



Seimineár Comhairliúcháin ar Straitéis Dréachta na Roinne CEF le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú

**Déardaoin 25ú Deireadh Fómhair 2012
Óstán Europa, Béal Feirste**

Tuairisc an tseimineáir

Consultation Seminar on the DCAL Draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language

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Europa Hotel, Belfast**

Report of the seminar

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An Seimineár Comhairliúcháin

Choimisiúnaigh an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóilíochta (RCEF) POBAL le seimineár comhairliúcháin a reáchtáil agus a éascú ar Straitéis Dréachta na Roinne le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú, agus le tuairisc na hócáide a ullmhú mar thaifead agus mar aighneacht na hócáide. D’oscail Carál Ní Chúilín, an tAire Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta an seimineár. Ar eochairchainteoirí eile na hócáide bhí: **Iwan Evans**, Stiúrthóir Straitéis na Breataine, Rialtas na Breataine Bige, **Ealasaíd Nic an t-Saoir**, Cathaoirleach ar Bhòrd na Gàidhlig agus **Dónall Ó Baoill**, Ollamh Emeritus. Rinne siad a saintaithí féin ar phleanáil straitéiseach teanga a roinnt le rannpháirtithe an tseimineáir. Bhí feidhmeannaigh shinsearach de chuid na Roinne ann leis an doiciméad comhairliúcháin a chur i láthair agus le ceisteanna a fhreagairt. Bhí deis ag na rannpháirtithe an Straitéis Dréachta a phlé ag ceardlanna, agus a gcuid tuairimí a léiriú.

Seo chugaibh tuairisc agus aighneacht an tseimineáir.

Nóta ar leagan amach

Le linn na bpríomhchodanna den seimineár, cuireadh aistriúchán comhuaineach ar fáil do dhaoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu, nó nach bhfuil líofa. Bhí seo ina dhúshlán ó thaobh leagan amach na cáipéise de. Ghlac muid le cuir chuige éagsúla nuair a thrasríobh muid agus nuair a leag muid amach rannóga éagsúla an tseimineáir sa doiciméad. Má tharla gur mó Gaeilge a bhí á labhairt sa rannán, chuir muid an Ghaeilge sa cholún ar chlé agus ár n-aistriúchán Béarla féin sa cholún ar dheis. Má tharla gur mó Béarla a bhí á labhairt sa rannán, mar a tharla maidir le beirt dár gcainteoirí agus le hionadaithe na Roinne, chuir muid Béarla i gcolún amháin. Sa cheardlann ar Oideachas, áit a raibh aistriúchán comhuaineach ar fáil, labhraíodh i bhfad níos mó Gaeilge ná labhraíodh sa dhá cheardlann eile, ina raibh ionchur ann i mBéarla nó i nGaeilge, leis na Gaeilgeoirí ag féin-aistriú. Aistriúodh an cheardlann ar Oideachas nuair ba ghá agus cuireadh an Ghaeilge sa cholún ar chlé agus Béarla sa cholún ar dheis. Bhí eisceacht amháin ann, nuair a labhair rannpháirtithe sa cheardlann i mBéarla. Sa chás seo, cuireadh Béarla sa dá colún taobh le taobh. Cé go bhfuil seo athráiteach corrúair, cinntíonn sé nach gcailltear ionchur le meancóg agus daoine ag léamh an cholúin Gaeilge amháin. Má tharla gur mó Béarla a bhí á labhairt i gceardlanna, agus sa seisiún Ceisteanna agus Freagraí, chuir muid téacs dátheangach i gcolún amháin, leis an ionchur sa Ghaeilge i gcló trom agus aistriúcháin i mBéarla go díreach thíos faoi. Sa seisiún Ceisteanna & Freagraí, chuir na cainteoirí iad féin in iúl ach ní dharna siad amhlaidh sna ceardlanna. Mar sin, agus muid ag trasríobh na gceardlanna, d’úsáid muid litreacha in ord aibítire do gach cainteoir nua, in áit ainmneacha.

The Consultation Seminar

POBAL was commissioned by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to organise and facilitate a consultation seminar on the Department’s Draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language and to prepare a report of the event as a record of and submission from the event. The Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Carál Ní Chúilín, officially opened the seminar. Other keynote speakers included: **Iwan Evans**, Leader of the Welsh Language Strategy, Welsh Government, (**Ealasaíd Nic an t-Saoir**) **Elizabeth Mc Atear**, Chair of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and **Dónall Ó Baoill**, Emeritus Professor who brought their experience of strategic language planning to the seminar. Senior DCAL Officials were there to present the consultation document and answer questions. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the draft strategy in workshops and to put forward their views.

This is the report of and submission from the seminar.

Note on layout

During the main sections of the seminar, those who do not speak Irish, or who are not fluent, were facilitated through simultaneous translation. This posed some challenges in the document lay out. In transcribing the different sections of the seminar and in laying out this document, we adopted slightly different approaches. Where the main language of the section was Irish, we carried the Irish in the left hand column and our own English translation in the right hand column. Where the main language was English, as was the case with two of our guest speakers and representatives of the Department, the English text runs across the whole page in a single column. In the Education workshop, where there was simultaneous translation available, significantly more Irish was spoken than in the other two workshops, where contributions were made in both English or Irish, with speakers in Irish self-translating. The Education workshop has been translated where necessary and the Irish language text runs in the left-hand column and the English in the right. The only exception to this, is where contributors at this workshop spoke in English. In this instance, we have carried the English text in both columns side by side. Whilst this is a little repetitive, it ensures that these contributions are not inadvertently overlooked by those reading the Irish language column alone. Where there was more English spoken in workshops, and in the Question and Answer session, the bilingual text runs across the entire page, with the Irish language contributions shown in bold text with translations in English directly underneath. In the Question & Answer session, speakers identified themselves. In the workshops they did not. Therefore, in the workshop transcriptions we use a letter to denote a new speaker.

Fáilte agus Cúlra

Janet Muller

Príomhfheidhmeannach POBAL

Cuirim fáilte romhaibh inniu a Aire, a chomhairleoirí, a stát seirbhíseach, agus a ionadaithe an phobail, chuig ócáid tábhachtach chomhairliúcháin ar Straitéis Dréachta de chuid na Roinne Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú. Rinne an Roinn POBAL a choimisiúnú leis an seimineár seo a eagrú agus a éascú, agus ar maidin, beidh deis againn níos mó eolais a fháil faoin dréacht straitéis, eolas ó Aire na Roinne, Carál Ní Chuilín, agus ó fheidhmeannaigh sinsearacha na Roinne; beidh muid ag cluinstitín ó thriúir shainchainteoirí ar leith faoi thaithí s'acu sa Bhreatain Bheag, in Albain agus i dtaca le pleanáil teanga agus féidearthachtaí ag an am i láthair thuaidh agus theas.

Cuirim fáilte roimh ár bpainéal de chainteoirí, Iwan Evans, Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir agus Dónall Ó Baoill. Ansin, i ndiaidh chur i láthair na Roinne ar na moltaí, beidh deis againn ceisteanna a chur ar an Roinn agus ar an phainéal de chainteoirí chomh maith faoin bhealach chun tosaigh. Ansin, beidh ceardlanna ann le gnéithe éagsúla an straitéis dréachta a phlé. I ndiaidh na hócáide seo, beidh POBAL ag ullmhú tuairisce don Roinn mar chuid den phróiseas comhairliúcháin. Molaim go láidir do gach duine atá anseo inniu aighneachtaí scríofa de bhur gcuid féin a chur isteach chomh maith, roimh an spriocdháta, 27 Samhain. Beidh POBAL ag cur comhairle agus ta-caoíochta ar fáil do dhream ar bith, níl le déanamh ach teacht i dteagmháil linn.

Anois, le tús a chur leis an seimineár, cuirim Arthur Scott, Stiúrthóir Cultúir na Roinne i bhur láthair, go raibh maith agaibh.

Arthur Scott

Director of Culture for the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Welcome and Background

Janet Muller

CEO POBAL

I should like to welcome you all here today, Minister, Councillors, civil servants and community representatives, to this important consultation event on the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure Draft Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language. The Department has commissioned POBAL to organise and facilitate this seminar, and this morning, we shall have a chance to find out more information about the draft strategy; from the Minister, Carál Ní Chuilín and from senior officials in the Department; we shall be hearing from three expert speakers about their experience in Wales, Scotland and in relation to language planning and the current opportunities north and south.

I should like to welcome our panel, Iwan Evans, Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir and Dónall Ó Baoill. Then following the Department's presentation on the proposals, we will have a chance to put questions to the Department and to the panel of speakers as well, about the way forward. Following this, there will be workshops to allow us to discuss various aspects of the draft strategy. After this event, POBAL will prepare a report for the Department as part of the consultation process. I strongly urge everyone here today to put in your own written submissions as well, before the closing date of 27th November. POBAL will provide advice and support to anyone who wishes it, you have only to contact us.

Now, to begin the seminar, I would like to introduce Arthur Scott, Director of Culture for the Department. Thank you.

Arthur Scott

Stiúrthóir Cultúir na Roinne Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta

Maidin mhaith - good morning. I'd like to introduce the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Carál Ní Chuilín.

Seoladh an tSeimineáir Seminar Launch

Carál Ní Chuilín,
An tAire Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta
The Minister for Cultúr, Arts and Leisure

Maidin mhaith a dhaoine uaisle. Is cúis áthais domhsa seimineár comhairliúcháin Gaeilge an lae inniu a oscailt. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. It is a pleasure for me to open today's Irish language consultation seminar.

I would like to begin by thanking Janet Muller and her team in POBAL for helping my Department to organise this seminar. It's great to see so many from across the Irish language community and I would like to thank all of you for giving up your time to be here. I am sure that by the end of this morning's seminar, you will feel that it has been a very worthwhile experience.

In July, I was delighted to launch the consultation on the draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language. It is another milestone on our journey. The Irish language is a valuable part of our shared cultural heritage. This strategy recognises the importance of the language and should be viewed in the context of the commitments given following the 2006 Agreement at St Andrews, which resulted in the 1998 NI Act being amended. This placed a duty on the Executive to adopt a strategy setting out how it proposes to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language. This strategy also addresses the requirements of the Programme for Government 2011-2015, which contains the development of a strategy for the Irish language as a key building block under Priority 4 of the Programme 'Building a Strong and Shared Community'.

As I stated in my foreword to the consultation document, the development and protection of the Irish language should not be viewed as divisive or a threat to any member of our community. The purpose of this strategy is



to make the Irish language more accessible. The strategy promotes the Irish language in a positive progressive way aiming to break down the barriers and negative preconceptions which have surrounded the language and opening Irish up to everyone who chooses to use it. Such barriers are already being broken down as demonstrated by positive statements from Unionist politicians and the fact that Irish language classes are being held among the Unionist community on the Newtownards Road.

Three months into the consultation period, I am greatly heartened by the level of interest there has been in the strategy and the discussions that are taking place among the Irish language community. However, with just over 4 weeks left, now is the time for those discussions to be translated into formal responses to the consultation. When launching the consultation, I stated that I view full and comprehensive public consultation as a vital part of the development of the content and substance of the strategy. It is critical that the content of this strategy reflects the needs of our people. The consultation document sets out aims and objectives for the Irish language strategy and identifies several key areas for action. I want to know your opinion on these. Do you agree with these aims and objectives? What are your opinions on the Areas for Action? It is for those with an interest in the language to confirm that what we have got it right or identify gaps to tell us what more the strategy should include. I am committed to a full and meaningful consultation process. I am determined to ensure everyone has the opportunity to shape the content of the Irish language strategy.

