residents had a request for a bilingual welcome sign refused.

In Carnogher, Co. Derry, An Carn Irish language group, who promote bilingual tourism in the area, applied for a Brown sign (tourist sign) and have been refused so far.

Belfast City Council tourist panel signage in West Belfast is in English only, in spite of the high numbers of Irish speakers and Irish language projects in the area and the existence of the so-called 'Gaeltacht area'. (see Appendix 3)

In 2012-3, POBAL conducted a survey on Irish language street signage in local council areas to determine where this existed, what percentage of any given council's street signage was bilingual and how many, if any requests were waiting for implementation. 16 of the 26 councils (61.5%) answered our letter. In some cases, councils have stated that they do not know how many street names exist currently in the local council area, or have not given this information. This obviously makes it difficult to establish what percentage of overall street signage is bilingual. Where a council has given the overall figures, we have included a percentage in brackets. It is worth pointing out that of those who responded, Belfast is the largest council in the North in population terms; Lisburn is second; Derry is third largest; Newry and Mourne is fourth; Fermanagh is 12th; Limavady is 19th and Ballymoney is 25th largest.

Mar seo a leanas atá réamhthorthaí as 16 freagairt ó 26 comhairle: Tá 736 sráidainm dátheangach in 8 gceantar comhairle; tá 3 shráidainm dátheangach i mBaile Monaidh, 133 (2.95%) i mBéal Feirste, 88 (7.13%) i nDoire, 20 i bhFear Manach, 57 (13.97%) i Léim a' Mhadaidh, 19 (0.83%) i Lios na gCearrbhach, 258 i Machaire Fíolta agus 158 (ó 2009) san lúr agus Múrna. Tá 68 sráidainm dátheangach ag feitheamh le faomhadh i 5 ceantar comhairle; Baile Monaidh – 6, an Dún – 13, Fear Manach – 1, Doire – 16 (le cur i gcrích i mí Iúil 2013) agus an tlúr agus Múrna – 32 (féach Tábla 8).

3.7.b

Comhairliúchán ar bheartas faoi úsáid chomharthaíochta dátheangai

I mí Eanáir 2011, d'fhoilsigh an tAire Forbartha Réigiúnaí (RFR), Conor Murphy de Shinn Féin, dréachtmholtáí do chomhairliúchán ar úsáid na Gaeilge agus nó Albainis Uladh ar chuid de chomharthaíocht phoiblí sa Tuaisceart. Dúirt an cháipéis chomhairliúcháin go raibh sí á heisiúint ar aon dul le hoibleagáidí RFR faoin Chairt Eorpach um Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh agus gur beartaíodh í le tionscnamh roinnt cineálacha áirithe comharthaí dátheangacha tráchtacha a éascú i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge agus in Albainis Uladh ar chomharthaí fáilte baile nó sráidbhaile, ar roinnt comharthaí pláta le cois, mar shampla, comharthaí rabhaidh 'Scoile' agus comharthaí áirithe turasóireachta. Faoi na dréachtmholtáí, chaithfeadh 'tionscnóir' na comharthaí a iarraidh trína gComhairle áitiúil Ceantair. B'fhéidir gurbh é an tionscnóir an Chomhairle áitiúil i gcás comharthaí fáilte baile nó sráidbhaile, tionscnóir áitiúil turasóireachta i gcás comharthaí turasóireachta, nó bainisteoir na saoráidí i gcás plátaí le cois. Sa chás seo príomhoide scoile, mar shampla. Dúirt an dréachtcháipéis fosta nach dtabhódh an chomharthaíocht aon chostas breise ar an Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí féin. Ina áit sin, samhlaíodh gurbh é tionscnóir na gcomharthaí a d'íocfadh na costais.

Cé gur bhraith réimse leathan Gaeilgeoirí go raibh an cháipéis chomhairliúcháin an-lochtach, go háirithe i dtaca le torthaí an Mheasúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais, fáiltíodh roimh an deis le tuairim a nochtadh. Trí iarratas Shaoráil Faisnéise, fuair POBAL cóipeanna ar ball de na haighneachtaí a cuireadh

Preliminary results from 16 responses out of 26 councils are as follows: There are 736 bilingual street names in 8 council areas; Ballymoney has 3 bilingual street names, Belfast has 133 (2.95%), Derry has 88 (7.13%), Fermanagh has 20, Limavady has 57 (13.97%), Lisburn has 19 (0.83%), Magherafelt has 258 and Newry and Mourne has 158 (since 2009). There are 68 bilingual street names waiting approval in 5 council areas; Ballmoney - 6, Down - 13, Fermanagh - 1, Derry - 16 (to be completed in July 2013) and Newry and Mourne - 32. (see Table 8)

3.7.b

Consultation on a policy for use of bilingual signage

In January 2011, the Minister for Regional Development (DRD), Sinn Féin's Conor Murphy, published draft proposals for consultation on the use of Irish and or Ulster Scots on some public signage in the North. The consultation document stated that it was being issued in line with the DRD's obligations under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and was intended to facilitate the introduction of a number of particular types of bi-lingual traffic signs in English and Irish or Ulster-Scots on town or village welcome signs, some supplementary plate signs for example a 'School' warning signs and certain tourist signs. Under the draft proposals, signs would have to be requested by a 'promoter' through their local District Council. The promoter could be the local Council in the case of town or village welcome signs, a local tourist operator in the case of tourist signs, or the manager of the facility in the case of supplementary plates. This could, for example, be a school principal. The draft document further stated that the signage would incur no additional cost to the Department of Regional Development itself. Instead, it was envisaged that any costs would be borne by the promoter for the signs.

Although the consultation document was widely perceived by Irish speakers to be seriously flawed, particularly in relation to the findings of its Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), the opportunity to comment was welcomed. Through a Freedom of Information request, POBAL subsequently acquired

chuig an chomhairliúcháin. Rinneadh 100 aighneacht agus léiríonn anailís a rinne Janet Muller go raibh 71 i bhfách le comharthaíocht dhátheangach (bhí siad seo uilig i leith úsáid na Gaeilge; bhí ceann amháin acu a luaigh Albainis Uladh fosta), bhí 9 n-aighneacht neodrach⁷ agus bhí 20 in éadan comharthaíochta dátheangaí. Tháinig naoi⁸ n-aighneacht ó eagraíochtaí nó scoileanna Gaeilge, ní tháinig ceann ar bith ó aon ghrúpa nó eagraíocht Albainis Uladh a luaigh cur i gcrích gníomhaíochtaí Albainis Uladh.

I mí an Mhárta 2011, i ndiaidh thoghcháin an Tionóil, rinneadh ath-leithdháileadh Ranna. Tharla athrú Aire sa Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí ó Chonor Murphy, Sinn Féin go Danny Kennedy, Páirtí Aontachtach Uladh (PAU). Cé gur chríochnaigh an comhairliúchán oifigiúil poiblí faoi chomharthaíocht dhátheangach a thabhairt isteach ar 11^ú Márta 2011, ní dhearna an Roinn aon trácht eile go dtí 20^ú Aibreán 2012 nuair a fuair an mhuintir a chuir isteach aighneachtaí chuig na comhairliúcháin fógra gairid ón Roinn ag rá gur chinn an tAire gan 'comharthaí tráchta dátheangach a sholáthar.'

Measann an tAire gurb é a aidhm tosaíochtaí comhaontaithe a sholáthar, mar a leagadh amach i gClár Feidhmiúcháin Rialtais TÉ. Leagann an Clár Rialtais amach eochairspríocanna maidir leis an líonra straitéiseach bóithre, cothabháil bóithre, trácht poiblí agus seirbhísí uisce agus camrais. Measann sé fosta, agus an cúlú geilleagrach san áireamh, gur chóir acmhainní teoranta na Roinne a chur in ord tosaíochta agus a dhíriú ar cheisteanna a dtiocfadh feabhsú díreach in úsáid shábháilte agus éifeachtach an líonra bóithre dá mbarr. De thoradh an chinnidh seo, ní dhéanfar a thuilleadh oibre ar an bheartas seo agus ní eiseoidh an Roinn freagra foirmiúil ar an chomhairliúchán.

copies of the submissions made to the consultation. There were 100 submissions made and analysis carried out by Janet Muller shows that 71 were in favour of bilingual signage (all of these were in favour of the use of Irish; only one makes favourable mention of Ulster Scots also), 9 submissions were neutral⁷ and 20 opposed bilingual signage. Whilst there are nine⁸ submissions from Irish language organisations or schools, there are none from any Ulster Scots grouping or any organisation which refers to carrying out Ulster Scots activities.

In March 2011, new Assembly elections were followed by a re-allocation of Departments. The Department of Regional Development (DRD) saw a change of Minister from Sinn Féin's Conor Murphy to the Ulster Unionist Party's (UUP) Danny Kennedy. Although the official public consultation on the proposals to introduce bilingual signage ended on 11th March 2011, no further announcements were made by the Department until 20th April 2012 when those who had made submission to the consultations received a brief notification from the Department stating that the Minister had decided not to 'provide bilingual traffic signs.'

The Minister considers that it is his aim to provide on agreed priorities, as laid out in the NI Executive Programme for Government. The Programme for Government lays out key goals in relation to the strategic roads network, roads maintenance, public transport and water and sewage services. He also considers, taking into account the economic recession, that the Department's limited resources should be put in order of priority and directed towards issues which will result in a direct improvement of the safe and effective usage of the roads network. Due to this decision, no further work will be undertaken on this policy and the Department will not be issuing a formal response to the consultation.

⁷ San áireamh san fhigúir seo tá ceann de dhá aighneacht faoin uimhir '20' (féach thuas). Is ó Infheistíocht TÉ an aighneacht seo a deir, 'taifead toradh NIALASACH ó Infheistíocht TÉ, le do thoil.'

⁸ Cumann Gaelach Ard Mhic Neasa, Gaelscoil na Speiríní, An Carn, POBAL, Conradh na Gaeilge, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, An Gaeláras, Iontaobhas Ultach, Forbairt Feirste.

⁷ This figure includes one of the two submissions numbered '20' (see above). This submission is from Invest NI and states, 'please record a NIL return from Invest NI.'

⁸ Cumann Gaelach Ard Mhic Neasa, Gaelscoil na Speiríní, An Carn, POBAL, Conradh na Gaeilge, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, An Gaeláras, Iontaobhas Ultach, Forbairt Feirste.

Creideann POBAL go n-aibhsíonn an cinneadh seo nádúr achtrannach an bheartais phoiblí ar an teanga Ghaeilge sa Tuaisceart cheal chosanta don Ghaeilge i reachtaíocht intíre. Fá láthair, tá dhá chineál beartais ann don Ghaeilge, ceann na nAirí náisiúnacha a d'fhéadfadh a bheith níos dea-mhéiní don teanga, agus ceann na nAirí aontachtacha atá naimhdeach agus bacúil don teanga. Cé gur mheas an Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí faoi Aire náisiúnach na moltaí 'de réir an CETRM', dar leis an Roinn chéanna faoi Aire aontachtach, bhí cead a chinn aige an comhairliúchán iomlán a chrosadh. Mar a nótáladh i miontuairiscí ón Ghrúpa Idir-Rannach um Fheidhmiú na Cairte (GIFC) a luadh i rannóga 2.13 agus 2.14, agus atá ar fáil ag Aguisín 1 A agus B, aithnítear go forleathan an cur chuige difreálach seo, ní amháin sa phobal, i bpáirtithe polaitiúla agus i státseirbhís TÉ, ach fosta san aon struchtúr a bunaíodh ó 2001 maidir leis an CETRM. Tá impleachtaí suntasacha aige a chreideann POBAL a bheith bunúsach don Chairt féin. Ina Thríú Tuairisc, deir COMEX (parag 127, leath 20), 'go n-áitíonn sé gur tábhachtach é nach ndéanfaí faiche imeartha i gcomhair pholaitíocht pháirtí de cheann ar bith de na teangacha.' Mholfaimis go leanfadh COMEX den cheist seo le rialtas an RA.

3.7.c

Bord Turasóireachta Thuaisceart na hÉireann (BTTÉ)

Thar tréimhse ama, cuireadh ar a shúile do POBAL roinnt deacrachtaí a bhaineas le Bord Turasóireachta Thuaisceart na hÉireann (BTTÉ), a dhiúltaíonn comharthaíocht thurasóireachta dhátheangach (Béarla-Gaeilge) a aontú, fiú sna ceantair inar iarradh seo le tacaíocht Chomhairle na háite. Is cosúil nach bhfuil sé soiléir cé acu tá nó nach bhfuil beartas scríofa 'Béarla-amháin' ann, cé acu tháinig nó nach dtáinig an treoir ó Aire an Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí, nó an iad oifigigh BTTÉ féin is ciontaí. Is é an cás láithreach gur dhiúltaigh BTTÉ comharthaíocht dhátheangach a chistiú. Ba é an toradh a bhí air seo brú suntasach le comharthaíocht aonteangach amháin a úsáid san lúr & Múrna (sárú bheartas dátheangach na Comhairle) agus i nDún Pádraig. An dréachtcháipéis chomhairliúcháin ar an Straitéis um Fheabhsú Fhorbairt na Gaeilge a d'eisigh an Roinn

POBAL believes that this decision highlights the problematic nature of public policy on the Irish language in the North in the absence of protection for Irish in domestic legislation. There are currently two types of policy for Irish, that of nationalist Ministers who may be more favourably disposed to the language, and that of unionist Ministers who are hostile and obstructive to the language. Whilst the Department for Regional Development (DRD) under a nationalist Minister considered its proposals 'in line with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages', the same Department under a unionist Minister considered itself free to veto the entire consultation. As noted in relation to minutes from the Inter-Departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG) mentioned in sections 2.13 and 2.14, and available at Appendix 1 A and B, this differential approach is widely recognised not only within the community, political parties and the NI civil service, but also within the one structure established since 2001 in relation to the ECRML. It has significant implications which POBAL believes are fundamental to the Charter itself. In its Third report, the COMEX (parag 127, pg 20), 'emphasises that it is important to refrain from making any of the languages a playing field for party politics.' We should like to suggest that the COMEX may like to pursue this issue further with the UK government.

3.7.c

Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)

Over a period of time, POBAL has been made aware of a number of difficulties relating to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and its refusal to agree bilingual (English-Irish) tourism signage, even in areas where this has been requested and is being supported by the local Council. There appears to be a lack of clarity about whether or not a written 'English-only' policy exists, whether or not direction has come from the Minister for the Department of Regional Development (DRD) or not, or whether NITB officials are themselves responsible. The current position is that NITB has refused to fund bilingual signage. This had led to considerable pressure to use monolingual signage only in both Newry and Mourne (in contravention of the Council's bilingual policy) and in Downpatrick. The draft consultation document on the Strategy for the Enhancement of the Development of Irish issued

Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF) i mí Iúil 2012, ní thugann sí aghaidh ar mhórchéist úsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaíocht phoiblí, sráide, baile, treo nó turasóireachta. Tugann POBAL le fios dá nglacfaí le reachtaíocht chuí don Ghaeilge go bhféadfadh sin cuid de na ceisteanna faoi chomharthaíocht a shoiléiriú agus a chur ar chumas comhlachtaí poiblí mar BTTÉ a chinntiú nach bhfuil a gcleachtas i leith na Gaeilge leatromach. Maímid le meas go mb'fhéidir gur mhaith le COMEX aghaidh a thabhairt ar an cheist seo ar bhonn práinne (féach Aguisín 4).

3.8 COMEX parag 386

Ag baint le tráchtanna COMEX i leith Acht Cumarsáide an RA agus Chairt Ríoga BBC, ní dhearnadh beart ar bith a leasódh an reachtaíocht seo, a fhágann amach aon tagairt don Ghaeilge. Ag cuimhneamh go bhfuil soláthar craoltóireachta Breatnaise sa Bhreatain Bheag agus craoltóireachta Gàidhlig in Albain san áireamh, is cosúil gur aimhrialtacht atá anseo agus is mífhortúnach nár fhreagair rialtas an RA tuairisc COMEX ar an cheist seo.

I mí Bealtaine 2011, scríobh POBAL chuig Oifig Thuaisceart na hÉireann (OTÉ) agus Hugo Swire, Fo-Rúnaí Stáit TÉ san am sin, maidir le roinnt ceisteanna, san áireamh Acht na Gaeilge, an CETRM agus reachtaíocht chraoltóireachta an RA. Bhí dhá chruinniú againn ina dhiaidh sin leis an Fho-Rúnaí Stáit agus ghríosaigh muid é le aghaidh a thabhairt ar cheist eisiamh na Gaeilge ó reachtaíocht chraoltóireachta an RA. Scríobh POBAL chuige arís ina dhiaidh sin ag iarraidh cruinniú trína oifig le Roinn Cultúir, Meán agus Spóirt an RA. Níor tharla an cruinniú sin. Chuir POBAL ár dteagmháil le OTÉ in iúl d'Aire Chultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta TÉ, Carál Ní Chuilín agus mhol muid di machnamh ar chuimsiú na Gaeilge i reachtaíocht chumarsáide an RA a iarraidh. Go dtí seo áfach, ní fios dúinn go ndearnadh aon dul chun cinn suntasach ar an cheist seo.

I mí na Nollag 2011, bhí cruinniú ag POBAL leis an Scáthrúnaí Stáit, Vernon Coaker, le ceisteanna reachtacha a ardú leis, san áireamh reachtaíocht chraoltóireachta an RA.

by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) in July 2012 does not address the broad issue of the use of Irish on public, street, town, direction and tourist signage. POBAL points out that the adoption of appropriate legislation for the Irish language could clarify some of the issues around signage and enable public bodies like NITB to ensure that their practice in respect of Irish is not discriminatory. We respectfully suggest that the COMEX may wish to address this issue as a matter of urgency. (see Appendix 4)

3.8 COMEX parag 386

In relation to the COMEX comments regarding the UK Communications Act & the BBC's Royal Charter, no measures have been taken to amend this legislation which excludes reference to the Irish language. Given the inclusion of provision for Welsh language broadcasting in Wales and for Gaelic broadcasting in Scotland, this appears to be an anomaly and it is unfortunate that the UK government has failed to respond to the COMEX report on this issue.

In May 2011, POBAL wrote to the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and Hugo Swire, then Under Secretary of State for NI regarding a number of issues including the Irish language Act, the ECRML and UK broadcasting legislation. We subsequently had two meetings with the Under Secretary of State and urged him to address the issue of the exclusion of the Irish language from UK broadcasting legislation. POBAL subsequently wrote to him to seek a meeting through his office with the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport. This meeting did not take place. POBAL informed the NI Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Carál Ní Chuilín of our contact with the NIO and suggested that she might consider requesting the inclusion of Irish in the UK communications legislation. To date however, we are not aware that any significant progress has been made on this issue.

In December 2011, POBAL met with Shadow Secretary of State, Vernon Coaker to raise legislative issues, including UK broadcasting legislation, with him.

Molaimid le meas go leanfadh COMEX den cheist seo.

3.9 COMEX parag 392

Tagraíonn Tríú Tuairisc COMEX don Chiste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge (CCG) a bhfuil cistiú £3 mhilliún sa bhliain faighte aige thar tréimhse cheithre bliana ó 2011 go 2015. Níl aon ráthaíocht ar chistiú leanúnach ann i ndiaidh na tréimhse seo. Is foinshe shuntasach buartha í an easpa leanúnachais seo.

Dheonaigh Ofcom síneadh 5 bliana go 2016 ar a cheadúnas craoltóireachta don aon stáisiún amháin raidió pobail Gaeilge, Raidió Fáilte. Ach, ainneoin an éilimh shoiléir taobh amuigh de mhórchéantar Bhéal Feirste, ní fhadófar an raon craoltóireachta 5km. Tá Raidió Fáilte ag fáil cistiú ón Chiste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge (CCG) d'oiliúint Raidió. Tá sé ag leanúint lena obair fhor-rochtana leis an phobal Protastúnach/Aontachtach/Dílseora, chomh maith le hobair fhor-rochtana leis na nuaphobail inimirceach.

3.10 COMEX parag 400-403

I dtaca leis na meáin chló, thuairiscigh POBAL do COMEX le linn an tríú timthriall faireacháin gur dhruid Foras na Gaeilge an nuachtán laethúil, *Lá Nua*, a bhí lonnaithe i mBéal Feirste. Tharraing sé siar ansin cistiú ón seachtaineán, *Foinse*. Ina dhiaidh sin, thairg Foras conradh do *Gaelscéal* faoi nósanna tairisceana a luadh in COMEX parag 401. D'fhógair Foras na Gaeilge i mí an Mhárta 2013 críoch ar chistiú don nuachtán *Gaelscéal*, lonnaithe i nGaillimh. Tá sé anois druidte. Ní thug Foras na Gaeilge aon eolas faoi na bearta a dhéanfas sé anois chun tacú leis na meáin cló. *Nós**, iris a dhíríonn ar dhéagóirí agus ar dhaoine óga, a bunaíodh an chéad uair ar líne ar 17^ú Márta 2008. Ní bhfuair sé aon chistiú. Idir 2009 agus 2010, táirgeadh líon beag cóipeanna clóite, arís gan aon chistiú.

We respectfully suggest that the COMEX might pursue this issue further.

3.9 COMEX parag 392

The Third COMEX report makes reference to the Irish Language Broadcast Fund (ILBF) which has now received funding of £3 million per year over a four year period from 2011 to 2015. There is no guarantee of continued funding after this period. This lack of continuity is a source of considerable concern.

The North's only Irish language community radio station, Raidió Fáilte has been granted a further 5 year extension on its broadcasting licence to 2016, by Ofcom. However, despite clear demand outside of the Greater Belfast area, the 5km radius of broadcasting will not be extended. Radió Fáilte is in receipt of funding from the Irish Language Broadcasting Fund (ILBF) for Radio Training. It continues its outreach work with the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist community, as well as outreach work with the new immigrant communities.

3.10 COMEX parag 400-403

In respect of the print media, POBAL reported to the COMEX during the third monitoring cycle that Foras na Gaeilge had closed down the Northern-based daily newspaper, *Lá Nua*. It then withdrew funding from the weekly newspaper, *Foinse*. Foras subsequently offered a contract to *Gaelscéal* under tendering procedures referred to in COMEX parag 401. Foras na Gaeilge announced in March 2013 an end to funding for the Irish language newspaper *Gaelscéal*, based in Galway. It has now closed. Foras na Gaeilge has provided no information about what steps it will now take to support the print media. *Nós**, a magazine aimed at teenagers and young people, was originally founded, online, on 17th March 2008. It received no funding. Between 2009 and 2010, a small number of printed copies were produced, again with no funding.

In 2010 agus 2011, nocht *Nós** ina mhír ionsáite sa seachtaineán Gaeilge, *Gaelscéal*, arís gan aon chistiú. I mí Deireadh Fómhair 2012, fuair *Nós** cistiú ó Foras na Gaeilge, le 12 eagrán a tháirgeadh thar tréimhse bliana. Faigheann sé £3000 sa mhí le costas foirne, poiblíochta, clódóireachta, eagarthóireachta agus na costais uilig eile a chlúdach. Gheobhaidh *Nós** cistiú go Deireadh Fómhair 2013. Fá láthair, níltear cinnte go bhfaighidh sé tuilleadh cistiú i ndiaidh an dáta sin.

Nuacht24, an nuachtseirbhís ar líne. Níl cóipeanna clóite de *Nuacht24* ar fáil anois. Uasdátaítear an suíomh gach lá, agus tuairiscí nuachta agus sainghnéithe a chistigh an Ciste Craoltóireacht Gaeilge ó 2010 go 2011, uaslódáil iad le linn na tréimhse sin. Níl *Nuacht24* ag fáil cistiú fá láthair.

3.11 COMEX parag 410

Ón Lascaistriú Digiteach i nDeireadh Fómhair 2011, ní thig TG4 a fháil anois ach in Ard-Ghléine (AG), rud a fhágann go gcaithfidh lucht féachana teilifíseán lán-AG a bheith acu, nó glacadóir digiteach lán-AG, Saorview mar shampla nó BBC HD.

Tá tuilleadh castachtaí ag lucht féachana cois na teorann sa Tuaisceart, ós rud é gur féidir go bhfuil comharthaí TG4 ag teacht ón Tuaisceart nó ón Deisceart, agus gur féidir go n-athródh rochtain chuid mhaith taobh istigh de limistéar beag, in amanna taobh istigh de theaghais áirithe chónaí. Sa chás sin, b'fhéidir go gcaithfeadh duine a bheadh ag iarraidh coimhead ar TG4 sa seomra tosaigh thíos staighre an comhartha a ghlacadh trí threalamh éagsúil le duine sa chúlseomra thuas staighre.

3.12

COMEX 405 agus 412

Sa Tríú Tuairisc aige, ní raibh COMEX in ann cinneadh a dhéanamh ar an ghealltanas i dtaca le léirithe closamhairc i nGaeilge (parag 405, leath 56) agus d'aibhsigh sé an gá atá le 'fíorbheartas straitéiseach' i dtaca le gníomhaíochtaí agus saoráidí cultúrtha (parag 412, leath 56).

In 2010 and 2011, *Nós** appeared as an insert in the weekly Irish language newspaper, *Gaelscéal*, again with no funding. In October 2012, *Nós** received funding from Foras na Gaeilge, to produce 12 issues over a one year period. It receives £3000 per month to cover staff costs, publicity, printing, editing and all other costs. *Nós** will receive funding until October 2013. At present, there is no certainty of receiving further funding after this date.

Nuacht24, the online news service. Printed copies of *Nuacht24* are no longer available. The site is updated daily, and news reports and special features funded by the Irish Language Broadcast Fund from 2010 to 2011 were uploaded during that period. *Nuacht24* currently receives no funding.

3.11 COMEX parag 410

Since Digital Switchover in October 2011, TG4 can only be received now in HD, which means viewers must have a full-HD television, or a full-HD digital receiver, for example Saorview or BBC HD.

There are additional complexities for viewers in the border region of the North, since TG4 signals may be coming from the North or the South, and access may vary considerably within a small area, sometimes within the confines of a given domestic dwelling. In such cases, someone wanting to watch TG4 in the front downstairs room may need to access the signal through different equipment from someone in a back upstairs room.

3.12 COMEX 405 and 412

In its Third report, the COMEX was unable to conclude on the undertaking in relation to audiovisual productions in Irish (parag 405, pg 56) and highlights the need for 'a concrete and strategic policy' in relation to cultural activities and facilities (parag 412, pg 56).

3.12.a

D'aibhsigh POBAL roimhe seo roinnt samplaí den dea-chleachtas maidir le soláthar ábhar Gaeilge i saoraidí cultúrtha, ag Pláinéadlann Ard Mhacha, mar shampla, mar ar táirgeadh roinnt ábhar closamhairc agus clóite i nGaeilge. Tuigimid, agus é seo á scríobh, gur táirgeadh nua-acmhainn dhátheangach teagaisc, Leabhar Cheanannais Digiteach, i bpáirtíocht leis an Chuideachta Chultúir, an Chroílár agus an Chomhairle Curaclaim, Scrúdúcháin agus Mheasúnaithe (CCSM). Is é atá san acmhainn suíomh gréasáin, leabhair agus ábhair chlosamhairc⁹.

3.12.b Ar an drochuair, sampla measartha scoite atá anseo agus, dar le POBAL, go bhfuil mearbhall éigin ag baint le feidhmiú Airteagail 12, a tharlaíonn go minic, mar shampla, maidir le comhairlí áitiúla. Le linn an Cheathrú Timthriall Faireacháin, thaifead POBAL i gcáipéisí gur dhiúltaigh roinnt comhairlí do leaganacha Gaeilge d'ábhair thaispeántais chlosamhairc, oidhreacht nó taispeántais, a bhain go minic le diúltú do chomharthaíocht dhátheangach in ionaid phoiblí. Ní chuireann láithreáin nuathógála turasoíreachta agus oidhreacht, Clochán an Aifir (Co Aontroma), mar shampla, agus an Cheathrú Thíotáineach (Béal Feirste), aon chomharthaíocht ná soláthar closamhairc i nGaeilge ar fáil agus níl Gaeilge ar bith ar na suíomhanna gréasáin. I gcás Ionad na hEamhna in Ard Mhacha, ceann d'eochairláitheáin sheandálaíochta agus oidhreacht Éireann, níl ann fá láthair aon soláthar do Ghaeilgeoirí. I ndiaidh tuairisc a choimisiúnaigh Comhairle Ceantair Ard Mhacha ar mhargú Ionad na hEamhna, agus sraith moltaí a bhain le soláthar meirgí, comharthaíochta agus soláthar eile dátheangach ag an Ionad, tógadh an t-ábhar arís ag cruinniú Comhairle. Chuir comhairleoírí de chuid Shinn Féin i leith na n-aontachtach dearcadh 'grabhróga ón tábla' i dtaca le soláthar Gaeilge ag an Ionad, agus líomhnódh ag an chruinniú gur stiúradh turais 'Ghaeilge' an Ionaid trí mheán an Bhéarla agus i sraith ábhar closamhairc a táirgeadh i bhformáidí agus i dteanga eile, gurbh iad na hábhair Ghaeilge amháin a 'cailleadh'.

3.12.a

POBAL has previously highlighted some examples of good practice in relation to provision of Irish language materials in cultural facilities, for example at the Armagh Planetarium where some audio-visual and printed materials in Irish have been produced. We understand at the time of writing that a new bilingual teaching resource, The Digital Book of Kells has been produced in partnership with the Culture Company, the Nerve Centre and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The resource consists of a website, books and audio-visual materials.⁹

3.12.b Unfortunately, this is a rather isolated example and it appears to POBAL that there is some confusion about the application of Article 12, which arises frequently, for example, in relation to local councils. During the Fourth monitoring cycle, POBAL has documented refusals by a number of councils to produce Irish language versions of audio-visual exhibition, heritage or display materials, often connected with denial of bilingual signage in public places. New build tourist and heritage sites including at the Giant's Causeway (Co. Antrim) and the Titanic Quarter (Belfast) make no signage or audio-visual provision in Irish and there is no Irish on the web sites. In the case of the Navan Centre in Armagh, one of Ireland's key archaeological and heritage sites, there is currently no provision made for Irish speakers. Following a report commissioned by Armagh District Council on marketing of the Navan Centre, and a series of proposals regarding provision of bilingual banners, signage and other provision at the Centre, the matter was further raised at a Council meeting. Sinn Féin councillors accused unionists of a 'crumbs from the table' attitude in relation to Irish language provision at the Centre, and it is alleged during the meeting that 'Irish language' tours of the Centre had in fact been conducted in English and that of a series of audio-visual materials produced in different language formats, the Irish language materials alone had been 'lost'.

⁹ Togra Leabhar Cheanannais Digiteach, <http://www.ccea.org.uk/colmcille/gaeilge/index.php>

⁹ Digital Book of Kells project, <http://www.ccea.org.uk/colmcille/gaeilge/index.php>

Seo a leanas sliocht ó mhiontuairiscí Chomhairle Ceantair Ard Mhacha, Dé Luain 25^ú Iúil 2011¹⁰:

Dúirt an Comhairleoir Speers gur cur in iúl dearcaidh a bhí i gceist.

Dúirt an Comhairleoir Bean Uí Dhúill gur bhain sé le glacadh leis an Ghaeilge agus d'fhiafraigh sí de ar ghlac sé leis gur cuid dá gcultúr í an Ghaeilge.

Ag tabhairt freagra, dúirt sé nach raibh deacracht aige le labhairt na Gaeilge. Dúirt sé gur cuid den saol é. Dúirt sé go bhfoghlaimeodh sí rud beag teanga duit agus go nglacfadh sí siar go dtí an bogach thú ach nach ndéanfadh sé a dhath d'aonduine.

Dúirt an Comhairleoir Bean Uí Raifeartaigh gur sin iad na focail chéanna a chuala sí 10 mbliana ó shin nuair a tháinig sí an chéad uair chuig an Chomhairle (féach Aguisín 5).

Ainneoin agóidí roinnt comhairleoirí náisiúnacha, ritheadh an moladh ar son comharthaíochta aontanga ag móramh aontachtach na Comhairle. Níl comharthaíocht ar bith eile Gaeilge fá láthair ag Ionad na hEamhna agus ní heol dúinn aon soláthar eile Gaeilge a bheith á dhéanamh (féach Aguisín 5).

3.12.c

Le linn fhorbairt Ionad shuaitheanta Ealaíon Uí Néill agus Rann Feòrling i nDún Geanainn, bhí cruinniú ag POBAL le hoifigigh chomhairle (8.3.12). Tá sé seo ina eochairláthair stairiúil ón tríú céad déag go dtí an lá inniu. Is mór cosanta ardchríche é Cnoc Uí Néill os cionn Dhún Geanainn agus ba é daingean ríshliocht Uí Néill é. Bhí amharc aige ar naoi gcontae Chúige Uladh, rud a chuir ar chumas na n-áititheoirí a bheith i gceannas ar an cheantar máguaird, agus bhí sé ar cheann de na láithreacha ba thábhachtaí ó thaobh straitéise de i stair na hÉireann. I ndiaidh na gcruinnithe leis na oifigigh chomhairle, is fiú a lua gur cuireadh méid áirithe comharthaíochta dátheangáil in airde ar an Chnoc féin. Ar an drochuair,

The following is an extract from the minutes, Armagh District Council meeting, Monday 25th July 2011,¹⁰

Councillor Speers said it was a matter of stating a view.

Councillor Mrs Doyle said that it was down to acceptance of the Irish Language and asked of him did he accept the Irish Language was part of their culture.

In response, he said that he had no problem with speaking the Irish Language. He said he saw it as one of those things. He said it would learn you a bit of language and take you back to the bog but that it would do nothing for anyone.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that these were the same words she had heard 10 years ago when she first came to the Council. (see Appendix 5)

In spite of the protests by some nationalist councillors, the proposal for monolingual signage was passed by the Council's unionist majority. There is currently no Irish language signage in the Navan centre and we are not aware of any other Irish language provision being made. (see Appendix 5)

3.12.c

During the development of the flagship Hill of the Ó Neill and Ranfurnly Arts Centre in Dungannon, POBAL met with council officials (8.3.12). This has been a key historical site from the thirteenth century until modern times. The Hill of the O'Neill is a highland rampart above the town of Dungannon and was the stronghold of the Gaelic Ó Neill dynasty. Its view of all nine counties of Ulster enabled its occupants to command the surrounding area and it has been one of the most strategically important sites in the history of Ireland. Following the meetings with council officials, it is worth noting that some bilingual signage has indeed been placed on the Hill itself. Unfortunately, the exhibition housed in nearby

¹⁰ Cruinniú Chomhairle Ceantair Ard Mhacha, Luan 25^ú Iúil 2011, miontuairiscí iomlán le fáil ag <http://www.armagh.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/filebase/2011/07%20July/25%20July%20-%20Statutory%20Council.pdf>, ioslódáil deiridh 17.5.2013.

¹⁰ Armagh District Council meeting, Monday 25th July 2011, full minutes available at <http://www.armagh.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/filebase/2011/07%20July/25%20July%20-%20Statutory%20Council.pdf>, last downloaded 17.5.2013

is i mBéarla amháin atá an taispeántas atá lonnaithe i dTeach Rann Feòrling in aice láimhe, agus cé go bhfuil leagan Gaeilge den chur i láthair ciosamhairc ar fáil, ag an oscailt oifigiúil (Deireadh Fómhair 2012) ba doiligh teacht air agus ba dona a fógraíodh é agus tá sé gan chríochnú. Cé gur cosúil go bhfuil clár forbartha gníomhaíochtaí oideachais ann, ní léir cá mhéad acu seo atá ar fáil tríd an Ghaeilge do Ghaelscoileanna na háite nó cé chomh fada is atá an clár á leathnú le cainteoirí Gaeilge sa cheantair a chuimsiú. Níl Gaeilge ar bith ar shuíomh gréasáin an ionad ealaíon. Ba deis chaillte í úsáid threallach na Gaeilge ba léir ag tionscnamh an togra seo a tharla b'fhéidir cionn is nár pleanáladh chun cinn go sásúil agus nár cuireadh san áireamh riachtanais Ghaeilgeoirí agus gur gá radharc glan a fhorbairt ar na oibleagáidí faoin CETRM.

3.12.d

Tá easpa leoreolais ar an CETRM agus ar dhualgais chomhairlí áitiúla faoi Airteagal 12 á léiriú arís ag tuairisc chruinniú Choiste Ealaíon/Iarsmalann Chomhairle an Lúir a tionóladh ar 14^ú Lúnasa 2012. Sna miontuairiscí seo, diúltaíodh do cheist faoi thuairisc ar fheidhmiú Airteagal 12 agus 13 den CETRM ar an bhonn 'gur Airteagal 10 a bhaineann le húdaráis Riaracháin agus seirbhísí poiblí an ceann a bhaineann go díreach leis an Chomhairle.' (féach Aguisín 6).

3.13

COMEX parag 416, 419, 420

Cionn is gur lean an RA gan tuairisc a dhéanamh, is in olcas a chuaigh na bearnaí in eolas a luaigh na Saineolaithe roimhe seo. Maidir le parag 415-6, bhí POBAL ag obair ó 2010 ar fheidhmiú Straitéise ar Fhorbairt na nEalaíon Gaeilge a Fheabhsú. Faigheann POBAL £25,000 sa bhliain leis an obair seo a chistiú, suim a chlúdaíonn tuarastal lánaimseartha gan chostais reatha nó chostais togra. Cé go luaitear an straitéis seo ar shuíomh gréasáin Chomhairle Ealaíon TÉ, níl sé le feiceáil sa cháipéis chomhairliúcháin a tháirg an Chomhairle Ealaíon i mí Aibreáin 2013, *Ambitions for the Arts, A Five Year Strategic Plan*¹¹. Níl aon tagairt sa dréachtcháipéis don Ghaeilge. Cé

Ranfurnly House is in English only, and whilst there is an Irish language version of some parts of the audio visual presentation, at the time of the official opening (October 2012) it was hard to locate and remained poorly advertised and uncompleted. Although there appears to be a developed programme of educational activities, it is not clear to what extent these are available through Irish for local Irish medium schools, or to what extent this programme is being expanded to include local adult Irish speakers. There is no Irish on the arts centre web site. The patchy use of Irish apparent at the inauguration of this project is a missed opportunity which may have occurred in part because of a failure to forward plan adequately and to take into account the needs of Irish speakers and to develop a clear view of the obligations under the ECRML.

3.12.d

The lack of adequate information on the ECRML and the duties of local councils under Article 12 is further illustrated by the report of the Newry Council Arts/Museum Committee Meeting held on 14th August 2012. In these minutes, a request for a report on the application by the arts and museums committee of Articles 12 and 13 of the ECRML is refused on the basis that, 'Article 10 relating to Administrative authorities and public services is what directly applied to the Council.' (see Appendix 6)

3.13

COMEX parag 416, 419, 420

Because of the continuing UK reporting failure, the gaps in information noted by the Experts previously is exacerbated. In relation to parags 415-6, POBAL has been working since 2010 on the implementation of a Strategy for the Development of the Irish Language Arts. POBAL is in receipt of £25,000 per annum to fund this work, which covers a full time wage but no running costs or project costs. Although this strategy is referred to on the Arts Council NI website, it does not appear in the consultation document produced by the Arts Council in April 2013, *Ambitions for the Arts, A Five Year Strategic Plan*.¹¹ There are no references in the draft document

¹¹ Uaillmhianta do na hEalaíona, CETÉ, http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/compliance/2012-2013/strategic_plan_consultation_draft.pdf, íoslódáil deiridh 13.5.2013.

¹¹ Ambitions for the Arts, ACNI, http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/compliance/2012-2013/strategic_plan_consultation_draft.pdf, last downloaded 13.5.2013

gur bhraith POBAL go raibh a lán d'oifigigh an Chomhairle Ealaíon báuil agus gairmiúil sa chur chuige, ní fhostaíonn an Chomhairle Ealaíon oifigigh Ghaeilge nó oibrithe tiomnaithe chun plé leis an earnáil. Tá POBAL toilteanach forbairt straitéiseach agus obair abhcóideachta a dhéanamh ar na healaíona Gaeilge i gcomhar le Comhairle Ealaíon TÉ. Ní chreidimid, áfach, go dtig le haon Eagras Neamh Rialtasach (ENR), dá éifeachtaí agus dá dhícheallaí é, oibleagáidí chomhlachtaí poiblí ar neamhchomaoin a chomhlíonadh ós rud é nach gcuireann ENRanna i gcrích freagrachtaí agus acmhainní déanamh beartais agus buiséid comhlachtaí den chineál sin. Mar ENR, caithfear POBAL a acmhainniú le hobair mar sin a dhéanamh. Ar an drochuair, tá staid chistiú eagraíochtaí Gaeilge sa Cheathrú Timthriall Faireacháin ag éirí níos éiginnte. Cé go n-aithnítear tionchar an ghéarchor chun donais sa gheilleagar domhanda, tá ábhar dlisteanach inní ann fá láthair go bhféadfadh athbreithnithe chistiú ENRanna mar POBAL, le saineolas, cuntas leanúnach teiste i measúnacht beartais, cleachtas and reachtaíocht rialtais, a bheith faoi thionchar ag cúrsaí eile agus go n-oibreodh sin ar dhóigh dhiúltach ar an obair forbartha agus abhcóideachta.

3.14 Sa Tríú Tuairisc aige, d'fhoghlaim COMEX nár comhlíonadh ach i bpáirt an gealltanais 'gur chóir go mbeadh foireann lánchumasach ar an TRM faoina réir ag comhlachtaí atá freagrach as tacú le gníomhaíochtaí cultúrtha.' Thuairiscigh POBAL roimhe seo deacrachtaí a éiríonn as doicheall a lán comhlachtaí poiblí agus comhairlí cumas Gaeilge a chuimsiú i gcritéir earcaíochta a bhaineann le poist tacaíochta cultúrtha. Ceist atá forleiththeadach agus leanúnach í seo a dtagróimid fosta di faoi mhír 5.3.f i dtaca le comhairle ón Choimisiún Comhionannais agus Alt 75. I sampla amháin, i mí na Nollag 2012, i gcomhfhreagras le Comhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn a bhain le post Chúntóra Iarsmalainne, nár luadh an Ghaeilge a bheith ina critéar riachtanach nó inmhianaithe, scríobh oifigeach den Comhairle,

Is a thuigim nach ndeachtaíonn an CETRM sainriachtanais ar bith i dtaca le cuimsiú na Gaeilge mar riachtanas d'aon phost a fhógraítear.

to the Irish language. Whilst POBAL has found many Arts Council officers to be sympathetic and professional in their approach, the Arts Council does not employ any Irish language officers or dedicated workers to engage with the sector. POBAL is happy to carry out strategic developmental and advocacy work on the Irish language arts in co-operation with the Arts Council NI. However, we do not believe that any NGO, however effective and hard working, can fulfil the obligations of arms length public bodies since NGOs do not dispose of the policy-making and budgetary responsibilities and resources of such bodies. As an NGO, POBAL needs to be resourced to carry out such work. Unfortunately, the funding position of Irish language organisations in the Fourth monitoring cycle has become increasingly insecure. Whilst recognising the impact of the global economic downturn, there are currently legitimate concerns that funding reviews of NGOs like POBAL, with expertise, a continuous track record of independent evaluation of government policy, practice and legislation may be influenced by other factors and that this will impact negatively on developmental and advocacy work.