I am delighted to welcome Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir from Scotland's Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Iwan Evans from the Welsh Government and Dónall Ó Baoill from Queen's University. They will add to our knowledge by giving us an overview of how language strategies were developed and implemented in Scotland, Wales and the south. This will give us a chance to step back a little and consider what can be learned from the experiences of others in order for us to make our own strategy stronger.

With your participation today's seminar has great potential to further inform and strengthen the draft strategy. It presents us with opportunities to hear about and be informed by the experience of language strategies in Scotland, Wales and the south, the opportunity to hear from my officials about the contents of the draft strategy and the consultation process, the opportunity to question and be informed by the guest speakers and my officials, and, importantly, you will also have the opportunity to consider and discuss the draft strategy among yourselves and put forward informed, substantive responses to the consultation to improve the final strategy. I would encourage you to make sure your voice is heard.

After today's seminar, POBAL will provide my Department with a report on the proceedings and this will be considered as part of the consultation. But, of course, everyone here today can provide their own response and I would urge you all to do so. Ensure that your voice is heard. I would also urge you to engage with others that have an interest in the Irish language and encourage them to share their views with us by responding to the consultation. All views and opinions are of value. Over the past months, my officials have engaged with the public and met with Irish language groups in Newry, An Carn, and Belfast and will be attending a consultation meeting in Derry on 14th November. Over the remaining four weeks of the consultation period, they will do their best to accept all invitations to meet in order to fulfil my commitment to a full and meaningful consultation.

This is a great opportunity for you to input to the consultation process that will develop and agree a strategy to protect and enhance the Irish language. This is your chance to make the strategy meaningful and strong. I am delighted with the high level of interest that is being shown in the consultation by the Irish language community. It is vital that this interest results in actual responses to the consultation process in order to strengthen and improve the final strategy.

I hope that you find this morning to be positive, constructive and beneficial in helping you put together your responses to the consultation which formally closes on the 27th November.

Unfortunately, due to other commitments I cannot stay this morning to take part in your discussions but I look forward to reading the report on the proceedings. I look forward to receiving your responses.

Go raibh maith agaibh.

Réamhrá

Janet Muller

Príomhfheidhmeannach POBAL

Tá POBAL chun tosaigh i bhforbairt stádas na teanga ó bhí 1998 ann. Go dtí seo, reáchtáil muid sraith d'ócáidí le forbairt pholasaithe don Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn. I 2010, bhunaigh muid Grúpa Oibre le hionadaithe na n-ollscoileanna agus le daoine eile le saineolas ar an oideachas agus ar na meáin, agus chuir muid moltaí roimh an phobal. Seoladh na torthaí ar aghaidh chuig an Aire agus a Roinn. Mar gheall ar an tseantaithí atá againn, cuireann muid fáilte roimh fhoilsiú cháipéis na Roinne Cultúr, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta, mar chuid de chomhlíonadh dualgas an Fheidhmeannais faoi Acht Cill Rímhinn 2006. Cuireann an tAcht sin dualgas ar an Fheidhmeannas 'glacadh le straitéis d'fhorbairt na Gaeilge' agus tá tábhacht leis an fhoclaíocht sin. Ní deir sé go gcaithfear straitéis a dhréachtú, ní deir se go gcaithfear straitéis a phlé, deir an tAcht go gcaithfear glacadh le straitéis don teanga. Tá tábhacht ar leith leis sin, mar thiocfadh dó go dtugann sé cúltacaíocht láidir don Aire agus í ag cur moltaí a Roinne ós chomhar an phobail. Ní chomhlíonfar dualgas reachtúil an Fheidhmeannais go nglacfar le straitéis don Ghaeilge. Mar gheall ar sin, tá sé níos tábhachtaí arís go gcluineann an Roinn ón phobal faoi aon bhearnaí a fheiceann muid sna moltaí nó aon bhealach leis an straitéis a fheabhsú nó a chur chun cinn. Is féidir go spreagfaidh straitéis don Ghaeilge polasaithe eile i ranna eile, trasna an Tionóil, agus ar an bhealach sin go n-imreoidh sí tionchar dearfach ar chomhairlí áitiúla, ar chomhlachtaí poiblí agus fiú ar chomhlachtaí príobháideacha.

Thiocfadh dó go gcuideodh straitéis na Roinne le forbairt pholasaí ar an Ghaelscolaíocht, le tuilleadh acmhainní agus margáíocht níos suntasaí faoin Ghaelscolaíocht. Thiocfadh léi cur le teagasc na Gaeilge sa chóras Béarla chomh maith. Thiocfadh léi tionchar a imirt ar thraenáil, ar earcú foirne le seirbhísí níos cuimsithigh a fhorbairt agus a chur ar fáil do lucht labhartha na Gaeilge, mar chuid den chomhphobal. Thiocfadh léi cuidigh le hardú feasachta ar an teanga mar chuid de shaibhreas roinnte na tíre seo, agus ar an díbhinn sláinte is oideachais a thagann ón dátheangachas. Ach tá rudaí nach féidir le straitéis a dhéanamh, is cuma cé chomh maith is atá sí. Ní hionann straitéis agus reachtaíocht, cé go dtig le straitéis reachtaíocht a mholadh. Agus in gach áit a gcluineann muid faoi inniu, sa Bhreatain Bheag, in Albain, i ndeisceart na hÉireann, tá reachtaíocht teanga ann ceanna féin a chuidíonn le straitéisí agus le polasaithe a chur

Introduction

Janet Muller

CEO POBAL

POBAL has been to the fore in developing the status of the language from 1998 onwards. To date, we have organised a series of events to promote the development of policies for Irish. In 2010, we established a Working Group with representatives of the universities and others with expertise on education and the media, and we presented proposals to the community. The results were then sent on to the Minister and her Department. Because of our long standing experience, we welcome the publication of the DCAL document as part of the fulfilment of the duty of the Executive under the 2006 St Andrews' Act. This Act places a duty on the Executive to 'adopt a strategy for the development of the Irish language' and this wording is important. It does not say that a strategy must be drafted, it does not say that a strategy must be discussed, the Act says that an Irish language strategy must be adopted. This is crucial, because it could be seen to give strong support to the Minister in putting forward publically the Department's proposals. The statutory duty of the Executive will not be fulfilled until an Irish language strategy has been adopted. Because of this, it is more important than ever that the Department hears from the community about any gaps we may see in the proposals or any way in which the strategy may be improved or promoted. It is possible that an Irish language strategy could act as a catalyst for policies in other departments, across the Assembly, and in this way that it could influence positively local councils, public bodies and even private companies.

The Department's strategy could help in the development of a policy for Irish Medium Education, with more resources and more significant marketing of Irish Medium Education. It could add to the teaching of Irish in the English Medium sector also. It could influence training, and staff recruitment to develop and provide more comprehensive services to Irish speakers as part of the wider community. It could help with raising awareness of the language as part of this country's shared wealth, and of the health and educational dividend that comes from bilingualism. But there are things which a strategy cannot do, however good it is. Strategies are not the same as legislation, even though a strategy can propose legislation. In each place that we will hear about today, in Wales, in Scotland, in the south of Ireland, there is already language legislation in place to help bring policies and strategies forward. A strategy is a start to a story,

chun cinn. Is é tús an scéil é an straitéis, ní a dheireadh, agus beidh orainn uilig a chur go leanúnach le straitéis teanga, a chinntiú go n-oibríonn bearta éagsúla de gach cineál le chéile go maith, le creatlach iomlán a sholáthar chun forbairt na teanga a éascú agus a chur chun cinn.

Cluinfidh muid ó phainéal de chainteoirí níos moille, agus is léir go bhfuil go leor le foghlaim óna dtaithí. Tá a fhios againn, mar shampla, sa deisceart, gur tugadh treoiríní deonacha isteach maidir leis an Ghaeilge sna hochtóidí. Rinneadh cáineadh géar orthu mar, cé go raibh na treoiríní féin maith go leor, rinneadh neamart orthu. Ghlac sé reachtaíocht leis an scéal sin a athrú, agus fiú amháin ansin, ní raibh gach rud foirfe, agus bheadh, b'fhéidir, roinnt daoine den tuairim nach raibh an reachtaíocht láidir go leor. Cluinfidh muid b'fhéidir ón phainéal faoi cé chomh tábhachtach is atá sé, ina dtaithí féin, an pacáiste iomlán a bheith ann uilig le chéile, leis an teanga a chur chun cinn go héifeachtach. Ach, ba mhaith liom an painéal a chur i bhur láthair.

not an ending, and we shall all have to add to the language strategy continuously, to ensure that the various measures of all types can work well together to provide a complete framework which facilitates and promotes the development of the language.

Later, we shall hear from a panel of speakers, and it is clear that we can learn a great deal from their experience. We know, for example, that in the south, voluntary guidelines for the Irish language were introduced in the eighties. They were strongly criticised, because even though the guidelines themselves were adequate, they were ignored. It took legislation to change that attitude, and even then, everything was not perfect. Perhaps some might say that the legislation was not strong enough. We may hear from the panel about how important it has been, in their experience that the whole package should be working together, in order that language promotion can work best. I should like to introduce the panel.

Ealasaíd Nic An t-Saoir

Cathaoirleach Eatramhach, Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Interim Chairperson, Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Tógadh Ealasaíd Nic an t-Saoir ar Oileán Barra. D'éirigh sí as Bord Lews Castle College i mí Aibreáin 2010 tar éis ocht mbliana ar an Bhord, an dá bhliain dheireanacha caite mar Chathaoirleach. Bhí sí ina hionadaí freisin don Choláiste mar ghobharnóir ar Institiúid Mhílaoise Ollscoil na nGarbhchríocha agus Inse Ghall. Roimhe sin, bhí sí ar Bhord SSN na nOileán Siar ar feadh 10 mbliana, cuid den am sin mar Chathaoirleach. Tugann sí saintaithí do chathaoirleacht an Bhoird maidir le pleanáil straitéiseach agus maidir le forbairt an rialachais.

Elizabeth (Betty) McAtear was brought up on the Isle of Barra. She retired from the Board of Lews Castle College in April 2010 after serving eight years on the Board, the last two as Chairman. She also represented the College as a governor on the Board of the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute. Previously, she served on the NHS Western Isles Board for 10 years, part of that time as Chair. She brings valuable knowledge of strategic planning and experience of development of governance to the Bòrd.

Good morning. I am Ealasaíd Nic an t-Saoir, (Elizabeth McAtear.) I am interim chair for Bord na Gàidhlig in Scotland. I was born and bred on the island of Barra in the Western Isles, which are the first islands you come to when you go north, so I don't come from too far away. I'm very pleased to accept the invitation to address you today. Bord na Gàidhlig is pleased to participate in anything that helps to develop the Celtic languages, no matter where they are being developed.

We have a strategy document called Fás is Feabhas, that is Growth and Improvement, and it's a strategy for action. Fás is Feabhas would imply that we already have something to build on, and we certainly do. It's been a long time in the building, and I'll give you a very short history of it, to let you know how we got to where we are today. The Gaelic language has had its ups and its downs over the centuries, and I have to say that in the last century and a half, it's been very much 'swings and roundabouts'. The 1872 Education Act forbade the speaking of the Gaelic language in Scotland. All children had to be educated through the medium of English.

They all spoke Gaelic, they couldn't speak English, but they had to be educated through English, and that was very nearly the death-knell of the language. In 1918, there was a slight reversal, with the recognition of Gaelic in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. And you'll see that that we have Missed Opportunities and we have Outcomes. Although there were attempts to help the language, it's questionable if the outcomes of these were of any benefit, or of any great benefit. In the 1950s, there was more recognition, and there was actually a memoranda issued, urging the use of it. That was fine – wonderful words, but not much action. And then, it carried on into the late 1950s, and they introduced Gaelic Medium schemes in schools in the highlands and Islands. I am actually a product of one of these. I remember Friday afternoons, having Gaelic programmes to work with, and again, the outcome is questionable, because children, who spoke the language naturally, were being given projects about learning the names of birds and flowers. That was the Gaelic we were being taught at that time in the school. But, it was a little something, it was a slight development. And then in 1974, the Scottish National Party made a resolution for a policy, both in existing Gaelic areas, and for the whole of Scotland. Now, Gaelic was always strongest in the Highlands and in the islands, in the Western Isles, but the Scottish National party committed to taking it Scotland-wide, and that was a whole new dimension. They were a new party, in their infancy at that time, with huge aspirations. So, we now have the turning point. We now have a political party that is committed to promoting the language. They weren't in power, but they had a very strong voice. And in 1980 we had the Education Act, that enabled parents to request education for their children, and that was the real turning point, I think, for Gaelic, because parents were able to ask, and demand, that the local authorities teach their children in the language, and in the 80s, there was considerable movement. Sabhail Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic college in Skye, and Cumann na Gàidhlig, the main Gaelic agency in Scotland, had a major conference, and the Scottish minister was told that the government's benevolent neutrality was stifling Gaelic, instead of helping it, and the minister took those words to heart, and from then we started to have a positive offer for Gaelic, both in Education, Broadcasting and the Arts, and from then, small areas of development started to emerge. And in 1985 we saw the first Gaelic Medium Units being introduced in English Medium schools in the Western Isles, and that was as a result of parental pressure. In order to enable these Gaelic medium units to flourish, the government, in 1986, made specific grants available, through the Specific Grants Regulations, so there was a set amount of money given to each local authority in Scotland to use for the purposes of teaching the children through Gaelic – a real commitment, and some real action.

In 2005, the Gaelic language Act gave the Gaelic language its official, legal status, and that was a huge leap forward. The language Act established Bord na Gàidhlig, so, as an organisation, it is still very much in its infancy – it's only been around for seven years – but in that time, it has focussed on Education, as set out in the Act, and on Gaelic Language Plans, which are a requirement in the Act, and a very important element of the Act, in that, all local authorities, and all public bodies in Scotland, must adopt a Gaelic Language Plan, whether they like it or not. And it is part of the requirement of Bord na Gàidhlig to oversee that development, and to ensure that it progresses. At present, I think we have about twenty-odd Gaelic Language Plans, either developed or in the process, and they are making a big difference. I will refer a bit more to this later, but to move forward in our history, we are slap-bang up to date and even moving forward. We have the Scottish National Party as the ruling body in the Scottish Parliament, and they have a manifesto that gives a commitment to parental rights in Gaelic education by 2014. And in 2014, we have another momentous event in Scotland. We have a referendum on independence. So we have a government that is committed to the language, not just for the Highlands and Islands, but for the whole of Scotland, and not just for the whole of Scotland as a country, but to every element of the country, including our local authorities and our public bodies that are funded by the government.

So we have a very sound base on which to work and to develop our Gaelic language. The school in the picture



is the new Gaelic Primary school in Inverness. It was one of the first Gaelic medium schools to be opened in Scotland, and it's part of the reason that Gaelic is so popular, because children are being taught in brand new buildings, with the best of facilities, which is a great draw for parents. Bord na Gàidhlig was established in 2005, and required to submit, to the Scottish government, a national Language Plan for a five year period, the first one drawn from 2005, the second one was launched in the summer of this year, and this time last year, we were in the process of

public consultation for our second language development plan. This plan is based very much on the history of Gaelic over centuries, in that, we took note of what had happened, or, what had not happened. What were the outcomes? What were the missed opportunities? Where was there lack of action? We looked at the points, and we developed our strategy on the basis of that, as a way of moving forward, to ensure that there was positive development. And, from the learning, we decided that our National Plan should have six areas of development – separate, and yet, when put together, will combine to ensure that the whole of Scotland, everybody in Scotland, has an opportunity to ‘opt in’ to the Gaelic language.

We have six development areas. They are all listed there. The Plan is at the back, and you can all take a copy and read it, in Gaelic or in English at your leisure. We have concentrated in particular in the beginning, for the first three years of our plan, we are focussing very deeply on Home and Early Years. If you don’t get the language spoken in the home, by parents, and by the children, you’re going nowhere, so it’s hugely important to start there. And if you have the children speaking it, and the parents speaking it or learning it, then will come the education, because they will want their children educated in the best possible way, and if the Gaelic language is the way of doing that, and there is research to show the benefits of children having two languages, so there is the evidence to support Gaelic education. It will work with Irish as well, which we find is very helpful and encouraging parents to think. It’s not a deterrent, it actually enhances children’s education and their chances of being successful in their later lives. So, we are concentrating on Education. We are concentrating on the resources required for education; the buildings, the teachers, the CPDs – Continual Professional Development for teachers – for ancillary staff in the schools, so that we have a whole Gaelic ethos.

And in addition to that, we are concentrating on communities, because what’s the point in having the language spoken in the school, if everybody comes outside that building, out the gates, and it’s back to English? So we are trying to ensure that there are opportunities for the language to be spoken outwith the school. We are working with projects around the community, as many as 70 or 90 at a time – at the last round of grants for community projects, I think there was over 60 grants given to various communities throughout Scotland, not just the Highlands and Islands, to enable them to set up anything from Gaelic cafés to Gaelic childminding services – you name it. If there is a project that will help promote and grow the language, we are willing to support it. Having said that, we have a very limited budget, and we are living in very austere times. We have a budget of 5.1 million pounds per year, which might seem a lot, but we have an awful lot to do with it. But we feel that it is important to use whatever resources we have to the best advantage of our communities, to strengthen the language, to make it inclusive, to encourage adult learners, to encourage, even more, those who have it in their heads, but not on their lips, those who were, in the 50s and 60s, turning over to English, when television became the ‘in thing’, and I remember first seeing television, and hearing the strange language. But it very quickly took hold, and there is two generations of people now having to go back and learn to speak the language, not just to understand it. And these are the people who are going to strengthen the language.

Continuing with our work, again, there is no point in young people being educated in the language, having it in their communities, if they are not able to practice it in their work places. As yet, there is no requirement for the Private Sector or industries to adopt Gaelic language policies, but we are finding they are adopting them because they are finding economic benefits. Tourists love to come to Scotland and see Gaelic place names. I love going to Ireland and seeing your Gaelic place names. It’s absolutely wonderful. There is a connection. It makes it a different place. If people in the work place become empowered to speak the language, it will become commonplace. Why shouldn’t you go and ask for your morning paper in your own language? Why shouldn’t you buy your petrol, or your food, in your own language? So it’s very important for the workplace to adopt it, and we are encouraging this to happen, by showing that there are economic benefits to using the language.

Arts, Media, Heritage and Tourism – equally important, because, again, the economic benefits are enormous, and Visit Scotland, Historic Scotland, these agencies, which have a requirement to develop a language plan, are seeing the positive benefits. And finally, there is corporate planning, which means that the development of the language itself, the media, the academic side of it, must also continue, because there are forever new words being developed in languages, new ways of working, so the language has to keep abreast, especially if you are hoping, as we are, to attract and to keep young people using it, because young people will use Twitter and Facebook and all the other media that are available to them today. So therefore they should be able to use the language with all these media, websites etc. Why shouldn’t it be perfectly normal to use Gaelic in an e-mail or

on a website? Our headline target, with our current language plan, is to attain stability in the number of Gaelic speakers, by raising the rate at which new speakers are created to replacement level. Replacement level means that we want, by 2021, for the decline in the Gaelic language to be overcome. At the moment, because it is mostly older people using the language, we are losing them, and we are not getting enough new speakers coming in to replace, person for person, those that we are losing. So that is our headline target. In order to stop the erosion of the language, we have set out, by 2021, for it to be balanced out, and then, moving forward, we can start to increase the numbers again. In our 2012 – 2017 Strategic Plan, we are looking to see Primary One Gaelic Medium Education doubling, from 400 to 800, and adult learners increasing from 2000 to 3000. It may not seem an awful lot, but hugely important that we keep increasing.

And finally, our strategic plan, ‘Planning for Quality and Growth’, we see that again, looking back, the missed opportunities and looking forward, to make sure that the best opportunities for development exist. Priority should be given to ensuring the education and continuing professional development, and that the language is up to a standard that will withstand an HMIE inspection. HMIE have themselves got a Gaelic language plan, and are very supportive of the work that is being done. Resources are required. Capital, workforce planning, it all has to come together. We have to work with homes, schools and community partnerships. In Scotland, all the local authorities are required to have a Community Planning Partnership, where Health, Education, Housing, Police, all main players in the community have to come together and develop one plan. Single Outcome Agreements they are called, and they are required now to include Gaelic within these, and we are working very closely with them to ensure that they have a Gaelic focus. So we are bringing the community and the community agencies together. In doing that, we are bringing the Homes, and making sure the Homes are included and that they are not left out.

There is the hugely important work of the inter- and intra-community agency collaboration. We have the initiative, Colmcille, where we work with the Irish language on a joint initiative, because there is a lot of work already being done there, and there’s no need to re-invent the wheel. If there are resources already available, why not use them? And we particularly welcome the support we get from Colmcille in working with the Home and Early Years Strategy, because they have done a lot of work there, and it is progressing very well. We have joint resources with them, where we fund projects that help achieve the aims of the agency. And we have MG Alba, who are, again, a government-established body, covering the media side of it, and although they were established by the British government in London, they cover Scotland, and they are responsible for all the television output which we rely on to ensure that Gaelic does get to all the agencies. So you see, our strategy in moving forward, was very much to look back, to see the opportunities that had been missed, and the opportunities that lay ahead, and we have pooled all these in together into our five-year strategic plan, and are working closely with all the agencies to make sure that we can move forward, because, at the end of the day, you need the action. The words are wonderful, but actions do speak louder than words.

Tapadh leibh agus slán.