3.14 In its Third Report, the COMEX find only partly fulfilled the undertaking, 'that bodies responsible for supporting cultural activities should have at their disposal staff that has full command of the Regional or Minority Language.' POBAL has previously reported difficulties arising from the unwillingness of many public bodies and councils to include ability in Irish in recruitment criteria in relation to cultural support posts. This is a widespread and continuing issue which we shall also refer to under section 5.3.f regarding advice from the Equality Commission and Section 75. In one example, in December 2012, in correspondence from Newry and Mourne Council regarding the post of Museum Assistant, for which Irish has not been cited as an essential or desirable criteria, the council official writes,

It is my understanding that the ECRML does not dictate any specific requirements in relation to the inclusion of Irish as a requirement for any

Má thig leat fianaise chainníochtúil láidir a thabhairt go bhfuil líon cothrom Protastúnach agus Caitliceach a bhfuil labhairt nó cáilíochtaí Gaeilge acu, sa chás sin b'fhéidir go measfaí a leithéid a chuimsiú mar inmhianaithe i bpoist más mian leis an Chomhairle an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an dóigh sin. Agus muid ag breithniú ar an tslí seo, áfach, de réir ár n-oibleagáidí faoi Alt 75, chaithfimis fosta tionchar a leithéide sin a bhreithniú ar an dóigh a n-oibreodh úsáid an critéir seo ar chumas daoine ó phobail mhionlaigh nó ar dhaoine le míchumas nach dtiocfadh leo na critéir a chomhlíonadh agus nach mbeadh, mar sin de, incheaptha do na poist (féach Aguisín 11)¹².

3.15 COMEX parag 420

Ní fios do POBAL aon tionscnaimh nó cur chuige straitéiseach a dhíríonn ar 'mhalartuithe cultúrtha, thagairtí do na teangacha réigiúnacha agus mionlaigh a labhraítear san RA i gcomhthéacs taispeántas nó imeachtaí, nó ábhar faisnéise bainte leis an RA a dhíríonn ar an phobal idirnáisiúnta.'

Cé go bhfuil ábhar áirithe Gaeilge i gclár thogra Chathair Cultúrtha an RA i nDoire, is de bharr chrua-oibre agus iarracht Ghaeilgeoirí sa chathair agus níos faide i gcéin a tharla sé.

Dar le POBAL gurbh fhéidir gur mhaith le COMEX an toradh a fuair sé roimhe seo a athrá agus na húdaráis a ghríosú le cinntiú go gcuirfear in áit ar an deis is luaithe 'fíorbheartas straitéiseach' i dtaca le pleanáil faoi Airteagal 12.

post which is advertised. If you are able to supply robust quantitative evidence that there are equal numbers of Protestants and Catholics who can speak or have qualifications in Irish, then consideration may be given to inclusion of such in jobs as desirable if the Council wishes to promote Irish in this way. However, in considering this route, in line with our Section 75 obligations, we would also have to consider the impact of such on how the use of this criterion would impact on the ability of people from minority communities or those with a disability who might not be able to comply with the criterion and therefore not be eligible for the posts.¹² (see Appendix 11)

3.15 COMEX parag 420

POBAL is not aware of any initiatives or strategic approaches aimed at 'cultural exchanges, references to the regional or minority languages spoken in the UK in the context of exhibitions or events, or information material concerning the UK aimed at an international public.'

Whilst the programme for the UK City of Culture project in Derry contains some Irish language content, this has been brought about through the hard work and effort of Irish speakers in the city and beyond.

POBAL feels the COMEX may wish to reiterate its previous finding and urge the authorities to ensure that 'a concrete and strategic policy' in respect of planning under Article 12 is put in place at the earliest opportunity.

¹² R-chomhfhreagras ó Catherine Sweeney, Comhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn, 10ú Nollaig 2012.

¹² E-correspondence from Catherine Sweeney, Newry and Mourne Council, 10th December 2012

4.0

COMEX agus Moladh Chomhairle na nAirí RecChL(2010)4

'glac le beartas cuimsitheach Gaeilge agus cuir i bhfeidhm é, trí ghlacadh le reachtaíocht ab fhearr'

4.1

Straitéis ar Fhorbairt na nEalaíon Gaeilge a Fheabhsú

4.1.a

Ní thagraíonn tuairisc an RA do mholadh RecChL(2010)4, do Chomhaontú Chill Rímhinn 2006 a gheall go dtabharfaí isteach Acht Gaeilge, ná d'Acht Chill Rímhinn 2006 a leagann dualgas ar an Fheidhmeannas glacadh le straitéis don Ghaeilge. Is léir gur réimsí iad seo ina leagtar oibleagáidí díreacha ar rialtas an RA. Thig le POBAL a dhearbhu gur cuireadh amach dréachtmholtaí i gcomhair straitéis don Ghaeilge (agus straitéis ar leith d'Albainis Uladh) do chomhairliúchán poiblí ar 11^ú Iúil 2012, faoin Aire reatha Cultúir, Carál Ní Chuilín, le dáta deiridh 27^ú Samhain 2012¹³. Fuair POBAL coimisiún ón Roinn le seimineár comhairliúcháin a eagrú le hearnáil na Gaeilge ar 25^ú Deireadh Fómhair 2012. Thug muid tuairisc iomlán ar thorthaí an tseimineáir don Roinn chomh maith lenár n-aighneacht féin. Creideann POBAL go bhfuarthas 280 freagra scríofa ar an chomhairliúchán Gaeilge. Níl aon eolas eile ar fáil fá láthair ar staid an phróisis seo, cé gur dúradh linn go neamhfhoirmiúil go gcuirfidh státseirbhísí na Roinne láithreoireachtaí faoi bhráid an Choiste Tionóil ar Chultúr, Ealaíona agus Fóillíocht sna seachtainí romhainn amach agus go dtosóidh sraith cruinnithe le ranna rialtais ina dhiaidh sin. Creideann POBAL go bhfuil an tAire dáiríre faoi straitéis don Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn. Is é a thuigimid, áfach, go n-iarrfaidh a leithéid de straitéis tacaíocht traspháirtí ó Fheidhmeannas TÉ agus ón Tionól sular féidir glacadh léi. Thairis sin, cé go bhfuil an gá le hAcht Gaeilge luaite sa dréachtcháipéis straitéise¹⁴, is éadócha go mbeidh

4.0

COMEX and Council of Ministers Recommendation RecChL(2010)4

'adopt and implement a comprehensive Irish language policy, preferably through the adoption of legislation'

4.1

Strategy for the Enhancement of the Development of the Irish Language

4.1.a

The UK report makes no reference to the RecChL(2010)4 recommendation, to the 2006 St Andrews Agreement which commits to the introduction of the Irish language Act, nor to the 2006 St Andrews Act which places a duty on the Executive to adopt a strategy for the Irish language. These are all clearly areas where direct obligations are placed upon the UK government. POBAL can confirm that under current Culture Minister Carál Ní Chuilín, draft proposals for a strategy for the Irish language (and a separate strategy for Ulster Scots) were put out for public consultation on 11th July 2012 with a closing date of 27th November 2012.¹³ POBAL was commissioned by the Department to organise a consultation seminar with the Irish language sector on 25th October 2012. We provided the Department with a full report of the seminar findings as well as making our own submission. POBAL believes that in total 280 written responses were received to the Irish language consultation. No further information is currently available as to where this process stands, although informally we have been informed that Departmental Civil Servants will make presentations to the Assembly Committee on Culture, Arts and Leisure in coming weeks and that a series of meetings with government departments will subsequently commence. POBAL believes that the Minister is serious about progressing a strategy for the Irish language. However, it is our understanding that any such strategy will require cross-party support from

¹³ RCEF, Dréachtstraitéis le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversityr08/consultation_on_the_strategy_for_protecting_and_enhancing_the_development_of_the_irish_language.htm ioslódáil deiridh 13.05.2013

¹³ DCAL, Draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/language-cultural-diversity-r08/consultation_on_the_strategy_for_protecting_and_enhancing_the_development_of_the_irish_language.htm Last downloaded 13.05.2013

creat cuí dlíthiúil in áit in am chun tacú le lánfheidhmiú straitéise Gaeilge (féach pointe 4.4 thíos).

I dtaca le braistint an phobail, féadann contúirt a bheith ann, in easpa reachtaíocht chumasaithe, go bhfeicfead an straitéis Ghaeilge, fiú má ghlactar léi, ina sop mura leanfaidh gníomh éifeachtach gasta í.

4.1.b

Ar an láimh eile de, tá naimhdeas na n-aontachtaíthe do thionscnamh straitéise curtha in iúl cheana féin. Roimhe seo, sa tuairisc faireacháin againn don Tríú Timthriall, d'aithin POBAL, dar linn 'claonadh atá ag dul i méid leis an CETRM a chomhthoghadh chun éilimh ar a thuilleadh cosaintí agus soláthair don Ghaeilge a neodrú. Creideann POBAL go gcaithfead dúshlán láidir a thabhairt ar an dearcadh go dtig an CETRM a lua le cur chuige forásach don Ghaeilge a chosc'.¹⁵ Is mian linn a chur in iúl go bhfeictear dúinn gur mhéadaigh an claonadh sin le linn an timthriall reatha. Ag cruinniú de chuid choiste Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta Thionóil TÉ, Déardaoin 20^ú Meán Fómhair 2012, thug Cathaoirleach an Choiste, Michelle McIlveen den PAD, an ráiteas oscailte seo ag freagairt do chur i láthair ar an dréachtstraitéis ó oifigigh an Roinn Chultúir,

B'ábhar spéise againn na freagraí ar an chomhairliúchán a léamh, agus is cinnte go dtiocfaidh sibh chugainn chomh luath agus is féidir leis an anailís sin. Caithfidh mé a rá ón fhíorthús, áfach, ó mo dhearcadhsa, go bhfuil an rud a shílím atá á mholadh sa straitéis Gaeilge níos cosúla le prionsabail Bhille ná le straitéis. Ní fheicim cén dóigh ar theip oraibh achoimre a thabhairt sa cháipéis ar fhreagrachtaí an Tionóil

the NI Executive and Assembly before it can be adopted. In addition, although the need for the Irish language Act is mentioned in the draft strategy document,¹⁴ it appears unlikely that there will be an appropriate domestic legal framework in place in time to support full implementation of any Irish language strategy (see point 4.4 below).

In terms of the perception of the community, there may be a danger that because of the absence of enabling legislation, the Irish language strategy, even if adopted, may be seen as a sop unless followed rapidly by effective legislative action.

4.1.b

On the other hand, unionist opposition to the introduction of a strategy has already been expressed. Previously, in our monitoring report for the Third cycle, POBAL identified what we see as, 'a growing tendency to co-opt the ECRML in order to neutralise demands for improved protections and provisions for Irish. POBAL believes that the view that the ECRML can be cited to prevent a progressive approach for the Irish language must be firmly challenged'.¹⁵ We wish to point out that it appears to us that this tendency has increased during the current cycle. At a meeting on Thursday 20th September 2012 of the NI Assembly Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Chairperson of the Committee, Michelle McIlveen of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), made the following opening remarks in response to a presentation on the draft strategy by Culture Departmental officials,

It will be interesting for us to read the responses to the consultation, and, no doubt, you will come to us at your earliest opportunity with that analysis. However, I have to say from the outset that, from my position, what I feel is being proposed in the Irish language strategy reads more like the principles of a Bill than a strategy. I do not see how you can fail to outline in the document the responsibilities that the Assembly

¹⁴ RCEF Dréachtstraitéis (mar atá thuas), alt 4, fophointe 4.8.2.

¹⁵ POBAL, An Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh: Feidhmiú na Cairte i leith na Gaeilge 2005-8, parag 1.05, leath 5

¹⁴ DCAL Draft Strategy (as above), section 4, sub-point 4.8.2

¹⁵ POBAL, An Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh: feidhmiú na Cairte i leith na Gaeilge / The ECRML: The Implementation of the Charter with Regard to the Irish language 2005-8, parag 1.05, pg 5

maidir leis an Chairt [an CETRM]. Déanann sí neamhiontas glan den mhéid a rinneadh go dtí seo maidir leis sin agus d'fhreagrachtaí an Tionóil maidir leis an Chairt agus trí reachtaíocht.

Feicim seo á chur i láthair mar liosta mianta agus mar ardaidhm, agus ní mó ná sásta atá mé leis an cháipéis. Creidim go seasann sí taobh amuigh de spiorad na Cairte lenar aontaigh rialtas an RA ar son leas na teanga. Is é an sprioc atá leagtha amach Tuaisceart na hÉireann dátheangach a chruthú. Diúltóidh mé dó sin, mar a dhéanfas an páirtí s'agam.¹⁶

4.1.c Ardaíonn an díospóireacht ag an chruinniú roinnt ceisteanna eile maidir le feidhmiú éifeachtach na mbeart atá molta sa straitéis agus naimhdeas chuid de na haontachtaí do reachtaíocht don Ghaeilge per se.

An tUas McGimpsey¹⁷: An dtig bhur straitéis a sholáthar gan reachtaíocht?

An tUas Scott¹⁸: Cheapfainn go dtiocfadh an t-iomlán a sholáthar gan reachtaíocht.

An tUas McGimpsey: Mar sin de, ní theastaíonn Acht Gaeilge leis an straitéis a sholáthar.

An tUas Scott: Braitheann sé sin ar fheidhmiú na straitéise. Cuireadh ceisteanna faoina tionchar ar ghnólachtaí. In amanna, má aontaíonn an Feidhmeannas straitéis, is ar gach Aire a thitfeadh an fhreagracht leis an straitéis sin a fheidhmiú. Dá leathfadh an straitéis níos faide isteach san earnáil phoiblí nó ghnó, an mbeadh sí comhairleach nó éigeantach? Dá mbeadh sí éigeantach, theastódh reachtaíocht.

has in relation to the [ECRML] charter. It totally ignores what has been done to date in relation to that and the responsibilities of the Assembly with regard to the charter and through legislation.

I see this as being presented as a wish list and an aspiration, and I take issue with the document. I believe that it stands outside the spirit of the charter to which the UK Government have signed up in the interests of protecting the language. The goal that has been set out is to create a bilingual Northern Ireland. I will resist that, as will my party.¹⁶

4.1.c The discussion at the meeting raises a number of other issues regarding effective implementation of measures proposed in the strategy and the resistance of some unionists to legislation for Irish *per se*.

Mr McGimpsey¹⁷: Can your strategy be delivered without legislation?

Mr Scott¹⁸: I imagine that it could all be delivered without legislation.

Mr McGimpsey: So you do not need an Irish language Act to deliver the strategy.

Mr Scott: That depends on the implementation of the strategy. Questions were asked about whether it would impact on businesses. Sometimes, if a strategy is agreed by the Executive, it would become the responsibility of each Minister to implement that agreed strategy. If the strategy extended further afield into the public sector or business, would it be advisory or mandatory? Were it to be mandatory, legislation would be required.

¹⁶ Tionól TÉ, Taifead Oifigiúil Hansard, Déardaoin 20ú Meán Fómhair 2012, Coiste Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta, Straitéisí Gaeilge/Albainis Uladh: Faisnéisiú RCEF.

¹⁷ Michael McGimpsey, Páirtí Aontachtach Uladh (Aire Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta 2000-2002)

¹⁸ Arthur Scott, Oifigeach Roinne.

¹⁶ NI Assembly, Hansard Official Record, Thursday 20th September 2012, Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Irish/ULster-Scots Strategies: DCAL Briefing,

¹⁷ Michael McGimpsey, Ulster Unionist Party (Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure 2000-2002)

¹⁸ Arthur Scott, Departmental Official

An tUas McGimpsey: An bhfuil tú ag rá má bhíonn sí comhairleach, nach dteastaíonn Acht Gaeilge, ach má bhíonn sí éigeantach, go dteastaíonn?

An tUas Scott: Is fíor sin.

An tUas McGimpsey: An é sin an tátal? Má bhíonn sí éigeantach, go dteastaíonn Acht Gaeilge, agus má bhíonn sí neamhéigeantach, nach dteastaíonn. An sin an rud a chluinim?

An tUas Scott: Má aontaíonn an Feidhmeannas í, ghlacfaí leis go ndéanfadh na hAirí an gnó. Tá mé ag tuairimiú, ach mura gcomhlíonfadh an Roinn í, chaithfí reachtú. Is é an príomhrud faoi reachtaíocht gur tugadh gealltanais i gComhaontú Chill Rímhinn reachtaíocht a thabhairt chun cinn.

An tUas McGimpsey: Cé a d'aontaigh sin?

An tUas Scott: Tá sé i gComhaontú Chill Rímhinn; na páirtí ann sin —

An tUas McGimpsey: Comhaontú Chill Rímhinn agus Acht Gaeilge. Cé a d'aontaigh sin dáiríre?

An tUas Scott: An dá Rialtas.

An tUas McGimpsey: Cén dá Rialtas?

An tUas Scott: Na Breataine agus na hÉireann.

An tUas McGimpsey: Ba sin Tony Blair agus a Rialtas.

An tUas Scott: Tá mé buartha; ba iad an dá Rialtas.

An tUas McGimpsey: Ba sin Tony Blair agus a Rialtas. Bhí mé ag Cill Rímhinn, tuigean tú, agus d'aontaigh Tony Blair agus Bertie Ahern. Is den stair iad beirt, agus tá déabhlóid anois againn. Tá sé sa cháipéis chomhairliúcháin gur aontaigh an Rialtas é seo. Mar a thuigimse é, áfach, níl aon aontú ann. Bhí mé ar an Fheidhmeannas i ndiaidh 2007, agus níl aon aontú san Fheidhmeannas ach a oiread. Mar sin de dáiríre, níl aontú rialtais ar Acht Gaeilge.

Mr McGimpsey: Are you saying that if it is advisory, you do not need an Irish language Act, but if it is mandatory, you do?

Mr Scott: That is right.

Mr McGimpsey: Is that the conclusion? If it is mandatory, you need an Irish language Act, and if it is non-mandatory, you do not. Is that what I am hearing?

Mr Scott: If there is Executive agreement to do it, the assumption would be that Ministers would do it. I am speculating, but if for some reason a Department failed to comply, there may be a need to legislate. The key thing on legislation is that there is a commitment in the St Andrews Agreement to bring forward the legislation.

Mr McGimpsey: Who agreed that?

Mr Scott: It is in the St Andrews Agreement; the parties to that —

Mr McGimpsey: The St Andrews Agreement and an Irish language Act. Who actually agreed that?

Mr Scott: The two Governments.

Mr McGimpsey: Which two Governments?

Mr Scott: The British and the Irish.

Mr McGimpsey: That was Tony Blair and his Government.

Mr Scott: I am sorry; it was the two Governments.

Mr McGimpsey: That was Tony Blair and his Government. I was at St Andrews, you see, and Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern agreed. They are both history, and we now have devolution. It is in the consultation document that this is agreed by the Government. However, as I understand it, there is no agreement. I sat on the Executive after 2007, and there is no agreement in the Executive either. So in fact there is not governmental agreement on an Irish language Act.

An tUas Scott: Tá mé buartha; bhí mé ag tagairt don aontú idir an dá Rialtas. Tá freagrachtaí an Fheidhmeannais as na straitéisí leagtha amach in alt 28D.

An tUas McGimpsey: Mar sin de tá an t-aontú idir Rialtas na Breataine agus Rialtas na hÉireann agus ní Rialtas Bhéal Feirste. Ar costáladh an straitéis?

An tUas Scott: Níor costáladh; níor costáladh. (féach Aguisín 7) ¹⁹

Mr Scott: Sorry; I was referring to the agreement between the two Governments. Executive responsibilities for the strategies are set out in section 28D.

Mr McGimpsey: So the agreement is between the British Government and the Irish Government and not the Belfast Government. Has the strategy been costed?

Mr Scott: No; the strategy has not been costed.¹⁹ (see Appendix 7)

4.2 Acht Gaeilge TÉ

4.2.a

I dTríú Tuairisc COMEX, gríosáinn na Saineolaithe 'bonn oiriúnach reachtach a sholáthar i gcomhair chosaint agus chur chun cinn na Gaeilge in TÉ' (parag 15, leath 6). I mí Deireadh Fómhair 2010 agus i mí Eanáir 2011, scríobh POBAL chuig Príomh-Aire an RA, David Cameron agus an LeasPhríomh-Aire, Nick Clegg ag áitiú orthu gealltanais Chill Rìmhinn le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge a achtú a chomhlíonadh agus le haird a tharraingt ar thorthaí COMEX. D'iarr muid ar rialtas an RA:

- reachtaíocht don Ghaeilge a thabhairt isteach in TÉ críoch a chur ar an idirdhealú éagórach in éadan na teanga atá léirithe in Acht Riartha an Cheartais 1737
- easnamh na Gaeilge ó reachtaíocht eile de chuid an RA ar shaoránacht agus inimirce agus ar chraoltóireacht a cheartú

4.2.b

Deir comhfhreagras ó oifig Nick Clegg (1 Feabhra 2011), 'Is eagal liom nach dtig linn aghaidh a thabhairt ar na cúrsaí a d'ardaigh tú nó is cuid de fhreagrachtaí cineachta Fheidhmeannas TÉ iad' (féach Aguisín 8). I mí Aibreáin 2012, i bhfreagra

4.2

The Irish Language Act NI

4.2.a

In the Third COMEX Report, the Experts urge the UK, 'to provide an appropriate legislative base for the protection and promotion of Irish in NI'. (parag 15, pg 6). In October 2010 and in January 2011, POBAL wrote to both UK Prime Minister, David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg to urge them to fulfill the St Andrews' commitment to enact Irish language legislation and to draw their attention to the COMEX findings. We asked the UK government to:

- introduce legislation for the Irish language in the NI, end the unjustified distinction against the language represented by the 1737 Administration of Justice Act
- correct the omission of Irish from other UK legislation on citizenship and immigration and on broadcasting

4.2.b

Correspondence from the office of Nick Clegg (1 February 2011), states, 'I am afraid we are unable to address the matters you raise as these fall within the devolved responsibilities of the NI Executive' (see Appendix 8). In April 2012, in response to a question

¹⁹ Tionól TÉ, Taifead Oifigiúil Hansard, Déardaoin 20ú Meán Fómhair 2012, Coiste Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta, Straitéisí Gaeilge/Albainis Uladh: Faisnéisiú RCEF.

¹⁹ NI Assembly, Hansard Official Record, Thursday 20th September 2012, Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Irish/ULster-Scots Strategies: DCAL Briefing,

ar cheist ó Margaret Ritchie, Teachta Parlaiminte de chuid an PSDLO (Páirtí Sóisialta Daonlathach an Lucht Oibre), dúirt an Fo-rúnaí Stáit, Hugo Swire, 'Beartas a bhaineann le teangacha réigiúnacha agus mionlaigh in TÉ, reachtaíocht ar an Ghaeilge san áireamh, is ábhar cineachta do Thionól agus d'Fheidhmeannas TÉ den chuid is mó é'²⁰ (féach Aguisín 8).

4.2.c

I mí Meithimh 2012, d'fhoilsigh POBAL moltaí nuashonraithe pobal-aontaithe d'Acht na Gaeilge²¹. An tAire Cultúir, Carál Ní Chuilín a rinne seoladh oifigiúil dara heagrán na moltaí seo. Tá ráite go poiblí ag an Aire Cultúir go bhfuil rún aici moltaí óna Roinn a chur chun tosaigh do Bhille Gaeilge. Ach, níl aon eolas thairis sin go fóill san fhearann phoiblí fá láthair, agus bhraith POBAL cé go bhfuil na straitéisí don Ghaeilge agus d'Albainis Uladh luaite i gClár Rialtais 2012-2015²², níl tagairt mar sin ann d'Acht na Gaeilge. Ar nós na straitéisí, d'éileodh reachtaíocht Ghaeilge tacaíocht traspháirtí ag Tionól TÉ. Agus POBAL ag fáilte roimh ráitis an Aire Cultúir ar an cheist seo, braithimid, ceithre bliana i ndiaidh chuairt deiridh COMEX, nach bhfuil amscála go fóill ann d'fhoilsiú moltaí reachtacha d'Acht na Gaeilge nó do thionscnamh chéimeanna éagsúla Bille ar leibhéal Tionóil. Is oibleagáid idirnáisiúnta chonartha é an gealltanais le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge a achtú, a rinne rialtas an RA agus sa deireadh is é rialtas RA atá freagrach as a fheidhmiú. Creidimid gur chóir go bhfeicfí rialtas reatha an RA anois ag glacadh cur chuige gníomhach i gcomhair chomhlíonadh an ghealltanais agus d'iarrfaimis le meas ar COMEX coinneáil leis an chúram seo ar bhonn práinne.

²⁰ CR/12/170 Freagra Hugo Swire ar Margaret Ritchie

²¹ POBAL, (2012) Acht na Gaeilge TÉ Eis 2 / The Irish Language Act NI Issue 2, <http://www.pobal.org/uploads/images/Acht%20na%20Gaeilge%202012.pdf>, íoslódáil deiridh 17.5.2013

²² Clár an Rialtais, Tionól TÉ 2011-2015, <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-2011-2015-final-report.pdf>, íoslódáil deiridh 17.5.2013.

from Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) MP Margaret Ritchie, Under Secretary of State, Hugo Swire stated, 'Policy relating to regional and minority languages in NI, including legislation on the Irish language, is in the main a devolved matter for the NI Assembly and Executive'²⁰ (see Appendix 8).

4.2.c

In June 2012, POBAL published updated community-agreed proposals for the Irish language Act.²¹ The Culture Minister, Carál Ní Chuilín officially launched the second edition of these proposals. The Culture Minister has also stated publicly that she intends to put forward proposals from her Department for an Irish Language Bill. However, no information beyond this statement is in the public domain at present, and POBAL notes that although the strategies for Irish and Ulster Scots are referred to in the 2012-2015 Programme for Government NI,²² there is no such reference to the Irish Language Act. Like the strategies, the Irish language legislation would require cross-party support at the NI Assembly. Whilst POBAL welcomes the statements made by the Culture Minister on this issue, we note that four years after the last COMEX visit, there is as yet still no timescale for publication of legislative proposals for the Irish language Act or for the commencement of the various Bill stages at Assembly levels. The commitment to enact Irish language legislation is an international treaty obligation made by the UK government and its implementation ultimately rests with the UK. We believe that the current UK government should now be seen to take an active approach to fulfilling this commitment within an agreed timescale and we respectfully ask the COMEX to pursue this matter urgently.

²⁰ PQ/12/170 Response of Hugo Swire to Margaret Ritchie

²¹ POBAL, (2012) Acht na Gaeilge TÉ Eis 2 / The Irish Language Act NI Issue 2, <http://www.pobal.org/uploads/images/Acht%20na%20Gaeilge%202012.pdf>, last downloaded 17.5.2013

²² NI Assembly Programme for Government 2011-2015, <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-2011-2015-final-report.pdf>, last downloaded 17.5.2013

5.0

Tuilleadh eochaircheisteanna fá fheidhmiú an CETRM ó 2009

5.1

Naimhdeas don teanga Ghaeilge

Mar a d'áirigh muid roimhe seo, spreag gníomhartha rialtas an RA roimh dhéabhlóid, nuair a úsáideadh gealltanas Chill Rímhinn le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge a achtú mar ghléas babhtála i gcomhchainteanna polaitiúla, spreag siad páirtithe aontachtacha le hionsaithe buana a dhéanamh ar an Ghaeilge sa Tionól (agus i gComhairlí áitiúla srl). Is é an trua nach dtig linn a rá go dtáinig aon laghdú i líon, i minicíocht nó i bhfíochmhaireacht na n-ionsaithe ar an Ghaeilge ón timthriall faireacháin deiridh. Tugadh eolas éigin i míreanna roimhe seo faoi shamplaí de ráitis ghránna phoiblí ó roinnt polaiteoirí aontachtacha faoi chomharthaíocht dhátheangach. Tarlaíonn an cineál seo freagairtí ar bhonn rialta is cuma cén cineál úsáid nó soláthar poiblí atáthar á dhéanamh den Ghaeilge. I mí Deireadh Fómhair 2012, craoladh leagan Gaeilge d'fhógra teilifíse ón Roinn Oideachais le rannpháirtíocht daoine óga a spreagadh mar chuid de shraith (10 leagan Béarla le taispeáint in aghaidh gach leagan Gaeilge). Cháin iar-Aire Cultúir ón PAD, Gregory Campbell úsáid na Gaeilge agus dúirt,

"An seo iarracht spreagtha ag polaitíocht le rud éigin a chur chun cinn i nGaeilge amháin?... Ba chóir gur leor agus ró-leor an teastas i mBéarla," arsa an tUas Campbell, ionadaí thar ceann Oirthear Cho Dhoire. "Cad chuige a n-íocfadh an cáiníocóir na mílte punt do dhaoine a labhraíonn agus a thuigeann Béarla cheana féin?"

Mar a leanas a bhí cuid d'fhreagra an Aire Oideachais:

"Níl scoileanna trí Albainis Uladh ar bith sa chúram agam. Tá neart Gaelscoileanna sa chúram. Bíonn na mílte dalta ag freastal gach lá orthu agus na mílte ag fáil céimíochta uathu. (féach Aguisín 9).

5.0

Some further key issues around the implementation of the ECRML since 2009

5.1

Hostility to the Irish language

As we have noted previously, consistent attacks upon the Irish language by unionist parties within the Assembly (and in local Councils etc) have been encouraged by the actions of the UK government prior to devolution, when the St Andrews' commitment to enact Irish Language legislation was used as a bartering tool in political negotiations. It is unfortunate that we cannot report any diminution in the number, frequency or ferocity of attacks on the Irish language since the previous monitoring cycle. Some information has been given in earlier sections regarding incidents of ugly public comments made by some unionist politicians regarding bilingual signage. Such reactions arise on a regular basis regardless of the type of public usage or provision being made for Irish. In October 2012, an Irish language version of a televised advertisement by the Department of Education (DENI) to encourage youth participation was broadcast as part of a series (10 English language versions to be shown for every Irish language version). Former Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Culture Minister, Gregory Campbell criticised the use of Irish and said,

"Is this a politically motivated attempt to promote something only in Irish?... The campaign in English should be more than sufficient," said Mr Campbell who represents East Londonderry. "Why should the taxpayer be expected to stump up thousands of pounds to people who can already speak and understand English?"

As part of his response, the Education Minister said:

"I don't have any Ulster Scots schools in my portfolio. I have numerous Irish medium schools in my portfolio. Thousands of pupils attend them every day and thousands have graduated from them.' (see Appendix 9)

Sa tseachtain roimh chuairt suímh COMEX go TÉ, tharla dhá eachtra eile. Dhíreoimis aird na Saineolaithe ar chonspóid a bhain le hinfhaighteacht an chúrsa oiliúna múinteora tríd an Ghaeilge dóibh siúd ar mhaith leo dul le múinteoireacht tríd an Ghaeilge ag Coláiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire, agus ceist ag Tionól TÉ²³, ón Uas T Buchanan (an Páirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach, Iarthar Thír Eoghain) 21/3/2013: 'Fiafraím den Aire Oideachais cad chuige a gcaithfidh mic léinn ar mhaith leo freastal ar chúrsa TOIC (Teastas Oideachais IarChéime) ag Coláiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire, Béal Feirste, ardleibhéal scríofa agus labhartha Gaeilge a bheith acu; agus cén beart atá sé ag brath a dhéanamh le aghaidh a thabhairt ar nádúr leatromach an chúrsa ag Coláiste Mhuire.'

Mar a leanas a bhí freagra an Aire:

An TOIC a thairgeann Coláiste Mhuire is cúrsa trí mheán na Gaeilge é a thugtar den chuid is mó trí mheán na Gaeilge, go háirithe ar son céimithe ar mhaith leo teagasc i nGaelscoileanna.

Tá ábhar an chúrsa bunaithe ar riachtanais an Churaclaim agus bíonn deis ag mic léinn léargais shuntasacha a fháil ar cheisteanna oideachasúla atá ábhartha don tumoideachas.

Is éigean mar sin de, go mbeadh ardleibhéal scríofa agus labhartha Gaeilge ag mic léinn atá ag iarraidh an cúrsa áirithe seo a dhéanamh.

Tá cúrsaí eile cláir TOIC Bhunoideachais trí mheán an Bhéarla ar fáil ag Ollscoil Uladh agus, le haird ar leith acu ar na luathbhlianta, ag Coláiste Ollscoile an tSrutháin Mhilis. 21/03/2013

Ar 23.4.2013, d'éirigh conspóid as moladh go gcuirfí leagan Gaeilge den logainm 'Derry' ('Doire') le hábhair bhrandála don Ghildhalla athchóirithe. Dúirt Maurice Devenney den Pháirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach (PAD) go bhféadfadh aontachtaithe

In the week prior to the site visit of the COMEX to NI, there were two further examples. We draw the attention of the Experts to controversy surrounding the availability of the teacher training course through Irish for those intending to enter Irish medium teaching at St Mary's University College, and a NI Assembly question,²³ Mr T Buchanan (Democratic Unionist party, West Tyrone) 21/3/2013: 'To ask the Minister of Education why students wishing to sit a PGCE Course at St Mary's University College, Belfast must have a high level of written and oral Irish; and what action he proposes to take to address the discriminatory nature of the course at St Mary's.'

The Ministerial response given is as follows:

The PGCE offered by St Mary's College is an Irish Medium course which is taught substantially through the medium of Irish and is intended particularly for graduates who wish to teach in Irish-Medium primary schools.

The course content is based on the requirements of the Curriculum and students have the opportunity to gain meaningful insights into educational issues relevant to immersion education.

It is therefore essential that students wishing to sit this particular course have a high level of written and oral Irish.

Alternative English-Medium PGCE Primary programmes are available at the University of Ulster and, with specific regard to early years, at Stranmillis University College. 21/03/2013

On 23.4.2013, controversy arose at the proposal that the Irish language version of the place name 'Derry' ('Doire') be added to branding materials for the refurbished Guildhall. The Democratic Unionist Party's Maurice Devenney said unionists could live

²³ Ceist Tionól TÉ, AQW 21293/11-15, 21st. Márta 2013 le freagra.

²³ NI Assembly Question, AQW 21293/11-15, 21st. March 2013 with response

réiteach leis an ainm Derry/Londonderry ach 'nach dtiocfadh leo glacadh le Doire'. Ar seisean,

"Is ábhar imní dom gur seo tuilleadh de scamhadh ár mBriotanachais i gcomhairlí faoi rialú náisiúnaithe."

Dúirt Paul Fleming, Sinn Féin, nárbh amhlaidh a bhí an cás.

"Ní bhaineann sé le scamhadh rud ar bith ón Gildhalla. Caithfidh an foirgneamh saoránaigh uilig na cathrach agus an cheantair seo a léiriú." (féach Aguisín 9).

5.2.1 Acht Riartha an Cheartais (Teanga) Éire) 1737

5.2.a

Aithníonn tuairisc 2010 COMEX gur 'idirhealú éagórach' in éadan na Gaeilge é go bhfuil an tAcht seo go fóill i bhfeidhm agus go dtig leis forbairt na teanga a thoirmeasc. Aontaímid leis an anailís seo agus gabhaimid buíochas le COMEX as a chruinneas ar an cheist. D'inis POBAL torthaí COMEX d'Aire Ceartais TÉ, David Ford (Páirtí an Chomhaontais) in 2011. Ar 24^ú Aibreán 2011, d'fhreagair an tAire Ford ár gcomhfhreagas. Deir sé nach nglacann sé le torthaí COMEX agus go bhfuil a thuairim eolasach ag comhairle dlí. Deir sé, 'Ní mheasaim go bhfuil an t-idirdhealú idir Béarla agus teangacha eile a dhéantar in Acht 1737 éagórach; agus ní mheasaim gurb é rún an Achta cur in éadan chaomhnú agus fhorbairt na Gaeilge nó aon teanga eile.' Deir sé fosta gur áirigh sé, 'nach ndearna Coiste na nAirí, ag freagairt do thuairisc COMEX, moltaí ar bith faoi Acht 1737, seachas iarraidh ar údaráis an RA tuairimí COMEX a chur san áireamh. Tá sin déanta ag mo Roinnse, agus ní heol dom aon 'impleachtaí' a d'éireodh as gan aontú le tuairimí an Choiste faoin Acht.' (féach Aguisín 10).

with the Derry/Londonderry name but 'couldn't accept Doire'. He said,

"I worry this is more stripping away of our Britishness within nationalist controlled councils,"

Sinn Fein's Paul Fleming said that was not the case.

"It isn't about stripping out anything from the Guildhall. The building needs to be reflective of all the citizens of this city and district." (see Appendix 9)

5.2.1 737 Administration of Justice (Language) (Ireland) Act

5.2.a

The COMEX report 2010 identifies the continued operation of this Act as representing an 'unjustified distinction' against the Irish language and one that may hinder its development. We agree with this analysis and thank the COMEX for their precision on the matter. POBAL informed the Minister for Justice NI, David Ford (Alliance Party) of the findings of the COMEX in 2011. On 24th April 2011, Minister Ford responded to our correspondence. He states that he does not accept the COMEX findings and that his position is informed by legal advice. He states, 'I do not consider that the distinction between English and other languages provided in the 1737 Act is unjustified; and neither do I consider that the intention of the Act is to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of Irish or any other language.' He goes on to say that he notes, 'that the Committee of Ministers, in responding to the COMEX report, did not make any recommendations about the 1737 Act, other than asking the UK authorities to take account of the COMEX observations. My Department has done so, and I am not aware of any 'implications' that might arise from not agreeing with the Committee's observations about the Act.' (see Appendix 10)

5.2.b

Mhaíonn an tAire Ford gurb é 'an comhthéacs is oiriúnaí le staid na Gaeilge i gcúirteanna a mheas' trí 'straitéis aontaithe an Fheidhmeannais.' I mí Iúil 2012, foilsíodh dréachtmholtaí do straitéis Ghaeilge (féach tuilleadh ráiteas ar an dréachtstraitéis níos luaithe sa cháipéis seo) agus moladh go 'ndíscoirfí' Acht 1737²⁴. Is dócha gur aistríodh leagan Gaeilge na cáipéise ón Bhéarla. Léiríonn leagan Gaeilge na cáipéise an leagan Béarla, ag úsáid an téarma 'a dhíscor' in áit 'a aisghairm', gnáthfhoirm an bhriathair 'to repeal'. Cé gur thug oifigigh roinne le fios do POBAL go raibh úsáid an fhocail 'prorogued/a dhíscor' mícheart, agus gur "repealed" an téarma "ba chóir" a úsáid sa cháipéis, aontaímid le himní a lan sa phobal gurbh fhéidir go mbeadh de thoradh ar mhí-úsáid téarmaíochta, easpa soiléire faoi rún an mholta. Is é an dearcadh s'againn gur chóir Acht 1737 a aisghairm.

5.2.c

I dtaca le cuimsiú an mholta seo sa dréachtstraitéis mar uirlis le críoch a chur ar an idirdhealú éagórach a léiríonn Acht 1737, mar a chuir an tAire Ford in iúl, caithfidh an Feidhmeannas traspháirtí aon mholtaí do straitéis Tionóil don Ghaeilge a aontú. Fiú dá soiléireofaí an moladh le hAcht 1737 a aisghairm, agus dá gcoinneofaí i gcáipéisí é le cur faoi bhráid an Fheidhmeannais, má theipeann ar an straitéis tacaíocht traspháirtí a bhaint amach, titfidh an moladh seo i gcuideachta iomlán na moltaí eile in aon cháipéis eile dá cineál. Cé nach bhfuilimid in éadan an cheist seo a bheith faoi chaibidil in aon straitéis amach anseo, ach go ndéanfaí sin go héifeachtach agus go gasta, ní léir dúinn fáth ar bith go bhféachfadh an Roinn Ceartais le beart ar aisghairm an Achta a iarchur. Tá ráite ag an Aire Ford go ndiúltaíonn sé do thorthaí COMEX maidir le hAcht 1737, agus dar linn, is é atá san iarchur aige ábhar seachráin ar a neamhthoilteanas le reachtaíocht a aisghairm arb ionann í agus idirdhealú éagórach in éadan na teanga Gaeilge.

²⁴ RCEF, (Iúil 2012) Dréachtstraitéis le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú, Comhairliúchán Poiblí, parag 4.8.1, leath 31, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/strategy_for_protecting_and_enhancing_the_development_of_the_irish_-_12_nov.pdf, íoslódáil deiridh 17.5.2013.

5.2.b

Minister Ford has suggested that the 'most appropriate context to consider the position of the Irish language in courts' is through 'an agreed Executive strategy.' In July 2012, draft proposals for an Irish language strategy were published (see further comments on this draft strategy earlier in this document) and the proposal made that the 1737 Act should be 'prorogued'.²⁴ It is likely that the Irish language version of the document was translated from the English. The Irish language version of the document reflects the English version, using the term 'a dhíscor' instead of 'a aisghair' which is the common form of the verb 'to repeal'. Although POBAL was informed by departmental officials that the use of the word 'prorogued / a dhíscor' was incorrect, and that the term used in the document 'should have been "repealed"' we share the concerns of many in the community that the misuse of terminology may lead to a lack of clarity about the intention of the proposal. It is our view that the 1737 Act should be repealed.

5.2.c

In relation to the inclusion of this proposal in the draft strategy as a means to ending the unjustified distinction which the 1737 Act represents, as indicated by Minister Ford, any proposals for an Assembly strategy for Irish must be agreed by the cross-party Executive. Even if the proposal to repeal the 1737 Act is clarified and retained in documentation to be put to the Executive, if the strategy fails to gain cross-party support, this proposal will fall with all the others in any such document. Whilst we are not opposed to this issue being dealt with in any future strategy, as long as this can be done effectively and quickly, we see no reason why the Department of Justice would seek to defer action on repeal of the Act. Minister Ford has stated that he rejects the findings of the COMEX in relation to the 1737 Act, and it appears to us that his deferment to the strategy is simply a distraction for his unwillingness to repeal legislation which represents an unjustified distinction against the Irish language.

²⁴ DCAL, (July 2012) Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish language, Public consultation, parag 4.8.1, pg 31, http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/strategy_for_protecting_and_enhancing_the_development_of_the_irish_-_12_nov.pdf, last downloaded 17.5.2013

5.3 Léirmhíniú Alt 75 Acht TÉ 1998, an Dualgas Comhionannais

5.3.a

Sa Tríú Tuairisc aige, d'fhreagair COMEX (parag 123, leath 19) ábhair bhuartha POBAL faoi léirmhíniú Alt 75 maidir le ceistanna Gaeilge. Leagann Alt 75 Acht Thuaisceart na hÉireann 1998 dualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí comhionannas deise a chur chun cinn ar naoi mbonn, chomh maith le 'deachaidreamh' a chothú idir grúpaí ainmnithe, an dá phríomhphobal i dTuaisceart na hÉireann san áireamh, á gcatagóiriú faoi Alt 75 mar 'reiligiún' nó 'tuairim pholaitiúil'. Níl teanga cuimsithe mar chatagóir faoi Alt 75.

5.3.b

Agus iad ag tabhairt isteach nó ag leasú beartas atá ann, faoi Alt 75, caithfidh comhlachtaí poiblí Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais (MTC) a dhéanamh le measúnú an oibreodh an beartas úr nó leasaithe aon 'tionchair dhochracha' ar chomhionannas nó dheachaidreamh cheann ar bith de na grúpaí ainmnithe sa Dualgas Comhionannais. Más é toradh an MTC go mbeadh tionchar dochrach ann, caithfidh an comhlacht poiblí bearta maolaitheacha nó beartais eile a bhreithniú.

5.3.c

Sa chomhairle a thugaimid do chomhlachtaí poiblí, agus inár dteagmháil leis an Choimisiún Comhionannais, ar leagadh de chúram air Alt 75 a mhaoirsiú, d'áitigh POBAL go buan go gcaithfear reachtaíocht intíre, Alt 75 san áireamh, a léamh agus a léirmhíniú i bhfianaise ghealltanais agus oibleagáidí an CETRM. Mar a luadh thuas, thug COMEX ráiteas soiléir sa Tríú Tuairisc aige maidir le léirmhíniú Alt 75, mar a rinne an Coiste Comhairleach ar an Chreatchoinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta²⁵. Ar an drochuair, go dtí seo, is cosúil nár tharla aon fheabhsú intomhaiste i MTCanna na gcomhlachtaí poiblí. Cé gur tugadh ceistanna a d'éirigh as MTCanna mar sin ar ár n-

²⁵ Coiste Comhairleach ar an Chreatchoinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta, Tríú Rogha ar an Ríocht Aontaithe a glacadh ar 30 Meitheamh 2011, Strasbourg, 22 Nollaig 2011, ACFC/OP/III(2011)006, parag 147.

5.3 Interpretation of Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, the Equality Duty

5.3.a

In its Third report, the COMEX responded (parag 123, pg 19) to POBAL's concerns regarding the interpretation of Section 75 in relation to Irish language issues. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a duty on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity on nine grounds as well as a duty to promote 'good relations' between various named groups, including the two main communities in Northern Ireland, categorised under Section 75 as either 'religion' or 'political opinion'. Language is not included as a category under Section 75.

5.3.b

When introducing new or amending existing policies, under Section 75, public bodies must carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to assess whether the new or amended policy would have any 'adverse impacts' on equality or good relations between any of the groups named in the Equality Duty. If the EQIA finds that there is an adverse impact, the public body is required to consider mitigating measures or alternative policies.

5.3.c

In our advice to public bodies, and in our contact with the Equality Commission, charged with overseeing Section 75, POBAL has consistently argued that domestic legislation, including Section 75, must be read and interpreted in the light of the ECRML commitments and obligations. As noted above, the COMEX made a clear statement regarding interpretation of Section 75 in its Third report, as has the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.²⁵ Unfortunately, to date, there does not appear to have been any measurable improvement in public bodies' EQIAs. Whilst issues arising from such EQIAs have been brought to our

²⁵ Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Third Opinion on the United Kingdom adopted on 30 June 2011, Strasbourg, 22 December 2011, ACFC/OP/III(2011)006, parag 147

aird maidir le roinnt comhlachtaí poiblí éagsúla, tá patrún athfhillteach i gcomhairlí áitiúla, go gcomhairlíonn MTCanna go buan maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí agus i ndualgais na comhairle, go n-oibreoidh úsáid na Gaeilge tionchar dochrach ar an 'dea-chaidreamh' agus gur chóir, ina áit sin, moltaí a lagú go suntasach nó a aistarraingt. Is minic gur léir nach bhfuil aon fhíordhúshraith faoi na breithiúnais seo, agus is annamh a nochtann argóintí loighciúla, forbartha. Ina áit sin, is cosúil gur leor a mhaíomh, ós rud é gur dócha go mbeadh Gaeilge ag níos mó daoine ó chúlra náisiúnach/caitliceach ná ó chúlra protastúnach, go gcruthóidh úsáid na Gaeilge 'teach fuar do Phrotastúnaigh'. Is cosúil gur annamh a leanann MTCanna chomhairlí áitiúla tríd an loighic, má oibríonn úsáid na Gaeilge tionchar dochrach ar phrotastúnaigh, go gcruthóidh cosc ar a húsáid tionchar dochrach do chaitlicigh.

Creideann POBAL go bhfuil nádúr leataobhach na n-argóintí seo fréamhaithe i gcinseal polaitiúil stairiúil an aontachtachais sa Tuaisceart agus sa naimhdeas iarmharach don teanga dár thagair muid cheana féin.

Creidimid thairis sin, gur méadaíodh an claonadh sin i gcás na Gaeilge ag an dóigh ar úsáid rialtas an RA ceist Acht na Gaeilge mar uirlis bhabhtála pholaitiúil i gcomhchainteanna 2006-7 le déabhlóid a athbhunú. Mar a luadh i dtuairisc POBAL roimhe seo, léiríodh seo i ráiteas ó Státrúnaí an ama sin, Peter Hain²⁶. Sa ráiteas, insíonn Hain do cheannairí an PAD (Páirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach) agus SF (Sinn Féin), mura ndéanfaidh siad beart ar sprioc-am athbhunaithe an Tionóil, 'go ndruidfidh an Tionól, go stadfaidh na tuarastail...go dtabharfar reachtaíocht Ghaeilge chun tosaigh ag Westminster.' Luaigh urlabhraí PAD an ama sin ar Chultúr, Nelson McCausland²⁷, namhaid do reachtaíocht Ghaeilge, 'Is é an teachtaireacht, má théann aontachtaithe isteach i bhfeidhmeannas agus an tionól i mbun oibre beidh Acht na Gaeilge ina ábhar cineachta agus thig le haontachtaithe é a chosc. Arís eile pholaitigh Sráid Downing agus Oifig Thuaisceart na hÉireann an

attention in relation to a number of different bodies, there is a recurring pattern in local councils, where EQIA's regarding the use of Irish in public life and in the duties of the council consistently advise that the use of Irish will adversely impact on 'good relations' and that, instead proposals should be significantly weakened or withdrawn. The basis for these judgements often seems to have no concrete foundation, and logical, developed arguments rarely appear. Instead, it appears sufficient to suggest that since more people from a nationalist/catholic background are likely to have Irish than those from a protestant background, that the use of Irish will create 'a cold house for Protestants.' Local council EQIA s appear rarely to follow through the logic that if use of Irish creates an adverse impact on protestants, preventing its use creates an adverse impact on catholics.

POBAL believes that the one-sided nature of these arguments are grounded in the historical political dominance of unionism in the North and the residual hostility towards the language to which we have already referred.

We further believe that this tendency has been exacerbated in the case of the Irish language by the manner in which the UK government used the issue of the Irish language Act as a political bartering tool in the 2006-7 negotiations towards re-establishing devolution. As noted in POBAL's previous report, this is illustrated by a statement from the then Secretary of State, Peter Hain.²⁶ In it, Hain tells the leaders of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin (SF) that if they do not act on the deadline for re-establishment of the Assembly, that, 'The Assembly will close down, the salaries will stop, the allowances will stop...The Irish language legislation will be taken forward at Westminster.' The then DUP spokesperson on Culture, Nelson McCausland,²⁷ an opponent of Irish language legislation, noted, 'The message is that if unionists go into an executive and the assembly is operational the Irish language act will become a devolved matter and unionists can veto it.

²⁶ Hain, P. 20 Márta 2007, Preasráiteas a eisíodh trí Oifig an Rúnaí Stáit.

²⁷ Aire Cultúir ina dhiaidh sin go mí Aibreáin 2011

²⁶ Hain, P. 20 March 2007, Press statement released through the office of the Secretary of State

²⁷ Subsequently Minister for Culture until April 2011

teanga Ghaeilge'. Sa bhreis ar an bhabhtáil fhollasach phoiblí fán Ghaeilge, arís agus arís chuir na cáipéisí comhairliúcháin ar an reachtaíocht mholta riachtanais na nGaeilgeoirí le hais 'ghoilliúint' na n-aontachtaíthe, rud a neartaigh an tuairim go dtig go dlisteanach cosc a chur ar bhearta le neamhionannas a chúiteamh más leor an cur in éadan.

5.3.d

Tá POBAL buartha, cé go ndeir an Coimisiún Comhionannais, an comhlacht ar leagadh de chúram air Alt 75 a mhaoirsiú, nach bhfuil aon saineolas nó freagracht reachtúil air as ceist teanga, go dtugann sé ráitis go minic ar sholáthar teanga, go ndéanann sé aighneachtaí scríofa agus go dtugann sé comhairle do chomhlachtaí poiblí agus rialtais ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí. Bíonn cuid den chomhairle seo i bhfoirm fhoirmiúil scríofa. Is cosúil fosta, más fíor, go dtugtar comhairle agus ráitis i bhfoirmeacha briathartha níos neamhfhoirmiúla.

5.3.e

In 2011, bhí cruinniú ag POBAL leis an Ard-Choimisinéir, Bob Collins, lenár n-ábhair imní a thógáil leis fá nádúr na comhairle a chreid muid a bhí an Coimisiún a thabhairt maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge san áit oibre, úsáid na Gaeilge i bhfógraíocht earcaíochta agus maidir leis an Ghaeilge mar chritéar éigeantach nó inmhianaithe don fhostaíocht agus maidir le húsáid phoiblí na Gaeilge i gcomharthaíocht, seirbhísí srl. Ina dhiaidh sin, scríobh muid chuige le cóipeanna de cháipéisí beartais agus treoracha scríofa an Choimisiúin Chomhionannais a iarraidh air a bhain le comhairle ar cheisteanna teanga agus Alt 75. I ndiaidh roinnt moilleanna gan freagairt, scríobh an tUas Collins ar ais ar 9.8.2011 le rá nach bhfuil treoracha scríofa den chineál sin ag an Choimisiún Comhionannais. Tá aistriúchán a rinne POBAL den litir sin ceangailte ag Aguisín 11. Is ábhar buartha againn, cé go n-admhaíonn an Coimisiún Comhionannais go bhfuil sé suite agus trealmhaithe go dona le comhairle a thairiscint ar chomhionannas i gcúrsaí teanga, leanann sé á dhéanamh sin, mar shampla, i gcás chomhairliúchán agus fhorbairt beartais Ghaeilge in 2012-13 ag Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fíolta.

Once again Downing Street and the Northern Ireland Office have politicised the Irish language'. In addition to this obvious public bartering over the Irish language, the consultation documents on the proposed legislation repeatedly juxtaposed the needs of Irish speakers against the 'sensitivities' of unionists, reinforcing the impression that measures to redress inequality can legitimately be vetoed if there is sufficient opposition.

5.3.d

POBAL is concerned that although the body charged with oversight of Section 75, the Equality Commission, states that it has no expertise or statutory responsibility for the issue of language, it regularly comments on language provision, makes written submissions and gives advice to public and governmental bodies on the use of Irish in public life. Some of this advice and commentary is in formal written form. Anecdotally, it also appears that advice and commentary may also be given on Irish language matters in less formal, verbal forms.

5.3.e

In 2011, POBAL met with the Chief Commissioner, Bob Collins, to raise concerns with him about the nature of advice we believed was being given by the Commission regarding the use of Irish in the workplace, the use of Irish in recruitment advertisements and in respect of Irish as an essential or desirable criteria for employment and in respect of the use of Irish in public through signage, services etc. Subsequently, we wrote to him to ask for copies of Equality Commission written policy documents and guidelines relating to advice on language issues and Section 75. After some delays in responding, Mr Collins wrote back on 9.8.2011 to say that the Equality Commission has no such written guidelines. A translation by POBAL of this letter is attached at Appendix 11. It is a matter of concern to us that although the Equality Commission acknowledges that it is poorly placed and poorly equipped at present to offer advice on equality in language matters, it continues to do so, including for example in the case of Magherafelt District Council's consultation and development in 2012-13 of an Irish language policy.

5.3.f

Tá sliocht sa litir ón Uas Collins a bhaineas le hearcaíocht agus cuimsiú cumais sa Ghaeilge mar chritéar éigeantach nó inmhianaithe don fhostaíocht. Seo ceist a thóg POBAL ina thuairiscí faireacháin roimhe seo. Ba é an taithí a fuair muid go minic gur beag an tuiscint ná an léirmhíniú a bíos ag comhlachtaí poiblí, comhairlí áitiúla san áireamh, den chomhairle sách leathan a thugann an Coimisiún Comhionannais ar tagraíodh di sa litir, 'gur chóir go mbeadh critéir inchosanta, oiriúnach don phost agus riachtanach.' Tá sé seo á léiriú sa chomhfhreagras ó Chomhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn a bhain le hearcú Chúntóir Iarsmalainne dár thagair muid ag mír 3.14, agus a dhéanann tagairt atá sainiúil agus, dar linn, neamh-inbhuanaithe, d'Alt 75 le diúltú don mholadh gur chóir go mbeadh ar a laghad cumas ag méid áirithe den fhoireann taca chultúrtha chun déileáil le cainteoirí Gaeilge ina dteanga féin.

Tá sleachta as codanna den r-litir seo ag mír 3.14. Sa litir ó Chomhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn deir oifigeach den chomhairle fosta,

De ghnáth, áfach, dá measfaí cáilíocht nó líofacht sa Ghaeilge mar chritéar do phost, is dócha gur lú Protastúnach ná Caitliceach a chomhlíonfadh an critéir sin agus, mar sin, nach mbeadh in ann an post a iarraidh. Bheadh an critéar dá bhrí sin leatromach go hindíreach (féach Aguisín 11).

Beartas dátheangach atá ag Comhairle an Lúir agus Mhúrn (cé gur fiú a lua go measann an t-oifigeach thuas go bhfuil na cuspóirí 'toilmhianúil') agus tá 3 bhall foirne fostaíthe san aonad Gaeilge. Is ábhar buartha dúinn go dtiocfadh rud atá in ainm a bheith ina chomhthéacs tacúil don Ghaeilge, cuimsiú na Gaeilge mar chritéar fostaíochta do phoist chultúrtha sa Chomhairle, a dhiúltú ar bhonn Alt 75.

5.3.f

The letter from Mr Collins includes an extract regarding recruitment and the inclusion of ability in Irish as an essential or desirable criterion for employment. This is an issue which POBAL has raised in our previous monitoring reports. It has been our experience that public bodies, including local councils often poorly understand or misinterpret the rather broad Equality Commission advice referred to in the letter, that, 'criteria should be defensible, appropriate to the post and essential.' This is illustrated in the correspondence from Newry and Mourne Council regarding recruitment for a Museum Assistant to which we have also referred at section 3.14, and which makes specific and in our view unsustainable reference to Section 75 to reject the proposal that at least some cultural support staff should be able to deal with Irish speakers in their own language.

We have quoted parts of this e-letter at section 3.14. In the e-letter from a Newry and Mourne council official also states,

However, in general if a qualification or fluency in Irish language, were considered a criterion for a post, it is likely that fewer Protestants than Catholics could comply with this criterion and therefore would not be able to apply for a job. The criterion would therefore be indirectly discriminatory. (see Appendix 11)

Newry and Mourne Council has a bilingual policy (although it is worth noting that the above official considers its aims to be 'aspirational') and employs 3 staff members in the Irish language unit. It is a matter of deep concern to us that in what is supposedly a supportive context for the Irish language, the inclusion of Irish as an employment criterion in respect of cultural posts within the council could be rejected on the grounds of Section 75.

5.3.g

Déanann tuairisc 2010 COMEX ráitis shoiléire faoi léirmhíniú Alt 75, an Dualgas Comhionannais, nach n-imroedh bearta le staid na Gaeilge a fheabhsú leatrom ar úsáideoirí theanga an mhóraitimh. I mí Feabhra 2011, mí dhéag i ndiaidh fhoilsiú tuairisc COMEX, scríobh POBAL chuig na Comhairlí áitiúla uilig le toradh COMEX a inse dóibh. D'fhiafraigh muid cén teagmháil a rinne na comhlachtaí a leanas leis an Chomhairle s'acu maidir le soiléiriú a ndualgas a d'éirigh as toradh COMEX, ó foilsíodh tuairisc COMEX:

- Oifig Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Comhlathais an RA
- Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta TÉ
- An Coimisiún Comhionannais

D'fhreagair sé cinn déag as fiche a sé Comhairle (ocht gcinn i nGaeilge, seacht gcinn i mBéarla agus ceann amháin sa dá theanga). Ní dhearna aon cheann de na comhlachtaí thuasluaite teagmháil le ceann ar bith de na Comhairlí ar cheist Alt 75 agus an CETRM (féach Tábla 7).

D'fhiafraigh muid an ndearna aon cheann de na comhlachtaí thuasluaite teagmháil leo faoi aon ábhar eile i dtaca leis an Ghaeilge nó an CETRM. Dúirt comhairle amháin (an tIúr agus Múrna) astu siúd a d'fhreagair go ndearna An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta teagmháil leo. Bhain an teagmháil seo le hAthbhreithniú Bheartas Dátheangach na Comhairle i mBealtaine 2010 agus le dhá chruinniú idir Aonad na Gaeilge agus ionadaithe ón Choimisiún Comhionannais, agus le haighneacht a rinne an Chomhaire i mí Feabhra 2011 ar an bhuiséad a moladh don Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta, agus go saineúil do chiorruithe i mbuiséad Foras na Gaeilge. D'fhreagair Comhairle amháin eile, Baile Nua na Mainistreach, go ndearna siad teagmháil leis an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta faoi chomhairliúchán a sheol an t-iarAire Nelson McCausland ar straitéis Fheasachta Chultúrtha na Roinne.

5.3.g

The COMEX report of 2010 makes clear statements in respect of the interpretation of Section 75, the Equality Duty, that actions to improve the position of the Irish language do not constitute discrimination against users of the majority language. In February 2011, eleven months after the publication of the COMEX report, POBAL wrote to all local Councils to inform them of the COMEX finding. We asked what contact the following bodies had made with their Council in relation to clarification of their duties arising from the COMEX finding, since the publication of the COMEX report:

- The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- The NI Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
- The Equality Commission

Sixteen out of twenty-six Councils responded. (Eight of them in Irish, seven in English and one bilingually.) None of the councils who responded had been contacted on the issue of Section 75 and the ECRML by any of the above named bodies. (see Table 7)

We also asked if any of the above bodies had contacted them in relation to any other matters in respect of the Irish language or the ECRML. One council (Newry and Mourne) of those who replied said that there had been contact with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. This contact related to the May 2010 Review of the Council's Bilingual Policy and two meetings between the Irish Language Unit at the Council and representatives of the Equality Commission, and a submission made by the Council in February 2011 on the proposed budget for the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, and specifically to cuts to the budget of Foras na Gaeilge. One further council, Newtownabbey, responded that it had had contact with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding a consultation launched by former Minister Nelson McCausland on the Department's Cultural Awareness Strategy.

5.3.h

Is é an dearcadh atá againn go bhfuil ganntanas teorach straitéisí agus mhalartú eolais ó na comhlachtaí atá freagrach, ar leibhéal pháirtí Stáit agus ar leibhéal Tionóil as an CETRML agus a fheidhmiú mar ba chuí. Cé gur ábhar réimse frustrachas agus míbhuntáistí seo faoi fheidhmiú an CETRML, tá sé géar-amhrasach i dtaca le dualgas 'dea-chaidrimh' agus le hoibleagáidí Alt 75 na gcomhlachtaí poiblí. Admhaíonn an Coimisiún Comhionannais go bhfuil siad trealmhaithe go dona agus neamhoiriúnach don tasc a bhaineas le léirmhíniú comhionannais i gcúrsaí teanga, ach leanann siad leo ag tairiscint comhairle, rud nach bhfuil, dar linn, de réir oibleagáidí conartha atá ann.

5.3.i

Cé go bhfuil Grúpa Idir-Rannach ar Fheidhmiú na Cairte (GIFC) taobh istigh de Ranna Tionóil TÉ, is cosúil nach bhfuil oifigigh a bhfuil saineolas acu in achar comhionannais i gcúrsaí teanga sa ghrúpa, cé go n-aithnímid gurbh fhéidir gur carnadh eolas agus taithe éigin le himeacht ama. Thairis sin, ní théann sainchúram GIFC thar réimse gach roinn rialtais. Ní thagann aon treoir lárnaithe straitéiseach ón RA, ó Thionól TÉ nó ón Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta. Tá POBAL buartha go bhfuil saineolas suntasach sna hEagrais Neamh Rialtasacha (ENRanna) Gaeilge agus go háirithe, taobh istigh de POBAL, ach ní thugtar leoraitheantas don saineolas sin agus tá ENRanna Gaeilge i ndeacair maidir le tacaíocht stáit agus le cistiú.

5.4

Moltaí chun deireadh a chur le Bunchistiú 19 Eagraíochtaí Gaeilge (7 gcinn acu suite sa Tuaisceart)

Mar a tuairiscíodh sa tuairisc roimhe seo uainn chuig COMEX, fuair Foras na Gaeilge, an comhlacht trasteorann Gaeilge, ordú ón Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta sa Tuaisceart agus ón Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta sa Deisceart ('An

5.3.h

It is our view that there is a lack of strategic guidance and information exchange from the bodies responsible at State party level and at Assembly level for the ECRML and its appropriate application. Whilst this presents a range of frustrations and disadvantages in respect of the implementation of the ECRML, it is acutely problematic in respect of the 'good relation' duty and the Section 75 obligations of public bodies. Whilst the Equality Commission acknowledges that it is poorly equipped and inappropriate to the task of interpretation of equality in language matters, it continues to offer advice which in our view, is not in line with existing treaty obligations.

5.3.i

Although within the NI Assembly Departments, there is an Inter Departmental Charter Implementation Group (ICIG), this group does not appear to comprise officials with specific expertise in the area of equality in language matters, although we recognise that some knowledge and experience may have accrued over time. In addition, the ICIG's remit does not extend beyond the range of each government department. There is no centralised strategic direction from the UK, from the NI Assembly or from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL). POBAL is concerned that whilst considerable expertise exists within Irish language Non-governmental organisations (NGO), and in particular, within POBAL, this expertise is not sufficiently recognised and Irish language NGOs remain in a precarious position in relation to state support and funding.

5.4

Proposals to end Core Funding to 19 Irish Language Organisations (7 of them located in the North)

As reported in our previous report to the COMEX, Foras na Gaeilge, the cross-border body for the Irish language has been instructed by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in the North and the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht in the

Comhaireacht Thuaidh-Theas’) le cistiú a athchumrú don earnáil bhunchistithe Gaeilge. Tá cistiú faighte anois ag seacht n-eagras sa Tuaisceart (POBAL san áireamh) ar bhonn stad-dúiseachta le breis agus ceithre bliana. In 2011-2, thug an Comhaireacht Thuaidh-Theas (CATT) ordú do Foras na Gaeilge comhairliúchán poiblí ar a chuid moltaí i gcomhair Shamhail Nua Maoinithe a eagrú²⁸. Tar éis an chomhairliúcháin, a thaispeáin cur in aghaidh comhaontach ón earnáil Gaeilge, b'éigean do Foras deireadh a fhógairt leis an tSamhail Nua Maoinithe i mí Aibreáin 2012. Ó shin, níor cuireadh moltaí ar bith eile scríofa ar fáil do na heagrais Ghaeilge, cé go dtuigtear go ndearnadh moltaí agus gur cuireadh faoi bhráid an dá Roinn iad. Níor pléadh na moltaí seo ag cruinniú mhí na Nollag 2012 an CATT (cruinniú earnála teanga), ach dúradh go mbeidh siad ar chlár oibre chruinniú mhí Meithimh 2013²⁹. San idirlinn, fógraíodh síneadh cistithe go 31^ú Nollaig 2013, ach ní fios cén cruth a bheas ar an síneadh seo. Tá ráite ag Foras na Gaeilge go ngearrfar ciorruithe buiséid agus go ngearrfar ciorruithe níos troime ar roinnt eagras nó ar chuid eile, cé gurbh fhéidir go bhfaighidh roinnt eagraíochtaí méadú. Is féidir gan cheist go dtiocfadh le cinntí Foras na Gaeilge sa chéim seo oibríocht chuid de na grúpaí Gaeilge a dhéanamh dodhéanta. Is é ábhar imní na hearnála gur deis a bheas sa chéim cistithe atá le teacht ag Foras na Gaeilge le dul níos faide i dtreo moltaí nach bhfuil feicthe go fóill ag an earnáil. Tá cur chuige Foras na Gaeilge cáinte ag na 19 eagraíochtaí uilig, agus is eagal go n-imreoidh an cur chuige seo éifeacht is díobhálaí arís ar an bhonneagar nuaghinte níos mó sa Tuaisceart ná in aon áit eile.³⁰

south ('The North-South Ministerial Council') to reconfigure funding for the core funded Irish language sector. Seven organisations in the North (including POBAL) have now been funded on a stop-start basis for over four years. In 2011-2, Foras na Gaeilge was instructed by the North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC) to hold a public consultation on its proposals for A New Funding Model.²⁸ Following the consultation, which showed unanimous opposition from the Irish language sector, Foras was forced to announce an end to the New Funding Model in April 2012. Since this time, no further written proposals have been made available to the Irish language organisations, although it is understood that proposals have been made and put to the two Departments. These proposals were not discussed at the December 2012 meeting of the NSMC (Language sectoral meeting), but it has been stated that they will be on the agenda at the meeting in June 2013.²⁹ In the meantime, an extension of funding until 31st December 2013 has been announced, but it is not clear what form this extension will take. Foras na Gaeilge has stated that it will impose budgetary cuts and that some organisations may receive more substantial cuts than others, whilst some organisations may receive increases. It is entirely possible that Foras na Gaeilge's decisions at this stage will make the continued operation of some Irish language groups impossible. It is the concern of the sector that the forthcoming funding phase may be an opportunity for Foras na Gaeilge to further progress towards proposals which the sector has not seen. All 19 organisations have criticised Foras na Gaeilge's approach, which it is feared will have an even more detrimental effect on the nascent infrastructure in the North than elsewhere.³⁰

²⁸ D'aistarraing Foras na Gaeilge na moltaí don tSamhail Nua Maoinithe in 2012 agus baineadh an cháipéis amach as suíomh gréasáin Foras na Gaeilge. Tá cuid de na freagraí ar an chomhairliúchán poiblí ar taispeáint.

http://www.gaeilge.ie/Foras_na_Gaeilge/Public_Consultation.asp Ach, chuir cuid de na heagraíochtaí Gaeilge a mbuaireamh in iúl nár tugadh an meáchan céanna do na freagraí uilig a fuarthas nó nár caitheadh ar an dóigh chéanna leo, agus nár cuimsíodh na mílte litir a chuir in éadan na moltaí

²⁹ Comhráiteas CATT,

http://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/lan_jc_eng__12_dec_2012.pdf

²⁸ The New Funding Model proposals were withdraw by Foras na Gaeilge in 2012 and the document has now been removed from Foras na Gaeilge's website. Some of the responses to the public consultation are shown.

http://www.gaeilge.ie/Foras_na_Gaeilge/Public_Consultation.asp However, some Irish language organisations have expressed concern that not all the responses received have been given the same weight or treated in the same way, and that thousands of individual letters opposing the proposals have not been included.

²⁹ NSMC Joint Communiqué,

http://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/lan_jc_eng__12_dec_2012.pdf

5.5

Athbhreithniú an Riaracháin Phoiblí

Sa Cheathrú Tuairisc aige cuireann COMEX a bhuairt in iúl (parag 40, 41, leath 11) go n-oibreodh cónascadh chuid de na comhairlí faoi ARP tionchar díobhálach ar fhorálacha agus ar bheartais Ghaeilge san áit a bhfuil siad seo. Deir an tuairisc gur inis an Roinn Comhshaoil do COMEX go raibh treoir ar chónascadh na gcomhairlí áitiúla eisiithe acu. Scríobh POBAL chuig an Roinn Comhshaoil i mí Aibreáin 2011 ag fiafraí arbh iad a bheadh freagrach as a chinntiú nach mbeadh an Ghaeilge faoi mhíbhuntáiste sna comhairlí nuachruthaithe i ndiaidh Athbhreithniú an Riaracháin Phoiblí. D'inis an Roinn dúinn gur ar na comhairlí féin a bheadh an fhreagracht, rud is ábhar buartha do phobal na Gaeilge. Feictear dúinn nach ndearna na húdaráis beart oiriúnach lena chinntiú nach socraíocht is lú fabhar don Ghaeilge an toradh a bheas ar na nuaranna riaracháin.

Ar 22 Aibreán 2013, fógraíodh gur aontaíodh aistriú cumhachtaí do chomhairlí áitiúla. Éascóidh sé seo aistriú pacáiste feidhmeanna chuig na 11 nua-chomhairlí ó ranna an rialtais láir i mí Aibreáin 2015. An Feidhmeannas a d'aontaigh anois an pacáiste a thabharfas tuilleadh cumhachtaí fadréimse do na comhairlí. Aistreofar cumhachtaí i bpleanáil, i mbóithre, in athghiniúint uirbeach, i bhforbairt pobail, i dtithíocht, i bhforbairt áitiúil eacnamaíoch agus i dturasóireacht áitiúil. Cuimseoidh an t-aistriú fosta soláthar Chlár Forbartha Tuaithe an AE, ball-liostú foirgneamh agus páirt níos mó a bheith ag an rialtas áitiúil i gcinntí spórt áitiúil.

Is dócha go n-imreoidh athrú cheantair na gcomhairlí áitiúla agus cónascadh chuid de na comhairlí tionchar ar fhorálacha agus ar bheartais Ghaeilge, an beagán limistéar comhairle atá ann ina bhfuil Oifigigh Ghaeilge fostaithe, san áireamh.

5.5

Review of Public Administration (RPA)

In its Fourth Report, the COMEX expresses concern (parags 40, 41, pg 11) that the amalgamation of some councils under RPA may impact adversely on Irish language provisions and policies where these exist. The report states that the Department of the Environment told the COMEX that it had issued guidance on the merger of district councils. POBAL wrote to the Department of the Environment in April 2011 asking if they were responsible for making sure that the Irish language wouldn't be at a disadvantage in the newly formed councils after the Review of Public Administration. The Department told us that that responsibility would lie with the councils themselves, something that concerns the Irish language community. It appears to us that the authorities have not taken appropriate action to ensure that the new administrative divisions will not result in less favourable treatment of the Irish language.

On 22 April 2013, it was announced that the transfer of powers to local councils has now been agreed. This will enable the transfer of a package of functions to the 11 new councils from central government departments in April 2015. The package, which will also give new the councils more wide ranging powers and responsibilities, has now been agreed by the Executive. Powers will transfer in planning, roads, urban regeneration, community development, housing, local economic development and local tourism. The transfer will also include the delivery of the EU Rural Development Programme, spot listing of buildings and greater involvement of local government in local sports decisions. The changing of local Council areas and the amalgamating of some councils with others is likely to impact on Irish language provisions and policies, including in those few existing council areas where Irish Language Officers are currently employed.

³⁰ NB: Ghlac an CATT, ag cruinniú ar leith, 10ú Iúil 2013 le moltaí Fhoras na Gaeilge. http://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/language_body_joint_communique_irish_version_10_july_2013_pdf_33.9 Ón eolas atá curtha ar fáil ón chruinniú, beidh deireadh ar fad le bunmhaoiniú ó Fhoras na Gaeilge, agus faoi chritéir nua, beidh cosc ar iarratais nua ó 5 as 7 do na heagrais Gaeilge atá lonnaithe ó thuaidh, POBAL san áireamh.

³⁰ Foras na Gaeilge's proposals were passed at the NSMC meeting on 10th July 2013, http://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/index/publications/joint-communiques/sectoraljc/language_jc/language_body_joint_communique_10_july_2013.htm. From the information available at the time of writing, these proposals will mean a complete end to all Foras na Gaeilge core funding, and the new criteria will exclude 5 of 7 of the Irish language groups based in the North, including POBAL from making any new applications.

5.6

Saoránacht

Deir Tríú Tuairisc COMEX (parag 122, leath 19) go bhfuil eisiámh na Gaeilge ó reachtaíocht saoránachta éagórach. I gcomhfhreagras idir POBAL agus Oifig Baile an RA (20^ú Iúil 2011), deir Damian Green ó Oifig Baile an RA gur chinn rialtas an RA gan toiseacht ar mhíreanna ábhartha (39-41) an Acht Teorainneacha agus Inimirce ar son chuspóirí lonnaíochta agus inimirce, ach go bhfanfaidh eisiámh na Gaeilge in áit. Deir sé i dtéarmaí praiticiúla is beag iarratas a fuarthas ar theangacha seachas Béarla agus, 'Is ionann sin is a rá gur bheag buntáiste praiticiúil é liosta na dteangacha ábhartha a shíneadh tuilleadh, cionn is go háirithe go mbeadh costas na n-athruithe díréireach le haon sochar a gheofaí.' Lean sé leis ag rá go bhfuil na socrúithe reatha tástála pais agus teanga lánchomhlíontach le hAcht na Breatnaise 1993 agus le hAcht na Gàidhlig (2005), agus mar sin de, 'níl aon ghá dlíthiúil go gcuimseofaí an Ghaeilge sna seirbhísí seo.' Deir sé gur iarr sé ar oifigigh, de réir an CETRM, 'do chuid moltaí a bhreithniú tuilleadh san am a mbeadh leasuithe sa reachtaíocht ábhartha á meas mar chuid de chuspóirí níos leithne an Rialtais.' (féach Aguisín 12).

Tá POBAL meallta nár tugadh aon eolas i dtaca le dul chun cinn a rinneadh ó 2011 i dtuairisc an RA agus mholfaimis le meas gurbh fhéidir nár mhiste le COMEX míniú a lorg tuilleadh ar an idirdhealú idir teangacha Pháirt III sa chás seo.

5.7

Comhlachtaí Corónacha

Tá drochtheist ar Chomhlachtaí Corónacha i ndéileáil le hiarratais, foirmeacha iarratais agus comhfhreagras le cainteoirí Gaeilge. Bíonn deacrachtaí athfhillteacha in úsáid ainmneacha Gaeilge, in úsáid cheart an chomhartha dhiaichritice, 'síneadh fada', agus in úsáid sheoltaí Gaeilge agus eolais eile i nGaeilge ar fhoirmeacha oifigiúla.

5.6

Citizenship

The Third COMEX Report (parag 122, pg 19) states that the exclusion of Irish from citizenship legislation is unjustified. In correspondence between POBAL and the UK Home Office (20th July 2011), Damian Green for the UK Home Office states that although the UK government has decided not to commence the relevant sections (39-41) of the Borders and Immigration Act for settlement and immigration purposes, the exclusion of Irish will remain in place. He states that since in practical terms there have been few requests for languages other than English, 'This means there is little or no practical advantage in extending the list of relevant languages further, particularly where the costs associated with making such changes would be disproportionate to any benefit derived.' He goes on to say that current passport and language testing arrangements are fully compliant with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Gaelic Language (2005) Act, and that therefore, 'there is currently no legal imperative for the Irish language to be included in these services.' He states that in line with the ECRML, he has asked officials to 'give further consideration to your proposals at a time when amendments to relevant legislation are being considered as part of the Government's wider policy objectives.' (see Appendix 12)

POBAL is disappointed that no information in respect of progress made since 2011 has been given in the UK report and respectfully suggest that the COMEX may wish to pursue an explanation of the distinction made between Part III languages in this case.

5.7

Crown Bodies

Crown bodies have a poor record of dealing with requests, application forms and correspondence from Irish speakers. There are recurring problems in the use of Irish language names, the correct use of the diacritic mark, the 'síneadh fada', and in use of Irish language addresses and other information in Irish on official forms.

5.7.a

Sa Cheathrú Tréimhse Faireacháin, fuair POBAL gearáin arís agus arís ó chainteoirí Gaeilge faoin Chlárann Cuideachtaí agus faoi Theach na gCuideachtaí (in TÉ) cionn is nach nglacfaid siad le hainmneacha cuideachtaí leis an síneadh fada mar a iarradh; foirmeacha á gcur ar ais cionn is gur taifeadadh eolas i nGaeilge nó go mbíonn seoltaí cuideachtaí i nGaeilge.

Thug CICB le fios dúinn nach dtig leo an síneadh fada a chur ar ainmneacha daoine atá siad a chlárú ar son chuspóirí Árachais Náisiúnta nó ar chártaí Árachais Náisiúnta. (féach Aguisín 13)

5.7.b

I gcodarsnacht, tá ráite ag Oifig Toghthóirí TÉ go bhfuil athrú an chórais idir lámha acu a ligfeas dóibh amach anseo ainmneacha daoine a chuimsiú i rolla na dtoghthóirí leis an litriú ceart, an síneadh fada san áireamh (féach Aguisín 13).

Chuir POBAL litreacha chuig 9 gComhlacht Corónach i mí Feabhra 2011, **Coimisinéirí Ioncaim & Custaim na Banríona, an Coimisiún Carthanachta do Thuaisceart na hÉireann, Seirbhís Cúirte Thuaisceart na hÉireann, Feidhmeannas Tithíochta TÉ, Ceadúnú Teilifíse, Oifig na bPasanna Béal Feirste, an Roinn Saothair agus Pinsean, Seirbhís Póilíneachta Thuaisceart na hÉireann** agus **Teach na gCuideachtaí** ag cur roinnt ceisteanna orthu a bhain le feidhmiú na Cairte:

- Déileáil le comhfhreagras i nGaeilge
- Úsáid cheart an tsíneadh fada
- Teagmháil leis an rialtas agus le háisíneachtaí eile corónach i dtaca leis an CETRM
- Soláthar cáipéisí agus foirmeacha i nGaeilge

D'fhreagair 5 cinn de na comhlachtaí, 3 cinn i mBéarla agus 2 cheann i nGaeilge. Dúirt Ceadúnú Teilifíse nach bhfreagrófaí litreacha i nGaeilge ach i mBéarla amháin, dúirt siad nach bhfuil 'dóigh ar bith le síneadh fada a iontráil i gcórais éagsúla cheadúnú teilifíse'. Tá eolas le fáil ar an suíomh gréasáin acu i 6 theanga, ach ní i nGaeilge. Ní chuireann ceann ar bith de na freagróirí cáipéisí nó foirmeacha i nGaeilge ar fáil, cé gur dhúirt an Seirbhís

5.7.a

In the Fourth Monitoring Period, POBAL has had repeated complaints from Irish speakers regarding Companies Registry and Companies House (in NI) because of the refusal to accept company names with the síneadh fada as required; forms being returned because information has been recorded in Irish or company addresses are in Irish.

HMRC has informed us that it cannot put the síneadh fada on the names of people they are registering for National Insurance purposes or on National Insurance cards. (see Appendix 13)

5.7.b

By contrast, the NI Electoral Office has said that it is in the process of changing to a system which will allow it in future to carry the names of those on the electoral roll with the correct Irish spellings, including the síneadh fada. (see Appendix 13)

POBAL sent letters to 9 crown bodies in February 2011, **HM Revenue & Customs, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Court Service, NI Housing Executive, TV Licensing, Belfast Passport Office, Department for Work and Pensions, Police Service of Northern Ireland** and **Companies House** asking a number of questions relating to implementation of the Charter:

- Dealing with correspondence in Irish
- Correct use of the síneadh fada
- Contact with government and other crown agencies in relation to the ECRML
- Providing documents and forms in Irish

5 of the bodies responded, 3 in English and 2 in Irish. TV Licensing, for example, stated that letters in Irish would only be answered in English, they said that there was 'no way of entering a síneadh fada into TV licensing's various systems'. Information is available on their website in 16 languages, but not Irish. None of the respondents provides documents or forms in Irish, although the PSNI said they could provide this on request. Only the PSNI had had

Póilíneachta TÉ (SPTÉ) go gcuirfeadh siad seo ar fáil ar iarratas. An SPTÉ amháin a rinne teagmháil leis an rialtas agus le comhlachtaí eile corónach, ag rá go ndearna siad teagmháil le RCEF.

Dúirt **an Roinn Saothair agus Pinsean** nach iad atá freagrach 'as leas sóisialach i dTuaisceart na hÉireann mar is ábhar cineachta é', agus gur ar Roinn Forbartha Sóisialta TÉ atá an fhreagracht.

5.8 Foirmeacha Daonáirimh

5.8.a

Tógadh Daonáireamh an RA i mí Iúil 2011. Mar a áiríodh sa Tríú Tuairisc Faireacháin againn, tá POBAL buartha fá na ceisteanna teanga a chuirtear mar chuid den Daonáireamh. D'iarr muid le fada ceisteanna níos mionsonraithe fá úsáid na Gaeilge sa Daonáireamh, ach ní bhaineann cuid ar bith de na hathruithe a rinneadh sa roinn teanga den Daonáireamh ar dhóigh ar bith suntasach leis an Ghaeilge. Cuireadh ceisteanna nua ann fá theangacha breise atá á labhairt, céadteangacha agus Albainis Uladh. Is ábhar misnigh ag POBAL é cruinniú eolais ar theangacha i gcoitinne, ach tá díomá orainn nár athchóiríodh laigí chruinniú na sonraí ar an Ghaeilge. Roimhe seo, chuir muid ár n-amhras in iúl fá dhébhriocht na gceisteanna a bhain leis an chumas le hAlbainis Uladh a thuiscint, a léamh, a labhairt agus a scríobh cé go dtuairiscítear go forleathan gó bhfuil sí ar leanúntas teanga leis an Bhéarla. Is é sin le rá i ngach cás ach líon beag cásanna difreáilte, go bhfuil Albainis Uladh agus Béarla comhshothuigthe.

5.8.b

Is ábhar díomá againn é fosta, ainneoin iarratais ó Ghaeilgeoirí aonair agus eagraíochtaí Gaeilge thar tréimhse blianta, nár cuireadh na foirmeacha daonáirimh féin ar fáil i nGaeilge, cé go mbíonn bileog treoracha ar fáil i dteangacha éagsúla, Gaeilge san áireamh. Comhairle neamhréireach a tairgeadh do Ghaeilgeoirí a rinne teagmháil le seirbhísí comhairle Daonáirimh, agus iarrachtaí a rinne POBAL agus na meáin, theip orthu an cás a shoiléiriú. Thuairiscigh roinnt cainteoirí Gaeilge gur bagraíodh ionchúiseamh a chur orthu agus fíneáil

contact with government and other crown agencies, saying that they have contacted DCAL.

The **Department for Work and Pensions** said that they were not responsible 'for social security in Northern Ireland as it is a devolved matter', and that the Department of Social Development NI was responsible.

5.8 Census forms

5.8.a

The UK Census was held in 2011. As noted in our Third monitoring report, POBAL has concerns about the language questions included as part of the Census. We have consistently called for more detailed questions about Irish language use within the Census however, none of the changes made to the language section of the Census form relate in any significant way to the Irish language. New questions have been added about additional languages spoken, first languages and Ulster Scots. Whilst POBAL is encouraged by the collection of information on languages generally, we are disappointed that the weaknesses of the data collection on the Irish language have not been revamped. In the past, we have expressed doubt as to the ambiguity of questions regarding the ability to understand, read, speak and write Ulster Scots since it is widely reported to be on a linguistic continuum with English. This means that in all but a very small number of differentiated cases, Ulster Scots and English are mutually comprehensible.