Iwan Evans

Ceannasaí, Straitéis na Breatnaise, Rialtas na Breataine Bige
Leader, Welsh Language Strategy, Welsh Government

Thosaigh Iwan ag obair le seirbhís aistriúcháin Tionól Náisiúnta na Breataine Bige i 1999 sular aistrigh sé go haonad beartais na Breatnaise ag Rialtais na Breataine Bige sa bhliain 2001. D'oibrigh sé le seacht mbliana ar chur i bhfeidhm scéim na Breatnaise de chuid Rialtas na Breataine Bige - scéim a bhí mar chreat le haghaidh soláthar seirbhísí dátheangacha ag an eagraíocht. Ó dheireadh 2008 go tús na bliana 2011, bhí sé ina bhall den fhoireann bheartais a

Iwan began work at the National Assembly for Wales translation service in 1999 before transferring to the Welsh language policy unit of the Welsh Government in 2001. He worked for seven years on implementation of the Welsh Government’s Welsh language scheme - the framework for the provision of bilingual services by the organisation. Between late 2008 and early 2011 he was a member of the policy team which developed and managed the passage of the Welsh

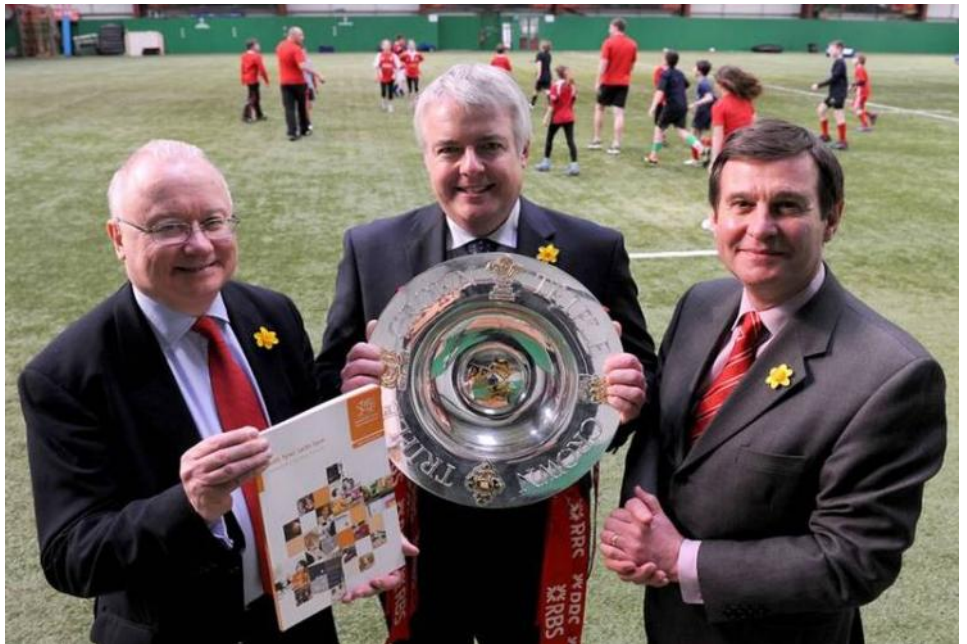
d'fhorbair agus a bhainistigh rith Bheart na Breatnaise (An Bhreatain Bheag) 2011 tríd an Tionól Náisiúnta. Dhearbhaigh an Beart stádas oifigiúil don Bhreatnais, bhunaigh sé post Choimisinéir Teanga na Breatnaise agus chruthaigh sé córas rialála nua maidir le dualgais (ar a dtugtar caighdeáin) i leith na Breatnaise. Ó lár-2011, bhí Iwan chun tosaigh maidir le forbairt agus cur i bhfeidhm Straitéis na Breatnaise nua de chuid Rialtas na Breataine Bige: Teanga bheo: Teanga shaoil. Tá fócas ar leith faoi láthair ar chur le húsáid na Breatnaise sa teicneolaíocht agus sna meáin dhigiteacha. Le cois sin, in am trátha, beidh ról aige in ionchur Rialtas na Breataine Bige sa phróiseas reachtúil le caighdeáin Breatnaise faoin Bheart a chruthaigh - próiseas atá faoi stiúir Choimisinéir na Breataine Bige.

Language (Wales) Measure 2011 through the National Assembly. The Measure confirmed the official status of the Welsh language, established the post of Welsh Language Commissioner and created a new regulatory system with regard to duties (known as standards) in respect of the Welsh language. Since mid-2011 Iwan has led on the development and implementation of the Welsh Government's new Welsh Language Strategy: A living language: a language for living. A particular focus at present is to increase the use of Welsh in technology and the digital media. He will also, in due course, be involved in the Welsh Government's contribution to the statutory process of making Welsh language standards under the Measure - a process which is being led by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Bore da. Diolch yn fawr am y gwahoddiad i fod yma heddiw. Good morning. Thank you very much for the invitation to be here today, and thank you for the welcome.

I'm here to say a few remarks about the Welsh Government's work to promote the use of the Welsh language -

and our approach in Wales to strategic language planning. Specifically, I'm going to talk about the Welsh Government's new Welsh Language Strategy - *Iaith fyw: iaith byw - A living language: a language for living*. The strategy was launched on the first of March this year - St David's Day - at the Welsh Rugby Union's training headquarters by the First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones and the Minister for Education and Skills, Leighton Andrews. It just so happened that Wales had just won the Triple Crown at Twickenham the previous Saturday - so, as a rugby-mad nation, we were in celebratory mood - and an opportunity for the Strategy to be pictured alongside the Triple Crown could not be turned down!



To introduce myself briefly. I'm a civil servant in the Welsh Government, and have been working on various aspects of Welsh language policy since 2001. I was born and raised in Cardiff - a first language Welsh-speaker - and attended Welsh language schools. I think I took being a Welsh-speaker for granted in those days. It was just a part of me, really. It wasn't until I went to University in Liverpool that I took an interest in the language and indeed I wrote a dissertation on the situation of Welsh in Cardiff as part of my Geography degree. By the time I had returned to Cardiff in 1999, Wales had voted for devolution and the National Assembly had been established. And that's when I joined the civil service. But that's enough about me. As I said, I'm here to talk about the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Strategy. I should know a bit about it - because I wrote it! I hope that my whistle stop tour of the strategy will, in some small way, help facilitate your discussions today as part of the consultation on the draft Irish language strategy.

Before I begin that tour, here's a bit of context with regard to the situation of Welsh in Wales. After all, no presentation about language planning would be complete without some maps, facts and figures. But I promise to keep it brief. I have two maps to show you - and both are based on data from the 2001 Census. We are actually eagerly awaiting the first results from the 2011 Census which are due to be published soon. In 2001,

around 580,000 people said that they could speak Welsh - which was 20.8 per cent of the population. This was an increase compared with 1991 Census - which recorded 18.7 per cent - the first percentage increase of Welsh speakers ever recorded by a Census.

This first map shows you the percentage of Welsh speakers in communities across Wales in 2001. As you can see, the communities where Welsh was the main language - which we refer to as "the heartlands" - are the mainly rural communities in the west.

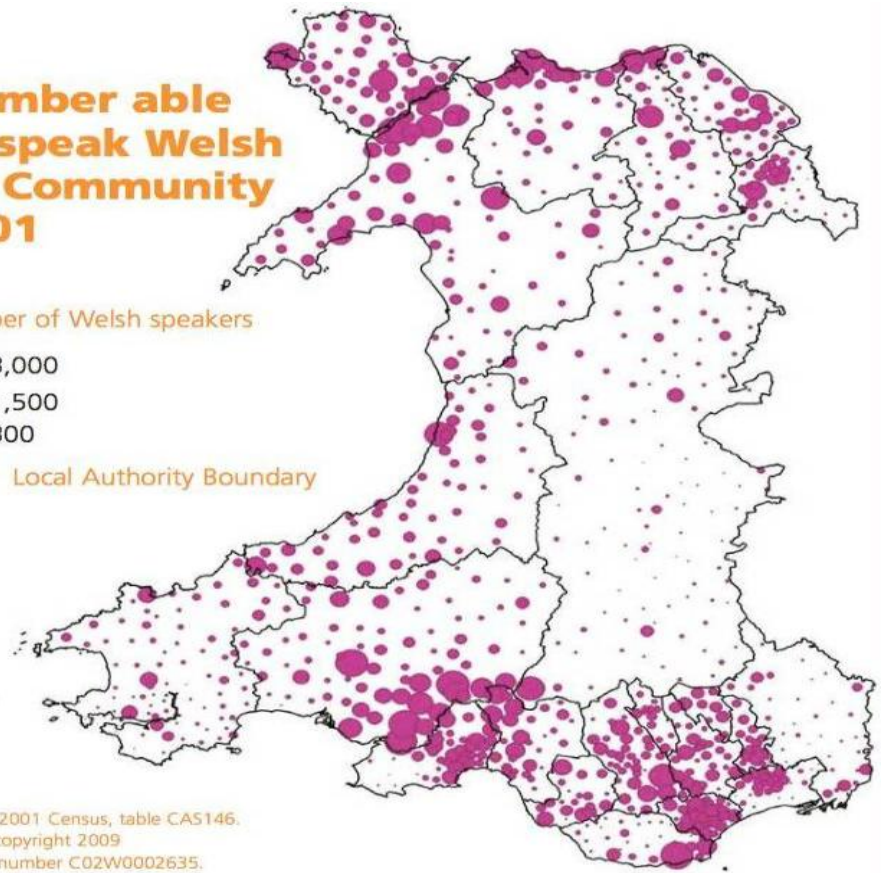
The second map, on the other hand, shows the numbers of Welsh speakers across Wales. Contrary to general perception, there are more Welsh speakers

Number able to speak Welsh by Community 2001

Number of Welsh speakers

- 3,000
- 1,500
- 300
- Local Authority Boundary

Source: 2001 Census, table CAS146.
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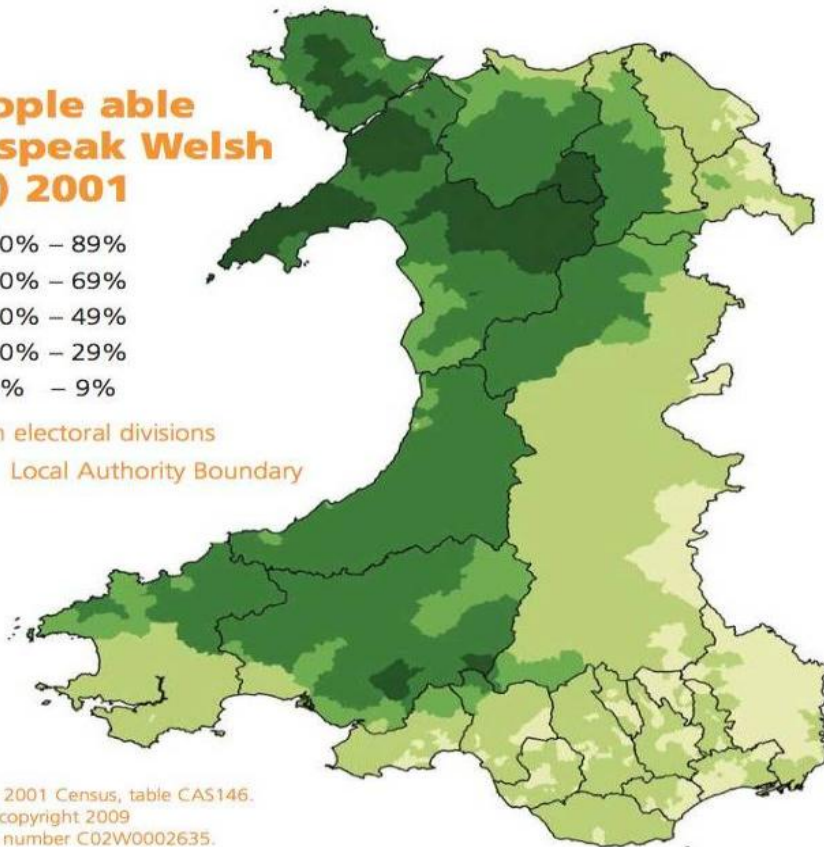


People able to speak Welsh (%) 2001

- 70% – 89%
- 50% – 69%
- 30% – 49%
- 10% – 29%
- 6% – 9%

within electoral divisions
— Local Authority Boundary

Source: 2001 Census, table CAS146.
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living in urban areas than there are in rural areas. In Cardiff, for example, there were around 30,000 Welsh speakers - or 10% - recorded in 2001. This may well increase by the time we see 2011 figures. So, there is every reason to be optimistic about the future of the Welsh language - and this is highlighted by the fact that the largest increase was amongst the 5-15 age group. However, there is a note of caution. A three-year study of Welsh language use conducted between 2004 and 2006 showed that 58% of those who said they could speak Welsh, said they were fluent. And, not unsurprisingly, fluency and use are intrinsically linked - with 87% of those who were fluent saying that they used the language daily.