5.8.b

It was also a matter of disappointment to us that in spite of requests from individual Irish speakers and Irish language organisations over a period of years, the census forms themselves were not made available in Irish, although a guidance sheet of instructions was available in several languages including Irish. Inconsistent advice was offered to Irish speakers contacting the Census advice services, and attempts by POBAL and by the media failed to adequately clarify the position. A number of Irish speakers reported that they had been threatened

£1,000 dá líonfadh siad amach na foirmeacha i nGaeilge (féach Aguisín 14). Ainneoin na bagartha tréan-phoiblithe seo, líonadh agus cuireadh ar ais foirmeacha Béarla i nGaeilge. Ní heol dúinn gur éirigh aon ionchúiseamh as seo, ach motháimid go dtiocfadh de thoradh ar an éiginnteacht faoi dhlíthiúlacht úsáid na Gaeilge ar na foirmeacha agus eagla a lán Gaeilgeoirí go bhfágfaí eolas a cuireadh isteach i nGaeilge amach as an bhonn staidrimh, go úsáidfeadh cuid mhór acu Béarla amháin ar na foirmeacha. Mhéadóidh sé sin ar imeallú agus ar fhrustrachas chainteoirí Gaeilge.

5.9 Líofa 2015

I mí Meán Fómhair 2011, sheol an tAire Cultúir, Carál Ní Chuilín, dúshlán Líofa 2015. Is é aidhm thogra Líofa 2015, 5,000 duine as gach cúlra trasna an Tuaiscirt a spreagadh le héirí líofa i nGaeilge fá 2015. D'fháiltigh POBAL roimh thionscnamh an Aire, ar éirigh leis aird dhearfach na meán a tharraingt, go háirithe i dtaca le líon beag foghlaimoírí ardleibhéal ó phobail nó ó chúlraí gairmiúla nach samhlófaí de ghnáth leis an Ghaeilge. Ach is crua an dúshlán é gnóthachtáil líofachta agus lena bhaint amach braitheann Líofa ar acmhainní foghlama, ranganna agus scéimeanna atá ann, a lán acu pobalbhunaithe agus ar lagchistiú. San fhadtréimhse, b'fhéidir go dtiocfadh de thoradh ar an tionscnamh acmhainní feabhsaithe do na grúpaí pobail Gaeilge arb iad cnámh droma an chreat foghlama sa Tuaisceart iad, ach níl sé sin cinnte fá láthair. Leoga, ós tionscnamh Aire é, ní fios cén fhorbairt a dhéanfaí feasta ar an tionscnamh faoi Aire úr.

Tá oibrí amháin fostaithe ag an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF) le togra Líofa a bhainistiú. Ní fios an mbeidh an post seo buan nó cén dóigh a bhfuil togra Líofa comhtháite le hobair fhoriomlán na Roinne. Ainneoin gur sheol RCEF Scéim Sparánachta Gaeltachta chun cuidiú le 100 duine óg agus duine fásta ó chúlraí faoi mhíbhuntáiste costais

with prosecution and a £1,000 fine if they filled in the forms in Irish. (see Appendix 14) In spite of this well-publicised threat, English language forms were completed and returned in Irish. Whilst we are not aware of any prosecutions arising from this, we feel that the uncertainty around the legality of using Irish on the forms and the fear of many Irish speakers that information would not be entered into the statistical base if submitted in Irish lead to many using English only on the forms. This increases the marginalisation and frustration of Irish speakers.

5.9 Líofa 2015

In September 2011, the Minister for Culture, Carál Ní Chuilín launched the Líofa 2015 challenge. The Líofa 2015 project aims to encourage 5,000 people from all walks of life across the North to sign up to becoming fluent in Irish by 2015. POBAL has welcomed the Ministerial initiative, which has succeeded in gaining some positive media attention, particularly in relation to a small number of high profile learners from communities or professional backgrounds not usually associated with the Irish language. The attainment of fluency however is a difficult challenge and to achieve it the Líofa initiative relies on existing learning resources, classes and schemes, many of which are community-based and under-funded. In the longer term, the initiative may lead to improved resources for the Irish language community groups who provide the backbone of the learning framework in the North, but this is not certain at the present time. Indeed, as a Ministerial initiative, it is not certain what future development would be made to the project under a new Minister.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has employed one worker to manage the Líofa project. It is not clear whether this post will be made permanent or how the Líofa project is integrated into the overall work of the Department. Although the DCAL has also launched a Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme for 100 young people and adults from

chóiríochta agus táillí cúrsaí Gaeltachta a íoc, níl aon bhuiséad ag togra Líofa é féin (ach buiséad le híoc as 'cóisir lá breithe' bliantúil). Is féidir go bhfuil acmhainn i 'gcóisir lá breithe Líofa' le bheith ar an aon imeacht bliantúil Gaeilge a tosaíodh agus a stiúradh go díreach ag an rialtas. Leis an acmhainn seo a bhaint amach, áfach, chaithfeadh sé a bheith de bhreis ar iarrachtaí eagraíochtaí Gaeilge agus go seachnódh sé macasamhlú formáidí agus imeachtaí bunaithe atá á n-eagrú ag an earnáil phoiblí.

5.10

Teagasc na Gaeilge sa Ríocht Aontaithe

I dtaca le hAirteagal 8 (Oideachas) ní dhéanann tuairisc an RA aon tagairt do theagasc na Gaeilge ag GCSE, A-leibhéal agus leibhéal ollscoile san RA. Ní féidir mar sin de a shocrú an dtarlaíonn nó cé chomh fada is a tharlaíonn teagasc na teanga agus an dtáinig aon athrú san infhaighteacht nó sa ráta glactha ón timthriall faireacháin roimhe seo.

5.11

Teagasc na Gaeilge i Scoileanna Béarla i dTÉ

Maidir le teagasc na Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla i dTÉ, is díobhálach an tionchar a d'imir íosghrádú stádas nuatheangacha i gcoitinne ar theagasc na Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla. Taispeánann eolas sna táblaí thíos titim shuntasach i líon na ndaltaí a dhéanann staidéar ar Ghaeilge ar leibhéal GCSE (idir GCSE 'Gaeilge' agus GCSE 'Irish'). Is léir, san áit nach nglacann páistí Gaeilge nó 'Irish' ag GCSE, nach rachaidh siad ar aghaidh go dtí an scrúdú níos airde A-Leibhéal. Ní miste a áireamh, cé go bhfuil méadú beag i líon na bpáistí a ghlacann scrúdú Gaeilge GCSE, gur scrúdú measartha nua an scrúdú seo agus is cinnte gurb é an méadú i méid na ranganna do dhaltaí san aoisghrúpa seo (tuairim is ar 16) sa Ghaeloideachas is cúis leis an ardú i líon na ndaltaí. (Is scrúdú é 'Gaeilge GCSE' a dearadh ar son pháistí le Gaeilge, dóibh siúd de ghnáth sa Ghaeloideachas).

An líon níos (measartha) airde in iontrálacha A-Leibhéal ó 2008/9, is dócha gurb é is cúis leis an céatadán níos airde páistí sa Ghaeloideachas a

disadvantaged backgrounds to help cover costs of accommodation and Gaeltacht course fees, the Líofa project itself has no budget (except for a budget for an annual 'birthday party' event.) The 'Líofa birthday party' has potential as the only Irish language annual event started and run directly by government. To achieve this potential, however, it must be additional to the efforts of Irish language organisations and avoid duplication of established formats and events run by the community sector.

5.10

Teaching of Irish in the UK

In relation to Article 8 (Education) the UK report makes no reference to the teaching of Irish at GCSE, A level and university level in the UK. It is therefore not possible to determine whether and to what extent teaching of the language takes place and if there has been any change in availability or take-up since the previous monitoring cycle.

5.11

Teaching of Irish in English-Medium Schools in the North of Ireland

In relation to the teaching of Irish in English Medium schools in NI, the downgrading of the status of Modern Languages in general has had a detrimental impact upon the teaching of Irish in English schools. Information in the tables below shows significant drops in the number of pupils studying GCSE Irish. Clearly, where children do not take Irish at GCSE, they will not progress to the higher A level examination. It should be noted that whilst there are small increases in the pupils taking the GCSE Gaelic examination, this is a relatively new examination and the rise in pupil numbers is undoubtedly due to the increases in class sizes for pupils of this age group (approx 16) in Irish Medium education (GCSE Gaelic is an examination geared for Irish speaking children, usually those in Irish Medium Education.)

The (relatively) higher numbers in A level entries from 2008/9 is also likely to be due to a higher percentage of children in Irish Medium Education

bheith anois san aois (fá 18 bliain) leis an scrúdú a dhéanamh. Fá láthair, níl aon scrúdú A-Leibhéil 'Ghaeilge' ann (.i. aon scrúdú ar an leibhéal seo a ceapadh go háirithe do na daltaí sin sa Ghaeloideachas).

now being of the age (approx 18 years) to sit the exam. There is currently no A level Gaelic examination (ie no exam at this level specifically intended for those pupils in IME)

Iontálacha GCSE GCSE Entries

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
'Gaeilge'	99	126	107	133	118
'Irish'	2383	2055	1731	1680	1669
Iomlán Total	2482	2181	1838	1813	1787

Foinse: fuascailtí sonraí RM Source: RM data solutions

Iontálacha A-Leibhéil A Level Entries

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
'Irish'	254	238	328	334	319

Foinse: fuascailtí sonraí RM Source: RM data solutions

Mar a taispeánadh thuas, tharla titim shuntasach i líon na ndaltaí a ghlacann Gaeilge ag GCSE, m.s. ó 2,383 in 2006/07 go 1,669 in 2010/11. Is é sin le rá gur ghlac 714 níos lú mac léinn Gaeilge in 2010/11 i gcomparáid le cohórt cosúil mac léinn 5 bliana roimhe in 2006/07. Tharla titim leanúnach gach bliain. Creidimid le bhfuil cás ar leith le déanamh don Ghaeilge mar theanga dhúchais a bheith ina hábhar GCSE sa Tuaisceart. Meastar GCSE a bheith ina bhun-dúshraith i nGaeilge agus gur thairbheach í dóibh siúd ar mhaith leo a gcuid Gaeilge a fheabhsú níos moille anonn. Agus níos lú mac léinn ag déanamh staidéir ar an Ghaeilge ag GCSE is lú an líon mac léinn ar mhaith leo freastal ar chúrsaí samhraidh Gaeltachta a chuireann teacht isteach ar fáil do chainteoirí dúchais Gaeilge agus obair ar fáil, mar mhúinteoirí agus mar chinnirí, don mhuintir atá líofa sa Ghaeilge. Tógann cúrsaí Gaeltachta ar líofacht foghlaimeoirí agus bíonn ardtionchar acu ar thiomantas foghlaimeoirí don Ghaeilge lena mbeo.

Féadann scoileanna Béarla dearcadh dearfach don Ghaeilge a ghiniúint sa chuid is mó de mhic léinn. Mar a thuairiscigh muid roimhe seo, is annamh a theagasctar Gaeilge taobh amuigh den earnáil rialaithe Béarla, scoileanna Caitliceacha a mórchuid. San earnáil measartha beag scoileanna comhtháite (mar a dteagasctar páistí Caitliceacha agus Protastúnacha le chéile), teagasctar méid áirithe

As shown above, there have been significant drops in the numbers taking Irish at GCSE e.g. from 2,383 in 2006/07 to 1,669 in 2010/11. This means that 714 fewer students took Irish in 2010/11 compared to a similar cohort of students 5 years previously in 2006/07. There has been a steady fall each year. We believe that there is a special case to be made for Irish as an indigenous language as a GCSE subject in the North. GCSE is considered to be a basic foundation in Irish and would be beneficial to those hoping to improve the Irish in later life. With fewer students studying Irish at GCSE fewer students are likely to wish to attend Gaeltacht summer courses which provide revenue for native Irish speakers and work for those fluent in Irish as teachers and leaders. Gaeltacht courses build on the fluency of learners and have a huge impact on the commitment of learners to Irish throughout their lives.

English Medium Schools can engender a positive attitude towards Irish in the majority of students. As we have reported previously, Irish is rarely taught outside of the controlled English-medium sector, which consists mainly of Catholic schools. In the relatively small integrated schools sector (where Catholic and Protestant children are taught together), there is some teaching of Irish although

Gaeilge, cé gur dócha nach mairfeadh an cleachtadh sin thar leibhéal GCSE. Ní heol dúinn aon mhéadú suntasach i líon na scoileanna Protastúnacha a thairgeann Gaeilge mar ábhar. Thairis sin, thuiriscigh a lán scoileanna laghdú i líon na múinteoirí atá tiomanta do theagasc na Gaeilge ina gcuid scoileanna, agus is cosúil gur ag dul i laghad atá ranna Gaeilge ar fud TÉ.

Beidh tacaíocht an phobail leathan labhartha Béarla ríthábhachtach i bhfíorfhorbairt na Gaeilge amach anseo. Le líon na ndaoine a roghnós an Ghaeilge a mhéadú caithfidh an Roinn Oideachais teagasc na Gaeilge ar leibhéal bunscoile i scoileanna Béarla a leathnú agus a fhorbairt. Fá láthair, tá an Ghaeilge á múineadh i scoileanna Béarla de réir rogha agus dea-mhéin múinteoirí aonair. Teastaíonn cur chuige níos structúrtha agus níos tacúla le dul chun cinn teanga isteach in oideachas iar-bhunscoile a chinntiú do pháistí i mbunscoileanna a bhfuil teacht go luath acu ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge.

5.11 Oideachas Trí Mheán na Gaeilge (OTG)

5.11.a

D'fháiltigh a lán i bpobal na Gaeilge roimh Athbhreithniú ar an Ghaelscolaíocht 2009 a rinne an Roinn Oideachais (ROTÉ) mar dheis, dá theoranta é, le cuid de riachtanais na hearnála a chur chun cinn. D'aithin an tAthbhreithniú gur theastaigh:

- feabhsú earnáil-íogair in oiliúint foirne scoile le gobharnóirí, múinteoirí, cúntóirí seomra ranga srl, san áireamh
- acmhainní teagasc agus foghlama
- feabhsú i ngnóthachtáil daltaí
- straitéisí do sholáthar nua Gaeloideachais, go háirithe i dtaca le hoideachas iar-bhunscoile taobh amuigh de Bhéal Feirste
- feabhsú i gcóiríocht scoileanna soláthar agus tacaíocht do Riachtanais Speisialta Oideachais

I mí an Mhárta 2009 ghlac an tAire Oideachais, Caitríona Ruane, le hAthbhreithniú ar an Ghaelscolaíocht, 24 moladh san iomlán, iad siúd

this may not continue in practice beyond GCSE level. We are not aware of any substantial increases in the numbers of Protestant schools offering Irish as a subject. In addition, many schools have reported a reduction of the number of teachers dedicated to the teaching of Irish in their schools and Irish departments seem to be shrinking throughout NI.

Support of the wider English speaking public is crucial to meaningful development for the Irish language in the future. To improve the uptake of Irish the Department of Education could expand and develop the teaching of Irish at primary level in English Medium schools. Currently the Irish language is taught in English medium schools at the discretion and with the good will of individual teachers. A more structured and supportive approach is required to ensure linguistic progression into post primary education for children in primary schools who do have early access to Irish language teaching.

5.11 Irish Medium Education (IME)

5.11.a

The 2009 Review of Irish Medium Education by the Department of Education (DENI) was welcomed by many in the Irish speaking community as an opportunity, however limited, to progress some of the needs of the sector. The Review identified the need for:

- sectorally sensitive improvement in training for schools staff including governors, teachers, classroom assistants etc
- teaching and learning resources
- improvement in pupil achievement
- strategies for new IM provision, especially in respect of post primary education outside Belfast
- improvement to the schools accommodation
- Special Education Needs provision and support

In March 2009 the Minister of Education, Caitríona Ruane, accepted the Review of Irish Medium Education Report with a total of 24

thuas san áireamh. Bunaíodh Grúpa Stiúrtha Athbhreithniú an Ghaeloideachais, comhdhéanta d'ard-státseirbhísigh, sa Roinn Oideachais TÉ (ROTÉ) le feidhmiú an Athbhreithnithe a fhaireachán. Ó mhí an Mhárta 2010, áfach, ní tháinig an Grúpa Stiúrtha Athbhreithniú an Ghaeloideachais le chéile ach 4 huaire, an cruinniú deiridh i mí Feabhra 2012. Creideann POBAL nár ghlac ROTÉ leis na freagrachtaí a d'éirigh as an Athbhreithniú agus go bhfuil sé sin ag cur bacainn ar chur chun cinn pleanáilte i bhforbairt earnáil an Ghaeloideachais. Is é sin le rá nach bhfuil taithí oideachasúil agus gnóthachtálacha daltaí atá anois in Oideachas Trí Ghaeilge (OTG) ag fáil leorthacaíochta agus á n-uasmhéadú. Nuair nach gcuireann siad a nAthbhreithniú féin i bhfeidhm, tá an Roinn ag déanamh neamart i riachtanais aitheanta dhaltaí agus fhoireann an OTG.

5.11.b

Is ábhar imní againn é, ainneoin dul chun cinn éigin a bheith déanta, nár tugadh aghaidh ar riachtanais na hearnála a aithníodh san Athbhreithniú ar bhonn córasach san idirlinn. Níl cur chuige cónasctha in ROTÉ i gcomhair chur chun cinn an Ghaeloideachais. Ina áit sin, is minic a mheastar nach bhfuil san earnáil ach giota a cuireadh leis an Oideachas Trí Bhéarla (OTB) ar leibhéal beartais. Fágann sé sin, ní amháin gur iarsmaoineamh iad riachtanais speisialta na hearnála OTG, ach cuid den chur chuige a d'fhóirfeadh do scoileanna Béarla ar mhór an díobháil a dhéanfadh sé sin don earnáil Ghaelscolaíochta. Mar shampla, cruthaíonn an brú i dtreo Phleanála Bunaithe sa Cheantar deacrachtaí ar leith do Ghaelscoileanna ar an ábhar nach aithnítear riachtanais an Oideachais Trí Ghaeilge (OTG) agus gur gá an earnáil a fhréamhú taobh istigh den phróiseas pleanála.

Athbhreithniú OTG, mar a bhí sé in 2009, ba thogra gearrthréimhse é le aghaidh a thabhairt ar cheisteanna áirithe aibhsithe. Fiú dá bhfeidhmeofaí ina iomláine é, ní raibh sé oiriúnach don fheidhm mar bheartas fadtréimhse do OTG, dírithe ar mhúnú fhorbairt straitéiseach OTG. Is ró-oth le POBAL a áireamh nach ndearnadh na bearta ba chúig agus ba

recommendations, including those above. An Irish-medium Review Steering Group made up of senior civil servants was set up in the Department of Education (DENI) to monitor the implementation of the Review. However, since March 2010 the Irish-medium Review Steering Group has only met 4 times, the last meeting being February 2012. POBAL believes that the DENI has not accepted its responsibilities arising out of the Review and this is hampering planned progression in the development of the IME sector. This means that the educational experiences and achievements of pupils currently in IME are not being sufficiently supported or maximised. By not implementing its own Review the Department is guilty of neglecting the identified educational needs of IME pupils and staff.

5.11.b

It is a matter of concern to us that whilst some progress has been made, the needs of the sector identified in the Review have not been addressed on a systematic basis in the intervening period. There is no joined-up approach within the DENI to the promotion of Irish Medium Education. Rather, the sector is often seen as a bolt-on to the English Medium sector at a policy level. This not only means that the specific needs of the sector become an afterthought, some approaches taken by the DENI which may be appropriate for EM schools are extremely detrimental to the IM sector. For example, the drive towards Area Based Planning presents particular difficulties for IM schools because of the failure to recognise and ground the sectoral needs of IME within the planning process.

The IME Review, as it stood in 2009 represented a short-term project to address certain highlighted issues. Even if it had been fully implemented, it was not fit for purpose as a longer term policy for IME aimed at shaping strategic development of IME. It is with deep concern that POBAL notes the failure to take the appropriate and necessary steps to establish

riachtanach le beartas den sórt a bhunú do OTG, ag cuimhneamh ar an bhéim leanúnach a leag tuairiscí agus moltaí COMEX fán riachtanas atá le forbairt beartais chun tacú le forbairt na Gaeilge.

5.11.c

I mí Meán Fómhair 2011, b'oth le POBAL cinneadh a rinne ROTÉ diúltú do Mholadh Forbartha le naí-aonad reachtúil a bhunú ag Gaelscoil Éanna, Clann Ghormlaithe ar an bhonn, 'gur leor an líon áiteanna Gaelscolaíochta atá ann cheana féin le freastal ar an riachtanas láithreach sa cheantar agus ní hé beartas mo Roinnse soláthar ardchaighdeáin réamhscoile atá ann cheana féin a mhalartú ar sholáthar réamhscoile i suíomh eile.' Is léir gur cinneadh atá anseo bunaithe ar infhaighteacht áiteanna naiscoile Béarla agus ní áiríonn sé riachtanais na hearnála OTG (féach Aguisín 15). Thairis sin, mhéadaigh ROTÉ ina dhiaidh sin an glacadh isteach do Rang 1 Ghaelscoil Éanna (céadbhliain bunscoile), rud a chruthaigh contrárthachtaí agus deacrachtaí breise.

5.11.d

Is féidir nach bhfuil údar maith leis, ach braitear go bhfuil leisce sa Roinn Oideachais an Gaeloideachas a éascú agus a spreagadh, ar leibhéal iar-bhunscoile go háirithe, ar dhóigh a rachadh i dtreo chruthú Gaelscoileanna neamhspleácha úra. Mar thoradh ar éileamh buan ó thuistí dhaltaí bunscoileanna OTG agus eagraíochtaí Gaeilge, in 2011 choimisiúnaigh ROTÉ tuairisc ó mheitheal oibre ar shocrúithe féideartha don soláthar iar-bhunscoile i gceantar Chontae Dhoire. I ndiaidh roinnt roghanna a scrúdú, cuireadh isteach Moladh Forbartha i ndeireadh 2011 go mbunófaí campas de Choláiste Feirste i Machaire Rátha le freastal ar riachtanais oideachasúla pháistí bhunscoileanna Gaeilge i gContae Dhoire, le héifeacht ó 1 Meán Fómhair 2012. Go dtí seo, ní tháinig aon fhreagra foirmiúil ar an Mholadh Forbartha ó ROTÉ.

An bhraistint go bhfuil dícheangal idir ROTÉ agus feidhmiú réamhghníomhach a ndualgais le Gaeloideachas a spreagadh agus a éascú, neartaíodh

such a policy for IME, given the repeated emphasis of consecutive COMEX reports and recommendations regarding the need for policy development to support the development of the Irish language.

5.11.c

In September 2011, POBAL was concerned to note the decision by the DENI to turn down a Development Proposal for the establishment of a statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley on the basis that, 'there are already sufficient Irish-medium places to meet current demand in the area and it is not my Department's policy to displace good quality pre-school provision already in existence with pre-school provision in an alternative setting.' This is clearly a decision based on the availability of English-Medium nursery places and fails to take into account the needs of the IM sector (see Appendix 15). Furthermore, the DENI subsequently increased the intake for Gaelscoil Éanna's P1 (first year of primary school), thus creating additional contradictions and problems.

5.11.d

Whilst it may be unjustified, there is also a perception that within the Department of Education (DENI), there is a reluctance to facilitate and encourage Irish medium education, especially at post primary level, in a way which might lead to the creation of more free-standing Irish Medium schools. In response to long-standing demand from parents of IM primary pupils and Irish language organisations, in 2011 the DENI commissioned a working group report on possible arrangements for post-primary provision in the Co Derry area. Having examined the various options, a Development Proposal was submitted in late 2011 for a campus of Coláiste Feirste to be established in Maghera to meet the educational needs of children attending Irish medium primary schools in County Derry, with effect from 1 September 2012. To date, there has been no formal response to the Development Proposal from the DENI.

The perception that there is a disconnect between the DENI and the pro-active implementation of its duty to encourage and facilitate IME has been

í ag an mhoill i gcur i bhfeidhm plan réalaióch le aghaidh a thabhairt ar cheisteanna chóras iompair do dhaltáí OTG, a d'éirigh as an athbhreithniú breithiúnach i 2011 a ghlac Coláiste Feirste le tacaíocht POBAL agus an Togra Dlíthíocht Leas an Pobail.

5.12 Breithiúnas i gcás Cholma McKee ina Leaschathaoirleach ar Bhord Gobharnóirí Choláiste Feirste v An Roinn Oideachais

Ar 25^ú Deireadh Fómhair 2011, tugadh breithiúnas in Athbhreithniú Breithiúnach ar chinneadh de chuid an Roinn Oideachais a bhain le heaspa iomprais thiomnaithe scoile go Coláiste Feirste i mBéal Feirste do dhaltáí ó cheantair fhorimeallacha³¹. Dúirt an Breitheamh Treacey,

Is é Airteagal 89 feidhmiú reachtúil an ghealltanais shoiléir atá cumhdaithe i gComhaontú Bhéal Feirste/Aoine an Chéasta le dualgas reachtúil a leagan ar an fhreagróir le Gaeloideachas a spreagadh agus a éascú ar aon dul leis an soláthar reatha don oideachas comhtháite.

[44] Ní ghlacaim le háitiú an fhreagróra nach bhfuil sa dualgas seo ach ardmhian. Tá iarmhairtí praiticiúla agus suntas reachtach le forchur an dualgais reachtúil, agus sin é is rún dó. Mar sin de, ní thagann sé de thoradh go gcruthódh comhlíonadh ceart an dualgais seo, i réimse iomprais, mar shampla, fasach maidir le hearnálacha eile oideachais *nach bhfuil* an dualgas reachtúil seo dlite dóibh. Mar a luadh ag parag 7 is cosúil go raibh bunú fasaigh (costasach) cinntitheach roimhe seo i bhfreagra diúltach an fhreagróra. Ach, níl dualgas comhfhreagrach ar an fhreagróir maidir leis an earnáil thraidisiúnta bhunaithe oideachais. Dá réir sin, féadann sé an earnáil iar-bhunscoile OTG a éascú agus a spreagadh ar dhóigheanna nach gcaithfidh sé a dhéanamh d'earnálacha eile trí

strengthened by the delays in putting into effect a realistic plan to address transport issues for IM pupils, arising from the Judicial Review in 2011 taken by Coláiste Feirste and supported by POBAL and the Public Interest Litigation project.

5.12 Judgement in the case of Colma McKee As Vice Chairperson Of The Board Of Governors Of Coláiste Feirste v the Department of Education

On 25th October 2011, judgement was given in the Judicial Review of a decision of the Department of Education relating to lack of dedicated school transport to Coláiste Feirste in Belfast for pupils from outlying districts.³¹ Justice Treacey stated,

Art 89 is the statutory embodiment of the clear commitment enshrined in the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement to place a statutory duty on the respondent to encourage and facilitate Irish medium education in line with the current provision for integrated education.

[44] I do not accept the respondents contention that this duty is merely aspirational. The imposition of the statutory duty has and is intended to have practical consequences and legislative significance. Thus it does not follow that the proper discharge of this duty, for example in the field of transport, would set a precedent in respect of other education sectors to whom this statutory duty is *not* owed. As noted at para 7 the establishment of a (costly) precedent appears to have been decisive in the past in the respondents negative response. However the respondent does *not* have a corresponding duty in relation to the traditional established educational sector. Accordingly it may facilitate and encourage the IM post primary sector in ways that it need not for other sectors

³¹ Breithiúnas i gcás Cholma McKee ina Leaschathaoirleach ar Bhord Gobharnóirí Choláiste Feirste v An Roinn Oideachais, [http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2011/\[2011\]%20NIQB%2098/j_j_TRE8352Final.htm](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2011/[2011]%20NIQB%2098/j_j_TRE8352Final.htm), íoslódáil deiridh 13.05.2013.

³¹ Judgement in the case of Colma McKee As Vice Chairperson Of The Board Of Governors Of Coláiste Feirste v the Department of Education, [http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2011/\[2011\]%20NIQB%2098/j_j_TRE8352Final.htm](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2011/[2011]%20NIQB%2098/j_j_TRE8352Final.htm), Last downloaded 13.05.2013

bhearta dearfacha a dhéanamh nó constaicí a choisceann an cuspóir reachtúil a chur ar ceal. Ní cosúil go raibh an méid sin tuigte i gceart ag an fhreagróir. Dá réir sin, measaim gur theip ar an fhreagróir meáchan agus breithniú mar is ceart a thabhairt dá oibleagáidí faoi Airteagal 89 le forbairt oideachais Ghaeilge a spreagadh agus a éascú. Tá Foras 1 déanta amach agus caithfidh an freagróir, mar sin de, ceist an iomprais san earnáil iar-bhunscoile Gaeilge a bhreithniú tuilleadh ar aon dul le rialú na cúirte.

[45] D'áitigh an freagróir fosta nach bhfuil ábharthacht ag Airteagal 89 d'Airteagal 52 nó tionchar aige ar Airteagal 52 a chomhdhéanann, a dearbhaíodh, scéim iomlán reachtúil i gcomhair riaradh iompras scoile. Diúltaím don aighneacht seo. I mo tuairim, tá soláthar áiseanna iomprais do scoileanna in earnáil ar bith ríthábhachtach d'fhorbairt na hearnála sin agus do sholáthar fíor-rogha do thuistí. Mar a dúirt Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta ina argóint scríofa ní féidir forbairt scoileanna a dhealú ón ghléas lena mbainfidh daltaí amach iad. Tá sé oscailte don fhreagróir a chumhachtaí faoi Airteagal 52 a chleachtadh agus an beartas iomprais a leasú i gcomhlíonadh a dhualgais faoi Airteagal 89.

[46] D'éirigh leis an iarratas ar athbhreithniú breithiúnach agus caithfidh an freagróir anois an cheist a athbhreithniú oiread agus a éilíonn an breithiúnas seo.

Ocht mí dhéag i ndiaidh an bhreithiúnais seo, tá an cheist go fóill gan réiteach sásúil, cé, i ndiaidh easpa teagmhála ó ROTÉ, gur thosaigh an díospóireacht arís idir an scoil agus ROTÉ. Is eagal leis an scoil go ndéanfaidh ROTÉ moladh do sholáthar bus tiomnaithe ó Dhún Pádraig go dtí an scoil, agus b'fhéidir go bhfuil sé ar intinn aon mholadh den chineál sin a atreorú chuig an Roinn Airgeadais agus Pearsanra atá faoi stiúir ag an Pháirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach (PAD). Is é an eagla gurbh fhéidir go coiscfí an moladh sa chéim sin.

by taking positive steps or removing obstacles which inhibit the statutory objective. This does not appear to have been fully appreciated by the respondent. Accordingly I consider that the respondent has failed to give proper weight and consideration to its obligation under Art 89 to encourage and facilitate the development of IM education. Ground 1 is made out and the respondent will therefore need to give further consideration to the transport issue in the post primary Irish medium education sector in light of the courts ruling.

[45] The respondent also contended that Art 89 has no relevance to or impact upon Art 52 which it was asserted constituted a complete statutory scheme for the administration of school transport. I reject this submission. In my view the provision of transport facilities to schools in any sector is critical to the development of that sector and the provision of genuine parental choice. As Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) put it in their written argument it is not possible to divorce the development of schools from the means by which students are going to get to them. It is *open* to the respondent to exercise its powers under Art 52 and to amend the transport policy in the discharge of its duty under Art 89.

[46] The application for judicial review is successful and the respondent must now to the extent required by this judgment reconsider the matter.

Eighteen months after this judgement, the matter has still not been satisfactorily resolved, although, after lack of contact from the DENI for a period of months, discussion has now resumed between the school and the DENI. The school fears however that the DENI may make a proposal for provision of a dedicated bus from Downpatrick to the school, but that may intend to refer any such proposal to the Democratic Unionist Party-led Department of Finance and Personnel. Their concern is that the proposal may be vetoed at this stage.

5.13

Oiliúint Theicniúil agus Ghairmiúil (OTAG)

Sa Tríú Tuairisc Faireacháin againn, thug POBAL achoimre ar fhorbairtí a bhaineas le hOiliúint Theicniúil agus Ghairmiúil, agus ar iarratas an Roinn Fostaíochta agus Foghlama (RFF) go gcruthófaí páirtíocht idir Coláiste Uirbeach Bhéal Feirste (CUBF), príomhsholáthraí Bhreis Oideachais i mBéal Feirste, agus an grúpa beag Gaeilge Forbairt Feirste, i gcomhair bhuanú an tsoláthair. Theip ar an pháirtíocht, agus tharraing CUBF amach. Cheangail Forbairt Feirste lena chomheagraíocht, GaelChúrsaí agus tá siad i gcainteanna le RFF le dhá bhliain anuas. Áitíonn RFF go bhfuil sé tiomanta ar sholáthar OTAG in oiliúint theicniúil agus ghairmiúil. Ach go fóill, ní dhearna sé aon chinneadh ar fhorbairt a leithéid de sholáthar.

Thit cistiú RFF do sholáthar OTAG san oiliúint seo ó £151,162 in 2002/03, go £84,669 in 2006/7. Ón bhliain airgeadais 2009/10, níor gheall RFF aon chistiú do sholáthar OTAG. Níor mhírreasúnta an costas do RFF soláthar OTAG, agus taispeánann na figiúirí nuair a bhí sé á chistiú, go raibh costas per capita inchomparáide leis an soláthar Béarla. Mic léinn nach dtiocfadh leo leas a bhaint as an soláthar OTAG chaithfí freastal orthu sa chóras Béarla, ar costas cosúil do RFF, nó bheadh siad ina staitistic 'NFOO' (Níl i bhFostaíocht, in Oideachas nó in Oiliúint).

Tá GaelChúrsaí agus Forbairt Feirste go buan ag tabhairt aghaidh ar an bhearna seo. I mí Lúnasa 2012 d'iarr 28 Gaeilgeoir óg soláthar OTAG ag GaelChúrsaí. Molaimid do COMEX nár mhiste dóibh eolas a iarraidh ar cén fáth nár cuireadh aon chistiú ar fáil d'oiliúint theicniúil agus ghairmiúil OTAG ó 2009.

5.13

Technical and Vocational Training (TVT)

In our Third monitoring report, POBAL outlined ongoing developments in relation to Technical and Vocational Training, and the request of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) that a partnership be formed between Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC), the main Further Education provider in Belfast, and the small Irish language group Forbairt Feirste, for the continuation of the provision. The partnership failed, with BMC withdrawing. Forbairt Feirste formed linked with a sister organisation, GaelChúrsaí and has now been in talks with DEL for two years, DEL maintains that it is committed to an Irish Medium provision in technical and vocational training. However, as yet, it has made no decision regarding the development of such provision.

Funding by DEL to IM provision in this training has dropped from £151,162 in 2002/03, to £84,669 in 2006/7. Since the financial year 2009/10, DEL has committed no funding to IM provision. IM provision has not been an unreasonable cost to DEL, with figures showing that when it was being funded, costs per capita were comparable with costs for English language provision. Students not able to avail of IM provision would either have to be accommodated in the English medium system, at similar cost to DEL, or they would become a 'NEET' statistic (Not in Employment, Education or Training.)

GaelChúrsaí and Forbairt Feirste continue to address this gap. In August 2012 a total of 28 young Irish speakers sought IM provision at GaelChúrsaí. We suggest that the COMEX might ask for information as to why no funding has been provided for IM technical and vocational training since 2009.

6.0 An Ceathrú Tréimhse Faireacháin 2009 – 2013

Tuairiscí ginearálta POBAL:

6.1

Inár dtuairisc roimhe seo, leag POBAL béim ar an mhéadú sa diúltachas i gcomhthéacs na Gaeilge i dTuaisceart na hÉireann. Áirimid mar fhianaise air seo nár thug Páirtí an Stáit tuairisc go fóill. Níl aon chomhaontú ar cheisteanna Gaeilge sa Tionól cineachta. I mí Deireadh Fómhair 2006, thug rialtas an RA an gealltanais aonchiallach seo a leanas i gComhaontú Chill Rímhinn, 'Tabharfaidh an Rialtas isteach Acht Gaeilge a léireoidh taithí na Breataine Bige agus na hÉireann agus oibreoidh i gcomhar leis an Fheidhmeannas atá le theacht le forbairt na teanga Ghaeilge a fheabhsú agus a chosaint.' (Rialtais an RA agus na hÉireann, 13^ú Deireadh Fómhair 2006). Ach, níl an gealltanais seo comhlíonta ag rialtas an RA; ina áit sin ghlac sé cur chuige a chinntigh go rachadh comhchainteanna thar an spriocam d'athbhunú na déabhlóide, san áit a bhfuil móramh ag páirtithe a d'fhógair go poiblí arís agus arís eile go raibh rún acu reachtaíocht don teanga a mhilleadh. Bhí cliseadh seo rialtas an RA ina phríomhghné den naimhdeas don Ghaeilge atá ag dul i ndéine sna forais chineachta. Creideann POBAL go bhfuil géarghá le hAcht cuimsitheach Gaeilge bunaithe i gcearta agus gur chóir do rialtas an RA comhoibriú leis na páirtithe uilig lena chinntiú go mbainfear seo amach taobh istigh d'amlíne aontaithe.

6.2

Ba í príomhthréith an Tríú Timthriall Faireacháin gníomhartha triúr Aire den PAD (Páirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach) atá naimhdeach don Ghaeilge. D'athraigh seo le linn an Cheathrú Timthriall, agus Aire Shinn Féin, Carál Ní Chuilín ag tionscnamh togra foghlaimeoirí, Líofa 2015, ag foilsiú dréachtstraitéise don Ghaeilge (agus d'Albainis Uladh) agus ag déanamh ráiteas dearfach fána cuspóirí i dtaca le moltaí don Acht Gaeilge. Fáiltimid roimh spéis agus thacaíocht an Aire don Ghaeilge.

6.0 The Fourth Monitoring Period 2009 – 2013

POBAL's General remarks:

6.1

In our previous report, POBAL emphasised the increasing negativity in the context for the Irish language in the North of Ireland. We note the continuing reporting failure by the State Party as evidence of this. There is no consensus on Irish language issues within the devolved Assembly. In October 2006, the UK government made the following unequivocal commitment in the St Andrews' Agreement, 'The Government will introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language' (UK and Irish Governments, 13th October 2006). However, the UK government has not fulfilled this commitment, adopting instead an approach to ensure that consultations overran the target date for the re-establishment of devolution, where parties who had publically and repeatedly declared their intention to smash legislation for the language have a majority. The failure of the UK government has been a key factor in an increasingly hostile climate within the devolved institutions to the Irish language. POBAL believes that a comprehensive rights-based Irish Language Act is urgently needed and that the UK government should work with all parties to ensure that this is achieved within an agreed deadline.

6.2

The Third Monitoring cycle was characterised by the actions of three DUP Culture Ministers hostile to the Irish language. During the fourth cycle this has changed, with Sinn Féin Minister Carál Ní Chuilín initiating a learners' project, Líofa 2015, publishing a draft strategy for Irish (and Ulster Scots) and making positive statements about her intentions in relation to proposals for an Irish Language Act. We welcome the Minister's interest and support for the language.

6.3

Is léir, áfach, gur ann go fóill don chóras dhá chiseal sa Tuaisceart dár thagair POBAL, trína dtig le ranna Tionóil le hAíre atá naimhdeach don Ghaeilge cur chuige amháin a ghlacadh chucu féin agus go nglacann na cinn is lú naimhdeas le cur chuige eile. Cuireann sé seo beaguchtach ar chainteoirí Gaeilge faoi phlé leis na forais pholaitiúla ina n-iomláine agus cuireann sé le leithscaradh agus polaitiú na Gaeilge agus an CETRM. Creidimid go dtig seo a thaispeánt go soiléir sa timthriall seo faireacháin, mar shampla, tríd an chomhairliúchán ar chomharthaíocht dhátheangach a thionscnaigh an tIarlair Forbartha Réigiúnaí a scartáil ar aon dul le cúlra páirtí polaitiúil an Aire nua, ball den Pháirtí Aontachtach Uladh (PAU). Ní léir dúinn aon fhianaise sa timthriall faireacháin seo go bhfuil na ceistanna a bhaineann le cóireáil na Gaeilge sna forais chineachta ar shlí a réitigh.

6.4

An mhíchiall leantach a bhaintear as Alt 75, i gcomhar le heaspa cosaintí intíre don Ghaeilge, treisíonn sí leis na deacrachtaí seo trí chur leis an bhraistint gur rud é úsáid na Gaeilge ab fhearr le comhlachtaí poiblí a sheachaint ar eagla impleachtaí diúltacha ar an 'dea-chaidreamh'. Ní thig aghaidh a thabhairt ar dhianseasmhacht an chur chuige seo ach trí idirghabháil chórasach, údarásach agus oiliúint agus trí réiteach ionaid aimhrianta reachtach na Gaeilge i gcomparáid leis an Ghàidhlig in Albain agus an Bhreatnais sa Bhreatain Bheag.

6.5

Creidimid, faoin CETRM, go bhfuil freagracht ar rialtas RA a chinntiú go gcaithfear le gach TRM ar dhóigh chothrom, de réir a dálaí féin. Baineann an fhreagracht seo fosta le cóireáil chothrom don Ghaeilge faoi na forais chineachta. Ach, níor thug Páirtí an Stáit faoi aon obair lena chinntiú go bhfeabhsófaí meas ar an Ghaeilge, ag cuimhneamh fiú ar an timpeallacht naimhdeach don Ghaeilge atá ag síormhéadú agus ar dhoicheadh soiléir chodanna den rialtas cineachta di. Thóg POBAL an cheist seo ag cruinnithe le hionadaithe rialtas an RA trí Oifig Thuaisceart na hÉireann agus leis an Scáthruaí Stáit do TÉ.

6.3

However, it is clear that the two-tier system which POBAL has referred to before still exists in the North, whereby those Assembly departments with Ministers hostile to the Irish language adopt one approach and those less unfavourable adopt another. This discourages Irish speakers from engaging with political institutions as a whole and adds to the ghettoisation and politicisation of the Irish language and of the ECRML. We believe that this can be clearly illustrated in this monitoring cycle, for example, through the scrapping of the former Department of Regional Development's Sinn Féin Minister's consultation on bilingual signage in line with the party political background of the new Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) Minister. We see no evidence within this monitoring cycle that the issues around the treatment of Irish within the devolved institutions are in the process of resolution.

6.4

The ongoing mis-interpretation of Section 75, combined with the lack of domestic protections for the Irish language compounds these difficulties by adding to the perception that the use of the Irish language is something better avoided by public bodies since it may have negative implications for 'good relations'. The persistence of this approach can only be addressed through systematic, authoritative intervention and training and through the resolution of the anomalous legislative position of the Irish language in comparison with Gaelic in Scotland and Welsh in Wales.

6.5

We believe that under the ECRML, the UK government has a responsibility to ensure that each Regional or Minority Language is treated in an equitable manner, according to its own circumstances. This responsibility extends to the equitable treatment of Irish under the devolved institutions. However, no work has been undertaken by the State Party to ensure that respect for the Irish language is improved, even given the increasingly hostile climate for the language and the clear hostility of sections of devolved government to it. POBAL has raised this issue at meetings with representatives of the UK government through the Northern Ireland Office and with the UK Shadow Secretary of State for NI.

6.6

Is é POBAL an t-aon eagraíocht neamhrialtasach a rinne faireachán leanúnach, oiliúint feasachta agus oideachais ar fheidhmiú an CETRM sa Tuaisceart. Cuirimid ár dtuairiscí faireacháin ar fáil do Chomhairle na hEorpa agus ansin poiblímid an t-eolas sin. Ról tábhachtach atá anseo, níos suntasaí arís b'fhéidir ag easpa ábhar tuairiscithe ón RA nó ó na forais chineachta.

6.7

Tá POBAL ar cheann de roinnt eagraíochtaí Gaeilge a bhfuil a gcistiú ó Foras na Gaeilge faoi bhagairt. Is mar sin a bhí an cás i rith an cheathrú timthriall faireacháin, agus fuair foireann POBAL fógra iomarcaíochta ar cheithre ócáid ar leith. Ar na heagraíochtaí eile suite sa Tuaisceart a bhfuil a gcistiú faoi bhagairt tá: An tÁisaonad, an t-ionad acmhainní Gaeilge i gColáiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire; Altram, an eagraíocht luathbhlianta Gaeilge; Iontaobhas Ultach, a oibríonn ar bhonn trasphobail; Forbairt Feirste a dhéanann obair forbartha óna bhunáit in Iarthar Bhéal Feirste; Raidió Fáilte, an stáisiún raidió pobail agus Comhaltas Uladh a oibríonn ar theagasc na Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla. Tá an tuairim go láidir ag POBAL má aontaíonn an dá Aire fhreagracha Cultúir thuaidh agus theas é, go mbeidh de thoradh ar mholtaí Foras na Gaeilge le bunchistiú a stad, cailteanas fíoroilteachta agus eochairthaithí san earnáil Gaeilge ar fud na tíre. Sa Tuaisceart, is é a tharlóidh go ndruidfear roinnt grúpaí, rud a dhéanfas lagú suntasach ar an earnáil dheonach Gaeilge.³²

6.6

POBAL is the only non-governmental organisation that has consistently monitored, carried out awareness training and education on the application of the ECRML in the North. We make our monitoring reports available to the Council of Europe and then make this information public. This is an important role, made even more significant perhaps by the lack of reporting materials available from either the UK or the devolved institutions.

6.7

POBAL is one of a number of Irish language organisations whose funding from Foras na Gaeilge is under threat. This situation has been ongoing throughout the entire fourth monitoring cycle, with redundancy notices being issued to POBAL staff on four separate occasions. Other northern-based organisations whose funding is under threat include: An tÁisaonad, The Irish Medium resource centre based at St Mary's University College; Altram, the Irish language Early Years organisation; Iontaobhas Ultach / The Ultach Trust who work on a cross community basis; Forbairt Feirste who carry out west-Belfast based development work; Raidió Fáilte, the community radio station and Comhaltas Uladh who work on the teaching of Irish in English Medium schools. POBAL is strongly of the opinion that if agreed by the two responsible Culture Ministers north and south, the Foras na Gaeilge proposals to end core funding will result in the loss of genuine expertise and key experience in the Irish language sector throughout the country. In the North, they will result in the closure of a number of groups and thereby significantly weaken the Irish language voluntary sector.³²

³² Ghlac na hAíreí ón Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta sa Tuaisceart agus ón Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta sa Deisceart le moltaí an Fhorais ag cruinniú an Comhaireachta Thuaidh-Theas, 10ú Iúil 2013. Fá láthair, is cosúil go bhfuil deireadh ar fad le bunmhaoiniú d'eagraíochtaí Gaeilge ó Fhoras na Gaeilge. Faoi chritéir nua, beidh cosc ar iarratais nua ó 5 as 7 de na heagrais bunmhaoinithe Gaeilge atá lonnaithe ó thuaidh, POBAL san áireamh (féach fonóta 30 chomh maith).

³² The Ministers from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in the north and the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht in the south accepted Foras's proposals at the North-South Ministerial Meeting meeting on 10th July 2013. It appears at this stage that there is now a complete end to corefunding for Irish language organisations from Foras na Gaeilge. Under new criteria, 5 of 7 of the northern-based corefunded organisations (including POBAL), will be excluded from making new applications for funding. (see also footnote 30)

Tábla 1

Freagraí ar cheisteanna a cuireadh i litir chuig na ranna stáit áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte (Márta 2011)

Roinn	Cad é an traenáil agus na bogearraí cuí atá ar fáil don fhoireann a chinnteodh go n-úsáidfidís an síneadh fada go ceart sa chomhfhreagras? - An úsáidtear an síneadh fada i gcónaí sa chomhfhreagras?	Cad iad na socruithe atá curtha in áit le cinntiú go bhfuil sibh in ann ainmneacha agus sloinntí Gaeilge a úsáid go ceart, sintí fada san áireamh?	I dtuairisc 2010 Choiste na Saineolaithe ar Chairt na hEorpa, cáineadh údarais TÉ de dheasca easpa cur chuige chórasaigh maidir le hiarratais sa Ghaeilge: Nevertheless, it does not appear that a systematic approach to handling oral and written applications in Irish has been introduced across the Northern Ireland administration, and consequently in most cases even the minimum standards required by the code are not kept (COMEX, 2010: 51 - 355). An raibh ranna Whitehall, an Oifig Eachtrannach agus Comhlathais san áireamh, nó Oifig Thuaisceart Éireann i dteagmháil leat maidir leis an ráiteas thuas? - An raibh an Tionól i dteagmháil leat maidir leis? - An raibh an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta i dteagmháil leat maidir leis?	Cad é an comhordú nó cumarsáid atá déanta ag an Roinn leis na ranna eile maidir le cur i gcrích na Cairte ar bhonn comhordaithe chórasaigh trasna na ranna eile?	An bhfuil aon athruithe ar pholasaí nó ar chleachtas na Roinne i dtaca le comhfhreagras Gaeilge ó 2010? - Má tá, cad é atá déanta maidir leis seo?	Cad iad na cáipéisí agus cad iad ná foirmeacha atá curtha ar fáil aguibh sa Ghaeilge? - Cad iad na céimeanna a úsáideann sibh le cur in iúl don phobal go bhfuil cáipéisí ar leith ar fáil sa Ghaeilge?
Roinn an Chéad-Aire & an LeasChéad-Aire	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd. Traenáil ar bith.	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd	Láimhseálann DCAL seo.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh.
An Roinn Talmhaíochta & Forbartha Tuaithe	Fada in úsáid	Traenáil tugtha sa bheartas teanga agus san r-iris	Tuairisc COMEX curtha chuig baill an GIFIC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh.
An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon & Fóillíochta	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd le húsáid sintí fada a chinntiú. Traenáil ar bith.	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	An Oifig Eachtrannach agus Comhlathais, Oifig Thuaisceart Éireann, GIFIC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh. Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Oideachais	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith, ach 'IT Assist' ar fáil.	'IT Assist' ar fáil.	Ní raibh.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.		Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Fostaíochta & Foghlama	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith.		Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh. Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Comhshaoil	Fada in úsáid. 'IT Assist' ar fáil.	'IT Assist' ar fáil.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh. Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála & Infheistíochta	Fada in úsáid.	Treoir tugtha don fhoireann.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFIC.	Níl	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh. Aistriúchán ar fáil.

Table 1

Answers to questions put in letter to local government departments relating to implementation of the Charter (March 2011)

Department	What training and software have been made available to the staff to ensure that the length accent (fada) is always used correctly in correspondence? Is the length accent always used in correspondence?	What arrangements have been put in place to ensure that you are able to use Irish names and surnames correctly, including the length accents?	In the 2010 COMEX report, the Northern Ireland authorities were censured for their lack of a systematic approach to Irish language applications: Nevertheless, it does not appear that a systematic approach to handling oral and written applications in Irish has been introduced across the Northern Ireland administration, and consequently in most cases even the minimum standards required by the code are not kept. (COMEX, 2010: 51-355). Have Whitehall departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, or the NI Office been in contact with you regarding the aforementioned statement? - Has the Assembly been in contact with you in respect of same? - Has the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure been in contact with you in respect of same?	What coordination or communication has the Department engaged in with other departments as regards the implementation of the Charter on a coordinated, systematic basis across other departments?	- Have there been changes to the Department's policy or practise regarding Irish language correspondence since 2010? - If so, what has been done in that regard?	What documents and forms have you made available in Irish? - What steps have been taken to make the public aware that those documents are available in Irish?
Department of the Minister and Deputy First Minister	Central Translations (NI) Ltd used. No training.	Central Translations (NI) Ltd used	DCAL deal with this.	Department also discusses this at ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	Fada used	Instruction given in Language Policy and Equality e-magazine	COMEX report sent to ICIG members	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	Central Translations (NI) Ltd to make sure Fada is used. No training.	Central Translations (NI) Ltd used.	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Northern Ireland office, ICIG.	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website. Translation available
Department for Education	Fada used. No training but 'IT Assist' available.	'IT Assist' available.	No	Through ICIG meetings		Translation available
Department for Employment and Learning	Fada used. No training.		ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website. Translation available
Department of the Environment	Fada used. 'IT Assist' available.	'IT Assist' available.	ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website. Translation available
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	Fada used.	Guidance given to staff.	ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website. Translation available

Tábla 1 (ar lean)

Freagraí ar cheisteanna a cuireadh i litir chuig na ranna stáit áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte (Márta 2011)

An Roinn Airgeadais & Pearsanra	Fada in úsáid. 'IT Assist' ar fáil. Cód cúirtéise.	'IT Assist' ar fáil. Cód cúirtéise.	Litreacha an Tionóil.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Níl	Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta & Sábháilteachta Poiblí	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Úsáidtear Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Níl	Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Dlí	Fada in úsáid. Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.		Cáipéisí ar bith. Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí	Treoir sa chód cúirtéise. Fada in úsáid.	Treoir sa chód cúirtéise.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	GIFC, RTFT agus ROTE.	Níl.	Aistriúchán ar fáil.
An Roinn Forbartha Sóisialta	Treoir sa chód cúirtéise. Central Translations(NI) Ltd.	Treoir sa chód cúirtéise.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Pléite ag an Roinn ag cruinnithe GIFC.	Níl.	Cáipéisí ar fáil ar a shuíomh. Aistriúchán ar fáil.

Nóta: Reáchtáil an GIFC trí chruinniú ó 4ú Deireadh Fómhair 2010. Is cosúil nach ndearnadh plé sonracha ar thríú Tuairisc na Saineolaithe ag na cruinnithe ar 4/11/10, 13/10/11 agus 5/7/12.

Table 1 (cont'd)

Answers to questions put in letter to local government departments relating to implementation of the Charter (March 2011)

Department of Finance and Personnel	Fada used. 'IT Assist' available. Code of Courtesy.	IT Assist available. Code of courtesy	Assembly letters	Through ICIG meetings	No	Translation available
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings	No	Translation available
Department of Justice	Fada used. Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	Central Translations (NI) Ltd.	ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings		No documents. Translation available.
Department for Regional Development	Guidance in Code of Courtesy. Fada used.	Guidance in Code of Courtesy.	ICIG meetings	ICIG, DARD and DENI.	No	Translation available.
Department for Social Development	Guidance in Code of Courtesy. Central Translations(NI) Ltd.	Guidance in Code of Courtesy.	ICIG meetings	Through ICIG meetings	No	Documents available on website. Translation available

Note: The ICIG have held meetings 3 times since 4th November 2010. There appears to have been no specific discussion on the 3rd COMEX report at the meetings on 4/11/10, 13/10/11 and 5/7/12.

Tábla 2

Suirbhé POBAL ar chórais na ranna stáit do dhaoine ar mhian leo aighneachtaí a dhéanamh ó bhéal (2013)

Roinn	"An dtig liom caint le duine i nGaeilge, le do thoil"	"Can I avail of services in Irish"	Glórphost
Roinn an Chéad-Aire agus an LeasChéad-Aire	"Sorry?"	"I don't think so, what is your query?..., I'll put you through to someone" Cuireadh fríd chuig an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta mé. (RCEF)	
An Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Forbartha Tuaithe	"Sorry?"	"Please hold and I'll see if someone can speak to you..., we have a number where you can leave a message, it is: 02890 258971"	Glórphost: 02890 258971
An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta	"Sorry?"	"One moment..., I have a number: 02890 258971 or extension: 75252"	Glórphost: 02890 258971 Folíne: 75252
An Roinn Oideachais	"Sorry?"	"I'm not too sure..., there's a voicemail service at this number: 02890 258971 or extension: 75252"	Glórphost: 02890 258971 Folíne: 75252
An Roinn Fostaíochta agus Foghlama	"Sorry?"	"I think we do..., " Cuireadh fríd chuig an RCEF mé.	
An Roinn Comhshaoil	"Sorry?"	"Let me find out for you..., the number is: 02890 515252"	Glórphost: 02890 515252
An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Infheistíochta	"Nil, I only have a little Irish"	"I'll put you through to the Customer Helpline.... We have an Irish language voicemail service at; 02890 515252"	Glórphost: 02890 515252
An Roinn Airgeadais agus Pearsanra	"Sorry?"	"I'll put you through to the language section in DETI (freagra ar bith)..., the DETI language section number is 028 9025 8971 or you can leave a message at extension: 75252"	Glórphost: 02890 515252 Folíne: 75252
An Roinn Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí	"Pardon?"	"No, I'm sorry"	
An Roinn Dlí	"Sorry?"	"I don't think so, I've never done that before"	
An Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí	"Sorry?"	"Yes we do, one second and I'll get it for you..., can I ring you back?" "The number is: 02890 515252"	Glórphost: 02890 515252
An Roinn Forbartha Sóisialta	"Sorry?"	"No, you can send an e-mail to the Permanent Secretary about it"	

Nóta: Ceist curtha i nGaeilge ar dtús agus ansin i mBéarla nuair ba ghá.

Table 2
POBAL survey government department systems for those who wish to make oral submissions in Irish (January 2013)

Department	"An dtig liom caint le duine i nGaeilge, le do thoil"	"Can I avail of services in Irish"	Voicemail
Department of the Minister and Deputy First Minister	"Sorry?"	"I don't think so, what is your query?..., I'll put you through to someone". I was put through to the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL).	
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	"Sorry?"	"Please hold and I'll see if someone can speak to you..., we have a number where you can leave a message, its: 02890 258971".	Voicemail: 02890 258971
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	"Sorry?"	"One moment..., I have a number: 02890 258971 or extension: 75252".	Voicemail: 02890 258971 Extension: 75252
Department for Education	"Sorry?"	"I'm not too sure..., there's a voicemail service at this number: 02890 258971 or extension: 75252".	Voicemail: 02890 258971 Extension: 75252
Department for Employment and Learning	"Sorry?"	"I think we do...," I was put through to DCAL.	
Department of the Environment	"Sorry?"	"Let me find out for you..., the number is: 02890 515252".	Voicemail: 02890 515252
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	"Nil, I only have a little Irish"	"I'll put you through to the Customer Helpline.... We have an Irish language voicemail service at; 02890 515252"	Voicemail: 02890 515252
Department of Finance and Personnel	"Sorry?"	"I'll put you through to the language section in DETI (freagra ar bith)..., the DETI language section number is 02890258971 or you can leave a message at extension: 75252".	Voicemail: Extension: 75252
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	"Pardon?"	"No, I'm sorry".	
Department of Justice	"Sorry?"	"I don't think so, I've never done that before".	
Department for Regional Development	"Sorry?"	"Yes we do, one second and I'll get it for you..., can I ring you back?". "The number is: 02890 515252"	Voicemail: 02890 515252'
Department for Social Development	"Sorry?"	"No, you can send an e-mail to the Permanent Secretary about it".	

Note: Question put firstly in Irish and then in English when necessary

Tábla 3
Suirbhé POBAL ar an Ghaeilge i suíomhanna gréasáin na ranna rialtais (Márta – Iúil 2011)

Roinn	Gaeilge ar leathanach baile	Teagmháil tríd an Ghaeilge	Cáipéisí i nGaeilge	Nuashonrú an tsuirbhé (Bealtaine 2013)
Roinn an Chéad-Aire agus an LeasChéad-Aire	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	1 Cháipéis Ghaeilge (Greannán) ar fáil	Gan athrú
An Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Forbartha Tuaithe	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh) Nasc go leathanach eolais Gaeilge	Leathanach teagmhála Gaeilge fríd nasc ar an leathanach baile	8 gcáipéis Ghaeilge ar fáil ar leathanach Gaeilge tríd nasc ar phríomhleathanach an tsuímh	Gan athrú
An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh)	Guthán. R-phost.	2 cháipéis Ghaeilge & 12 cháipéis trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh) tríd nasc ar phríomhleathanach an tsuímh	Ardú suntasach ar líon na gcáipéisí ó thosaigh 'Líofa' (togra leis an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn) i mí MF 2011
An Roinn Oideachais	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh). Roinnt nasc & ceanteideal dátheangach (Gaeilge, Béarla)	Teagmháil ar bith	Roinnt mhaith cáipéisí agus preasráiteas Gaeilge tríd nasc Gaeilge ar phríomhleathanach an tsuímh	Ceann teideal dátheangach bainte. Fuarthas 7 gcáipéis Ghaeilge agus 13 phreas ráiteas.
An Roinn Fostaíochta agus Foghlama	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	20 cáipéis Ghaeilge tríd an inneall cuardaigh	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Infheistíochta	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéis ar bith	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Comhshaoil	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Tá roinnt mhaith cáipéisí Gaeilge ar fáil tríd an inneall cuardaigh	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Airgeadais agus Pearsanra	Gaeilge ar bith Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh)	Teagmháil ar bith	2 cháipéis Ghaeilge ar fáil tríd an inneall cuardaigh	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí	Gaeilge ar bith Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh)	Teagmháil ar bith	16 cháipéis Ghaeilge, an chuid is mó ó ré an Aire Bairbre De Brún (1999–2002)	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Díl	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéis ar bith	Athrú ar bith
An Roinn Forbartha Réigiúnaí	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh)	Teagmháil ar bith	13 cháipéis Ghaeilge tríd nasc Gaeilge ar phríomhleathanach go leathanach eolais ginearálta Gaeilge	Lógó i mBéarla amháin. Cuireadh inneall aistriúcháin le Gaeilge mar rogha ann
An Roinn Forbartha Sóisialta	Gaeilge ar bith	Uimhir ghlórphoist sa cháipéis Chód Cúirtéise	1 Cháipéis Ghaeilge (Cód Cúirtéise) ar fáil tríd an inneall cuardaigh	Athrú ar bith

Nóta: Torthaí bunaithe ar chuardach ginearálta tríd nasc ghréasáin, léarscáileanna láithreáin agus innill cuardaigh na suíomhanna idir Márta agus Iúil 2011.

Nóta: Cuireadh colún nuashonraithe leis i mí Bealtaine 2013.

Table 3
POBAL survey on Irish language in government department websites (March - July 2011)

Department	Irish on homepage	Contact in Irish	Documents in Irish	Survey update (May 2013)
Department of the Minister and Deputy First Minister	None	None	1 document (comic book) available	No change
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	Trilingual logo (Irish, English & Ulster Scots). Link to Irish language information page	Irish language contacts page available through home page link	8 Irish language documents available on an Irish language page through link on the home page	No change
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	Trilingual logo (Irish, English & Ulster Scots)	Phone E-mail	2 Irish language documents and 12 trilingual documents available (Irish, English & Ulster Scots) through link on the home page	The number of Irish documents has risen considerably since the 'Líofa' (a campaign to promote the Irish language) began in September 2011.
Department for Education	Trilingual logo (Irish, English & Ulster Scots). Some links and a bilingual heading (Irish, English)	None	A good number of Irish language documents and a press statement in Irish available through link on the home page	Bilingual heading removed. 7 Irish language documents and 13 press statements found
Department for Employment and Learning	None	None	20 Irish language documents available through site search engine	No change
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	None	None	None	No change
Department of the Environment	None	None	A good number of Irish language documents available through site search engine	No change
Department of Finance and Personnel	None	None	2 Irish language documents available through site search engine	No change
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	Trilingual logo (Irish, English & Ulster Scots)	None	16 Irish language documents available, mostly from Minister Bairbre De Brún's time in office (1999–2002)	No change
Department of Justice	None	None	None	No change
Department for Regional Development	Trilingual logo (Irish, English & Ulster Scots)	None	Irish language link on home page to general info page in Irish with links to 13 documents in Irish	English only logo. Translation engine with Irish as a choice added
Department for Social Development	None	Voicemail no. in Code of Courtesy document	Irish language document (Code of Courtesy) available through site search engine	No change

Note: Results based on general search through site links, site maps and site search engines between March and July 2011

Note: Survey update column added for May 2013

Tábla 4

Freagraí ar cheisteanna a cuireadh i litir chuig na comhairlí áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte (Márta 2011)

Comhairlí	Cad é an traenáil agus na bogearraí cuí atá ar fáil don fhoireann a chinnteodh go n-úsáidí an síneadh fada go ceart sa chomhfhreagras? - An úsáidtear an síneadh fada i gcónaí sa chomhfhreagras?	Cad iad na socrúithe atá curtha in áit le cinntiú go bhfuil sibh in ann ainmneacha agus sloinntí Gaeilge a úsáid go ceart, síntí fada san áireamh?	Níl dtuairisc 2010 Choiste na Saineolaithe ar Chairt na hEorpa, cáineadh údarais TÉ de dheasca easpa cur chuige chórasaigh maidir le hiarratais sa Ghaeilge: "Nevertheless, it does not appear that a systematic approach to handling oral and written applications in Irish has been introduced across the Northern Ireland administration, and consequently in most cases even the minimum standards required by the code are not kept" (COMEX, 2010: 51 - 355). - An raibh ranna Whitehall, an Oifig Eachtrannach agus Comhlathais san áireamh, nó Oifig Thuaisceart Éireann i dteagmháil leat maidir leis an ráiteas thuas? - An raibh an Tionól i dteagmháil leat maidir leis? - An raibh an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta i dteagmháil leat maidir leis?	Cad é an comhordú nó cumarsáid atá déanta ag an Chomhairle leis na comhairlí eile maidir le cur i gcrích na Cairte ar bhonn comhordaithe chórasaigh trasna na gcomhairlí eile?	Cad iad na háiseanna nó an córas a éascaíonn úsáid na Gaeilge le linn díospóireacht -aí nó cruinnithe na Comhairle?	Cad é cleachtas na Comhairle i leith doiciméad, ceisteanna scríofa nó comhfhreagrais sa Ghaeilge mar chuid de na díospóireacht-aí seo?	Cad iad na cáipéisí agus cad iad na foirmeacha atá curtha ar fáil agaibh sa Ghaeilge? - Cad iad na céimeanna a úsáideann sibh le cur in iúl don phobal go bhfuil cáipéisí ar fáil sa Ghaeilge? - Cén feabhas / fhorbairt atá déanta agaibh ar na céimeanna seo ó bhí 2010 ann?
Comhairle Baile Aontroma	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Baile na hArda	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith.		Ní raibh.	Comhordú ar bith.	Ar fáil má iarrtar.	Ar fáil má iarrtar.	Ar fáil má iarrtar. Rud ar bith. Rud ar bith.
Comhairle Cathrach agus Ceantair Ard Mhacha	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith.	Eolas tugtha.	Ní raibh.	Teagmháil déanta le comhairlí eile.	Breithneofar iarratais.	Breithneofar iarratais.	Ar fáil má iarrtar. Rud ar bith. Rud ar bith.
Comhairle Baile an Bhaile Mheánaigh	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Monaidh	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Ceantair Dhroichead na Banna	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste	Fada in úsáid. Seirbhís aistriúcháin.	Beartas teanga.	Ní raibh.	Comhordú ar bith.		Béarla amháin.	Béarla amháin. Rud ar bith. Rud ar bith.
Comhairle Baile Charraig Fhearghais	Freagra ar bith.					Breithneofar iarratais.	
Comhairle Baile an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Baile Chúil Raithín	Freagra ar bith.						

Table 4

Answers to questions in letter to local councils relating to implementation of the Charter (March 2011)

Council	What training and software have been made available to the staff to ensure that the length accent (fada) is always used correctly in correspondence? - Is the length accent always used in correspondence?	What arrangements have been put in place to ensure that you are able to use Irish names and surnames correctly, including the length accents?	In the 2010 COMEX report, the Northern Ireland authorities were censured for their lack of a systematic approach to Irish language applications: "Nevertheless, it does not appear that a systematic approach to handling oral and written applications in Irish has been introduced across the Northern Ireland administration, and consequently in most cases even the minimum standards required by the code are not kept." (COMEX, 2010: 51-355). - Have Whitehall departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, or the Northern Ireland Office been in contact with you regarding the aforementioned statement? - Has the Assembly been in contact with you in respect of same? - Has the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure been in contact with you in respect of same?	What coordination or communication has the Council engaged in with other councils as regards the implementation of the Charter on a coordinated, systematic basis across other councils ?	What resources or what system is used to facilitate using Irish in councils discussions or meetings?	What is the Councils practice regarding Irish language documents, written questions or correspondence in these meetings?	What documents and forms have you made available in Irish? - What steps have been taken to make the public aware that those documents are available in Irish? -What improvement /development have you made regarding these steps since 2010?
Antrim Borough Council	No reply						
Ards Borough Council	Fada used. No training.		No	None	Available on request	Available on request	Available on request. None. None.
Armagh City and District Council	Fada used. No training.	Information given	No	Other councils contacted	Request considered	Request considered	Available on request. None. None.
Ballymena Borough Council	No reply						
Ballymoney Borough Council	No reply						
Banbridge District Council	No reply						
Belfast City Council	Fada used. Translations service.	Language policy	No	None		English only	English only. None. None.

Tábla 4 (ar lean)

Freagraí ar cheisteanna a cuireadh i litir chuig na comhairlí áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte (Márta 2011)

Comhairle Ceantair na Coirre Críochaí	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith.		Ní raibh.	Teagmháil déanta le hoifigigh Ghaeilge eile.	Breithneofar iarratais.	Cleachtas ar bith	Ar fáil má iarrtar. Oifigeach Gaeilge. Rud ar bith.
Comhairle Baile Chreagabhann	Fada in úsáid.	Socruithe ar bith.	Ní raibh.		Áiseanna ar bith	Ar fáil má iarrtar.	Breithneofar iarratais. Rud ar bith. Rud ar bith.
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire	Treoir sa Chód Cúirtéise. Oifigeach forbartha Gaeilge. Beartas teanga.	Traenáil rialta tugtha ar an Chairt agus feasacht teanga.	Ní raibh.	Teagmháil déanta le hoifigigh Ghaeilge agus comhairlí eile. Coimisiún Foireann Rialtais Áitiúil.	Beartas teanga. Aistriúchán comh-uaineach	Tairiscintí aistrithe.	Cáipéisí ar fáil. Clár feasacht teanga. Suíomh idirlín. Meáin. Feabhas ar bheartas teanga. Dul chun cinn agus forbairt leanúnach.
Comhairle Ceantair an Dúin	Fada in úsáid. Seirbhís aistriúcháin.	Seirbhís aistriúcháin.	Ní raibh.	lúr Cinn Trá	Ar fáil má iarrtar.		Breithneofar iarratais.
Comhairle Baile Dhún Geanainn agus Dheisceart Thír Eoghain	Fada in úsáid. Traenáil ar bith.	Beartas teanga.	Ní raibh.	lúr Cinn Trá	Ar fáil má iarrtar.	Comhairle CLG.	Ar fáil má iarrtar. Gaeilge ar chinn litreach agus ar an suíomh idirlín.
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach	Fada in úsáid. Oifigeach forbartha teanga agus CLG.	Oifigeach forbartha teanga.	Ní raibh.	Teagmháil déanta le comhairlí eile fríd an oifigeach Gaeilge	Ar fáil.	Oibríochtaí Teanga	Ar fáil má iarrtar.
Comhairle Baile Latharna	Béarla amháin. Traenáil ar bith.	Socruithe ar bith.	Ní raibh.	Comhordú ar bith.	Oibríochtaí Teanga (RCEF).	(RCEF). Ar fáil.	Oibríochtaí Teanga (RCEF). Big Word. Suíomh idirlín agus fógraí i mBéarla amháin.
Comhairle Baile Léim a' Mhadaidh	Traenáil tugtha.	Traenáil tugtha. Cúrsaí Gaeilge. Oifigeach Gaeilge.	Ní raibh.	Machaire Fíolta.	Ar fáil.		Ar fáil má iarrtar. Beartas Cultúir (2011).
Comhairle Cathrach Lios na gCearrbhach	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fíolta	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile	Freagra ar bith.						
Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir agus Mhúrn	Freagra ar bith.					Breithneofar iarratais.	
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Nua na Mainistreach	Béarla amháin. Treoir ar an síniú fada sa bheartas teanga.		RCEF: Beartas feasachta cultúir.	Comhordú ar bith.	Breithneofar iarratais.	Béarla amháin.	Breithneofar iarratais. Athruithe ar bith eile.
Comhairle Baile an Dúin Thuaidh	Béarla amháin. Traenáil ar bith.	Socruithe ar bith.	Ní raibh.	Comhordú ar bith.	Níl fáil air.	Béarla amháin.	Breithneofar iarratais de réir ráchairt.

Table 4 (cont'd)

Answers to questions in letter to local councils relating to implementation of the Charter (March 2011)

Carrickfergus Borough Council	No reply						
Castlereagh Borough Council	No reply						
Coleraine Borough Council	No reply						
Cookstown District Council	Fada used. No training.		No	Contacts with other Irish language officers	Request considered	Request considered	Available on request. Irish language officer. None
Craigavon Borough Council	Fada used.	None	No		None	None	Request considered. None. None
Derry City Council	Guidance in Code of Courtesy. Irish language officer. Language policy	Regular training given of the Charter and language awareness	No	Other councils and Irish language officers. Local government Staff Commission.	Language policy. Simultaneous translation.	Available on request. Tenders translated.	Documents listed. language awareness programme. Web site. Media. Improvements in Language policy. Continuous progress and development.
Down District Council	Fada used. Translation service.	Translation service	No	Newry	Available on request	Available on request	Request considered.
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	Fada used. No training.	Language policy	No	Newry	Available on request		Available on request. Irish on letterheads and web site.
Fermanagh District Council	Fada used. Language and GAA Council Officer.	Language Officer	No	Other councils through Language Officer	Available	GAA Council	Available on request.
Larne Borough Council	English only. No training.	None	No	None	Linguistic Operations (DCAL)	Linguistic Operations (DCAL)	Linguistic Operations (DCAL). Big Word. Website and adverts English only.
Limavady Borough Council	Training given.	Training given. Irish courses. Language Officer.	No	Magherafelt	Available	Available	Available on request. Culture Policy (2011).
Lisburn City Council	No reply						

Tábla 4 (ar lean)

Freagraí ar cheisteanna a cuireadh i litir chuig na comhairlí áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte (Márta 2011)

Comhairle Ceantair na hÓmaí	Fada in úsáid. Seirbhís aistriúcháin. Oifigeach teanga.	Socruithe ar bith ach glactar le hainmneacha Gaelacha	Ní raibh.	Comhordú ar bith.	Níl fáil air.		Breithneofar iarratais de réir ráchairte.
Comhairle Ceantair an tSratha Bán	Freagra ar bith.						

Table 4 (cont'd)

Answers to questions in letter to local councils relating to implementation of the Charter (March 2011)

Magherafelt District Council	No reply						
Moyle District Council	No reply						
Newry and Mourne District Council	No reply						
Newtownabbey Borough Council	English only. Guidance on fada in Language policy.		DCAL – Cultural awareness Policy	None	Request considered	Request considered	Request considered. No Change
North Down Borough Council	English only. No training.	None	No	None	None	English only	Request considered based on demand
Omagh District Council	Fada used. Translation service. Language Officer.	None but Irish names accepted		None	None	English only	Request considered based on demand
Strabane District Council	No reply						

Tábla 5
Suirbhé POBAL ar an Ghaeilge ar shuíomhanna gréasáin na gcomhairlí áitiúla (Márta – Iúil 2011)

Comhairlí	Leathanach Baile	Teagmháil i nGaeilge	Cáipéisí Gaeilge	Nótaí
Comhairle Baile Aontroma	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile na hArda	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Cathrach agus Ceantair Ard Mhacha	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile an Bhaile Mheánaigh	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Leathanaigh i 3 theanga, ach níl leathanach Gaeilge ar fáil
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Monaidh	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Ceantair Dhroichead na Banna	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	2 cháipéis	Pacáiste Fáilte & Polasaí Teanga don Ghaeilge
Comhairle Baile Charraig Fhearghais	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Pacáiste Fáilte ar fáil i 6 theanga, ach níl sé ar fáil i nGaeilge
Comhairle Baile an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile Chúil Raithin	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Pacáiste Fáilte ar fáil i 8 dteanga, ach níl sé ar fáil i nGaeilge
Comhairle Ceantair na Coirre Críocháí	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh) Nasc Gaeilge go leathanach eolais	Teagmháil tríd nasc ar leathanach baile	Réimse leathan	Rogha dhátheangach ar leathanaigh a bhaineann leis an Ghaeilge amháin
Comhairle Baile Chreagabhann	Inneall aistriúcháin le rogha Gaeilge	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Inneall aistriúcháin le rogha Gaeilge a aistríonn gach rud (cé nach ndéantar aistriúchán ceart nó cruinn in amanna)
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire	Inneall aistriúcháin le rogha Gaeilge	Teagmháil tríd nasc ar leathanach baile	Réimse leathan	Réimse leathan de cháipéisí i nGaeilge ar fáil
Comhairle Ceantair an Dúin	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Leathanach eolais ilteangach ar fáil i 9 dteanga, ach níl rogha Gaeilge ann
Comhairle Baile Dhún Geanainn agus Dheisceart Thír Eoghain	Nasc go leathanach eolais ar chúrsaí Gaeilge	Teagmháil ar bith	3 cháipéis dátheangach	
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile Latharna	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile Léim a' Mhadaidh	Inneall aistriúcháin le rogha Gaeilge	Teagmháil tríd an léarscáil láithreáin	Cáipéisí ar bith	Inneall aistriúcháin le rogha Gaeilge a aistríonn gach rud (cé nach ndéantar aistriúchán ceart nó cruinn in amanna)
Comhairle Cathrach Lios na gCearrbhach	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fíolta	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	1 cháipéis dátheangach	Leathanach dátheangach ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge atá ar fáil
Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	Leathanach eolais ilteangach ar fáil i 11 teanga ach níl i nGaeilge

Table 5
POBAL survey on Irish language in local council websites (March - July 2011)

Council	Irish on homepage	Contact in Irish	Documents in Irish	Notes
Antrim Borough Council	No	No	No	
Ards Borough Council	No	No	No	
Armagh City and District Council	No	No	No	
Ballymena Borough Council	No	No	No	Pages in three languages but not Irish
Ballymoney Borough Council	No	No	No	
Banbridge District Council	No	No	No	
Belfast City Council	No	No	Yes. 2 documents	Welcome pack & Irish Language Policy
Carrickfergus Borough Council	No	No	No	Welcome pack' available in 6 languages but not Irish
Castlereagh Borough Council	No	No	No	
Coleraine Borough Council	No	No	No	Welcome pack' available in 8 languages but not Irish
Cookstown District Council	Trilingual logo: Irish, English, Ulster Scots. Irish language link to information page	Through link on home page	Yes. Broad range.	Bilingual choice, but only for pages connected to the Irish language
Craigavon Borough Council	Translation engine with Irish as a choice	No	No	Translation engine translates everything on site (although this system doesn't always give an exact or correct translation)
Derry City Council	No	Through link on home page	Yes	Wide range of Irish language documentation
Down District Council	Link to page with Irish language information	No	No	Multi-Lingual Information Sheet in 9 languages, but not Irish
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	No	No	Yes.3 bilingual documents	
Fermanagh District Council	No	No	No	
Larne Borough Council	Translation engine with Irish as a choice	No	No Yes	
Limavady Borough Council	No	Contact through site map	No	Translation engine translates everything on site (although this system doesn't always give an exact or correct translation)
Lisburn City Council	No	No	Yes. 1 bilingual document	
Magherafelt District Council	No	No	No	One bilingual page on Irish language services
Moyle District Council	No	No	Broad range	Multi-Lingual Information Sheet in 11 languages, but not Irish

Tábla 5 (ar lean)

Suirbhé POBAL ar an Ghaeilge ar shuíomhanna gréasáin na gcomhairlí áitiúla (Márta – Iúil 2011)

Comhairle Ceantair an Lúir agus Mhúrn	Lógó dátheangach (Gaeilge, Béarla) Naisc go leathanaigh dhátheangacha	Teagmháil tríd nasc ar leathanach baile	Réimse leathan Cáipéisí ar bith	Réimse leathan de cháipéisí Gaeilge ar fáil
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Nua na Mainistreach	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Baile an Dúin Thuaidh	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	
Comhairle Ceantair na hÓmaí	Gaeilge ar bith	Teagmháil tríd nasc ar leathanach baile	Cáipéisí ar bith	Rannán Gaeilge tríd leathanach baile ach tá achan rud i mBéarla
Comhairle Ceantair an tSraith Báin	Lógó trí-theangach (Gaeilge, Béarla & Albainis Uladh)	Teagmháil ar bith	Cáipéisí ar bith	

Nóta: Torthaí bunaithe ar chuardach ginearálta tríd naisc ghréasáin, léarscáileanna láithreáin agus innill cuardaigh idir Márta agus Iúil 2011.

Table 5 (cont'd)
POBAL survey on Irish language in local council websites (March - July 2011)

Newry and Mourne District Council	Bilingual logo: Irish, English. Links to Irish language homepage	Contact through link on home page	No	Wide range of Irish language documentation
Newtownabbey Borough Council	No	No	No	
North Down Borough Council	No	No	No	
Omagh District Council	No	Through link on home page	No	Irish language section available through home page but all information in English only
Strabane District Council	Trilingual logo: Irish, English, Ulster Scots.	No	No	

Note: Results based on general search through site links, site maps and site search engines between March and July 2011

Tábla 6
Suibhé POBAL ar chóras na gcomhlairí aitiúla do dhaoine ar mhian leo aighneachtaí a dhéanamh ó bhéal (Eánair 2013)

Comhairlí	"An dtig liom caint le duine i nGaeilge, le do thoil"	"Can I avail of services in Irish"	Glórphost
Comhairle Baile Aontroma	'Pardon?'	'Not that I'm aware of, I'll try to get someone who would know..., We don't seem to have anyone available but I can give you a number that you can ring – 0800 862 0626'. (Iarradh cód rochtana 'Big Word' orm, nár tugadh dom.)	Big Word On Call Language Service (Cód rochtana custaiméara de dhíth)
Comhairle Baile na hArda	'Sorry?'	'I don't know, I could put you through to someone who would know' (níor freagraíodh an guthán)	
Comhairle Cathrach agus Ceantair Ard Mhacha	'Sorry, I don't have Irish, I could transfer you to someone who has... the person doesn't seem to be available. I'll transfer you to our voicemail service.'		Glórphost ar fáil le rogha Gaeilge
Comhairle Baile an Bhaile Mheánaigh	'Ballymena Borough Council'	'I'll put you through to our policy department.' - 'We're currently reviewing our minority languages policy. We have a voicemail number which I can get back to you with (Oifigeach Polasaí).'	
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Monaidh	'Sorry?'	'One second. -you could ring me and leave your message on my personal voicemail and we could get that translated. The number is 27660243'	Níl glórphost tiomnaithe acu
Comhairle Ceantair Dhroichead na Banna	'Sorry?'	'Not that I know of..., one moment. - If you send it through in writing. We don't have a voicemail service.'	
Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste	'What is it?'	'I'll put you through to good relations. - I'll look into it and get back to you. - I've looked into it and there is a voicemail service if you ring the council and ask for extension 2416.'	Glórphost ar fáil ag folíne 2416
Comhairle Baile Charraig Fhearghais	'Excuse me?'	'No we don't'	
Comhairle Baile an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh	'Sorry?'	'I'm not sure, hold the line please... -I'll try to find out and phone you back. - Sorry, we don't have translation services'	
Comhairle Baile Chúil Raithin	'Sorry?'	'No, I'm sorry, we don't'	
Comhairle Ceantair na Coirre Críocháil	'Pardon?'	'We have an Irish language officer in the Burnavon Centre, his number is 867 69949'	
Comhairle Baile Chreagabhann	'Pardon?'	'I'll put you through to someone who would know..., I'll try to find out for you and get back to you asap.'	Glórphost ar fáil ag folíne 1998
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire	'Sorry?'	'Yes' Cuireadh fríd go díreach mé chuig an Oifigeach Gaeilge	
Comhairle Ceantair an Dúin	'Pardon?'	'I'll check and see, hold on..., I can see if I can find you a councillor who speaks Irish. Can I call you back?' - 'We don't have this service at present but we are currently running a consultation on a possible bilingual service for the Council (Oifigeach Comhionannais)'	
Comhairle Baile Dhún Geanainn agus Dheisceart Thír Eoghain	'Dia duit, tá Oifigeach Gaeilge againn, ag extension: 1613'		
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach	'Sorry?'	'I'll see if I can get... (Oifigeach CLG) for you, ... (Oifigeach CLG) is not available at present. We have no voicemail service.'	
Comhairle Baile Latharna	'Pardon?'	'Not that I know of, I put you through to the Community Relations Officer.'	
Comhairle Baile Léim a' Mhadaidh	'Sorry?'	'Yes, we have an Irish Language Officer at extension: 194'	

Table 6
POBAL survey of local council systems for those who wish to make oral submissions in Irish (January 2013)

Council	"An dtig liom caint le duine i nGaeilge, le do thoil"	"Can I avail of services in Irish"	Voicemail
Antrim Borough Council	'Pardon?'	'Not that I'm aware of, I'll try to get someone who would know..., We don't seem to have anyone available but I can give you a number that you can ring – 0800 862 0626'. The 'Big Word' access code was required which I hadn't received.	Big Word On Call Language Service (Access code needed)
Ards Borough Council	'Sorry?'	'I don't know, I could put you through to someone who would know'. No answer.	
Armagh City and District Council	'Sorry, I don't have Irish, I could transfer you to someone who has... the person doesn't seem to be available. I'll transfer you to our voicemail service.'		Voicemail with Irish language option
Ballymena Borough Council	'Ballymena Borough Council'	'I'll put you through to our policy department.'..., 'We're currently reviewing our minority languages policy. We have a voicemail number which I can get back to you with (Policy Officer).'	
Ballymoney Borough Council	'Sorry?'	'One second..., you could ring me and leave your message on my personal voicemail and we could get that translated. The number is 27660243.'	No designated voicemail.
Banbridge District Council	'Sorry?'	'Not that I know of..., one moment. - If you send it through in writing. We don't have a voicemail service.	
Belfast City Council	'What is it?'	'I'll put you through to good relations..., I'll look into it and get back to you. - I've looked into it and there is a voicemail service if you ring the council and ask for extension 2416.'	Voicemail with Irish option. Extension 2416
Carrickfergus Borough Council	'Excuse me?'	'No we don't.	
Castlereagh Borough Council	'Sorry?'	I'm not sure, hold the line please..., I'll try to find out and phone you back. Sorry, we don't have translation services'.	
Coleraine Borough Council	'Sorry?'	'No, I'm sorry, we don't'.	
Cookstown District Council	'Pardon?'	'We have an Irish language officer in the Burnavon, his no. is 867 69949'	
Craigavon Borough Council	'Pardon?'	'I'll put you through to someone who would know..., I'll try to find out for you and get back to you asap.'	Voicemail: Extension 1998
Derry City Council	'Sorry?'	'Yes'. I was put through to the Irish language officer	
Down District Council	'Pardon?'	'I'll check and see, hold on..., I can see if I can find you a councillor who speaks Irish. Can I call you back?'. 'We don't have a service at present but we are currently running a consultation on a possible bilingual service for the Council (Equality Officer)'	
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	'Dia duit, tá Oifigeach Gaeilge againn ag extension 1613' POBAL translation: 'hello, we have an Irish language officer on extension 1613'.		
Fermanagh District Council	'Sorry?'	'I'll see if I can get..., (Council GAA Officer)..., for you..., (Council GAA Officer) is not available at present. We have no voicemail service'.	
Larne Borough Council	'Pardon?'	'Not that I know of, I'll put you through to the Community	

Tábla 6 (ar lean)

Suibhé POBAL ar chóras na gcomhlairí aitiúla do dhaoine ar mhian leo aighneachtaí a dhéanamh ó bhéal (Eánair 2015)

Comhairle Cathrach Lios na gCearrbhach	'Sorry?'	'Bear with me, I'll put you through to our marketing department.' - 'if you could e-mail me I'll find out for you (Oifigeach Margaíochta).'	
Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fiolta	'Sorry?'	The Irish Language Officer is currently with someone but you can contact him at extension: 2206'	
Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile	'Sorry?'	'No, I'm sorry'	
Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir agus Mhúrn	'Pardon?'	'Our Irish Language Officer is available at 30313233'	
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Nua na Mainistreach	'Hello'	'Yes, a voicemail service is available on 90340040'	Glórphost: 90340040
Comhairle Baile an Dúin Thuaidh	'Sorry?'	'Not that I know of, I'll put you through to someone.' - 'I'll look into it and phone you back (Community Services)' - 'We have no Irish language voicemail service.'	
Comhairle Ceantair na hÓmaí	'Sorry, do you want to speak to someone in Irish?... our Irish Language Officer's extension is: 454 and our voicemail service is at: 82256214'		Glórphost ar fáil le rogha Gaeilge
Comhairle Ceantair an tSratha Báin	'Pardon?'	'One second...I'll try to find that out for you. If you ask for extension 351.'	Glórphost ar fáil ag folíne 351

Nóta: Ceist curtha i nGaeilge ar dtús agus ansin i mBéarla más gá

Table 6 (cont'd)
POBAL survey of local council systems for those who wish to make oral submissions in Irish (January 2013)

Limavady Borough Council	'Sorry?'	Relations Officer.' 'Yes, we have an Irish Language Officer at extension: 194'.	
Lisburn City Council	'Sorry?'	'Bear with me, I'll put you through to our marketing department.' - 'if you could e-mail me I'll find out for you (Marketing Officer).'	
Magherafelt District Council	'Sorry?'	'The Irish Language Officer is currently with someone but you can contact him at extension: 2206'.	
Moyle District Council	'Sorry?'	'No, I'm sorry'.	
Newry and Mourne Council	'Pardon?'	'Our Irish Language Officer is available at 30313233'	
Newtownabbey Borough Council	'Hello'	Yes, a voicemail service is available on 90340040'	Voicemail: 90340040
North Down Borough Council	'Sorry?'	'Not that I know of, I'll put you through to someone..., I'll look into it and phone you back (Community Services).' 'We have no Irish language voicemail service.'	
Omagh District Council	'Sorry, do you want to speak to someone in Irish?... our Irish Language Officer's extension is: 454 and our voicemail service is at: 82256214'		Voicemail with Irish option
Strabane District Council	'Pardon?'	'One second...I'll try to find that out for you. If you ask for extension 351.'	Voicemail: Extension 351

Note: Question put firstly in Irish then in English when necessary

Tábla 7

Litir (Feabhra 2011) chuig na comhairlí áitiúla maidir le cinneadh na saineolaithe (2010: Mír 123) nach meastar gur gníomh idirdhealaithe in éadan cainteoirí mórtheangacha é glacadh le bearta airithe ar son na Gaeilge atá dírithe ar chur chun cinn an chomhionannais idir cainteoirí mionteangacha nó teangacha réigiúnda agus an chuid eile den phobal.