A further cause for concern is that despite the percentage increase in 2001, the number of communities

where over 70% of the population were able to speak Welsh fell from 92 in 1991 to 54 in 2001. It has long been argued that such a density of speakers is required for Welsh to be an everyday language of the community. But let's be positive. We are seeing a growth in the number of Welsh speakers in urban areas, and, since the 1993 Welsh Language Act, we now have over 550 organisations operating Welsh language schemes - meaning that there are more and more opportunities to use Welsh available. The Welsh language schemes of local authorities commit them to do many things bilingually, including displaying road signs bilingually. I'm sure that anyone who has been to Wales will have noticed the bilingual road signs - one of the first victories for Welsh language campaigners in the 1960s and 70s.



From time to time we do have one or two slip-ups and this (right) is what the Welsh version of this sign says:

Something went wrong there.



We can laugh at things like this but thankfully these types of incidents are few and far between, and the serious point here is that the provision of bilingual road signs is an important aspect of the status afforded to the language in Wales.

And talking about status, since 2011, Welsh has had official status in Wales thanks to legislation passed by the National Assembly for Wales - the Welsh Language Measure. The Measure is something I could talk about at length because I was a member of the team that developed it. But I realise that today's focus is on strategic language planning in a wider context. Legislation is, however, an important piece of the strategic language planning jigsaw in Wales - a jigsaw which is a combination of education and initiatives to promote the use of Welsh on the one hand and legislation to protect rights on the other. In other words - both the carrot and the stick.

In addition to confirming official status, the Measure:

- established rights for citizens to receive services in Welsh - through duties to be placed on organisations; and
- established the office of Welsh Language Commissioner - with strengthened enforcement process to ensure that failures in the provision of services are rectified.

But back to the carrot - the need to work at a community level to encourage people to use the language in their daily lives in various domains. This is work that the Welsh Language Board and others pioneered over the last twenty years. Those responsibilities, and the staff undertaking the work, transferred to the Welsh Government in April of this year to coincide with the abolition of Board to make way for the Welsh Language Commissioner. As a result, the Welsh Government is now the primary language planning body in Wales, with around 65 members of staff in the department. And that is one of the reasons why this strategy has been prepared. So what are we trying to do in the strategy? The Welsh Government's vision which underpins the strategy is quite simple. It is:

"...to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales ...and to see an increase in the number of people who both speak and use the language."

There are two core elements to the Welsh Government's policy for achieving our vision. Firstly, via measures to enable and encourage children and other people to acquire the language, such as encouraging language transmission at home and ensuring further growth in Welsh-medium education. Indeed, the development of Welsh-medium education is dealt with in a separate strategy - the Welsh-medium Education Strategy - which now sits under the umbrella of this strategy as a key component of language acquisition. It is unlikely, however, that Welsh will thrive as a community and social language if it is dependent on the education system alone. As such - and secondly - our strategy includes measures to enable and encourage people to use the language on a daily basis - such as providing opportunities for people to use Welsh socially, at work, when receiving services - and when enjoying entertainment and recreation.

I will now briefly address each of the six strategic areas to give you a flavour of how we are attempting to meet these challenges.

Family

The first strategic area begins at home - in the family. This is probably the most important of the six aims - because Welsh needs to be the language of the home for as many children as possible. There is no doubt that

learning the language in this way is a natural and effective way to become a fluent Welsh speaker - or indeed a fluent speaker of any language. I can vouch for that as a parent of two young children, the eldest, my daughter, being a 4 year-old monolingual Welsh-speaker! But it's easy for us, because both my wife and I are first language Welsh speakers - and Welsh is the language of our home. And according to the 2001 Census - in families such as ours where both parents spoke Welsh - 82 per cent of three to four-year-olds could also speak Welsh. In families where only one parent spoke Welsh, the percentage fell to 40 per cent. In other words, 3 of every 5 families where one parent spoke Welsh did not transfer the language to their children. So this presents a formidable challenge. To address this issue, we are continuing with the Welsh Language Board's flagship programme - Twf, which means 'Growth' - which aims to encourage families - especially those families where there is one Welsh-speaking parent - to introduce the language to their children as early as possible.

Children and Young People

Over the last thirty years we have seen a considerable increase in the number of young people able to speak Welsh. But as I mentioned earlier, Census figures need to be treated with caution. It is likely that over half of children who speak Welsh have, or are, learning Welsh as a second language. So, for many Welsh speaking children from English speaking homes, school provides one of the few opportunities for them to use the language. However, evidence suggests that learning and speaking Welsh at school is not enough on its own; the language needs to be used and supported in the home (if possible) and through wider social and cultural activities. That is why the Welsh language strategy commits the Welsh Government to fund initiatives which provide children and young people with social opportunities to use their Welsh outside school - so that they associate the language not only with education, but also with leisure and cultural activities and, above all, with pleasure and entertainment.

Communities

I have already mentioned that communities in Wales which have a high percentage of Welsh speakers are changing. Inward and outward migration, limited job opportunities and lack of affordable housing have affected the linguistic profile of many communities. The strategy recognises that good work has been undertaken by the Welsh Language Board and its partners such as the Mentrau Iaith (local language initiatives) over the years to take action at grass roots level in communities across Wales to promote the use of the language. The strategy also notes that the task of renewing the language in these areas must go hand in hand with the work that other Government departments and agencies are undertaking to improve the social and economic infrastructure in those areas. A key task for us, therefore, in the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Unit is to work with our colleagues across government departments to ensure that Welsh language issues are factored into their work. The Welsh Language Measure will help us in this regard. The Measure makes provision for duties to be placed on the Welsh Government and local authorities to ensure that their policies - in whatever field - take opportunities to promote the language, and to mitigate against any adverse affects on the language.

Workplace

As individuals, we spend a lot of our time at work - unfortunately. A significant number of respondents to the consultation on the strategy felt that the workplace has an important role in building the confidence of Welsh speakers to use the language in other areas of their lives - and that developing the status of the language in the workplace was important in terms of underlining the value of Welsh-medium education. Because despite the increase in Welsh-medium education over recent years, the opportunities for young people to work through the medium of Welsh have remained comparatively limited. This, therefore, excludes Welsh from one of the key domains for a number of Welsh speakers. Our aim is to provide more opportunities for those who can speak Welsh to use the language at work - in their dealings with each other, with their customers and with their employers. As an employer itself, the Welsh Government is currently considering ways of increase opportunities for staff to use Welsh in the workplace - and to lead by example in this comparatively new area of language planning in Wales.

Services

Provision of bilingual services is a well established language planning discipline in Wales, which has largely been driven by the 1993 Welsh Language Act, and, more recently, the Welsh Language Measure of 2011. I spoke about the Measure earlier and its relationship with other language planning interventions. So I will not dwell much more on this - except to say that the Measure also expanded the range of bodies that may be required to comply with Welsh language duties in future. This includes telecommunication companies, the

utilities, and rail and bus operators.

Infrastructure

And finally - you will be relieved to hear - the sixth strategic area is to promote the infrastructure for the language. By infrastructure, I mean what tools, resources and media are available to support people's use of Welsh in all aspects of their lives. This includes things like standardisation of terminology, development of the translation industry, and research. But in particular I want to mention the media. Throughout the 20th Century, the broadcast media played an important role in the development and preservation of the Welsh language through both radio and television. We are lucky to have national radio and television channels which broadcast exclusively in Welsh. Now that we're living in a 21st Century which is dominated by digital media, the strategy sets out the Welsh Government's ambition and expectation that Welsh-speakers should be able to conduct their lives electronically through the medium of Welsh. This is a particular focus for my team at the moment, and we will soon be publishing an action plan and funding mechanism to promote the use of Welsh in technology and digital media. We want to influence the big players such as Google, Apple and Microsoft - as well as finding ways of making it easier for individuals to create Welsh language online content. This is exciting work which we hope will lead to an increase in the visibility of Welsh online.

I will end by quoting the words of the Minister, Leighton Andrews, used when he closed the Assembly debate on the Strategy in March. He said: "Ultimately, language choice is a complex matter, and there are many influences on people's decisions to use - or not to use - Welsh. As a Government, our role is to create the circumstances for it to flourish." That is what the Welsh Language Strategy is attempting to do over the next 5 years.

Finally, I wish you all the best in the development of the Irish language strategy. Thank you for listening. Diolch yn fawr.

Dónall P. Ó Baoill

Ollamh Emeritus

Professor Emeritus

Is fear Gaeltachta as Dún na nGall é Dónall P. Ó Baoill. Bhain sé céim B.A. onóracha amach sa Ghaeilge agus sa Mhatamaitic agus Ardteastas san Oideachas in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe. Bronnadh na céimeanna M.A. agus Ph.D sa teangeolaíocht air in Ollscoil Mhichigan sna Stáit Aontaithe. Bhí sé mar thaighdeoir in Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann ó 1974 - 1999. Ceapadh mar Ollamh le Gaeilge agus mar Cheann ar Roinn an Léinn Cheiltigh in Ollscoil na Banríona, Béal Feirste é ó 1999-2011. Tá mórán leabhar agus alt scríofa aige ar ghnéithe den teangeolaíocht, de theanga na Gaeilge, den bhéaloideas, de Bhéarla na hÉireann, den stair shóisialta, de mhúineadh na teanga, den dátheangachas agus ar Theanga Comhartaíochta na mBodhar in Éirinn. Tá ailt scríofa aige ar fhorbairt agus ar phleanáil teanga, ar shochtheangeolaíocht na Gaeilge agus tá eagarthóireacht déanta aige ar na foilseachain Teanga, *The Journal of Celtic Linguistics*, *Scáthlán* agus ar *Language and Politics* (1-25).