Comhairlí	Cad é an teagmháil atá déanta le do Chomhairle, i dtaca leis an soiléiriú seo ar bhur gcuid dualgas ag: An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Comhlathas, RA, An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta, TÉ agus An Coimisiún um Comhionannas TÉ?	An bhfuil teagmháil déanta ag áisíneacht ar bith do na háisíneachtaí thuasluaite ar ábhar eile a bhaineann leis an Ghaeilge nó le Cairt na hEorpa do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh?
Comhairle Baile Aontroma	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Baile na hArda	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Cathrach agus Ceantair Ard Mhacha	Teagmháil ar bith	Freagra ar bith ar an cheist seo
Comhairle Baile an Bhaile Mheánaigh	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Monaidh	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Ceantair Dhroichead na Banna	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Baile Charraig Fhearghais	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Baile an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Baile Chúil Raithin	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Ceantair na Coirre Críochaí	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith Tagairt déanta don chomhairliúchán sular foilsíodh tuairisc na saineolaithe
Comhairle Baile Chreagabhann	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Ceantair an Dúin	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Baile Dhún Geanainn agus Dheisceart Thír Eoghain	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Baile Latharna	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Baile Léim a' Mhadaidh	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Cathrach Lios na gCearrbhach	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fíolta	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir agus Mhúrn	Teagmháil ar bith	Tagairt déanta don chomhairliúchán ar an bhuiséad, beartas dátheangach na Comhairle
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Nua na Mainistreach	Teagmháil ar bith	Tagairt déanta do Straitéis Feasachta Cultúrtha na RCEF
Comhairle Baile an Dúin Thuaidh	Teagmháil ar bith	Teagmháil ar bith
Comhairle Ceantair na hÓmaí	Ní bhfuair muid freagra ar an litir	
Comhairle Ceantair an tSratha Báin	Teagmháil ar bith	Freagra ar bith ar an cheist seo

Table 7

Letter (February 2011) to the councils regarding COMEX finding (2010 Parag. 123) that the adoption of special measures in favour of Irish aimed at promoting equality between the users of regional or minority languages and the rest of the population is not considered an act of discrimination against the users of more widely used languages.

Council	What contact has been made with your council regarding the COMEX finding by: The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, The NI Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure or The Equality Commission?	Has any of these agencies contacted you in relation to any other matter in respect of the ECRML?
Antrim Borough Council	None	No
Ards Borough Council	None	No
Armagh City and District Council	None	Did not answer this question
Ballymena Borough Council	No response received	
Ballymoney Borough Council	None	No
Banbridge District Council	No response received	
Belfast City Council	None	No
Carrickfergus Borough Council	No response received	
Castlereagh Borough Council	No response received	
Coleraine Borough Council	No response received	
Cookstown District Council	None	No. Refers to consultation prior to publication of COMEX report
Craigavon Borough Council	None	No
Derry City Council	None	No
Down District Council	No response received	
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	No response received	
Fermanagh District Council	None	No
Larne Borough Council	No response received	
Limavady Borough Council	None	No
Lisburn City Council	None	No
Magherafelt District Council	No response received	
Moyle District Council	None	No
Newry and Mourne District Council	None	Refers to consultation on budget, council's bilingual policy
Newtownabbey Borough Council	None	Refers to DCAL's Cultural Awareness Strategy
North Down Borough Council	None	No
Omagh District Council	No response received	
Strabane District Council	None	Did not answer this question

Tábla 8
Litir chuig na comhairlí maidir le suirbhé ar shráidainmneacha Gaeilge (Feabhra 2013)

Comhairlí	Curtha	Freagra	Teanga an fhreagra	Sráidainmneacha uilig sa cheantar	Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge sa cheantar	Céatadán
Comhairle Baile Aontroma	6.2.13	3.3.13	Béarla		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Baile na hArda	6.2.13	13.3.13	Gaeilge		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Cathrach agus Ceantair Ard Mhacha	6.2.13					
Comhairle Baile an Bhaile Mheánaigh	6.2.13					
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Monaidh	6.2.13	6.4.13	Béarla		3 shráidainm dhátheangacha. 6 shráidainm dhátheangacha ar feitheamh.	
Comhairle Ceantair Dhroichead na Banna	6.2.13					
Comhairle Cathrach Bhéal Feirste	6.2.13	7.3.13	Gaeilge	4,500 (go neasach)	133 sráidainm dátheangach.	2.95%
Comhairle Baile Charraig Fhearghais	6.2.13					
Comhairle Baile an Chaisleáin Riabhaigh	6.2.13	27.3.13	Béarla		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Baile Chúil Raithin	6.2.13	7.3.13	Béarla / Gaeilge		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Ceantair na Coirre Críochaí	6.2.13					
Comhairle Baile Chreagabhann	6.2.13	12.3.13	Béarla		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire	6.2.13	14.5.13	Béarla	1,234	88 sráidainm dátheangach. 16 shráidainm dhátheangacha ar feitheamh. (bheith curtha in airde i mí Iúil 2013).	7.13%
Comhairle Ceantair an Dúin	6.2.13	20.3.13	Gaeilge		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith. 13 shráidainm dhátheangacha ar feitheamh.	
Comhairle Baile Dhún Geanainn agus Dheisceart Thír Eoghain	6.2.13					
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach	6.2.13	14.3.13	Gaeilge		20 sráidainm dátheangach. 1 shráidainm dátheangach ar feitheamh.	
Comhairle Baile Latharna	6.2.13					
Comhairle Baile Léim a' Mhadaidh	6.2.13	7.3.13	Gaeilge	408	57 sráidainm dátheangach.	13.97%
Comhairle Cathrach Lios na gCearrbhach	6.2.13	22.2.13	Béarla	2276	19 sráidainm dhátheangacha.	0.83%
Comhairle Ceantair Mhachaire Fíolta	6.2.13	10.3.13	Gaeilge		258 sráidainm dátheangach.	
Comhairle Ceantair na Maoile	6.2.13					
Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir agus Mhúrn	6.2.13	15.2.13	Béarla		158 sráidainm dátheangach (ó 2009). 32 sráidainm dátheangach ar feitheamh.	
Comhairle Baile Bhaile Nua na Mainistreach	6.2.13	16.2.13	Béarla		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Baile an Dúin Thuaidh	6.2.13	18.2.13	Béarla		Sráidainmneacha Gaeilge ar bith	0%
Comhairle Ceantair na hÓmaí	6.2.13					
Comhairle Ceantair an tSraitha Báin	6.2.13					

Table 8
Letter to local councils surveying Irish language street signage (February 2013)

Council	Sent	Answer	Language of answer	All street signage in the area	Irish language street signage in the area	Percentage
Antrim Borough Council	6.2.13	3.3.13	English		None	0%
Ards Borough Council	6.2.13	13.3.13	Irish		None	0%
Armagh City and District Council	6.2.13					
Ballymena Borough Council	6.2.13					
Ballymoney Borough Council	6.2.13	6.4.13	English		3 bilingual street signs. 6 bilingual street signs pending.	
Banbridge District Council	6.2.13					
Belfast City Council	6.2.13	7.3.13	Irish	4,500 (approx)	133 bilingual street signs.	2.95%
Carrickfergus Borough Council	6.2.13					
Castlereagh Borough Council	6.2.13	27.3.13	English		None	0%
Coleraine Borough Council	6.2.13	7.3.13	English / Irish		None	0%
Cookstown District Council	6.2.13					
Craigavon Borough Council	6.2.13	12.3.13	English		None	0%
Derry City Council	6.2.13	14.5.13	English	1,234	88 bilingual street signs. 16 bilingual street signs pending (to be erected in July 2013).	7.13%
Down District Council	6.2.13	20.3.13	Irish		None. 13 bilingual street signs pending	
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	6.2.13					
Fermanagh District Council	6.2.13	14.3.13	Irish		20 bilingual street signs. 1 bilingual street sign pending	
Larne Borough Council	6.2.13					
Limavady Borough Council	6.2.13	7.3.13	Irish	408	57 bilingual street signs.	13.97%
Lisburn City Council	6.2.13	22.2.13	English		19 bilingual street signs.	0.83%
Magherafelt District Council	6.2.13	10.3.13	Irish	2276	258 bilingual street signs.	
Moyle District Council	6.2.13					
Newry and Mourne District Council	6.2.13	15.2.13	English		158 bilingual street signs (since 2009).32 bilingual street signs pending.	
Newtownabbey Borough Council	6.2.13	16.2.13	English		None	0%
North Down Borough Council	6.2.13	18.2.13	English		None	0%
Omagh District Council	6.2.13					
Strabane District Council	6.2.13					

Aguisíní

Appendices

**Interdepartmental Charter Implementation Group
Twenty Sixth Meeting
Thursday 04 November 2010**

Attendance:

Donal Moran (Chair), DCAL
Kevin Hamill, DCAL
Ann Perry, DCAL
Don Morris (Minutes), DCAL
Stephen Shooter, DETI
Stephen Wilson, DETI
Tim Laverty, DRD
Marion Magill, DEL
Carolyn Barr, DFP
Joanna Ingram, DE
Valerie Keys, DARD
Mark Higgins, DOJ
Robert Magee, DHSSPS
Kerry Morrison, OFMDFM

Apologies:

John McStay, DE
Billy Crawford, DSD
David Savage, DE
Jan Harvey, DEL
Michelle Bell, DARD
Jeff Johnston, DOE

Item No.	Description	Action
	<p>Agreed Agenda items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minutes of Last Meeting 2. Matters Arising 3. Compilation of the 4th Periodical Report of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages 4. Updates from Departments on Minority Language Matters 5. NI Human Rights Commission Report on Minority Language Rights 6. Development of Regional or Minority Languages Strategy - Update 7. NICS Translation Service First Year Review Readout 8. BIC Conference 9. Any Other Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Freagra.net – Irish Language Helpline 10. Date of Next Meeting 	
1	Minutes of last meeting	
1.1	Minutes of meeting held on 5 February 2010 agreed and added to the DCAL website.	
2	Matters Arising	
2.1	Main items arising will be covered as separate items on the agenda	

<p>3</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>Compilation of the 4th Periodical Report of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages</p> <p>ICIG members were advised that the 3rd Periodical Report has not yet been agreed. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) issued the UK report including input from the NIO but without the Northern Ireland Executive input.</p> <p>Kevin informed ICIG members that the commencement of compilation of the 4th Periodical Report on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is likely to be requested by FCO in November/December 2010.</p> <p>Departments will have to compile information to reflect the extent they meet their obligations under the Charter. This input will have to be cleared by their respective Minister's.</p> <p>Once all data from Departments is gathered, DCAL will compile the Report and will also approach NIHRC for comments as previously agreed.</p>	
<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p>	<p>Updates from Departments on Minority Language Matters</p> <p>ICIG members were asked for an update from their respective Departments on matters relating to Minority languages and in particular how Departments promote Irish and Ulster-Scots.</p> <p>The general consensus was that the Departments are working within the guidelines relating to Minority languages. The majority of Departments continue to facilitate translation requests. It was noted that the degree of promotion of Irish and Ulster-Scots is dependent on their respective Minister's commitment to the language(s).</p> <p>DE have organised Irish language classes and DRD are already halfway through its second set of Irish language classes for their respective staff. The classes consist of a starter class and a refresher class. Previous classes arranged by DRD were over subscribed and feedback indicated they were a resounding success. DARD has also been holding lunchtime classes in Conversational Irish which started on 16 September and are running for 12 weeks until December.</p> <p>The DRD Rep informed the Group that the draft Bilingual Road Signage Scheme is going out for consultation in the coming weeks and will allow for the provision of bilingual road signs in Irish or Ulster-Scots, in addition to English under certain circumstances.</p> <p>Kevin informed ICIG members that CPD are currently exploring the possibility of a NICS-wide Minority Ethnic translation and interpretation service. Kevin advised that DCAL would be in favour of this service but would not be responsible for managing the contract.</p>	

4.6	<p>Donal provided the DOJ member with some background on the Judicial Review on the 1737 Act and other ICIG matters and undertook to issue relevant papers to the member.</p> <p>DCAL to issue to DOJ rep – Quick Complaint Form, COMEX Report, Link to Charter Website, Link to ICIG Minutes and NIHRC Report.</p>	<p>DCAL Issued - 15/11/10</p>
5 5.1	<p>NI Human Rights Commission Report on Minority Language Rights The NIHRC Report was published in May 2010 and circulated to ICIG members. The report is aimed at Public Bodies response to the 3rd COMEX Report.</p>	<p>DCAL to Re-issue NIHRC Report to ICIG Members. Issued 18/11/10</p>
5.2	<p>Donal informed ICIG members that a presentation by Daniel Holder (NIHRC) to Languages Branch staff on the 'Human Rights Framework for Minority Languages' was very informative and enlightening. Donal advised that he would consider arranging a presentation for ICIG group if significant interest was expressed.</p>	<p>DCAL to circulate email to ICIG members to ascertain interest in attending Daniel Holder presentation. Issued 25/11/10</p>
6 6.1	<p>Development of Regional or Minority Language Strategy - Update Kevin gave an overview of the Regional or Minority Language Strategy. He advised ICIG members that the DCAL Minister will take part in an Assembly debate on the Strategy and the Irish Language Act on Monday 8th November 2010.</p>	<p>DCAL to keep ICIG members informed of further developments.</p>
6.2	<p>Kevin reiterated that the Minister is keen to develop a single overarching strategy incorporating both languages.</p>	
6.3	<p>Both the Strategy and the Charter issues continue to attract a high level of interest from languages groups and Assembly members.</p>	
7 7.1	<p>NICS Translation Service First Year Review Readout Kevin gave an overview the First Year Review of the NICS Irish Translation Service. The contract commenced on 8 June 2009. It is a three year contract with a proviso for a one year extension.</p>	
7.2	<p>Kevin advised the ICIG members that Languages Branch had met with Central Translations in July to review the Irish Translation Contract.</p>	
7.3	<p>Central Translations were advised that DCAL's QA expert had expressed concerns about the accuracy of some translations. Central Translations agreed that several pieces of work did not meet DCAL's translation standards. Accordingly, they have introduced measures which it is hoped will improve their performance.</p>	

7.4	It was also agreed that the present minimum charge of £40.00 + VAT can still be applied to texts up to 300 words and a revised minimum of £20 + VAT is now applicable to jobs under 100 words. The translation rate remains at 0.12p per/word.	
7.5	Tim Laverty (DRD) advised the group that he had encountered problems with the contract details for the Central Translations in Account NI which have since been resolved. Tim has agreed to forward contract details to Languages branch for circulation to ICIG members.	DCAL to Circulate contract details to ICIG Reps. Issued 30/11/10
8	BIC Conference	DCAL to circulate Read-out from BIC conference to ICIG members when agreed
8.1	Kevin gave an overview of the British-Irish Council Conference – The Role of Minority Languages in Community Development which was held in Belfast on 19-20 October 2010, and hosted by DCAL.	
8.2	Feedback received from the attendees was very positive and the high quality presentations generated lively discussions with plenty of valuable recommendations arising from the group sessions.	
8.3	Next BIC Working Group meeting to be held in Dublin on 2 December 2010.	
9	Any Other Business	DCAL to Circulate Foras na Gaeilge email - detailing information on the services provided by 'Freagra.net' to ICIG members. Issued 26/11/10
9.1	Donal gave a brief outline of 'Freagra.net' a new Irish Language Helpline. The helpline is a confidential free service, accessible by phone, text and email. The response is usually well within 12 hours max. Queries could include questions on grammar, syntax, or translation of short pieces of work.	
9.2	The service has proved to be very useful to pressurised civil/public servants who wish to communicate with the public in Irish but who may not be very confident in their ability.	
9.3	DRD received an award from the 'Belfast Media Group' for -Outstanding use of Irish in the Public Sector. DRD was selected for the award because of its use of Irish online, providing staff training and the use of Irish in advertising, posters, leaflets and application forms.	
10	Date of Next Meeting	
	TBC	

**Interdepartmental Charter Implementation Group
Twenty Seventy Meeting
Thursday, 13 October 2011**

Attendance:

Kevin Hamill, (Chair) DCAL
Ann Perry, DCAL
Don Morris (Minutes), DCAL
Stephen Shooter, DETI
Jacqui Gregg, DRD
Marion Magill, DEL
Brian Patterson, DEL
Carolyn Barr, DFP
Joanna Ingram, DE
David Savage, DE
Robert Magee, DHSSPS
Kerry Morrison, OFMDFM
Laura McAleese, DOE

Apologies:

Billy Crawford, DSD
Sharon Fitchie, DARD
Michelle Bell, DARD
Valerie Keys, DARD
Mark Higgins, DOJ
Jon Donaghy, NIO
Tony Verran, HMRC

Item No.	Description	Action
	<p>Agreed Agenda items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minutes of Last Meeting 2. Matters Arising 3. Brief Updates from Departments on Minority Language Matters 4. Compilation of the 4th Periodical Report for the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages 5. Development of Renewed Proposals for an Irish Language Bill 6. Government Departmental Expenditure 2010-2011 7. Development of the Irish Language and Ulster-Scots Language, Heritage and Culture Strategies 8. Lófa 2015 Initiative 9. NICS Translation Service Feedback 10. BIC Conference Readout 11. Radió Fáilte 'Líonra Uladh' Project 12. Any Other Business 13. Date of Next Meeting 	
<p>1 1.1</p>	<p>Minutes of last meeting Minutes of meeting held on 13 October 2011 agreed and added to the DCAL website.</p> <p>3.2 FCO advice – 4th Periodical Report is due later than previously advised – to be addressed in Agenda item 4.</p> <p>5.2 Daniel Holder (NIHRC) presentation on the 'Human Rights Framework for Minority Languages' for ICIG group. Unfortunately Daniel is no longer in this post. Languages branch to liaise with new contact in NIHRC.</p>	

Aguisín 1b (ar lean)

<p>2 2.1 2.2</p>	<p>Matters Arising Donal Moran has left Languages Branch. Paul Gamble is now Head of Branch but was unable to chair the meeting due to conflicting diary commitments.</p> <p>Main items arising will be covered as separate items on the agenda.</p>	
<p>3 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 3.6</p>	<p>Departments on Minority Language Matters ICIG members were asked for a brief update from their respective Departments on matters relating to Minority languages.</p> <p>The general consensus was that the Departments are working within the guidelines relating to Minority languages. The majority of Departments continue to facilitate translation requests. Several Departments have had a change in Minister and it was noted that the degree of promotion of Irish and Ulster-Scots is dependent on their respective Minister's commitment to the language(s). DCAL reiterated that Departments should abide by their 'Codes of Courtesy' as much as possible.</p> <p>DRD Irish language classes have now ended and feedback indicated that they were a resounding success. DRD have no plans for further Irish language classes at this time. DE is planning another round of Irish language classes to be held at Waterside House, Londonderry/Derry, and Rathgael House, Bangor.</p> <p>The DRD Rep informed the Group that the draft Bilingual Road Signage Scheme has not progressed.</p> <p>DCAL informed the group that there has been an increase in Irish translations and work pertaining to language issues in the Department.</p> <p>CPD are currently exploring the possibility of a NICS-wide Minority Ethnic translation and interpretation service. Kevin advised the group that although DCAL would be in favour of this service we would not be responsible for managing the contract.</p>	
<p>4 4.1 4.2</p>	<p>Compilation of the 4th Periodical Report of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages DCAL informed the ICIG group that FCO have issued the request for the NI input to the 4th Periodical Report. FCO have asked for a completed Northern Ireland input by 27 January 2012.</p> <p>Departments will have to compile information to reflect the extent they meet their obligations under the Charter. This input will have to be cleared by their respective Minister's. Once all data is gathered, DCAL will compile a composite Report for Executive clearance. <u>Completed contributions are due with DCAL by 25 November 2011.</u></p>	<p>ICIG (excl NIO) – to complete their contribution to the NI input to the 4th Periodical Report</p>

<p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p>	<p>Discussion followed. It was suggested that perhaps the DCAL Minister could write to all other Ministers commissioning the Report.</p> <p>It was noted that the 3rd Periodical Report was never agreed. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) issued the UK report including input from the NIO but without the Northern Ireland Executive input.</p> <p>Kevin gave a brief overview of the reporting format. The reports consist of a preliminary section and three thematic parts. The Preliminary Section is intended to provide the necessary background information. Parts I to III of the report are devoted to providing an in-depth picture of the way the in which the Charter is implemented.</p> <p>Kevin advised that Languages branch will send ICIG members the outline for completion of the document and the previous NI Inputs for reference. DCAL will also send the questionnaire from the Council of Europe highlighting particular areas that the 4th report should address.</p>	<p>DCAL to consider letters to Ministers</p>
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Development of Renewed Proposals for an Irish Language Bill DCAL Minister has indicated a desire to bring forward renewed proposals for an Irish Language Bill. The Group was informed this will have implications for other Departments if enacted. The level to which Departments will be affected will depend on the legislative approach adopted.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>Government Departmental Expenditure 2010-2011 Kevin gave a brief overview of the Government Departmental Expenditure Exercise requested by DCAL every year. He advised the group that the exercise was useful when answering questions on language expenditure through AQ's, Freedom of Information queries and costing of language issues.</p> <p>Discussion followed on the best way to collect this information. Kevin added expenditure information is useful for DCAL as part of the scoping paper for the ILB and it would be helpful to know current spend at any given time. The Group felt that in some areas the amount of work required to get the figures was not value for money.</p> <p>It was agreed Depts. would provide figures where they were easily accessible and that DCAL would request specifics where required.</p>	<p>DCAL to issue a request for Departmental Expenditure 2010-2011 to all Govt Departments.</p>

Aguisín 1b (ar lean)

<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>Development of the Irish Language and Ulster-Scots Language, Heritage and Culture Strategies</p> <p>Kevin advised ICIG reps that a two strategy approach has been adopted (as opposed to a single Regional or Minority Languages Strategy). When the draft strategies are sufficiently completed ICIG reps will be asked for input and discussion.</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p>	<p>Líofa 2015 Initiative</p> <p>Kevin outlined the Liofa 2015 Initiative which was Launched on 5 September 2011. The Líofa 2015 Initiative aims to encourage 1000 people from all walks of life across the North to sign up to becoming more fluent in Irish by 2015.</p> <p>Since the launch 696 people have signed on to undertake the Líofa challenge of improving their capacity in the Irish language by 2015. DCAL website allows people to sign up to the Líofa challenge via the web.</p> <p>The Group were encouraged where possible to make colleagues in their Departments aware of the Líofa Initiative through articles in staff magazines etc.</p>	<p>ICIG – to promote Líofa 2015 in their Depts.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>10</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p>NICS Translation Service Feedback</p> <p>DCAL advised ICIG group that it was to meet with Central Translations in the near future to discuss the ongoing NICS Irish Translation Contract.</p> <p>ICIG members were invited to air their views on the translation service provided by Central Translation Ltd. Departments were content with the quality of translations and they enjoyed a good working relationship with Central Translations.</p> <p>BIC Minority Languages Working Group Meeting Readout</p> <p>Kevin advised the group that Paul Gamble had attended an officials meeting on 29 September 2011 to coordinate arrangements for the BIC Ministerial meeting in Donegal on 10 & 11 November 2011 and associated seminar on Minority Languages and Young People.</p> <p>ICIG members may be asked for input/suggestions for attendees in the area of young people and youth practitioners once more information is available.</p>	

11	Raidió Fáilte 'Líonra Uladh' Project	
11.1	Kevin informed the group that the DCAL Minister met with Raidió Fáilte, the Irish language community radio station in Belfast, to discuss funding for new premises for training, promotion and support for Irish language community raidió stations around Northern Ireland. The DCAL Minister is keen to assist Raidió Fáilte.	
11.2	DCAL advised that some ICIG members could possibly expect letters requesting funding for the Líonra Uladh (Ulster Network) in the future.	
12	Any Other Business	
12.1	DCAL advised they hoped to revisit the Language Skills Audit to for the NICS, previously recommended by the Group.	
13	TBC	

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Northern Ireland Politics

10 October 2011 Last updated at 19:34 [Share](#) [f](#) [t](#) [e](#)

Dominic Bradley sanctioned by speaker after Irish row

Stormont Speaker William Hay has told the SDLP's Dominic Bradley he will not be called to speak in the assembly chamber for some time.

He accused the MLA of launching a "vicious challenge" on the authority of one of the deputy speakers.

Mr Bradley clashed with the UUP's Roy Beggs, after Mr Beggs said the Newry and Armagh MLA had been talking for too long without asking a question.

Mr Beggs asked Mr Bradley to hurry up.

Mr Bradley replied that he had been asking a question when he had been interrupted.

He continued to speak in Irish after being asked to sit down by Mr Beggs, and at one point said he was "challenging the chair".

Mr Hay's response is similar to the action taken against the TUV leader Jim Allister last month.



Dominic Bradley was told to hurry up by deputy speaker Roy Beggs

Related Stories

Jim Allister 'wants to be martyr'

Drama marks day of assembly

Irish language issue must be progressed

In relation to the issue of bilingual signage at the Navan Centre in Armagh, which featured in a debate at Armagh District Council last week, POBAL the advocacy organisation for the Irish speaking community, has said that this is an issue that must be progressed in the interests of a fairer and more representative society.

Janet Muller, Chief Executive of POBAL said: "The 2001 Census showed that in Armagh, over 14.2% of the population have knowledge of the Irish language. This is higher than average, and in the past ten years, the Irish speaking community has grown considerably since that time. Irish speakers from a vibrant and positive part of the community in the District Council area and the Irish language itself is a unique selling point that brings a diversity dividend to the economy and promoting regeneration. Many Irish speaking schools, families and individuals locally and from far and wide visit the Navan Centre and other tourist venues and the use of the Irish language in a fuller and more visible way would add to their experience. It is now over 13 years since the Good Friday Agreement was signed, and 11 years since the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which protects and promotes the use of Irish in public. It is disappointing to hear that some public representatives who should act for the welfare of all, still cling to old-fashioned negativity about the language and their neighbours.

"Irish is part of our shared cultural wealth and deserves to be treated as such. Local Irish language groups in the area are carrying out great service to the community and a comprehensive rights-based Irish Language Act is needed to support and celebrate this work in building an equal society", Ms Muller concluded.

Wells criticises 'cynical' bilingual signs proposal

SOUTH Down MLA Jim Wells has criticised the Department of Regional Development proposal's for bilingual signs.

The DUP politician claimed that a consultation document issued by Minister Conor Murphy is a bid to appeal to republicans ahead of May's elections and added that Sinn Fein has been "cynically" using the Irish language for decades.

"He knows that unionists will never accept Irish language road signs so he has issued the document so late in this Assembly mandate that it cannot be killed off until after the elections," Mr Wells added.

"Any proposal for bilingual signs would require cross-community support in the Executive and the Assembly and both have already rejected an Irish Language Act.

"There is no chance of Murphy's proposals being passed by either.

"There is not a single person born in Northern Ireland who does not understand English so bilingual signs will not help anyone find their way around.

"What the Sinn Fein proposals will do is waste a large amount of ratepayers' money, alienate unionists and clearly mark out nationalist areas, thus further polarising the community."

War of words over bilingual street signs

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Saturday, 5 November 2011

A row has erupted over bilingual street signs in north Antrim.

Signs featuring Irish/English and Ulster-Scots/English have already been put up in the Moyle District Council area, that stretches from Bushmills to Cushendall.

But with it costing £250 to put up signs at each street the bill is rising.

Most of the requests for signs have been in Irish in places like the mainly nationalist Glens of Antrim and Ballycastle, but some Ulster-Scots signage has also gone up in areas like the Giant's Causeway, near mainly unionist Bushmills.

Ulster Unionist councillor Willie Graham said when the council is discussing next year's rates it should "look seriously" at not spending any more money on bilingual signs.

But several nationalist councillors defended the use of bilingual signs. Noreen McAllister (Sinn Fein) said people who want bilingual signs "pay rates" and were entitled to them.

Cushinan condemns calls for removal of 'foreign language' signs in Creggan

ANTRIM GUARDIAN
By Amy Ryan

24/11/11

TEMPERS flared in Antrim Civic Centre last week when councillors were advised that hamlet signs on the Staffordstown Road near Randalstown had been 'defaced'.

DUP rep Brian Graham told his colleagues that 'two signs in the townland of Creggan have had stickers put on them in a foreign language'.

Sinn Fein councillor Henry Cushinan hit back, saying: "By a foreign language I assume you mean Irish."
"Most of the townlands in that area have Irish speakers so it's not exactly foreign."

The professional looking stickers cover the part of the signs which declare Antrim as the first Fairtrade Borough in Ireland.

The bold white writing reading 'An Creggan' on a navy background blends in with the rest of the sign - an indication of what they may look like if Council changed its policy on bi-lingual signage.

UUP rep Adrian

Watson said the stickers 'must be removed immediately' but stressed his opinion would be unchanged if the graffiti was in Ulster-Scots.

He said: "In reality it would be more useful for this graffiti to be in Polish than Irish."

"That said, I disagree with any additional signs in other languages on principle because it would just be a waste of ratepayers' money."

However Councillor Cushinan told the chamber he had already asked Chief Executive David McCamnick to look again at the Council's policy as soon as possible.



Sinn Fein councillor Henry Cushinan (inset) was angry when unionist councillors called for the removal of Irish language stickers on road signs at Creggan near Randalstown. GA470401PMG



Teach Uí Aogáin,
Rae Mhuineacháin,
An tIúr,
BT35 8DJ



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Comhairle an Iúir & Mhúrn Newry & Mourne District Council

Cléireach & Príomhtheimeannach – Clerk & Chief Executive
Thomas McCall

Ár dTag / Our Ref:

Bhur dTag / Your Ref:

Dáta / Date:

26 January 2011

Mr Alan Clarke
NITB
St. Annes Court
59 North Street
Belfast
BT1 1NB

Dear Alan

RE: Bilingual Signage

With regard the above and discussion with Stephen Bill, the decision that NITB policy is, that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish was discussed at Councils Economic Development Committee in January. In respect of the 2 Signature Project, Mournes and St Patrick's, Council along with a range of partners including NITB, have been working on the Interpretation and Entrance Features for a number months. The draft signs for Newry & Mourne have incorporated Irish language as per our policy. This matter of English only was tabled with Council some months ago at the request of NITB and was discussed at length with Council. At this time Council were opposed to this given Councils bilingual policy, on this basis draft signs have been prepared incorporating Irish Language.

A number of factors need to be considered including the fact our Council has an agreed bilingual policy are. These factors are summarised:

1. **Welcome signage along the border regions is multi-lingual**
2. **European Charter** – Part II Objectives and principles pursued in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1 Article 7 Objectives and Principles recognises the importance of regional or minority languages, and the promote and safeguard them.
Part III Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life in accordance with the undertakings entered into under Article 2, paragraph 2
Article 10 Administrative Authorities and Public Services

3. The Good Friday (Belfast) and St. Andrews Agreements

The Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement 1998 also included a commitment to linguistic diversity which, drawing heavily on the language of the Charter in recognising the importance of linguistic diversity.

4. Public Consultation by DRD into bilingual signage

The current public consultation by DRD in relation to bilingual signage in response to demand includes the following:

The inclusion in consultation with NITB of Irish or Ulster Scots in addition to English on signs funded by private premise owners (e.g. tourist destinations, churches, schools and certain commercial premises)

5. Consultation by DRD on Transport Reform

Consultation by DRD on Transport Reform had resulted in information at bus stops, timetables and publications being made available in Irish, bilingual English/Irish signage at selected locations and the development of links with Irish medium schools and the provision of information in Irish to promote sustainable travel and public safety. May 2010

6. NMDC Tourism Strategy 2009 – acknowledges the linguistic and cultural heritage of the area is a unique product. The marketing of such a product should be bilingual.

7. Examples of existing tourist information/signage in area includes:

Within the District, existing tourism information and signage is bilingual in many places including for eh. Rian na bhFilí – the Poet’s Trail, Interpretative Boards erected at tourist/cultural/heritage sites throughout the District and directional signage to number of facilities e.g. Áras Chairdinéil Ó Fiaich Heritage Centre, and Tí Chulainn.

Environmental improvement schemes have provided bilingual signage for many villages in wood or stone. Local communities involved in townland projects have erected bilingual signage raising an awareness of local culture, history and identity. These schemes have all utilised public funds and have full planning permission


An important element of the tourism product in the area is the wide range of events organised on an annual basis that incorporate the Irish language either as the medium of delivery or as part of the marketing of the product e.g. bilingual bus/walking tours, summer festivals, summer camps for children, music festivals and drama festivals.

The unique selling point of Initiatives such as Ring of Gullion AONB, the Patrick’s Trail is the cultural heritage that influences the identity of the area and the potential for tourism growth is the Irish language element that can be used in the marketing of these initiatives.

I appreciate that a number of projects are time bound, although I reiterate until this month Newry & Mourne District Council has been working along with NITB on the basis of incorporating Irish language into Interpretations and Welcome Signs.

I ask you give this your urgent consideration and recognise the importance of the bilingual aspect of this signage

I look forward to hearing from



Yours sincerely

Gerard McGivern
Director of District Development

28 June 2011

Mr Alan Clarke
Chief Executive
NITB
St Anne's Court
59 North Street
BELFAST
BT1 1NB

Dear Alan

Bilingual Signage

Thank you for your letter dated 31 January 2011 which refers to the NI Tourist Board's recently ratified, established approach that all signs are in English except where the attraction is known in Irish.

You refer to the NITB's primary concern being the visitor experience to ensure all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, consistent and not confusing, and that you have seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from this approach would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience. In your letter you also referred to a guide to best practice featuring the St Patrick's interpretation guidelines.

As you are aware, Newry and Mourne District Council has a Bilingualism Policy. The Council has been working with the NITB on the basis of incorporating Irish language into interpretation and welcome signs and is disappointed at the approach adopted by the NITB.

With reference to the guide to best practice featuring the St Patrick's interpretation guidelines, these guidelines refer to good interpretation as promoting "a sense of ownership that will encourage both visitors and local communities to look after the site" (page3).

Page 5 of the document asks those responsible for tourism to "Be Authentic" and "be proud of and celebrate...all that makes your site a destination". This is reinforced on page 7 where the guidelines state you should "be yourself - we're not Disney". Within this section, the guidelines state:

- every site on every trail is different;
- no one type of sign or installation will work for every site;
- assess your needs and put in place a fit for purpose solution; and
- this means that within a consistent look and feel, each part of the system will be specific to its own area.

Interpretation of sites in both Irish and English by Newry and Mourne District Council is consistent with the premise that it is authentic, unique and specific to the local area. It is a means of promoting the cultural heritage of the area in two languages that offers two interpretations that are equally valid and specific to our area. Bilingual interpretation connects our stories and engages with visitors, offering two windows on our world and creating a greater sense of place.

Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, requires the NITB in carrying out its functions to have due regard the need to promote equality of opportunity and have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

While language may not be a specific Section 75 category, using proxy indicators, people who use the Irish language are predominantly people of different political opinion (from a Nationalist and Republican background), people of different religious belief (Roman Catholic community background) and people of a different racial group (Irish national identity).

For NITB to implement a blanket policy that all signage be in English only, except where an attraction is known in Irish, has potential to have an adverse impact upon the above groups of people.

Therefore in taking an approach that all signage be in English only, except where an attraction is known in Irish, NITB has not complied with its equality scheme and its Section 75 statutory duties, through its failure to take account of the equality implications of its policy.

In deciding upon the policy did the NITB equality screen the proposed course of action and if appropriate carry out an equality impact assessment?

Newry and Mourne District Council has a very good working relationship with the NITB and we are keen that these projects progress as soon as possible taking full account of the communication and linguistic needs of each area.

Yours sincerely

Gerard McGivern
Director of District Development



**northernireland
tourist board**

17 October 2012

Daniel Holder
Deputy Director
Committee on the Administration of Justice
2nd Floor, Sturgen Building
9-15 Queen Street
BELFAST
BT1 6EA

18 OCT 2012

18 OCT 2012

Dear Daniel

Re: QUERY REGARDING NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD TRI / BILINGUAL TOURIST SIGNAGE

I refer to your correspondence dated 26th March 2012 and all correspondence relating to this matter.

The scope and basis of the Tourist Board's approach is based upon the Department of Regional Development's signage Policy which is itself supported by a clear Ministerial Direction. This policy provides that signs should be in English only except where the facility in question is known in another language such as Irish. An example of this is the Cultúrlann. The Tourist Board adopts this approach.

In our ongoing approach to linguistic diversity we continually seek to endorse linguistic pluralism and embrace and respect minority languages. The Tourist Board welcomes your views.

Part of this ongoing process will involve supplementing the current equality screening procedures with a standalone human rights consideration to minority languages through the implementation of a human rights impact assessment.

We trust that this answers your queries and in the meantime do not hesitate to contact us should you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN CLARKE
Chief Executive

Northern Ireland Tourist Board, St Anne's Court, 59 North Street, Belfast BT1 1NB
Telephone: +44 (0) 28 9023 1221 Textphone: +44 (0) 28 9044 1522

Corporate website: nitb.com

Consumer website: discovernorthernireland.com

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**INVESTORS
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Funding will be lost if council insists on bilingual tourist signs

BY JOANNE FLEMING

THE Northern Ireland Tourist Board has confirmed it will not provide funding for new heritage signs in the district if Down Council insists on English and Irish wording.

At a Down Council committee meeting last Monday, a majority of councillors voted against the erection of NITB signs written solely in English for the new St. Patrick's trail — despite being warned they could lose a grant worth thousands of pounds.

The tourist board, which is the main funder of the new signs aimed at international visitors, says its policy is that all signs should be in English, "except where an attraction is known in Irish."

In recent debates a number of Sinn Féin and SDLP councillors said they believed the new signs should be in both English and Irish as a means of enhancing tourism. But the DUP has argued that the use of Irish is no use to

visiting tourists, and is simply a territory marking exercise by Republicans.

In correspondence this week with DUP councillor, Billy Walker, the NITB stated that its primary concern was ensuring all tourist interpretation and signage was "clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination".

"This applies to all NITB supported projects and in this case the proposed St. Patrick's Trail Signature Project signage at the St. Patrick's Centre, Down County Museum, Down Cathedral and Saul Church," the e-mail states.

"Should the council wish to proceed with signing in English and Irish at these sites, NITB will not be in a position to provide financial support for these projects."

DUP MLA Jim Wells and council colleagues Billy Walker and William Dick have welcomed the decision.

"The use of bilingual signs is a waste of money which will confuse tourists and cause offence to the unionist community in all four council areas," said Mr. Wells. "Sinn Féin are more interested in peddling their Republican agenda rather than genuinely assisting tourists and the common sense approach of the NITB is very welcome."

However, Sinn Féin councillor Eamonn Mac Con Midhe said Downpatrick's close connection to St. Patrick, and the fact that the town is steeped in so much Celtic and Irish history, was a major way of attracting visitors to the area.