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Díreach mar thús ar mo chuid cainte, cúpla rud a bhfuil baint aige leis an sórt straitéise atá déanta

Just to start off my talk, a couple of things which are connected with the kind of strategy that POBAL's

amach ag Grúpa Oibre POBAL ar an Chreat Straitéiseach, don Ghaeilge i dTuaisceart na hÉireann. Níl sé i gceist go ndéanfaí comparáid éigin idir an straitéis 20 bliain atá á chur i bhfeidhm fá láthair go han-mhall ar fad sa deisceart agus cibé straitéis a dtiocfaimis muid chun cinn leis sa tuaisceart. Tá difríochtaí móra idir an deisceart agus an tuaisceart maidir le straitéis teanga. Tá ceantar mór, nó réasúnta mór, Gaeltachta sa deisceart. Tá múineadh na Gaeilge ar súil sna gnáthbhunscoileanna agus sna Gaelscoileanna agus tá na Gaelscoileanna ó dheas, tá siad i bhfad níos mó agus líon i bhfad níos airde acu ann ná mar atá sa tuaisceart. Mar sin de, caithfidh muid a bheith an-chúramach ag cur straitéise le chéile don tuaisceart, ach go mbainfimid úsáid as cuid de na buntáistí agus cuid den eolas atá ar fáil ó dheas, ach mar sin féin, go gcoinneois i gcumhne i gcónaí go mbaineann an straitéis seo le tuaisceart na hÉireann, le cúinsí eile agus le deacrachtaí eile chomh maith.

Rud eile a threoraigh, ár gcuid smaointe maidir leis an Chreat Straitéiseach, gur shocraigh an Grúpa Oibre go luath díriú isteach ar roinnt gnéithe a bhí bunúsach, lárnach agus tábhachtach maidir le straitéis a chur le chéile. Mheas muid, cé gur dheas linn plé le gach uile ábhar nach raibh sé ciallmhar ag an pointe seo é sin a dhéanamh ach, mar sin féin, díriú isteach ar na réimsí sin a bhfuil a fhios againn go bhfuil ag iarraidh go maith leo, agus go bhfuil seans ann go n-éireoidh go maith leo. Sin iad an t-oideachas, gan amhras, na meáin chumarsáide, cúrsaí ealaíne agus mar sin de, agus chuir muid foghrúpaí ar bun le bheith ag obair air sin, foghrúpaí agus saineolas acu ó thuaidh agus ó dheas, ar an eolas seo a bhailiú.

Croí-aidhmeanna

Tá croí-aidhmeanna againn. Síleann muid go gcaithfidh muid díriú isteach ar bhealaí níos éifeachtaí le comhoibriú agus comhordú a dhéanamh idir an obair atá ar siúl sa dá dhlíne, is é sin an obair atá ar siúl ó dheas agus an obair atá ar siúl ó thuaidh. Tá cuid de sin ar siúl ach tá sé ag leibhéal an-íseal, dar liom, agus tá sé in am díriú isteach air. Chomh maith leis sin, ba mhaith linn go ndéanfaí isteach ar na fíor-riachtanais atá ag an Ghaelscolaíocht go háirithe; cad iad na fíor-riachtanais agus cad iad na fíricí taighde atá againn, ar ar féidir linn an obair agus an straitéis a bhunú. Chomh maith leis sin, mar a luaigh mé cheana, na naisc fhollasacha seo atá ar an straitéis 20 bliain ó dheas agus an straitéis ó thuaidh. Baineann go leor den straitéis sin ó dheas le traenáil múinteoirí, cúrsaí taighde, na rudaí ar éirigh leo agus nár éirigh leo i gcúrsaí múinteoireachta agus mealladh an phobail, pobail Ghaelacha a bhunú ó dheas agus ó thuaidh. Is dóigh linn gurb iad an naisc sin, agus an comhoibriú sin, tábhachtach mar go rachaidh sé i

Working Group on the Strategic Framework put together for the Irish language in Northern Ireland. It is not the intention to make a comparison with the 20-year strategy which is currently being implemented very slowly in the south, and whatever strategy we will develop in the north. There are major differences between the south and the north in terms of a language strategy. There are large, or fairly large, Gaeltacht areas in the south. Irish is taught in the ordinary primary schools and in Irish medium schools in the south, the Irish medium schools are much larger and have much higher numbers than in the north. Therefore, we must be very careful in formulating strategy for the north and make use of some of the advantages and of information available in the South, however, we must always keep in mind that this strategy relates to the north of Ireland, and with other circumstances and other difficulties as well.

Another thing which directed our thoughts in relation to the Strategic Framework, is that the Working Group decided early on to focus on a few elements, which were basic and central and important to putting a strategy together. We thought that while we would like to deal with each and every subject, that it probably wasn't sensible to do this, but rather, to focus in on those areas which we know are succeeding or are likely to succeed. These are education, obviously, the media, the arts and so on, and we formed sub-groups to work on these, subgroups with expertise from both the north and south, to work on these topics.

Central Aims

We have central aims. We think that we need to focus on more effective ways of cooperation and coordination between the work in the two jurisdictions, namely the work in the south and the work going on in the north. Some of that is happening but it is at a very low level, of course, and it's time to focus in on that. Also, we want to focus on the real needs of Irish Medium Education (IME) in particular; what are the real needs and what are the research facts, on which we can focus our work and establish a strategy. Also, as I mentioned earlier, the specific links between the 20-year strategy in the south and the strategy in the north. Much of that strategy (in the south) relates to teacher training, research courses, the things that were successful and unsuccessful in teaching and attracting the public, establishing Gaelic communities in the south and the north. We think that those links, and that co-operation, are important because they will affect the community and will influence the community, and as well as that, and more importantly, that

bhfeidhm ar an phobal agus go n-imreoidh sé tionchar ar an phobal, agus lena chois agus níos tábhachtaí arís, go gcuirfeadh sé breis deiseanna ar fáil dúinn leis an straitéis a chur chun cinn agus le bheith cinnte go bhfuil ag éirí léi.

Bunábhar an Chreata

Níl anseo i ndáiríre i mo chuid cainte ach achoimre ar an Chreat Straitéiseach atá curtha le chéile againn. Má tá an t-eolas iomlán uaibh, caithfidh sibh an Creat sin a léamh. Tá cóip istigh sa phacáiste eolais. Ceann de na rudaí móra atá an-tábhachtach, agus ní dóigh liom go bhfuil daoine i ndiaidh díriú isteach i gceart air go fóill, cad iad na rudaí is mó a imríonn tionchar ar fhorbairt na Gaeilge, sin an teanga féin agus na rudaí a théann i bhfeidhm uirthi, agus an bhfuil muid ag díriú isteach air sin?, an bhfuil muid ag plé leis i gceart? agus mar sin de. Cad iad na buaicréimsí fáis atá againn, cad iad na réimsí móra ina bhfuil fás iontu, a bhfuil ag éirigh leo agus nach gá dúinn a bheith ag argóint an oiread sin fúthu ach b'fhéidir ag cur leo agus iad a láidriú tuilleadh(?) ionas go mbeadh samplaí againn den dóigh ar cheart dúinn gluaiseacht ar aghaidh.

Tá gá le comhordú ar an ghluaiseacht, cibé gluaiseacht a bheas againn go mbeadh sí comhordaithe. Is minic a bhíonn dreamanna sa tír seo, thuaidh agus theas, ag obair ar an rud céanna i ngan a fhios dóibh féin, agus gach dream acu den tuairim go bhfuil siad féin níos fearr ná an dream eile. Sílim go gcaithfidh muid, sa tsaol réadúil atá ann agus sa tsaol ina bhfuil cruachás airgid agus áiseanna ann, go gcaithfidh muid díriú isteach ar a bheith chomh comhordaithe agus is féidir linn maidir leis, agus tá gá le dream éigin a bheith ann leis an chomhordú sin a chinntiú.

Chomh maith leis sin, tá sé tábhachtach go mbunóimis ceantair ina bhfuil seans ann gur féidir an Ghaeilge a chur an-fhada chun cinn iontu, chan mar atá a dhéanamh fá láthair, agus caithfear anailís a dhéanamh ar go leor rudaí, an census, agus cad a deireann an daonáireamh go díreach faoi cá bhfuil na cainteoirí, cén áit ina bhfuil na Gaelscoileanna, cén áit ina gcaithfidh na Gaelscoileanna a bheith agus mar sin de. Beidh dreamanna éagsúla ag obair air sin agus caithfidh muid cuspóirí cinnte a leagan amach don obair sin.

Níl an pobal ar an eolas, i ndáiríre, faoin tábhacht atá le pleananna teanga, le múineadh teanga le Gaeloidreachas, agus caithfidh muid sin a mhúnlú, a athrú agus a mhéadú go mór agus i bhfad níos mó úsáide a bhaint as na meáin chumarsáide agus as bealaí eile chun an obair seo a dhéanamh. An teachtaireacht is simplí, intuigthe a chur i láthair an phobail ionas go

they will provide us with extra opportunities to promote the strategy and to be sure that it is succeeding.

Key Themes in the Framework

Now really, my talk today is just a summary of the Strategic Framework which we have put together, and if you want all the information, you will have to read the full Framework document which you have in your information packs. One of the major things that is very important, and I do not think that people are focusing on it correctly yet, what are the main things that affect the development of the Irish language, that is the language itself and the things which affect it, and are we focusing in on them? Are we dealing with it properly? And so on. What are our peak areas of growth, what are the major areas which are growing, that are succeeding and that we don't need be arguing that much about and that we can develop and strengthen further, so that we have examples of how we should move forward.

There is a need to coordinate the movement, that whatever movement we have is coordinated. Often groups in this country, north and south, are unknowingly working on the same thing unbeknownst to each other, and each group of the opinion that they are better than the others. I think that we must, in real life and in this world where there is a lack of finances and facilities, we must focus on being as coordinated as we can, and there is a need for an organisation to ensure that coordination.

Also, it is important that we establish areas where there is a chance to develop the Irish language, as is happening at present, and many things must be analyzed, the census, and what the census says about where exactly the speakers are, where are the Irish medium schools, where Irish schools need to be, and so on. Different groups will be working on this and we need to set out specific objectives for this work.

The public is not really aware of the importance of language plans, of teaching Irish in Irish-medium education, and we need to shape that, change it and greatly increase it and make much more use of the media and other ways to do this work. Present the public with the simplest, most easily understood message so that they give support to what we are

dtuigfidh siad agus go dtabharfaidh siad tacaíocht don rud atá á mholadh againn.

Tá nuálaíocht tábhachtach, is é sin má tá smaointe nua againn nach mbeadh faitíos orainn rompu. Tá sé sin le plé, le cur chun cinn agus tá taighde nuálaíocht le cur chun cinn. Ar bhealach, cé go bhfuil méid áirithe taighde déanta, tá an t-uafás nach bhfuil déanta agus a d'fhéadfaí a dhéanamh, b'fhéidir ar bheagán costais ach cinnte, tá comhoibriú mór ag teastáil go géar ó lucht an tríú leibhéil nó an ceathrú leibhéil, mar a chuireann muid anois orthu, is iad sin na hollscoileanna, na hinstiúidí taighde agus mar sin de, go gcuirfeadh siad sin taighde chun cinn go leanúnach ag gach leibhéal na hoibre seo, agus go mbeadh siad ag cruthú polasaithe bunaithe ar an taighde agus ag tabhairt treoir do rialtais, do lucht pleanála teanga agus do dhaoine eile cad é go díreach a ba cheart a bheith ar siúl acu agus cad chuige. Má dhéanann muid sin ar bhealach atá cruinn, sílim go n-éireoidh linn. Bhí go leor leor cruinnithe ag An Grúpa Oibre le fáil amach cad é go díreach a bhí ag déanamh tinneas do phobal na Gaeilge, mar is eol daoibhse atá sa phobal sin bíonn mórán rudaí ag déanamh tinneas ar phobal na Gaeilge. Tá sé an-deacair tabhairt orthu a gcuid smaointe a chur i bhfocail atá simplí, gairid agus bunúsach.

Meicníocht nua

Ach, bhí rud amháin a tháinig amach as na cruinnithe ar fad, go bhfuil meicníocht nua ag teastáil le freastal ar bhuaireamh an phobal. Níl aon mheicníocht sa Roinn Oideachais nó in aon roinn eile, ina bhféadfadh duine é a léamh, glaoch gutháin a chur ar dhuine éigin, bualadh le duine éigin a cheisteanna go díreach a fhreagairt. Tá comhordú mór ag teastáil ansin agus thar gach rud, mhol siad go mbunófaí an mheicníocht seo sna ranna stáit, go háirithe sa Roinn Oideachais agus sa Roinn Cultúir, a bhfuil baint dlúth acu le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge sa tuaisceart ó thaobh scoileanna agus mar sin de, agus go leor ranna stáit eile chomh maith. Nuair a bheas deacrachtaí ag príomhoidí, ag múinteoirí, ag cigirí nó ag stiúrthóirí a bhíonn ag plé le páistí, le soláthraithe seirbhísí agus na tuismitheoirí agus na daoine sin ar fad agus daoine eile, go mbeadh áit éigin acu ina bhféadfadh siad glaoch air agus go bhféadfadh siad an t-eolas sin a fháil. Tá géarghá leis sin a bhunú, ní amháin sin ach go mbeadh airgead ar fáil dó ionas go bhféadfadh sé bláthú mar is chóir.

Gaeloideachas

Tá an-dul chun cinn déanta ag an Ghaeloideachas ar a bhealaí féin, ach mar sin féin, síleann muid go gcaithfidh an tacaíocht chuí a thabhairt, bhí tamall fada ann nach raibh an tacaíocht cheart sin ar fáil ach tá sin

proposing.

Innovation is important, that is, if we have new ideas let's not be afraid of them. This is for discussion, to develop, and innovative research needs to be developed. In a way, although a certain amount of research has been done, there is so much that has not been done and could possibly be done, perhaps at some small cost, but certainly, cooperation is urgently required from the third or fourth level, as we now know them, these are the universities, and research institutions, and so on, that they should continually develop ongoing research at all levels, and that they be creating policies based on the research and providing guidance to governments, for language planners and others as to exactly what they should be doing and why. If we do so in a way that is precise, I think we will succeed. The Working Group had many, many of meetings to find out what exactly was of concern to the Irish community, and as you in the community know, there are many things of concern to the Irish speaking community. It is very difficult to get them to verbalise their thoughts in a simple, brief and basic way.

New Mechanisms

One thing came out of all the meetings, a new mechanism is needed to deal with the worries of the community. There is no mechanism in the Department of Education or any other department that a person can read, make a phone call to someone, or meet someone to answer questions directly. A lot of coordination is needed here, and above all, they recommended the establishment of this mechanism in state departments, particularly the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, who have a central role in the promotion of Irish in schools and so on, and with many other state departments too. When principals have difficulties, teachers, inspectors or directors who deal with children, parents and service providers and all those others, that they would have somewhere they could call and where they would be able to get information. There is an urgent need to establish this, not only that but that money would be available to it to make it flourish as it should.

Irish Medium Education

Irish Medium Education has developed very well in its own way, but even so, we think that the appropriate support needs to be given, for a long time this support was not available but it has improved greatly and

feabhsaithe go mór agus tá a lán tacaíochta ag teastáil ón Ghaeloideachas mar gheall ar na deacrachtaí praiticiúla a bhíonn ann ó lá go lá ag daoine atá ag plé leis, scoláirí, agus múinteoirí. Tá tacaíocht oiliúna ag teastáil, tacaíocht traenála, tacaíocht taighde, tacaíocht an fheasacht pobail. Sílim, i gcás an tuaiscirt, go bhfuil gá le níos mó soláthair san iarbhunscolaíocht ná mar atá ann faoi láthair, agus bealaí nuálacha, bealaí a oibríonn a aimsiú i gcomhthéacs an tuaiscirt chun iarbhunscoileanna a bhunú, díreach mar a rinneadh sa deisceart. Tá a lán iarbhunscoileanna sa deisceart ach tá aonaid Ghaelscolaíochta chomh maith a bhfuil ag iarraidh go han-mhaith leo atá ceangailte le 'máthair scoileanna'. Bíonn duine i gceannas ar an aonad seo, leasphríomhoide sa scoil agus comhoibriú acu ón mháthairscoil a leithéid sin de chóras a oibriú amach agus tá ag éirí an-mhaith leo, an méid acu atá ann sa deisceart. Sílim, más féidir é a rá, is droch-am é a bheith a rá aon rud mar tá cruachás airgid ann, an comhordú uile-oileánda seo, ba cheart, i ndáiríre, mar gheall ar go mbíonn cuid de na deacrachtaí céanna atá ag an dá dhlíne, go mbeadh comhordú idir an taighde agus an oiliúint agus cur ar fáil áiseanna de gach sórt atá ag teastáil, go háirithe áiseanna leabharthaí a chur ar fáil agus áiseanna éagsúla a chur ar fáil chun go bhféadfaimis aistriúchán a dhéanamh.

Teagasc trí Ghaeilge

Ceann de na rudaí móra atá le déanamh, measaim, nó ní bheidh bláth ar an Ghaelscolaíocht i gceart, ná an cruinneas agus an líofacht chainte atá ag teastáil. Maidir leis an chruinneas, caithfidh muid a bheith cinnte go bhfuil cineál Gaeilge a thabhairt chun cinn againn atá inaitheanta. B'fhéidir nach mbeadh sí chomh blasta le Gaeilge na Gaeltachta, ach ar a laghad go mbeadh sí blasta go leor go n-aithneodh daoine gur Gaeilge í. Níl mé ag cur lochta ar na daoine atá ag foghlaim, ach tá locht éigin sa chóras mar nach bhfuil muid ag díriú isteach i gceart ar cad é an chiall atá le cruinneas. Tuigfidh muid go maith é i mBéarla, nuair a bhíonn muid os comhair ceamara agus ag léamh nuachta, bíonn Béarla an-mhaith iontu, nó ar an fhón, go dtuigeann achan duine thú ar an fhón, ach tá eagla orm go dtuigeann daoine a lán don Ghaeilge féin á labhairt mar gheall ar go bhfuil Béarla acu. Ach sin ceist an-suimiúil. Tá níos mó cur i láthair le déanamh os comhair an phobail, go háirithe ar an taighde is déanaí sa dátheangachas; Cad é atá faighte amach? cad iad na rudaí a bhfuil ag éirí leo ar fud an domhain? an bhfuil ceangail idir iad sin agus na rudaí atá ag tarlú anseo? Measaim, sa tuaisceart, gur gá smaoinneamh éigin a dhéanamh ar na bealaí leis an Ghaeilge a leathnú amach go dtí na scoileanna stáit mar atá sa deisceart. Tá an Ghaeilge sna bunscoileanna, sna meánscoileanna agus sna hollscoileanna sa deisceart chomh maith leis na gaelscoileanna. Níl an tacaíocht

a lot of support is needed for Irish Medium Education because of the practical difficulties encountered from day to day people dealing with it, students, teachers, and so on. Training support is needed, training support, research support, community awareness support. I think, in the case of the north, there is a need for more provision in the post-primary than there is at present, and innovative ways need to be found, ways that work in the context of the north to found post-primary schools, just as they did in the south. There are many post-primary schools in the south but there are also Irish medium units that are succeeding as well which are attached to 'parent schools'. A person is put in charge of this unit, the deputy principal of the school, and they get cooperation from the parent school to operate such a system and they are doing very well, those that there are in the south. I think, if it can be said, that this is a bad time to say anything because of financial hardship, but this all-island co-ordination, because some of the same difficulties are faced in the two jurisdictions, there should in fact be co-ordination between the research and training provided and resources of every kind that are required, especially provision of book resources and the various resources should be made available so that translations can be done.

Teaching through Irish

One of the major things to do, I think, or the IME properly will not flourish, is in the accuracy and the desired fluency of speech. Regarding the accuracy, we must be sure that the type of Irish language we have advanced is identifiable. It may not be as elegant as Gaeltacht Irish, but at least it would be fluent enough that people recognize that it is Irish. I'm not blaming the people who are learning, but there is some fault in the system because we are not focusing properly on the meaning of accuracy. We well understand it in English, when we are in front of a camera and reading the news, you have very good English, or on the phone, that everyone must be able to understand you on the phone, but I am afraid that many people understand the Irish being spoken because they speak English. But that's a very interesting question. There is more to be presented publicly, especially some of the latest research in bilingualism, what has been discovered, what are the things that are succeeding around the world; are there connections between them and what is happening here? I think, in the north, it is necessary to consider some of the ways to extend the language into the state schools as they have done in the south. The language is in primary schools, secondary schools and universities in the south, as well as the Irish Medium schools. That support is not so great in primary schools in the north, but I think it is time to think about it. Cross-curricular

sin chomh mór againn sna bunscoileanna sa tuaisceart ach sílim go bhfuil sé in am smaoinemh air. Féidearachtaí tras-churaclaim, is é sin cad iad na gnéithe don churaclam ar féidir linn úsáid a bhaint as, an stair, an tíreolaíocht, an eolaíocht féin, na healaíona; cad is féidir linn a dhéanamh?

Meáin

Maidir leis na meáin, sílim gurb é an chéad rud atá le déanamh ná aitheantas poiblí a thabhairt don teanga, tá aitheantas poiblí tuillte aici. Muna ndéanann muid sin, ní féidir linn an oidhreacht agus cultúr atá aici a chur chun cinn trí na meáin múna dtugann muid an t-aitheantas cuí di agus caithfidh muid é sin a dhéanamh. Caithfidh muid smaoinemh air go bhfuil fás leanúnach ar líon na nGaeilgeoirí sa tuaisceart agus nach bhfuil sin ag dul a stopadh, go bhfuil sé ag dul a leanúint ar aghaidh agus caithfidh muid aird a thabhairt air sin, stad a bheith ag troid leis agus rud éigin a dhéanamh le cuidiú leis. Tá an-mhaitheas déanta ag an Chiste Craoltóireachta agus tá dóchas againn go leanann sé ar aghaidh ag tabhairt an cuidiú atá ar fáil cheana féin. Maidir le soláthair oideachas agus tacaíocht churaclaim tá a lán dreamanna amuigh ansin atá ag obair ar an ábhar seo agus sílim go bhfuil sé tábhachtach go dtabharfaí an tacaíocht sin dóibh agus go mbeadh leormhaoiniú do staidéar na meán, do chláracha do staidéar ar na meáin, go mbeadh céimeanna bainte amach ann agus go mbeadh traenáil ar fáil ag daoine as.