"Our native language is a fundamentally important aspect of our history and it is vital that the Tourism Board and all other statutory agencies support the promotion of Irish through the erection of dual language signs," he said.

"I am not surprised that the DUP have opposed funding for dual signage as clearly there are

many with that party who still believe in the suppression of the Irish language and anything associated with Celtic history.

"In the 26 counties as well as in parts of Wales and Scotland, similar dual signage is designed to be easily read and enhance the cultural experience of visitors to historical sites and areas of outstanding natural beauty.

"If the DUP are serious about saving money then their time would be better spent encouraging the Loyal orders to reduce the hundreds of band parades that are forced in towns and villages across the north and do something to address the damage caused by 11th night bonfires."

Down Council has confirmed that the signage project, due to receive £13,620 grant aid funding, must be completed before the end of March. At Monday's meeting of full council councillors are due to debate the decision made at last week's committee meeting.

Sliocht ó na miontuairiscí
Extract from Minutes

Minutes of Proceedings of a Meeting of
ARMAGH CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL
held in The Council Chamber, Council Offices,
The Palace Demesne, Armagh, on
Monday 25 July 2011 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Presiding Mayor:	Councillor Mrs F Donnelly		
Deputy Mayor:	Councillor Mrs M Campbell		
Other Members:	Councillors –		
	P Berry	J Campbell	Mrs M Doyle
	Mrs M Eagle	Miss S Haughey	W G Irwin
G Kennedy	G Mallon	R McCartney	
D McNally	Mrs S McRoberts	T McWilliams	
T O'Hanlon	Mrs C Rafferty	Mrs J Rollston	
J Speers	R W Turner	G P White	
G Wilson			

Apology: Councillor N Sheridan

In Attendance: Clerk and Chief Executive
Strategic Director of Regeneration and Development
Strategic Director of Corporate Services and Governance
Deputy Director (Operational Services)
Deputy Director (Recreation and Leisure)
Head of Financial Services
Communications Assistant
Democratic Services (L P Brown)

- APOLOGIES/OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Baineadh 11 leathanach de théacs roimh uimhir 15 ar chlár an chruinnithe, leathanach 12
11 pages of text removed – Agenda Item 15, page 12 of minutes

15.0 ENTRANCE BANNERS AT THE NAVAN CENTRE & FORT

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: report outlining the recommendation from the Themed Scrutiny Panel (Economic Growth/Community Investment) held on Wednesday 20 July 2011 regarding the provision of entrance banners at the Navan Centre & Fort. (11-CL-35-LB)

CIRCULATED: design for the entrance banners recommended for approval by the Themed Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty stated that she thought the above matter needed to be brought back to the Themed Scrutiny Panel adding that she would like some advice on it from someone from the field in terms of the marketing of the Irish Language, the Tourism Officer and the Equality Officer and that they also needed to look at the consultation document when the Tourism Review was undertaken. She stated that she was not happy with what was on the table.

Councillor Campbell said that if they kept referring it and kept putting it on the long finger it was never going to happen. He said if they wanted it done they should get it done.

Councillor O'Hanlon said that one of the options was for the entrance signs to be in English and Irish and he felt it was appropriate to move ahead with the provision of tours in the Irish Language as required.

The Clerk and Chief Executive said that the design recommended for approval had been circulated and that tours would be provided in Irish as required.

Councillor Speers pointed out that the recommendation had been unanimous.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that they had been outnumbered. She said there were other issues regarding signage and that she had asked for a lot of signage and this had not been brought to the table. She said she had asked officers to go to DCAL to study and source funding.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that there had been two tours in Irish in the past number of weeks and that they had not been conducted as Ghaeilge, indeed they were mostly delivered in English. She said issues had been going on for a long time and the Council was not taking the language seriously. She said that they should be standing up and being counted.

She said there was a whole area in the City and it was not being promoted. She said it needed to be viewed in cultural terms and proposed they develop a proper Irish Language Policy to promote the Irish language.

In response to a request from Councillor Turner, Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that she didn't speak Irish fluently but that that did not mean she could not promote it. She said they wouldn't accept their culture and that they were being given 'crumbs on the table'.

Councillor Berry considered that the design under consideration was a step too far and that the Centre should be kept neutral. He felt that it was a political ploy and said that he did not see it as 'crumbs on the table'. He said they needed to attract as many tourists from across the UK and the South of Ireland. He stated that he was opposing the recommendation.

Councillor Campbell felt that the matter had been raised for political reasons and considered that the sooner this was taken out of the Chamber and the Chamber given its right and proper place the better.

Councillor Irwin concurred with Councillor Berry adding that he believed that the Centre should be kept neutral. He referred to political games and said that he would not be supporting anything bearing Irish.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty stated that the Irish Language was not a political football. She said that she had been involved with the Irish Language for 18 years and had used Irish Language Schools for her children. She said it was a beautiful language which was very prominent in the City and those people who spoke it were being discriminated against because they were not being provided for. She referred to the Irish Language schools within the City and said that Irish Language needed to be used on doors as they were supposed to be promoting it. She said that some people on the other side of the Chamber were using the issue as political football and pointed out that it was Irish Culture. She said that she had no problem with Unionist Culture but asked why they were stepping on what she believed was her culture.

Councillor Mrs Doyle said that she was not on the Panel. She said the Navan Centre was an ancient Irish history place and that she imagined that whatever language had been used it wasn't English. She said she agreed with Councillor Mrs Rafferty. She said that they accepted the Unionist tradition and expected them to accept theirs. She said that this was an Irish Centre. By not recognising there was an Irish Language they were not accepting the language of their people. She suggested that perhaps they needed to bring in an auditor regarding the discrimination against a minority language.

Councillor O'Hanlon queried whether there was a training need. He said that if the Centre agreed to facilitate a tour in Irish Language then this should have been provided. He felt that if the matter was referred back to the Panel it would be the following summer before there was any signage outside the facility. With regard to the design recommended he said he would have like to have seen the four banners with bi-lingual signage.

Councillor Mrs McRoberts pointed out that the Navan site was an archaeological and historical site which attracted schools from across the political and religious divide not because of one or the other but because of its archaeological and historical significance. She stated that it was not an Irish cultural site and that it should have tours in whatever language the visitors spoke. She felt that if tours could not be provided in Irish then this was something that should be addressed by the Navan Centre. She stated that she didn't understand why politics had to come into it.

Councillor Mrs McRoberts said that she had no objection to the flags and proposed that they approve them and get on with having the Navan Centre open and get some income from the place and a tourist attraction that they could be proud to promote.

Councillor Speers suspected that there would be no agreement and that it would not happen. He said that the design had been seen as a way to move the issue along.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that there had been 5 discs in the Navan Centre until two years previous when the Irish Language tape had disappeared and said that she found it ironic that this was the one that disappeared.

Councillor Kennedy asked if there had ever been a survey undertaken of those who would like the tour in Irish and pointed out that it was a neutral venue.

In response to a comment from Councillor Kennedy regarding windows having been smashed on buses travelling along the Killylea Road Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that the community in Drumarg had stated that it had nothing to do with anything that had happened on the Killylea Road. She added that the attacks had been condemned. She commented on the number of flags on the bonfire at the Folly and said that she was also aware of other things that had happened.

Councillor Mrs McRoberts reiterated her proposal to proceed with the banners at the ancient and historic site. The Clerk and Chief Executive said that the Council did not promote the Irish Language, as there was no policy or document to do so and it did not have an Irish Language Officer but that it did comply with Irish Language obligations. He said the matter under consideration was in relation to the design of banners badly needed at the entrance to the Navan Centre and that the recommendation was to proceed on the basis of the design circulated and asked if the Council was not ready to do this.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty enquired if the banners were ordered that evening how long it would be before they would be outside the Navan Centre, given that it was the end of July and there were only 4 weeks left of the summer.

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Development said that she would need to seek confirmation on this but that she imagined it would be quite quickly given that the design work was complete.

Councillor Mrs Doyle asked why there was only Irish on one of the signs.

The Clerk and Chief Executive stated that this had been a compromise reached following discussion at the Panel.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that this was what was being offered.

The Clerk and Chief Executive said that one of the options had been to have all signs bi-lingual.

Councillor Miss Haughey said that she had proposed having 3 signs in both English and Irish and proposed that again.

Councillor Kennedy said that the broad view had been that if they were all bi-lingual it would detract from the visibility of the other emblems on the others.

Councillor O'Hanlon suggested one side of the banner be in English and the other in Irish.

Councillor Speers said that the recommendation under consideration had been a proposal at the Panel and that everyone had agreed with it. He pointed out that there would have been reservations about it around the room. He said that if a Committee met and there was a unanimous decision of that Committee and people wanted to change it later it should go back to the Committee if everyone could not agree to what they had agreed to.

Councillor Mrs McRoberts said that it seemed a shame that the Navan Centre was being put on the long finger again. She referred to the linkages with Tara and New Grange and felt that it was a shame that they could not move forward and get the Navan Centre going.

Councillor McCartney seconded Councillor Miss Haughey's proposal that all banners should be bi-lingual.

Councillor McCartney proposed that Irish Language Officers be brought into the Committee to give a presentation.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty seconded the proposal.

Aguisín 5 (ar lean)

Councillor Turner seconded Councillor Mrs McRoberts' proposal, in response to request from the Clerk and Chief Executive for a seconder.

The Clerk and Chief Executive said that there were two proposals one proposed by Councillor Mrs McRoberts, seconded by Councillor Turner to proceed and one proposed by Councillor Miss Haughey, seconded by Councillor McCartney for full bi-lingual signage.

Councillor Turner questioned the need for Scrutiny Panels if the recommendations coming forward to Council for approval were not being agreed.

Councillor Campbell considered that if they didn't do it then it would not be done that year.

Councillor Mrs Doyle said it needed to be done.

Councillor O'Hanlon reiterated his suggestion of having one side English and the other Irish.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services stated that this was not possible due to the design of the banners.

Councillor McNally said that only one of the proposals had been seconded as the Clerk and Chief Executive had had to beg for a seconder for the other proposal.

Councillor Mrs McRoberts questioned how Councillor McNally had come to the conclusion that the Clerk and Chief Executive had to beg for a seconder. She said she had proposed that they go ahead with what had been agreed and Councillor Turner had seconded it so that they could get the Navan Centre up and going.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that people were not being invited in properly.

Councillor Speers said that the design had arisen from a compromise which emerged at the Scrutiny Panel in an effort to try and get some sort of approach to move the matter along and get signage up. He said the issue could move along for years and never get a sign up. He said it was up to the Council to have some maturity and not be dogmatic about what was ideological. In the interests of trying to proceed with some degree of common sense and forward movement the Scrutiny Panel had arrived at a compromise and an agreed proposal that everyone had bought into.

Councillor McCartney asked who had agreed to the recommendation at the Panel meeting.

Councillor Speers said that on several occasions he had asked those present and no one disagreed.

Councillor McCartney said no one agreed.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that had been outnumbered.

Councillor Speers said it was a matter of stating a view.

Councillor Mrs Doyle said that it was down to acceptance of the Irish Language and asked of him did he accept the Irish Language was part of their culture.

In response, he said that he had no problem with speaking the Irish Language. He said he saw it as one of those things. He said it would learn you a bit of language and take you back to the bog but that it would do nothing for anyone.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that these were the same words she had heard 10 years ago when she first came to the Council. By not supporting the Irish Language she said they were discriminating against a lot of people that were. Because she did not speak it fluently she said that didn't mean that she didn't promote it, adding that she had supported it.

With reference to the derogatory comments Councillor Mrs Doyle said that as a Council Group her Party represented thousands of people adding that they didn't have to speak it to promote it. She said that they accepted them but this was not reciprocated.

The Mayor pointed out that there were a lot of constituents who didn't care any way.

Councillor Campbell said that he had heard enough nonsense for one night with people egging others and asked that they draw a line under it.

Councillor Miss Haughey agreed.

Councillor O'Hanlon considered that if the public saw the effort that had gone into the protracted debate they wouldn't be too concerned. He pointed out that there was no debate about jobs and the economy and that there should be more effort into those types of issues. He said they could send the matter back to the Panel if this was what they wanted and, if it couldn't be agreed it could be brought to the Executive. He considered that people from all sides would be disgusted.

Councillor Mrs Rafferty said that the matter could wait for another couple of months.

AGREED: that the matter be referred back to the Themed Scrutiny Panel.

Deireadh an sleachta
Extract ends

Sliocht as

Extract from

**REPORT OF THE ARTS/MUSEUM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 14th AUGUST 2012 AT 7.00 PM
IN THE CANAVAN ROOM, SEÁN HOLLYWOOD ARTS CENTRE**

In the chair: Mr Gerry McNulty

In attendance:

Cllr Moffett	Mr Cassidy
Cllr M Ruane	Mr McManus
Cllr Patterson	Cllr Burns
Ms Mooney	Mr Haffey
Ms Brooks	Mrs O'Donnell
Ms Mooney	Mr O'Donnell
Cllr Curran	Cllr Taylor
Cllr Hyland	Cllr Casey
Ms Holt	Cllr Feely

Officials:

C Moffett	T Mooney
N Cunningham	

Apologies:

Mr Smyth	Mr McGivern
Mr Russell	Mr Ó'Gribín

Mr McNulty welcome all present to the Arts/Museum Committee Meeting.

Baineach téacs; 2 alt

Text removed, 2 paragraphs

3. Update on the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages

In relation to a request for a report on how Newry and Mourne District Council is fulfilling Articles 12 and 13 of the European Charter, Mr Moffett advised that it was the UK Government who had responsibility for providing periodic reports to the Council of Europe Committee of Experts who report periodically on each state's compliance with its Charter obligations, and that Article 10 relating to Administrative authorities and public services is what directly applied to the Council.

Baineadh tuilleadh téacs

Further text removed



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Irish/Ulster-Scots Strategies: DCAL Briefing

20 September 2012

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure

Irish/Ulster-Scots Strategies: DCAL Briefing

20 September 2012

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McLveen (Chairperson)
 Mr William Irwin (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mrs Brenda Hale
 Mr David Hilditch
 Ms Rosaleen McCorley
 Mr Michael McGimpsey
 Mrs Karen McKevitt
 Mr Oliver McMullan
 Mr Cathal Ó hOisín
 Mr Robin Swann

Witnesses:

Mr Aidan McCann	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Mr Arthur Scott	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Dr Michael Willis	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

The Chairperson: Arthur, Michael and Aidan, you are very welcome. Would you like to make your opening statement, and then members will follow up with some questions?

Mr Arthur Scott (Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure): Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to update the Committee on the separate public consultations on the strategies for protecting and enhancing the development of the Irish language and the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture. The statutory context for the strategy is set out in section 28D of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It states:

"(1) The Executive Committee shall adopt a strategy setting how it proposes to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language.

(2) The Executive Committee shall adopt a strategy setting how it proposes to enhance and develop the Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture.

(3) The Executive Committee—

(a) must keep under review each of the strategies; and

(b) may from time to time adopt a new strategy or revise a strategy."

The Executive's Programme for Government 2011-15, which was published on 12 March 2012 following extensive public consultation, includes a strategy for the Irish language and a strategy for the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture as required building blocks necessary to deliver against priority 4, building a strong and shared community.

The Minister wrote to the Committee on 3 July stating that she intended to begin public consultation on 11 July in order to start work on delivering the Executive's Programme for Government obligations in relation to both strategies. The Minister also provided separate copies of the consultation documents for the Committee's information and comment. The Minister had previously stated her intention to launch the consultations before the Assembly summer recess. The objective of both consultations is to provide the opportunity for all stakeholders, particularly both sectors, to express their views on the aims, objectives and each area for action in the draft strategies and to put forward additional new ideas for consideration. The consultations do not seek public opinion on whether the strategy should be developed. That matter was dealt with in the Programme for Government consultation, and it was concluded, on Ministers' agreement, that the strategy should be included in the Programme for Government.

The key aims of the strategy for the Irish language are as follows: to create a framework where Irish can flourish and be shared by all who wish to use it; to protect and support the development and learning of Irish; and to promote wider understanding of the background to the Irish language. The specific objectives of the strategy are to increase the number who can access Irish-medium education, increase the number who use public services through the Irish language and increase access to Irish language media. Key areas for action included in the draft strategy, which consultees are asked to comment on, include education; family transmission of Irish; public services and community; media and technology; legislation and status of the language; and economic life.

The key aims of the strategy for the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture are to create a framework where the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture can flourish and be shared and enjoyed; to protect and support the development and learning of the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture; and to promote wider understanding and recognition of the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture. The draft strategy has the following objectives: to increase educational provision in all aspects of Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture; to increase access to Ulster-Scots language media, including online material; to promote the economic benefits of the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture; and to promote research on the Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture. Key areas for action in the draft strategy, which consultees are asked to comment on, include education, media, use of the language, public services and culture.

As the consultation process started during the summer holiday period, the Minister decided that the consultations will last for 20 weeks. We are now about 10 weeks through that process. It is a significant increase on the recommended 12-week period and should afford all those who wish to respond the opportunity to do so. Following the consultations, there will be a period to analyse the responses and report the findings. At this point, it is difficult to be precise about the time required to analyse the responses received, as that will depend on the volume and detail. We estimate that somewhere in the region of eight to 12 weeks will probably be necessary, but that will be revised depending on the response. The findings from the consultation exercises will be shared with the Committee once the analysis has been completed.

The Minister stated her intention to conduct full, meaningful and inclusive consultations on both strategies. The consultations have been widely publicised and made accessible to everyone who wishes to respond. We specifically invited opinions and input from Irish language and Ulster-Scots stakeholder groups as well as those on the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) equality unit's list of consultees. Foras na Gaeilge, the Ulster-Scots Agency, the ministerial advisory group, the Ulster-Scots Academy and other relevant bodies have also been asked and have agreed to ensure that stakeholders known to them will be made aware of the consultations and asked to respond. The documents are available on the departmental website. Each document has a separate web page that explains its purpose and includes links to the consultation document and other relevant information in respect of context, such as the Programme for Government, the St Andrews Agreement and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Those are provided for respondees, who can make their responses online through the website as well as by e-mail or post.

Throughout the consultation period, the Department continues to work with the Irish language and Ulster-Scots sectors to organise a number of events to highlight the consultations and provide an opportunity for public debate about the content of the draft strategies and emerging issues. The Department will also accept invitations to attend consultation meetings that are organised by interest groups. For example, on Tuesday past, Michael attended a public consultation meeting that was hosted by Newry and Mourne District Council. In addition, the consultations will be promoted at events that are held by the two sectors, for example, Liofa on Saturday and Pobal's Rights and Revelry, which is to be held on 6 October. The chief executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency and the director of the Ulster-Scots Community Network are actively considering events where we could

promote the consultation. The network plans to engage with its membership base in relation to responding to the consultation. Over 400 groups are affiliated to the network. That meeting will be followed by a meeting of the Ulster-Scots joint forum, which comprises members of the Ulster-Scots Community Network and the Ulster-Scots Agency. DCAL officials will participate in that joint forum meeting, which will have a focus on the Ulster-Scots strategy.

During the consultation period, if clarification is required on particular suggestions or if further information is required from stakeholder groups about the ideas that they have suggested, DCAL will consider contacting them directly. That may take the form of individual meetings or focus groups, depending on the nature of their suggestions. The views of elected representatives and all those in local government are also very important to the consultation. All MLAs, MPs, MEPs and district councils have been invited to respond to the consultation.

A key stakeholder group — a normally hard-to-reach group — is children and young people. Work is being done by Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency to engage with young people and help them to share in the languages and enjoy, celebrate and share the cultures. We have been making efforts to focus attention on that group. The sustainability of both languages and the heritage and culture depends very much on the participation and involvement of young people going forward. To ensure that we can take on board their views, we have been working with the participation network. Its aim is to help the public sector to engage effectively with children and young people. It has helped us to produce a child- and young-person-friendly version of both strategy consultation documents. We will organise an event during October to allow children and young people to give their views on the strategy.

The DCAL equality unit has a list of section 75 consultees, who have been informed about the consultation. Work to identify anyone we have missed continues. One such group were individuals and groups from the sign-language community. If requested, the Department offers consultation documents in Braille, audiotape or large print. Following actions with Libraries Northern Ireland, it has placed links to the consultation on its website with encouragement to respond. Libraries Northern Ireland hosts Irish language reading groups in many of its libraries. Those groups will be made aware of the consultations and encouraged to respond. It has agreed to advertise the consultations and how to respond on a rolling loop via the plasma TV screens that are located in its main libraries and to supplement that with the distribution and promotion throughout the entire library network of a hard-copy poster and flyer about the consultations.

To ensure that maximum awareness is achieved, we have also used publicity to bring the message to as wide an audience as possible. Advertisements were placed in the three main newspapers at the start of the consultation. There was a press release from the Minister, which attracted coverage in the local media. Given the length of the consultation period, we plan a further press release about the participation network and the availability of that young-person-friendly document. We will supplement that with platform pieces in the local media up to the close of the consultation in November.

The announcement of the consultation was also displayed in the news story section of the departmental website. Again, we are relying on the efforts of Foras na Gaeilge, the Ulster-Scots Agency and others from both sectors to raise awareness of the consultation and to make the people with whom they are in contact aware of it.

DCAL has undertaken significant work to ensure that the knowledge and awareness of the strategy is as widespread and comprehensive as possible. We continue to proactively identify stakeholder organisations to make them aware of the consultation documents and encourage them to respond.

For example, following consultation with Comhaltas Uladh, DCAL intends to meet its representatives again to discuss their ideas for raising knowledge and awareness about the consultations and the responses to it. The marching bands community has also been identified as a stakeholder and will be contacted in relation to the Ulster-Scots consultation. DCAL officials are happy to meet any stakeholder if that will facilitate more meaningful responses to the consultation process.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much for your presentation. This is, obviously, the first opportunity that the Committee has had to discuss the strategies. We were disappointed from the outset that, despite the Minister's assurance that we would receive a briefing in advance of the consultations being published, we were just presented with the final document with no briefing. That said, however, we are where we are.

I understand why we are here in relation to the strategies, the context being the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the commitment that has been given through the Programme for Government. There will be other opportunities for the Committee to go through the documents in detail and for members to respond through their respective parties.

It will be interesting for us to read the responses to the consultation, and, no doubt, you will come to us at your earliest opportunity with that analysis. However, I have to say from the outset that, from my position, what I feel is being proposed in the Irish language strategy reads more like the principles of a Bill than a strategy. I do not see how you can fail to outline in the document the responsibilities that the Assembly has in relation to the charter. It totally ignores what has been done to date in relation to that and the responsibilities of the Assembly with regard to the charter and through legislation.

I see this as being presented as a wish list and an aspiration, and I take issue with the document. I believe that it stands outside the spirit of the charter to which the UK Government have signed up in the interests of protecting the language. The goal that has been set out is to create a bilingual Northern Ireland. I will resist that, as will my party.

I know you said that this is about the consultation and that maybe there is no requirement on the development of that. I am not really sure what you meant by that. In advance of presenting this for wider consultation, and because this is far-reaching and impacts on every aspect of life in Northern Ireland, what discussions did you have with other focus groups that sit outside the traditional stakeholders or other Departments? Have any costings been attached to this?

Mr Scott: Both draft strategies were prepared by DCAL officials in the context of the framework of the strategic objectives and actions set out in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which is an international convention that is designed to protect and promote regional and minority rights.

DCAL engaged with Pobal on the draft Irish strategy. Pobal is funded through the North/South body Foras na Gaeilge and has been extensively involved in consulting on Irish language legislation in the North and on a framework to support the development of the language.

The Chairperson: I am sorry, Arthur, would you mind speaking up? Hansard is finding it difficult to pick up on what you are saying.

Mr Scott: Do you want me to repeat it all? DCAL officials prepared both strategies in the context of the framework of the strategic objectives and actions as set out in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which is an international convention that is designed to protect and promote regional and minority languages.

DCAL also engaged with Pobal on the draft Irish language strategy. Pobal is funded by Foras na Gaeilge, one of our North/South bodies, and has extensive experience in and knowledge of working with the sector and wider interests on what is needed with legislation and a strategy or framework to support and protect the development of the Irish language. It was appropriate to build on that expertise and research, which was funded by money from the Governments in the North and the South, rather than for the Department to go out and recreate it. So, that was a source of expertise from which to draw.

Likewise, we engaged with the Ulster-Scots Agency and the ministerial advisory group on the Ulster-Scots Academy on the strategy for Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture. Although I note your points on your perception of the strategy, a consultation is not a decision; it is really about shaping what the strategy should be. It has to recognise and take account of the wider framework that already exists. Certainly, that was the Department's intention.

Notwithstanding the European charter, the Executive have a specific legislative commitment to develop a strategy. I trust that, through the consultation process and agreement on the strategy, we can eventually arrive at consensus. The draft strategy is designed to encourage and promote debate and discussion so that we can arrive at that position. It is not a de facto end result; it is there for that purpose in particular. It is about shaping the strategy and, in particular, ensuring that we capture and get an assessment of what is needed, to support and develop the Irish language community and those who, perhaps, do not have access to Irish at the moment, are interested in it and may want to access it — likewise, for the Ulster-Scots community.

The Chairperson: Do you accept that the document is the basis of consultation for a Bill?

Mr Scott: No, I do not accept that, Chair. The Minister clearly articulated to the Committee, and to the Assembly, her position on an Irish language Bill and the priority that she affords to it. The strategy obviously refers to it because it would have been quite inconsistent not to have done so given the Minister's position on an Irish language Bill and because the commitment to it in the St Andrews Agreement is quite clear.

The Chairperson: I accept that the range of stakeholders that you have consulted in advance of publishing the document is quite narrow. However, would it not have been wise to have had a discussion with other Departments about it?

Mr Scott: Under Treasury guidance, when you have consulted at the point where there is an opportunity to shape the strategy, consultation documents too often emerge very well developed and there is little opportunity to apply other opportunities or thinking, because people have become set in their ways.

Again, on the issue of costs, the strategy will eventually go to the Executive for agreement. It will be cross cutting, and costs will be considered. However, at this early stage, we were looking for the views of the communities in particular and what they require, rather than the Department setting out constraints by saying, "We cannot do this" and "We cannot do that". The point was really to assess what the Irish language and Ulster-Scots communities feel they require to support and develop their language, heritage and culture, and then to look at costs.

The Chairperson: Your focus in the consultation is really to go to the Ulster-Scots community with the Ulster-Scots strategy and to the Irish-speaking community with the Irish language strategy.

Mr Scott: No. The strategies are for the entire community. Obviously, people who are already engaged in the language, heritage or culture of either community will have a particular viewpoint. However, it is a strategy for the Executive and for all those who are interested, irrespective of the community they come from.

The Chairperson: If you were to read the document, you would see that it is much more far-reaching than merely sitting in those particular communities. It obviously impacts on every aspect of life, particularly when you are going through to public administration and day-to-day living.

Mr Scott: Yes, that is the point that I am making, Chair. Obviously, there are different stakeholder groups in our entire community, and, obviously, those who are involved in the Irish language community have a particular viewpoint. Hopefully, these strategies will eventually be prepared and agreed by the Executive for the entire community and anyone who is interested in Irish or Ulster Scots, irrespective of what part of the community they come from.

Mr Irwin: The Chair covered some of the questions that I was going to ask. I have concerns about the strategy. It is very far-reaching, and I feel that some of it would be very difficult and costly to deliver. The costings would certainly need to be looked at. I believe that the Irish language is being protected at this time. Given the small number of people in Northern Ireland who speak Irish or Ulster Scots, this is overkill. I can see difficulties ahead. The protection of a minority language is one thing, but this goes much further.

Mr Scott: Part of the strategy is about protection, but it is also about development. If you look elsewhere, such as the South, you will see that they have a 20-year strategy. The strategy should be bold, far-reaching and should look ahead, but, as I pointed out in my earlier reply, one of the statutory obligations is that the strategy can be reviewed or changed. At this point, there are issues with limiting our thinking around cost and what might be. Assumptions are being made about timescales, but that is among a lot of the details that have to be worked out. Yes, there could well be costs, but if one adopts a different approach to how the implementation will be, which is obviously further down the process, that can perhaps be addressed. Primarily, it is about finding out what people require and what is needed. Issues of costs, when it can be done and the practicalities will come later. The point is to try to get broad agreement of what needs to be done to develop, support and sustain Irish — and Ulster Scots — on a long-term basis.

Mr Swann: Arthur, thanks for your presentation. I agree with the two members who have just spoken, and I do not think that anyone in the room will be surprised by that. I think that the disparity between the two documents starts in both ministerial forewords, which are on the first pages. The tone, tenor and disparity between the words and the phrasing sets the Ulster-Scots strategy at a clear disadvantage and on the back foot and that carries on through.

You referred to the work by and your engagement with Pobal during the consultation on the Irish language, because it is a funded North/South advisory body under Foras na Gaeilge. Is this a DCAL document, or is it a Pobal document?

Mr Scott: This is a DCAL document. I was pointing out that DCAL had been funded by public money; I was not making the point that we consulted with Pobal because it was a North/South body. I was making the point that we consulted with it because it had the relevant expertise and knowledge, and it meant that we were not required to go out elsewhere to get that information. It was funded publicly. Therefore, I was making the point that it was logical to use that research, which the taxpayers, North and South, had paid for, rather than to incur additional expense.

Mr Swann: If I were to compare this strategy document with the Pobal strategy for the Irish language and its future development, how similar would I find it to what that organisation wants?

Mr Scott: I would argue that this document is different. Obviously, it will contain aspects of what Pobal is saying, which I am sure is just what you would see if you looked at the Ulster-Scots Agency, the work that the Department is doing with the ministerial advisory group on the Ulster-Scots Academy, and the Foras na Gaeilge strategy. You would see consistencies, because, in a sense, this strategy should provide an overarching framework for the work of all the bodies that are involved in promoting and developing language and, in the case of Ulster Scots, heritage and culture.

Mr Swann: You seem to have had consultation with Pobal over the Irish. Who was the equivalent body for the Ulster Scots?

Mr Scott: The Ulster-Scots Agency, which has statutory responsibility for the language, culture and heritage, and the ministerial advisory group on the Ulster-Scots Academy.

Mr Swann: How much engagement did you have with those people?

Mr Scott: We held two workshops, which I attended, and Michael had sessions with Pobal. I do not have the exact details, but we could write to you with them if you want. There were at least two half-day sessions with the Ulster-Scots Agency and the ministerial advisory group.

Mr Swann: Two half-day sessions? Do you have any idea —

Mr Scott: You have to bear in mind that, as sponsor for the North/South language body, I am in regular contact with Foras na Gaeilge, the Ulster-Scots Agency, the ministerial advisory group and the Ulster-Scots Academy. I meet regularly with them to discuss a whole range of issues, as well as their concerns. Over time, the Department builds up some knowledge and awareness of those sectors' needs and concerns.

Mr Swann: You have to appreciate that I am trying to establish how much these are departmental papers that are providing —

Mr Scott: I thought that I made that clear. They are departmental papers.

Mr Swann: That is what I am trying to establish, Arthur, and why I am asking you.

Mr Scott: Sorry, let me be quite clear, then. These are departmental strategies. They are not anyone else's strategies. They were drafted by officials and approved by the Minister. They are departmental strategies.

Mr Swann: They are ministerially approved. Going back to the Chair's point about the Irish strategies really being the basis for the establishment of a Bill, to me that becomes evident when you compare the Irish language and Ulster Scots. It is especially evident at paragraph 4.8 of the strategy on the

Aguisín 7 (ar lean)

Irish language, which refers to actions in parts of legislation for the status of the language. If it is already talking about legislation, I cannot understand how this is not the prerequisite for or forerunner to a Bill, whereas there is no reference at all to the same protection or equality in the Ulster Scots draft strategy.

Mr Scott: As I pointed out, it would have been quite inconsistent for the strategy not to have addressed the areas documented at paragraph 4.8 in the Irish strategy. We consulted with the ministerial advisory group and the Ulster-Scots Agency on the Ulster Scots strategy. We asked them about gaps and whether there was anything that we had not covered, and they were content. The agency has a statutory responsibility for promoting the language. Based on its expert advice and detailed knowledge of the sector, it said that it was content.

Mr Swann: Was that organisation able to see the Irish language document when it was making those decisions? I am trying to establish whether the two consultation processes were —

Mr Scott: No, it was not able to see the Irish language documents. The documents that we engaged with others on were not these documents. These are the final documents; they are the Department's documents.

Mr Swann: So, when the Programme for Government requires Irish language and Ulster-Scots strategies to go forward together, do you run two separate processes to establish these kinds of documents?

Mr Scott: The two strategies are separate, and the Minister has explained to the Committee the reasons for having them separate. Both languages are at different states of development, and on taking up office, the Minister made it very clear that she intended to bring forward separate strategies. So, they are separate strategies.

Mr Swann: There are no synergies in them at all?

Mr Scott: They are separate strategies.

Mr Swann: So, could one be delivered without the other?

Mr Scott: That is an interpretation that you place on it, but it is not the Department's intention.

Mr Swann: But they could be. It is not an interpretation; it is a question, sorry.

Mr Scott: Are you asking me whether they could be?

Mr Swann: Could one be delivered without the other?

Mr Scott: They could be delivered separately, but that is not the intention. The intention is to bring them forward and to deliver them both. Are you asking me about the timing with them? Yes, the timing depends on what happens in the consultation, but our intention is to bring both strategies to the Executive for approval. Implementation could be another matter, because they are different in what is being asked for and what is being addressed.

Mr Swann: Sorry, Chair, could I just clarify that last point, especially with regard to timing? No matter whether these two consultations are prepared and developed at the same time, could one be initiated prior to the other?

Mr Scott: I made it very clear, Chair, that the Department's intention is to bring both strategies to the Executive for approval at the same. You asked me whether they could be done separately, and I said, yes, they could. That is not the intention. Let us be very clear about that. You asked me a hypothetical question, which I answered. I think that I have made it quite clear that the Department intends to bring both strategies to the Executive at the same time to be approved.

Mr Swann: When you referred to timing, I took it to be timing that was —

Irish language, which refers to actions in parts of legislation for the status of the language. If it is already talking about legislation, I cannot understand how this is not the prerequisite for or forerunner to a Bill, whereas there is no reference at all to the same protection or equality in the Ulster Scots draft strategy.

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Mr Swann: When you referred to timing, I took it to be timing that was —

Irish language promotion. Quite a number of organisations promote the Irish language but are not Irish language promotional organisations. I am thinking of sporting, cultural and economic organisations. The GAA obviously springs to mind, as well as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and even organisations such as Forbairt Feirste. Have they been included as stakeholders in all the consultations?

Dr Michael Willis (Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure): I am fairly confident that we have been in contact with the groups that you named, but I assure you that I will check that. I am meeting Comhaltas Uladh tomorrow to talk with it, and I have written to Ryan Feeney from the GAA to discuss ways in which we can take things forward under the auspices of the GAA. I also received communication this morning from an Irish language officer in, I think, Magherafelt. They are planning to have an event, but we have not firmed up the details of that yet. However, we have agreed to attend the event to talk about the strategy document. I am particularly keen to make sure that we have not somehow missed out any groups. We have tried really hard to be as comprehensive as we can.

Mr Ó hOisín: I suppose, Chair, that, given that the response depends on the analysis, it is like the piece of string analogy. You talk about eight to 12 weeks, but, in real terms, when are we looking at getting a report back? Will the analysis take until the end of next March or thereabouts?

Mr Scott: It will probably take until some time around February.

Mr Hilditch: I concur, support and endorse many of your comments this morning, but, to be honest, I come from a background of having neither language. However, there is a wider community out there, Arthur, and I think that you referred to it at some stage. Maybe I am getting too long in the tooth, or maybe I am cynical, but consultation in recent years has not really meant taking away or adding to anything; it has really meant, "This is where we are". Consultations nearly translate into information now rather than consultation. You have given a different meaning to the old term "consultation". Are you comfortable with the terminology that you are using at this stage for what is a very detailed document?

Mr Scott: Yes, I believe that this is a genuine attempt to carry out a consultation. I would have thought that I had at least outlined the steps that we are taking to try to include as wide a variety of responses as possible, to engage as many people as possible and, in particular, to showcase the work that we are doing with children and young people. In my Civil Service experience, that has not always been the case, so that is different from the norm.

It is a transparent process, and there will be a report. All the responses received from those who are actively involved in the Irish language community or the Ulster-Scots community will be available for everyone to see, and people will see what emphasis has been placed on the responses that have been received. So, that is something to judge in the future. At this point, we are encouraging people, as taxpayers, to get interested and to make their points, even if they are interested in neither language or culture. So, we could try to encourage as wide a range of interest as possible. We also have contacts with the business community, because if the strategies are successful, there are opportunities in the Irish language strategy and in the Ulster-Scots strategy to seize economic benefits. Yesterday, the ministerial advisory group had a session with people dealing with cultural tourism. District councils, tour operators and people were interested in looking at what Ulster Scots has to offer by way of interesting places to visit, stories, and the history of the people to try to whet their appetite. That builds on the work from the cultural apps pilots, which the Department sponsored with the Ulster Historical Foundation, and links it to digital technology. So, apart from the opportunities that having a detailed knowledge of Irish or Ulster Scots might open, this is about creating new economic opportunities. Likewise, an application is being developed with the GAA and Comhaltas to give people information about what is on and where to go. Those apps are available for the local community. It is an opportunity for the digital technology business to get involved with culture. It is also an opportunity to showcase our rich cultural mix to audiences from outside the island.

Mr Hilditch: Following on from that, people such as myself who are not involved in languages have seen developments happen at a certain pace over the past number of years, probably since the signing of the Belfast Agreement. Looking at these documents, we can now see things moving at a different pace.

On the consultation side, I know that you said that there was probably no consultation with people other than language users, and so forth. Mixed with that is the issue of cost. Surely the production of

the documents will have an impact on, for example, local government, which is my background. You referred to economic benefits and to how it can drive tourism and that sort of thing. So, surely some thought must have been given at some stage to costings and how this would impact on other levels of government and agencies.

Mr Scott: I accept your point. Perhaps that is the old-fashioned approach to estimating costs, but if you are really serious about engaging with people to find what they need and require and how government should go about meeting that, why constrain your design thinking with cost? Why do you find out what it is that you want to do, look at the best way of doing it and then decide on it, cost it and see what is available before allocating your budget accordingly? Doing it the other way puts you in a straightjacket before you start, because you would be saying, "We have only x, and we have not thought of z, b or d."

Mr Hilditch: There is a very simple answer to that. You can cut your cloth accordingly, but maybe that is why we are in this economic situation.

Moving on, I would like to ask —

Mr Scott: Sorry, Chair, I just want to pick up on that. I was not suggesting for one minute that we should not be conscious of the need to use departmental resources effectively or efficiently. I was trying to make a point that constraining design thinking by cost can have an adverse outcome on your ambition or what it is you want to achieve. If there is only x amount of money, I readily accept that. It is then a question of prioritising, out of all the things that you need to do, what are the most important and the time frame in which you do them so that they can fit the budget that is available.

Mr Hilditch: But then you are creating falsehoods and false impressions with the public out there.

Moving on anyway —

Mr Scott: Sorry, again, in establishing the need —

Mr McGimpsey: On a point of order, Chair, it is not in order for people coming in here to give evidence to the Committee to talk down members and interrupt them.

Mr Scott: I am sorry, Chair, I did not —

Mr McGimpsey: That is what you are doing. That is the second time that you have done it.

Mr Scott: I apologise to the Committee.

Mr Hilditch: I certainly was not asking a further question. I was only making a comment. I was not asking a further question and was not seeking any further comment or clarification on the answer.

The Chairperson: We have finished with that. Are you happy enough with the response?

Mr Hilditch: Yes. Can I ask a final question?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr Hilditch: When the consultation closes around November, you indicated that there will perhaps be a report around February. What is the process after that?

Mr Scott: When the analysis is complete, the report will be prepared as an Executive paper, because the costs and some of the issues we are talking about are cross cutting, and it will be taken to the Executive for consideration and agreement.

Again, Chair, I apologise. That was not my intention. I simply did not want it recorded that I had somehow suggested that the importance of public money was being set aside. I was really just trying to emphasise the design principle in trying to capture the essence of need and the possibilities of how that could be best achieved.

Mr Hilditch: And I have my own impressions of what that entails.

Ms McCorley: Go raibh maith agat arís, a Chathaoirigh. I just want to add something extra to the conversation. Costs are an issue; there is no doubt about that. The Irish language started its revitalisation and its athbheochan, which means reawakening, particularly in Belfast at the beginning of the 1970s. That caused the Irish language to flourish and to get to the point where we are now, largely without much public funding. That came much later. Commitment, energy and love of the language can be the best motivators and the best way to develop the language. We also need governmental commitment. Since Líofoa was launched a year ago, approximately 2,300 people have made a commitment to the Irish language, which shows that a lot of people wish to speak Irish and have the necessary drive and commitment. That is evidence of the need for further government action.

The Chairperson: Do you have a response to that?

Mr Scott: No, Chair.

Mr McMullan: I will be brief. I welcome the gentlemen's comments. I was getting a bit lost in all the questioning this morning, because it is more like an inquiry than a question-and-answer session. I was glad to have the issue of costs explained. I am sure that members across the table would agree that if costs start to be cut, content will be cut, and we may not get the full picture. That is important. If costs are being cut, that tells me that there is not 100% interest in what is being done. Are the latest census figures any different to the statistics at the end of the consultation document?

Dr Willis: My understanding is that the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's (NISRA) census unit has not announced when the 2011 census figures will be available. So the short answer is that we do not yet know. One would hope that they will be available soon, and it will be interesting to see what they show compared with the 2001 census figures.

The Chairperson: When people indicate that they are an Irish language or Ulster-Scots speaker in the census, is any random testing carried out to verify that?

Dr Willis: Again, my understanding of the process is that the questions — I am not aware exactly what the questions were — were asked on the census form, and it was up to each person in a household to answer them in the way they felt best applied to them.

I previously headed the research and statistics unit in the Department and worked in NISRA for a while. There was considerable debate, and many workshops were held, to develop the census questions for both languages. As I said, I was not directly involved in that, but I know that NISRA's census unit would be best placed to give advice on the content of the questions.

The Chairperson: It might be useful for the Committee to contact the census unit to find out whether there was any verification of the answers to those questions.

I have an issue with the discussion about costs, given the economic situation that we are in. We have to be mindful that we are custodians of a budget, and we have to make sure that it is spent wisely. Certainly, our constituents will not thank us if we are seen to be wasting money.

Mr McGimpsey: Can your strategy be delivered without legislation?

Mr Scott: I imagine that it could all be delivered without legislation.

Mr McGimpsey: So you do not need an Irish language Act to deliver the strategy.

Mr Scott: That depends on the implementation of the strategy. Questions were asked about whether it would impact on businesses. Sometimes, if a strategy is agreed by the Executive, it would become the responsibility of each Minister to implement that agreed strategy. If the strategy extended further afield into the public sector or business, would it be advisory or mandatory? Were it to be mandatory, legislation would be required.

Mr McGimpsey: Are you saying that if it is advisory, you do not need an Irish language Act, but if it is mandatory, you do?

Mr Scott: That is right.

Mr McGimpsey: Is that the conclusion? If it is mandatory, you need an Irish language Act, and if it is non-mandatory, you do not. Is that what I am hearing?

Mr Scott: If there is Executive agreement to do it, the assumption would be that Ministers would do it. I am speculating, but if for some reason a Department failed to comply, there may be a need to legislate. The key thing on legislation is that there is a commitment in the St Andrews Agreement to bring forward the legislation.

Mr McGimpsey: Who agreed that?

Mr Scott: It is in the St Andrews Agreement; the parties to that —

Mr McGimpsey: The St Andrews Agreement and an Irish language Act. Who actually agreed that?

Mr Scott: The two Governments.

Mr McGimpsey: Which two Governments?

Mr Scott: The British and the Irish.

Mr McGimpsey: That was Tony Blair and his Government.

Mr Scott: I am sorry; it was the two Governments.

Mr McGimpsey: That was Tony Blair and his Government. I was at St Andrews, you see, and Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern agreed. They are both history, and we now have devolution. It is in the consultation document that this is agreed by the Government. However, as I understand it, there is no agreement. I sat on the Executive after 2007, and there is no agreement in the Executive either. So in fact there is not governmental agreement on an Irish language Act.

Mr Scott: Sorry; I was referring to the agreement between the two Governments. Executive responsibilities for the strategies are set out in section 28D.

Mr McGimpsey: So the agreement is between the British Government and the Irish Government and not the Belfast Government. Has the strategy been costed?

Mr Scott: No; the strategy has not been costed.

Mr McGimpsey: OK. I am interested in this, having been in business all my life. Paragraph 4.9.1 of the consultation document states:

"Private sector companies should be encouraged to develop services through the medium of Irish and use Irish language signage."

How will you encourage that? How are you going to encourage private sector companies to develop services? I had a building company, for example, and employed anywhere between 30 and 100 men who came onto a site to lay brick and block and all the rest of it. In that situation, how would you encourage me to develop services?

Mr Scott: The Department is seeking feedback and comment on the suggestion that we should be doing that. Depending on the responses to the consultation, it becomes a question of how you would do it. Would it be by encouragement or by incentive? Would there be grant schemes? The Department for Social Development, for example, do neighbourhood renewals and provide grants to do up shopfronts. Should part of that include support to put up shop signs in the language?

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Mr McGimpsey: What are the business organisations saying to you on that? I presume that you have talked to the Institute of Directors and —

Mr Scott: We are arranging to talk to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and to business interests.

Mr McGimpsey: Excuse me; hold on a minute. I am still talking. The process here is that I let you talk, and you let me talk. Have you talked to the Institute of Directors and other business organisations, whether they are in tourism or manufacturing? Have you talked to any of them about encouraging their private sector companies "to develop services"? Who have you talked to?

Mr Scott: We have contacted all of them, and we are keen to speak to them.

Mr McGimpsey: So you have not spoken to them.

Mr Scott: We have not spoken to them as yet.

Mr McGimpsey: So that is still an aspiration, and we have talked about the St Andrews Agreement. By the way, Arthur, do you speak Irish?

Mr Scott: No.

Mr McGimpsey: You do not.

Mr Scott: I do not believe that that question is relevant, Chair.

Mr McGimpsey: I mean — I am asking you a question —

Mr Scott: I think that my personal abilities are not relevant.

Mr McMullan: Chair, this is harassment.

Mr McGimpsey: — because you are guiding the strategy.

Mr McMullan: On a point of order, Chair. This really is getting away from the context of the meeting, and it is getting personal.

Mr McGimpsey: No, it is not

The Chairperson: I accept that that is a point of order.

Mr McMullan: It is getting very personal, and I take exception to that and want the Chair to rule on it, please.

The Chairperson: Mr McGimpsey, can you respond?

Mr McGimpsey: I withdraw that question. That is no problem at all. It just interests me that when you are doing something, you have an expertise. Tell me this, then, Arthur. Looking at the basis for the strategy, we go back to the Belfast Agreement 1998, which agreed to a series of obligations, not an Irish language Act:

"take resolute action to promote the language ... facilitate and encourage the use of the language ... place a statutory duty on the Department of Education ... seek more effective ways to encourage and provide financial support for Irish language film and television".

Were all those undertakings adhered to? Was all that done?

Mr Scott: The reference in the strategy document sets out the context to the strategies. I am not in a position to respond to the question of how far these have all been advanced.

Mr McGimpsey: That is your basis of work; that is your work plan that was set out in 1998. I presume that you are still doing things such as "resolute action to promote the language". I am asking that because other steps were taken at that time on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to do with part II and part III status.

Mr Scott: Work is ongoing on a number of the areas that you highlight.

Mr McGimpsey: Yes, and those are still ongoing —

Mr Scott: Yes. The strategy is seen as a —

Mr McGimpsey: — and those are delivering or have been delivered in the case of part II and part III status. That has been delivered.

Mr Scott: Some aspects of those might have been delivered, and some are still being worked on.

Mr McGimpsey: It is work in progress. That is your workload, your work plan. You then have the joint declaration in 2003 to do with Irish language film and television, and that was delivered.

Mr Scott: Yes, more latterly in relation to Ulster Scots.

Mr McGimpsey: It was also delivered in relation to Irish. Irish language broadcasting received around £11 million or £12 million at that stage.

Mr Scott: Yes. They continue through Northern Ireland Screen, which has responsibility for that.

Mr McGimpsey: That was a very substantial investment. We touched on the St Andrews Agreement, and then we had the European Charter. I am trying to get up to date. Very substantial investment and work have gone into Irish and Ulster Scots to get us to where we are. We are now on this strategy, which has not been costed. As far as I can see, you will need legislation to do what you want to do. There are no costings. We are not sure from the answers that we have been given whether we need legislation, but it seems to me that it will be essential for the lines that have been put down here. There have been no general discussions with business organisations.

The Chairperson: Arthur, do you have any response to those questions?

Mr Scott: I think that I have already answered them.

The Chairperson: No other members have indicated that they wish to speak. Would you like to come back in, William?

Mr Irwin: I am not sure whether the figures are in the document. Do you know how many people in Northern Ireland actually speak Irish?

Dr Willis: The figures are included at the back of the consultation document. The most recent census put the figure at about 10% of the population. Table 1 of the consultation document shows that 10% of respondents have "some knowledge of Irish".

Mr Irwin: Having some knowledge of Irish is a completely different thing from being able to speak Irish. We could all say that we have some knowledge.

Dr Willis: It is linked to my earlier point about the question that was asked in the census. That is why, as I said earlier, it would be interesting to establish the wording of the questions that were used in the census.

Mr Irwin: I very much doubt that the number of Irish speakers in Northern Ireland is anything like 10%. I would be very surprised if it were more than 1% or even 0.5%.

The Chairperson: As you will gauge from the conversation, opinion is clearly divided on this matter. We will follow up on progress on the consultation, the responses and your final report. We will look forward to having this discussion again.

Dr Willis: I will follow up on Mr Irwin's point. I have just noticed table 2 in the consultation document, which contains the results from the 2007 omnibus survey. It indicates that 18% of respondents had "some knowledge of Irish". Again, it depends on the way in which questions are phrased, but that is an indication of how the different survey methods can indicate different things.

The Chairperson: Thank you.



Nick Clegg,
Deputy Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Cc/ David Cameron, PM; William Hague, Foreign Secretary; Owen Patterson, Secretary of State for NI

11.10.2010

Dear Mr Clegg,

Ref: The St Andrews' Agreement and the findings of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in respect of Irish in NI

I am writing to you on behalf of POBAL, the advocacy organisation for the Irish speaking community in the North of Ireland. As you are aware, in Appendix B of the St Andrews' Agreement (2006), the British government gives the following unequivocal commitment in respect of legislation to protect and promote the Irish language,

"The Government will introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language."

To date, this commitment has not been fulfilled. Two public consultations run under the auspices of the NI Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in 2007 both showed overwhelming support for the legislation and for the rights-based model proposed in detail by POBAL in our document, The Irish Language Act NI (Feb 2006). Since the re-establishment of devolution, three successive Unionist Ministers for Culture, Arts and Leisure in the NI Assembly have refused to introduce the Act, citing perceived 'lack of community consensus.' It is widely perceived that this refusal is for narrow party political interests. Even if this were not the case, the reasoning of successive unionist politicians is not human rights compliant. Both the British government and the devolved Assemblies have a duty to legislate and direct resources as necessary to recognise, protect and promote human rights, including language rights.

International human rights bodies have called for the implementation of the Irish language Act. These include the Advisory Group on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (October 2007) who highlight the adoption of legislation reflecting the needs of Irish speakers as demonstrated in responses from them to public consultations on the Irish language Act in 2007; the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (May 2009) who state that the legislation must be introduced either at devolved level or at Westminster level; and the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (April 2010).

Findings and Recommendations of the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Irish language Act

As you are aware, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is an international instrument signed and ratified by the British government up to Part III for Welsh in Wales, Gaelic in Scotland and Irish in NI. In April 2010, the Committee of Experts at the Council of Europe whose responsibility it is to monitor UK compliance with the Charter, made a number of clear statements regarding the legislative position of Irish and the need for action at UK level.

The COMEX report 2010 states,

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14. It appears to the Committee of Experts that legislation is needed to protect and promote Irish in Northern Ireland, as is the case for Welsh in Wales and Scottish Gaelic in Scotland. Furthermore, the Committee of Experts agrees with the evidence received from the NI Human Rights Commission that a legislative basis is even more important in the environment of political conflict, as a means of achieving reconciliation.

15. It appears to the Committee of Experts that as things currently stand, legislation on the protection and promotion of the Irish language is unlikely to be made by the Northern Ireland Assembly. It could however be made by the UK Parliament under its parallel legislative competence. The Committee of Experts urges the UK authorities to provide an appropriate legislative base for the protection and promotion of Irish in Northern Ireland.
(COMEX April 2010, p. 6)

The 1737 Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland)

Commenting further on UK legislation, the Committee of Experts state that the effect of the 1737 Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland), is 'a prohibition of the use of Irish in court which effectively bans the use of Irish in the courts in NI, and this is how it has been interpreted and implemented.' In the view of the Committee, this legislation is, 'contrary to the spirit and objectives of the Charter and the general commitment of the UK authorities to protect and promote Irish.' (COMEX p. 19, 120) It is they state, 'an unjustified restriction to the use of Irish, endangering the development of the language'. (COMEX p.19, 121)

Broadcasting legislation

In respect of UK broadcasting legislation, the Committee of Experts seek an explanation as to the anomalous position of Irish in comparison with Welsh and Scottish Gaelic in the 2003 UK Communications Act and the 2005 BBC Royal Charter. (COMEX p. 54, 386)

Citizenship and Immigration Legislation

Furthermore, the Committee finds that the failure to include the Irish language in legislation on citizenship and immigration is a distinction between Part III languages and they cannot see how this is justified.
(COMEX p. 19, 122.)

Treatment of Languages According to their Circumstances

The report of the Committee of Experts contains a number of further key comments regarding the promotion and protection of the Irish language. It is critical for example, of the policy of equating Irish and Ulster Scots since the Charter requires that each language be treated according to its own circumstances and that the developmental stage of Irish and Ulster Scots are widely different. (COMEX, p.6, 16, 17; p. 7, 20)

Clearly, it is the responsibility of the British government to bring UK application of the Charter into line with the findings and recommendations of the Committee of Experts, and I am therefore writing to you to ask what actions the British government intends to take and when, in respect of the COMEX findings, that the UK government should,

- introduce legislation for the Irish language in the NI,
- end the unjustified distinction against the language represented by the 1737 Administration of Justice Act
- correct the omission of Irish from other UK legislation on citizenship and immigration and on broadcasting

I look forward to your reply.

Is mise,

Janet Muller
Chief Executive



DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
70 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AS

From the Direct Communications Unit

1 February 2011

Ms Janet Muller
POBAL
Unit 6
Curran House
Twin Spires Centre
155 Northumberland Street
Belfast
BT13 2JF

Dear Ms Muller

I am writing on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 14 January.

It is good of you to take the time to write to Mr Clegg. Please rest assured that the contents of your letter have been registered.

However, I am afraid we are unable to address the matters you raise as these fall within the devolved responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Executive. You may wish to contact them directly by writing to the following address: Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX.

You may also be interested in visiting their website at www.northernireland.gov.uk for further information and possible contacts in your area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Silver'.

MRS S SILVER

Westminster Written Questions**DATE FOR ANSWER: 16 APRIL 2012**

Ms. Margaret Ritchie (South Down): To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment his Department has made of the recommendation of the Council of Europe Advisory Committee's Third Report that the UK Government should develop comprehensive legislation on the Irish language in Northern Ireland to protect and implement more effectively the language rights of persons belonging to the Irish speaking community. (102468)

HUGO SWIRE

Policy relating to regional and minority languages in Northern Ireland, including legislation on the Irish language, is in the main a devolved matter for the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive. The Government recognises the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, and is committed to working with the devolved administration to support the protection and development of the Irish language in those policy areas which remain non-transferred, such as broadcasting. I have met, and will happily continue to meet, Irish language organisations to discuss language issues within our sphere of responsibility.

BBC NEWS

NORTHERN IRELAND

2 October 2012 Last updated at 12:52

Irish TV ad 'all about Sinn Fein agenda' says Campbell

DUP MLA Gregory Campbell has accused the education minister of putting Sinn Fein's agenda over young people's education by running a TV ad in Irish.

"Is this a politically motivated attempt to promote something only in Irish?" the DUP assembly member asked.

He also accused John O'Dowd of going against his civil servants' advice by running the Irish advertisement.

But Mr O'Dowd said this was untrue. "The Civil Service have never advised me not to do this," he said.

The "Get Involved" advertisement in Irish ran on UTV on Monday evening.

Mr Campbell said Mr O'Dowd was putting his party's agenda ahead of young people's education.

"The campaign in English should be more than sufficient," said Mr Campbell who represents East Londonderry.

"Why should the taxpayer be expected to stump up thousands of pounds to people who can already speak and understand English?"

Mr O'Dowd said he had launched a campaign about valuing education which involves the community and family in the education of younger siblings.

"For every 10 advertisements in English, one will run in Irish," he said.

"Irish language people pay taxes and they have rights. I don't have any Ulster Scots schools in my portfolio. I have numerous Irish medium schools in my portfolio. Thousands of pupils attend them every day and thousands have graduated from them.

"We have a responsibility under legislation, under the European Languages charter and I will continue to use resources properly to promote the use of the Irish medium sector."

More Northern Ireland stories



[Fire manager 'ran own business'](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19814287)

[\[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19814287\]](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19814287)

A senior member of the NI Fire Service was allowed to run a private business selling uniforms and other equipment while he was in charge of buying them for the service.

[NI women rescued after shoot-out](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-foyle-west-19825894)

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[\[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19824323\]](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19824323)

BBC

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BBC NEWS**FOYLE & WEST**

24 April 2013 Last updated at 11:33

DUP and Sinn Fein row over Londonderry's Guildhall symbols

The DUP has said it fears the Guildhall in Londonderry is being stripped of its British symbols.

The 19th Century building was closed in 2012 for a multi-million pound renovation and will reopen in June.

At a meeting on Tuesday, the DUP and Sinn Fein clashed over a new exhibition on the Ulster Plantation and a proposal to amend the Guildhall's branding.

Sinn Fein said it wanted the building to reflect the lives of all in society.

The party objected to having the UK prefix in the City of Culture title in part of the new exhibition.

The DUP opposed a call to have Doire, the Irish name for the city, included on Guildhall branding along with the names Derry and Londonderry.

Both motions were passed by Derry City Council.

The DUP's Maurice Devenney said unionists could live with the Derry/Londonderry name but "couldn't accept Doire".

BBC News - DUP and Sinn Fein row over Londonderry's Guildhall symbols

Page 2 of 2

"I worry this is more stripping away of our Britishness within nationalist controlled councils," he said.

Sinn Fein's Paul Fleming said that was not the case.

"It isn't about stripping out anything from the Guildhall. The building needs to be reflective of all the citizens of this city and district."

A working group will be set up to look at the issue of symbols and what the building should be used for.

The SDLP's Gerard Diver rejected DUP suggestions that a working group might be the first step in removing British symbols from the Guildhall.

"That is not what our party is about," he said.

"That flies in the face of what we're trying to do which is to create a space for a shared society. The DUP shouldn't have anything to fear from that."



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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE



Department of

Justice

www.dojni.gov.uk

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Our ref: INV/221/2010

Ms Janet Muller
POBAL
Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich
216 Bóthar na bhFál
BT12 6AH

21 October 2010

Dear Ms Muller

Thank you for your e-mail of 10th October about the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737 and the use of the Irish language in the courts.

As I advised your colleague, Séamus Mac Aindreasa, in my letter of 29th June, while I am responsible for matters relating to the courts, Irish language policy generally is the responsibility of the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure. This means that policy in relation to Irish in courts requires collective agreement by the Executive. Accordingly, I indicated to the Assembly in April that I considered the proposed Executive language strategy to be the appropriate context in which to consider the question of Irish in courts. I understand that the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure intends to bring forward a draft strategy for Executive approval soon.

I do not consider that a meeting at this particular time would be particularly useful,

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE



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but I would hope that Pobal will participate in the public consultation on the draft Executive strategy, when it is published.

Yours

David Ford

DAVID FORD MLA
Minister of Justice

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE



Department of
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Our ref: INV/23/2011

Ms Janet Muller
Pobal
Aonad 6
Teach Uí Chorráin
Ionad an Dá Spuaic
155 Sráid Northumberland
Béal Feirste
BT13 2JF

7 February 2011

Dear Ms Muller

Thank you for your letter of 27th January about the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737.

I am sorry that you were not satisfied with my previous response, but I can only reiterate my position as stated in the Assembly on 26th April last year and explained in previous correspondence.

It remains my view that the most appropriate context in which to consider the position of the Irish language in courts is as part of the Executive strategy for Irish (and Ulster-Scots). I have explained that any decisions about language policy, even if restricted to usage in the courts, will require Executive agreement. I do not believe that attempting to reach agreement on this one aspect of language

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policy, outside the wider context of an Executive strategy, is either desirable or likely to achieve cross-community agreement.

You mentioned last year's Comex report on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the UK. I should advise that we do not accept Comex's assessment that the 1737 Act represents an unjustified restriction that endangers the development of the Irish language, and note that the Committee of Ministers, to which Comex reports, did not make any specific recommendation about the 1737 Act.

Given the above, I am afraid that I still do not consider that a meeting at this stage would serve any useful purpose.

Yours

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Ford', written in a cursive style.

DAVID FORD MLA
Minister of Justice

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE



Department of
Justice

www.dojni.gov.uk

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Your ref:
Our ref: COR/447/2011

Ms Janet Muller
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20 April 2011

Den Ms Muller

Thank you for your letter of 30 March, in which you asked me to explain my basis for not accepting Comex's assessment that the 1737 Act represents an unjustified restriction that endangers the development of the Irish language.

In response to your question as to whose conclusion this is, let me clarify that I am explaining my position as Minister of Justice, and that, as far as compliance with the Charter is concerned, this is informed by legal advice.

Article 7(2) of the Charter commits signatories "to eliminate ... any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it". I do not consider that the distinction between English and other languages provided in the 1737 Act is unjustified; and neither do I consider that the intention of the Act is to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of

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Irish or any other language.

In relation to the former point, I noted the comments of the Court of Appeal in its recent judgment in the case of *Caoimhin Mac Giolla Cathain*, which stated that the different treatment in courts of English and other languages is “manifestly necessary and proportionate in a democratic society”. I also note that the explanatory report to the Charter explains that the purpose of Article 7(2) is “not to establish complete equality of rights between languages” and that “measures laid down by each state in favour of the use of a national or official language do not constitute discrimination against regional languages on the sole grounds that these same measures are not taken for their benefit”.

In my letter of 7 February, I also noted that the Committee of Ministers, in responding to Comex’s report, did not make any recommendations about the 1737 Act, other than asking the UK authorities to take account of Comex’s observations. My Department has done so, and I am not aware of any “implications” that might arise from not agreeing with the Committee’s observations about the Act.

As I have stated many times, my view is that an agreed Executive strategy for the Irish language is the most appropriate context to consider the position of the Irish language in courts. My party is committed to a comprehensive language strategy and, if re-elected as Minister, I will seek to prioritise this in the Executive.

Yours
D.F.

DAVID FORD
Minister of Justice

R-post ó Bob Collins, Príomhchoimisinéir Choimisiún Um Chomhionannais

9 Lúnasa 2011

16.58

Janet, a chara,

Gabh mo leithscéal arís as ucht an praiseach a deineadh den iarracht freagra ar do litir a sheoladh chugat. Tuigfidh tú óna bhfuil pléite againn cheana nach n-áirítear an Ghaeilge, nó ceist teangan go ginearálta, san reachtaíocht a bhaineann le comhionannas nó le idirdhealú. Is féidir, gan amhras, ceangal éigin a dhéanamh idir teanga agus cine nó dearcadh polaitiúil nó dearcadh reiligiúnach. Ach 'sé meon sean-bhunaithe an Choimisiúin Um Chomhionannais nach cóir go raghfaí ró-fhada leis an gceangal sin.

Toisc nach mbaineann aon ceann des na hAchtanna a bhronnan cúraimí ar an gComisiún le ceisteanna teangan, níl aon cumhacht díreach againn ar an ábhar; níl aon údarás againn air. Is beag deis atá againn idirghabháil forimeálta a dhéanamh. Ar an ábhar sin, níl Cód nó Treoirlínte foilsithe ag an gCoimisiún maidir le teanga mar a bhfuil i réimsí eile.

Agus sin ráite, áfach, thug an Coimisiún cúnaimh do iarratasóirí i roinnt cásanna dlí a bhain, a bheag nó a mhór, le ceist teangan. Chomh maith le sin, i gcomthéacs na cúraimí atá orainn, tá comhairle tugtha ag an gCoimisiún ar ceisteanna teangan, an Ghaeilge san áireamh.

Tá sliocht sna Treoirlínte "Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment" a bhaineann le teanga (i mBéarla atá sé) ina deirtear;

"The use of languages other than English, for example in corporate logos and communications, will not, in general, constitute an infringement of a good and harmonious working environment. However in keeping with other elements of this guidance, decisions on this must rest with the employer and should be based on relevant policies and procedures that are proportionate, reasonable and appropriate to the context in which the organisation operates. They should also be compliant with the requirement and principles of equality of opportunity. Such decisions may also be affected by the terms of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages".

Molann an Coimisiún go mbéadh earcaíocht i gcónaí eagraithe, neamhchlaonta agus go mbéadh coinníollacha nó critéir inchosanta, oiriúnach do'n bpost agus riachtannach. Luaitear an méid seo i dtaobh fógraíocht agus teanga (in Recruitment Advertising; A Good Practice Guide for Employers for Promoting Equality of Opportunity);

“Where an ability to communicate in a particular language, other than English, is required for certain kinds of work, it is common practice for the relevant employers to place advertisements for the jobs in both English and in the language in question. This practice is lawful and has the advantage of providing information to the general reader about the nature of the selection criteria. Nevertheless, where an ability to speak and/or read a particular language, other than English, is an objectively justifiable requirement of a particular job, then an employer may lawfully place an advertisement for the job that is exclusively in that language. In these particular circumstances it is not actually necessary for the advertisement to be placed in English too, or to contain any English words by way of explanation or clarification.

However, where a newspaper publisher or other publisher does not understand the meaning of the proposed advertisement due to an inability to read the particular language in question, he or she should seek an assurance from the employer that an ability to speak and/or read the specific language is an objectively justifiable requirement of the job in question prior to accepting an advertisement of this nature”

Thairis sin, mar a dúras cheana, níl Cód nó Treiorlínte foilsithe maidir le teanga nó an Ghaeilge.

Glacaim leis go bhfuil tú ar an eolas cheana féin i dtaobh freagra an Choimisiúin ar an chomhairliúchán don Dréacht-Acht Gaeilge. Má tá cóipeanna ag teastáil uait, curfear chugat iad.

Tá súil agam go bhfuil an nóta seo ina chúnamh duit. Beidh fáilte romhat castáil le ionadaithe an Choimisiúin chun an cheist seo a plé má’s mian leat.

Beir beannacht.

Bob

Translation by POBAL of email from Chief Commissioner Bob Collins, Equality Commission, to Janet Muller, CEO, POBAL

9.8.2011

Dear Janet,

Apologies again for the mess we made attempting to send out to you the response to your letter.

You will understand from our discussions that the Irish language, or the issue of language generally, does not figure in the legislation relating to equality or discrimination. It is possible, no doubt, to make some linkages between language and race or between political viewpoint and religious viewpoint. But the long-standing view of the Commission is that it is not appropriate to take this linkage too far.

Since not one of the Acts which place duties on the Commission concern language issues, we have no direct power on the issue; we have no authority on it. We have few opportunities to make formal representations. For this reason, the Commission has not published any Code or Guidelines concerning language, as we have for other fields.

That said, however, the Commission has given help to applicants in legal cases that relate, more or less, to language issues. As well as this, in the context of the duties we have placed on us, the Commission has given advice on language matters, Irish included.

There is an extract from the Guidelines, "Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment" which relates to language (it's in English) in which it says:

"The use of languages other than English, for example in corporate logos and communications, will not, in general, constitute an infringement of a good and harmonious working environment. However in keeping with other elements of this guidance, decisions on this must rest with the employer and should be based on relevant policies and procedures that are proportionate, reasonable and appropriate to the context in which the organisation operates. They should also be compliant with the requirement and principles of equality of opportunity. Such decisions may also be affected by the terms of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages".

The Commission advises that any recruitment should always be organised, impartial and that the conditions or criteria should be defensible, appropriate to the post and essential. This is mentioned in relation to advertising and language ((in Recruitment Advertising; A Good Practice Guide for Employers for Promoting Equality of Opportunity);

“Where an ability to communicate in a particular language, other than English, is required for certain kinds of work, it is common practice for the relevant employers to place advertisements for the jobs in both English and in the language in question. This practice is lawful and has the advantage of providing information to the general reader about the nature of the selection criteria. Nevertheless, where an ability to speak and/or read a particular language, other than English, is an objectively justifiable requirement of a particular job, then an employer may lawfully place an advertisement for the job that is exclusively in that language. In these particular circumstances it is not actually necessary for the advertisement to be placed in English too, or to contain any English words by way of explanation or clarification.

However, where a newspaper publisher or other publisher does not understand the meaning of the proposed advertisement due to an inability to read the particular language in question, he or she should seek an assurance from the employer that an ability to speak and/or read the specific language is an objectively justifiable requirement of the job in question prior to accepting an advertisement of this nature”

Beyond this, as I say already, there is no published Code or Guidelines in relation to language or Irish.

I suppose you are already aware of the Commission’s response to the consultation on the draft Irish Language Act. If you need further copies, they will be sent to you.

I hope this note is helpful to you etc



Home Office

Damian Green MP
MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION
2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Janet Muller CEO
POBAL
Aonad 6
Teach UI Chorrain
115 Sraid Northumberland
Beal Feirste
BT13 2JF

20 JUL 2011

Our Reference: PG/11/087/9290

Dear Ms Muller,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2011 regarding the use of Irish language in UK passports and in language testing for settlement and citizenship purposes. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

In relation to the UK passport, it is correct that the UK passport shows the key information in bold print in English, Welsh and Scottish Gaelic and not in Irish. However, in line with the European standards for passports certain information in the UK passport is represented in all the official languages of the European Union. This means that since 1988, Irish has featured to a limited extent within new versions of the UK Passport.


You have also asked about the exclusion of Irish from the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, in particular the requirement that applicants for naturalisation/settlement as a British citizen are required to satisfy the Secretary of State that they have sufficient knowledge of the English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic language.

I should advise you that this Government has elected not to commence section 39 to 41 of the Borders Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, including those provisions that deal with Knowledge of Language and Life testing for settlement and naturalisation purposes. However, it is correct that the Irish language is not a language which can currently be tested as part of

ensuring the Knowledge of Life and Language requirement for settlement and citizenship is met.

I understand that consideration was given to including Irish as a language in 2005 when the requirement to have Knowledge of Language and Life was introduced as a statutory requirement for naturalisation. However, Parliament was not persuaded at that time that there was any sustained desire or practical benefits to including additional languages. This was in practice because no applicant has ever sought to rely on proficiency in any other language other than English as a qualification for naturalisation since the commencement of the British Nationality Act 1981. This means that there is little or no advantage in extending the list of relevant languages further, particularly where the costs associated with making such changes would be disproportionate to any benefit derived.

The current arrangements for passports and language testing ensure that our services are fully compliant with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005; there is currently no legal imperative for the Irish language to be included in those services. However, I note your observations in relation to the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages to which the UK is a signatory. I am aware that the UK is committed to doing what it can to protect and develop those minority languages identified under the Charter. In light of this, whilst I am unable at this time to make any firm commitments to change, I have asked officials to give further consideration to your proposals at a time when amendments to relevant legislation are being considered as part of the Government's wider policy objectives.

Yours sincerely,


Damian Green



Companies House
— for the record —

**THE COMPANY SECRETARY
POBAL
AONAD 6, TEACH UÍ CHORRÁIN
LONAD AN DÁ SPUAIC
155 SRÁID NORTHUMBERLAND
BÉAL FEIRSTE
BT13 2JF**

Companies House Belfast
2nd Floor The Linenhall
32-38 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BG
www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Date 19/01/2011

Dear Sir or Madam

Regarding your recent incorporation of NI605668 – POBAL, we have been advised by our Policy team in Cardiff that although director's names and addresses are acceptable in Irish the following director information must be supplied in English:-

State of Residence
Nationality
Occupation

Please file complete form CH01 (section 6) for each of the 6 directors.

Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours faithfully

David Bennett
Customer Care Manager



Companies House
— for the record —

[REDACTED]
CULTURLANN MCADAM O FIAICH
216 FALLS ROAD
BELFAST
BT12 6AH

Your Ref
Our Ref INCORPORATION/INCN0654/CR
Date 24/01/2011

NI New Companies
Companies House
Second Floor
The Linenhall
32-38 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BG
Telephone +44(0) 303 1234 500
Fax +44(0) 28 90407 444
DX 481 N.R. Belfast 1
www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

CULTURLANN MCADAM O FIAICH

Thank you for your enclosed document. Unfortunately, we have been unable to accept it for the following reason(s):

Under the Companies Act 2006, the country/state of residence and nationality of Janet Muller must be completed in English.

Please also note that due to a system constraint, we are able to incorporate company names that contain roman characters only. Please ensure that the fadas are removed from the company name in all instances, in particular, the articles of association.

Please amend your document and resubmit it as soon as possible and accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours faithfully

Companies House

Encs.

BIS | Department for
Business Innovation & Skills

Ms Janet Muller
POBAL
Aonad 6, Teach Uí Chorráin
Ionad an Dá Spuaic
155 Sráid Northumberland
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Company Law
Business Environment
Spur 2
3rd Floor
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Tel +44 (0)20 7215 3137

Date: 25 May 2012

www.bis.gov.uk
catherine.crowsley@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Your Ref: GJ37/11

Dear Ms Muller,

I write further to my initial response, dated 4 May 2012, to your letter of 31 February 2012 regarding the use of Irish in documents required by Companies House.

Firstly, please accept my apologies for a small error in my previous letter. The final sentence of paragraph 2 should be amended to read:

"The register must be accessible to everyone in the UK and that is why official documents must usually be delivered to the Registrar in English, although a company may also send a voluntary certified translation, or provide one for a previously filed document. However, this only applies to documents which are subject to Directive Disclosure requirements and the translation must be in an official EU language."

When the Companies Act 2006 was being drafted the Irish government were consulted but they did not wish to include regulations allowing for full accommodation of the Irish language and there are currently no changes being considered in this area.

As you know, the UK has ratified both: the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Charter's overriding purpose is cultural. It is designed to protect and promote regional or minority languages as a threatened aspect of Europe's cultural heritage. The commitments made under these international agreements are aspirational, rather than binding, and can not, therefore, be legally enforced.

The UK is also bound by the Good Friday Agreement, as you say, but this merely provides that Member States promote the facilitation and

Continuation 2

encouragement of the use of the language, where there is appropriate demand, and to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language. The St Andrews agreement also only relates to the enhancement and protection of the Irish language.

For these reasons, there is no legal requirement by the identified treaties to ensure that Companies House is authorised to accept documents in Irish without translation and to accept the diacritic mark in company names and other company details.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Crowsley



HM Revenue
& Customs

Customer Operations
National Insurance Contributions Office
NI Registrations BP1002
Benton Park View
Longbenton
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE98 1ZZ

Mrs [REDACTED]

Béal Feirste

Phone 0191 22 57757
Monday-Thursday 08:30-17:00
Friday 08:30-16:30

Fax 0191 22 57384

Email craig.simpson@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Date 17 February 2011

Our ref

Your ref

NI number

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Dear Mrs [REDACTED]

Further to our telephone conversation earlier today regarding your daughter's National Insurance account.

I can confirm that the spelling error in É[REDACTED]'s middle name has been corrected, however the National Insurance system is unable to record the stress marks on the relevant characters.

Your letter in respect of this matter has been referred for a full response.

Yours sincerely

Craig Simpson
Assistant Officer

Information is available in large print, audio and Braille formats.
Text Relay service prefix number – 18001



Director: Ian McDonald



HM Revenue
& Customs

**Customer Operations
National Insurance Contributions &**

Benton Park View
Longbenton
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE98 1ZZ

Phone 0191 2257757
Monday - Thursday 8.30 - 17.00
Friday 8.30 - 16.30

Fax 0191 2257384

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Miss E C Ni [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Belfast
[REDACTED]

Date 25 November 2010
Our ref

Dear Miss Ni [REDACTED]

Thank you for your recent communication and the return of your National Insurance (NI) card.

You have requested that we send you a replacement bilingual NI card in Irish – English language, under the European Charter for regional or minority languages (Article 10)

You have also requested that we show punctuation stress marks on some of the characters in your name.

Our position on your requests is as follows:

HMRC will aim to make it easier for our customers in Scotland and Northern Ireland who wish to communicate with us and interact with our products and services in the officially recognised minority languages (or specific language), **as appropriate and when reasonably practicable**, as required under the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages (2001).

However due to the nature of our systems this could only be provided automatically:


- Where the functionality is available on the system
- The cost of doing so is reasonable and proportionate

Also, on Friday 10 September 2010, the government announced that it would introduce a new system for distributing National Insurance numbers to people. The plastic National Insurance number card will be replaced with a letter, saving the government money. We therefore cannot send a person a plastic National Insurance number card because HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) no longer issues replacement National Insurance number cards.



We will send you a letter confirming your NI number under separate cover.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Craig Simpson', written in a cursive style.

Craig Simpson
Assistant Officer

MAKES NO CENSUS

Irish language group hits out at insistence on English-only forms

MAURICE FITZMAURICE
in fitzmaurice@wmg.co.uk

LANGUAGE activists hit out at the Government yesterday for refusing to supply census forms in Irish.

And a delegation will travel to London today to make their point of how Irish is being "neglected".

Census forms in the UK can be completed in Scots Gaelic or Welsh but not Irish.

However, a fact-sheet in Irish explaining how to complete the census will be sent to homes on request.

Census forms must be filled in by each family and returned before this Sunday.

In the 2001 census, 167,487 people in Northern Ireland declared they had knowledge of Irish, including 10,917 Protestants.

Refusal to complete the census form, or completing it in Irish, is illegal and could

lead to a £1,000 fine. Janet Muller, chief executive of pressure group Pobal, accused the Government of failing its responsibilities under European language laws.

She said: "The Irish language community here is seeking the same rights as those given to Welsh and Scots Gaelic speakers."

"The fact is that the census form has been translated into Irish but it's for information only and it's actually illegal to fill in the form in Irish."

Ms Muller added it appeared the parties in Stormont had no power over the census.

She said: "We also wanted the Government to include more detailed questions for those who have Irish."

"This is a one-off opportunity to get precise details of the language revival - for example its economic benefits - but our appeals have fallen on deaf ears."

"It's another example of why we urgently need an Irish language act."

Voice of the Mirror: Page 10



A INSTRUCTION A fact sheet is available in Irish but the census forms themselves are not

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911

NAME	AGE	SEX	RELIGION	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY	IRISH SPEAKING	ENGLISH SPEAKING
O'Boyle, Mary	27	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, John	24	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, William	17	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, Elizabeth	15	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, Thomas	12	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None

O'Boyle, Mary	27	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, John	24	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, William	17	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, Elizabeth	15	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
O'Boyle, Thomas	12	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None

EVIDENCE
O'Boyle
- O'Boyle
- family in
Red Bay, Co
Antrim

Native speakers made their mark century ago

MANY families filled in their census forms in Irish 100 years ago.

There were native speakers throughout counties Armagh, Down, Derry and Tyrone. And the returned forms show Irish was a widely spoken community language in the Glens of Antrim and on Rathlin Island.

But even then, the decline of the language was obvious. Many older people in households wrote that they spoke Irish only, while their grandchildren spoke only English.

Gearoid Mac Siacais, who studied the 1911 census, said scholars are surprised how many of these native speakers could also write fluently.

He added: "Irish wasn't taught in schools so they probably learned how to read and write in Irish from their parents or at hedge schools. In 1911

the form was only available in English and had to be filled in in English.

"But still, thousands of people filled it in in Irish. It could be that they were more comfortable speaking and writing in Irish or they could have been influenced by the Gaelic revival which started about 10 years earlier."

He said the returns showed Irish speakers crossed the religious divide, adding: "Most of the streets in the Shankill had Irish speakers, many who had obviously just moved in from the country."

"A Protestant minister living on the Falls Road filled his form in completely in Irish. Much of what is now Northern Ireland had genuine Gaeltacht areas."

"Many of those same areas still retain significant numbers of Irish speakers."

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911

NAME	AGE	SEX	RELIGION	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY	IRISH SPEAKING	ENGLISH SPEAKING
Black, Thomas	79	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	42	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	38	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	29	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	17	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	15	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	10	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	6	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None

Black, Thomas	79	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	42	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	38	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	29	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	17	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	15	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Thomas	10	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None
Black, Margaret	6	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	Irish	None

HISTORY
Dubh - Black
- family on
Rathlin



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Decision on the Establishment of a Nursery Unit at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castlewellan

Education Minister, John O'Dowd, has turned down a Development Proposal for the establishment of a statutory nursery unit at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castlewellan.
~ Friday, 2 September 2011

Explaining the reasons for his decision, Mr O'Dowd commented: "I take my statutory duties in relation to Irish-medium education very seriously. Each development proposal for the establishment of new provision must, however, be carefully considered on the basis of all the information pertinent to the individual case.

"In this instance there are already sufficient Irish-medium places to meet current demand in the area and it is not my Department's policy to displace good quality pre-school provision already in existence, with pre-school provision in an alternative setting. On that basis I could not endorse this proposal."

Notes to editors:

1. On 22 March 2011, the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) published Development Proposal (DP) No. 220, which proposes the establishment of a statutory nursery unit at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castlewellan to be known as Naíscoil Uachtar Tíre, with effect from 1 September 2011, or as soon as possible thereafter. It will be co-educational, catering for children of pre-school age and providing 26 full-time places. The two month objection period ended on 22 May 2011.
2. There is currently a voluntary pre-school playgroup, known as Naíscoil Uachtar Tíre operating at Circular Road, Castlewellan. In 2010/11, the playgroup had 26 PEAG funded places.
3. Watch videos from the Department of Education on the [Department's YouTube channel](http://www.youtube.com/thedeptofeducation). (<http://www.youtube.com/thedeptofeducation>)
4. Media queries to Communications Team, Department of Education, 028 9127 9207 or Press Office, Department for Employment and learning, Tel 02890 547 492. Out of office hours please contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 07699 715 440 and your call will be returned.



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Decision on the establishment of a Nursery Unit at Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley

Education Minister, John O'Dowd, has turned down a Development Proposal for the establishment of a statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley.

~ Friday, 2 September 2011

Explaining the reasons for his decision, Mr O'Dowd commented: "I take my statutory duties in relation to Irish-medium education very seriously. Each development proposal for the establishment of new provision must, however, be carefully considered on the basis of all the information pertinent to the individual case.

"In this instance there are already sufficient Irish-medium places to meet current demand in the area and it is not my Department's policy to displace good quality pre-school provision already in existence with pre-school provision in an alternative setting. On that basis, I could not endorse this proposal."

Notes to editors:

1. The North Eastern Education and Library Board published Development Proposal Number 258, in the week commencing 14 March 2011 proposing that a new grant-aided Irish medium nursery unit be established at Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley to be known as Naíscóil Éanna, from 1 September 2011 or as soon as possible thereafter.
 2. There is currently a voluntary pre-school playgroup, known as Naíscóil Éanna operating at Saint Enda's GAA, Hightown Road, Glengormley. In 2010/11, the playgroup had 24 PEAG funded places.
 3. Watch videos from the Department of Education on the [Department's YouTube channel](#). (<http://www.youtube.com/thedeptofeducation>)
 4. Media queries to Communications Team, Department of Education, 028 9127 9207 or Press Office, Department for Employment and learning, Tel 02890 547 492. Out of office hours please contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 07699 715 440 and your call will be returned.
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Education Minister marks new beginning for Gaelscoil Éanna

Education Minister, John O'Dowd, has cut the first sod of a new building for Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley.

~ Thursday, 10 November 2011

The new accommodation will consist of three classrooms, resource space, offices, staff room and play areas and is due to be completed by April 2012 at a cost of nearly £500,000. The scheme will be managed by Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta (InaG), the Trust Fund for Irish-Medium Education and was initially announced by the previous Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane, in March 2010.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Minister said: "I am pleased to be here to officially cut the first sod of new school accommodation for Gaelscoil Éanna. This marks a new beginning for all those involved with the Gaelscoil and is another chapter in Irish-medium education in Glengormley and the surrounding area.

"The Irish language is an integral part of our rich and shared heritage and I value the benefits that Irish-medium education offers children. This is an exciting time for everyone involved in Gaelscoil Éanna and I celebrate along with the rest of the Irish-medium sector the start of this new build.

"I would like to congratulate the Principal, Maighréd Ní Chonghaile, the staff, Board of Governors, Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta and of course the parents and pupils who have worked so hard to get to this stage."

Notes to editors:

1. Gaelscoil Éanna opened in 2007 and is located on a site at St Enda's, Glengormley.
2. The contractors for the scheme are the McAvoy Group.
3. Watch video from the Department of Education on our [YouTube channel](http://www.youtube.com/thedeptofeducation) (<http://www.youtube.com/thedeptofeducation>).
4. Media queries, contact the Department of Education's Communications Team on Tel No: 028 9127 9701. Out of office hours please contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 07699 715 440 and your call will be returned.







The logo for POBAL, featuring the word "pobal" in a teal, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are enclosed within a purple, stylized circular graphic that resembles a hand or a gear with two dots at the top and bottom.

pobal

The logo for Foras na Gaeilge, featuring a stylized blue and white eye-like graphic.

Foras na Gaeilge

The logo for the Department for Social Development, featuring a cluster of blue dots.

Department for
Social
Development
www.dsdni.gov.uk

The logo for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, featuring a stylized black and white graphic of a spiral or eye.

arts
council
of Northern Ireland

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