Na hEalaíona

Ní bhíonn an oiread sin cainte air sin ach is gné antábhachtach é don obair seo ar fad. Caithfidh muid luach a chur ar na healaíona Gaeilge agus aitheantas a thabhairt do. Caithfidh muid níos mó a dhéanamh faoin turasóireacht chultúrtha, bíonn muid ag caint air ach cad a dhéanann tú go díreach chun é sin a chur chun cinn, cad iad na rudaí a bhfuil suim ag cuairteoirí ann, cad iad na rudaí nach bhfuil muid ag cur ar fáil agus a d'fhéadfaimis a chur ar fáil. Tá ról lárnach ag na scoileanna i bhforbairt na n-ealaíona mar is féidir an drámaíocht, an fhilíocht, an scríbhneoireacht a dhéanamh; aon rud is maith leat, is féidir iad go léir a chur i gcuraclaim agus úsáid a bhaint as. Ba cheart go dtabharfadh an Roinn Oideachas agus an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta tacú leis an réimse seo cláir ealaíne ceart a chur ar fáil trí mheán an oideachais.

Reachtaíocht

Ní dóigh liom go mbeadh rath ar an obair seo ar fad gan reachtaíocht chinnte chun tacaíocht a thabhairt dó, agus sa chás sin, tá an-tábhacht le hAcht na Gaeilge. Tá an chraoltóireacht go fóill faoi smacht Westminster agus caithfear rud éigin a dhéanamh faoi sin

possibilities, that is, what aspects of the curriculum can we use, history, geography, science, the arts; what we can do?

Media

For the media, I think that the first thing to do is to give public recognition to the language, the public recognition it deserves. If we don't do that, we can not promote its heritage and culture through the media and we must do that. We must think of the continued growth in the number of Irish speakers in the north and this is not going to stop, it is going to continue and we must direct our attention to this, stop fighting it and do something to help it. The Irish Language Broadcast Fund has done some great good and we hope it continues giving the help already available. In relation to the provision of education and curriculum support, there are many groups out there who are working on this subject and I think it is important to support them and provide adequate funding for the study of media, for programmes of media studies, that degrees can be awarded in it and that training be provided to people out of it.

The Arts

There is not much talk about this but it is a very important aspect to all of this work. We need to put a value on the language arts and give them recognition. We need to do more about cultural tourism, we are talking about it but what exactly are we doing to promote this, what are the things that are of interest to visitors, what are the things we are not providing and could be provided? Schools have a central role in the development of the arts as drama, poetry, writing; anything you like, you can put them all in curricula and use them. The Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure should give support in this field to make art programs available through education.

Legislation

I do not think this work would succeed without legislation to support it, and in that case, the Irish Language Act is very important. Broadcasting is still under the control of Westminster and we need to do something about this and tell them that more support

agus a rá leo gur cheart tuilleadh tacaíochta a thabhairt dó, agus an rud a fheabhsú agus a leathnú. Seans go bhfuil an chomharthaíocht an-tábhachtach, is é sin, cá háit a bhfeicfidh tú an teanga seo atá tú ag cleachtadh, go poiblí nó in aon áit a dtéann tú, mar sin tá reachtaíocht ar leith ag teastáil do chomharthaíocht Ghaeilge mar is ábhar conspóideach é sa tuaisceart. Tá sé tábhachtach go ndéanann na ranna stáit athbheithniú rialta ar reachtaíocht agus ar pholasaithe, mar muna ndéanann siad é sin ní bheidh sé suas chun dáta leis na deacrachtaí a chruthaíonn go leor den reachtaíocht nach bhfuil ann do lucht labhartha na teanga. Bíonn an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt go minic sa nuacht, polasaí labhairt na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna chur as feidhm. Ba cheart éalú as an amaidí atá ar siúl agus ba chóir go mbeadh cead agat cibé teanga is maith leat a labhairt agus go gcuirfí aistriúchán ar fáil.

Conclúid

Is dóigh liom go bhfuil comhcheangal le déanamh idir na foghnéithe éagsúla den straitéis. Tá a lán rudaí sa straitéis. Tá siad uilig ceangailte le chéile. Má theipeann ar ceann amháin, seans go rachaidh sé i bhfeidhm ar rud eile. Caithfidh muid a bheith anchúramach leis. Tá feidhm le pleanáil chúramach straitéiseach, sin an focal seo ‘straitéiseach’, bíonn sé in úsáid ‘s in amanna nach bhfuil ciall leis, ach, mar sin féin tuigeann sibh go maith cad a chiallóinn sé go díreach, go mbeadh sé pleanáilte i gceart, go mbeadh sé leagtha amach i gceart, agus go ndéanfaí léirmheas rialta ar an dul chun cinn, rud nach ndéantar, léirmheas criticiúil agus neamhspleách. Dá bhrí sin go bhfeicfidh an pobal agus daoine go bhfuil ag éirí leis an straitéis, go bhfuil sí ag déanamh dul chun cinn agus gur cheart í a láidriú tuilleadh.

should be given to it, and to improve and expand it. Perhaps signage is very important, that is, where do you see the language you are practicing, in public or at any place you go, so therefore specific legislation is required for Irish signage because it is a controversial subject in the north. It is important that departments regularly review legislation and policies as if they don't it will not be up to date with the legislation, which creates a lot of difficulties for speakers of the language. The Department of Justice is often in the news, policies on spoken Irish in the courts need to be made obsolete. We should escape from the nonsense going on and you should be allowed to speak whatever language you like and have translation made available.

Conclusions

I think there are mutual links to be made between the various strands of the strategy. There are many things in the strategy. They are all connected to each other. If one fails, chances are it will affect others. We must be very careful with it. There is a reason for careful strategic planning, that word, ‘strategic’, it's in use everywhere and at times perhaps it doesn't mean anything, but even so, you understand well what exactly it means, that it be planned right, that it is set out correctly, and that regular reviews be made on the progress, something which isn't done, a critical, independent review. That way, the community and people can see that the strategy is successful, it is progressing and should be further strengthened.

Cur i Láthair na Roinne ar an Straitéis Dréachta

DCAL Presentation on the Draft Strategy

Arthur Scott,
Stiúrthóir Cultúir na RCEF
Director of Culture for DCAL

Maidin mhaith, good morning. I and my team are responsible for developing the Draft Strategy and we're delighted to have this opportunity to meet with you today to listen to your views and your thoughts, and discuss what you think government needs to do to, now and in the future, to enhance and protect the Irish language. We also have the benefit of our panel of expert speakers and their range of experience, and I'm very grateful and would like to thank them on behalf of the Department for coming to join this event today. Many of the organisations that are here also today have been assisting the Department and my team to make as many people as possible aware of the consultation, and to encourage them to take the opportunity to feed in their thoughts to help shape the strategy to meet the future needs of those need to learn and use the language in their everyday lives, so I'm also very grateful for your support and cooperation. The consultation period closes on the 27th, so there's still a number of weeks, and as is the pattern in most consultations, there tends to be a spike right at the end, so thank you for that support and help, and there's still a bit more to do. The team and I have attended a number of events already, these have been organised by local groups and local councils, and we've gone along to answer questions and to provide clarifications on those discussions. The team and I are quite happy to make ourselves available as best we can in the weeks that remain to come out and join those, if you're organising or if any of the organisations you know of are organising, we'd be happy to do this. Our contact details are in the information packs or you can get the information from the departmental website. I thought it would be useful to outline the purpose of the draft strategy and the main areas for action before we break into the smaller groups, when you'll obviously have an opportunity to get into a more detailed discussion on the views and comments.

I suppose the first point to make, this is just simply the content, some of you will have read it, some of you will be seeing it for the first time, but the draft strategy is by no means finished. It reflects previous work over many years by the Department, good work that is already ongoing, and points that have been put forward by the sector to the Department Minister by a range of stakeholders. Its purpose was primarily to generate debate and discussion about what is needed, and as the Minister outlined in her opening address, we value your views and thoughts, and we hope to use events like today, and the formal consultation, to refine and change the document to better reflect what you think needs to happen in terms of Government support. Those of you who have had an opportunity to go through the document will have noticed that funding is not mentioned, and this is quite deliberate. This consultation is very much about the design stage, we didn't want to hinder thinking about what might be affordable, this is really about trying to find out, in as comprehensible a way as possible, what we need to do to support and develop the language now and into the future. Obviously, when we're clear about the sorts of priorities and areas we should tackle, and some of these areas have been touched on by our earlier speakers as pointers to those areas of priority, then we'll come to the issues of funding, affordability and a timescale for moving it forward. So you have free reign, in that sense, to change the document, to refine the document, so that it reflects and provides the support that those of you here who are activists and doing this on a day to day basis, that it will support you in the task that lies ahead.

In summary the aims are to make it easier for people to access, learn about and use Irish in their everyday lives, as they chose to do so. The document is structured in such a way that it asks for your views on the aims, or are there any other aims, are these aims inspiring, does it encourage you, does it give you that confidence of a vision going into the future. So we very much welcome if you think that these can be improved or if you think there's something missing, or if there's an important aspect we're failing to communicate to the sector, and to people who, perhaps, have no interest in the Irish language or who might be interested if there was something more inspiring, in terms of the aims.

These are the objectives that the Department has come up with in terms of strategy, again these can be added to or refined, but broadly they are about:

- increasing the numbers who can access Irish medium education
- to increase the number of those that use public services through the Irish language; and
- to increase access to Irish language media

The strategies aims and objectives contribute to the requirements of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Executive's Programme for Government 2011-2015, under Priority 4, Building a Strong and Shared Community. Vital to the success of the strategy is the implementing of positive changes in the following 6 key areas of action, which are: Education, Family transmission of Irish – Early Intervention, Administration, Services and Community, Media and Technology, Legislation and Status of the Language and Economic Life. It is in these areas that the Department believes that real progress can be made in terms of protecting, enhancing and developing the language. So again, on those key areas, do you agree that these are the key areas? Some of them have been touched on by our speakers. Have we missed anything? Are there other ones that we have left out?

For each area, then, there is a supplementary list of actions that the Departments feels would contribute to the achievement of the aims and objectives. I don't want to dwell on these, but you can see some have been touched on by our speakers. Our areas for action include Education:

Oideachas / Education

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ■ Gaeloideachas | ■ Irish Medium Education (IME) |
| ■ An Ghaeilge san Earnáil Bhéar | ■ Irish in the English Medium Sector |
| ■ Oideachas Tríú Leibhéal | ■ Third-Level Education |
| ■ Gníomhaíochtaí Seach-Churaclaim | ■ Extra-Curricular Activity |
| ■ Foghlaim Teangacha ag Aosaigh | ■ Adult Language Learning |

Some of the areas when you look at them prompt obvious questions. Is there enough support for the parents or guardians who want to know more about Irish medium education? Or those who want such provision locally? Could more be done to encourage Irish language learning in English Medium schools? In Third level Education? And in terms of Lifelong learning for people who are out of the formal education system?

Next is family Transmission of the Language, and again in this section, there is a list of actions:

Seachadadh na Teanga sa Teaghlach / Family Transmission of the Language

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|---|---|
| ■ Idirghabháil Luath | ■ Early Intervention |
| ■ Comhairle agus treoir maidir le clann a thógáil sa dóigh go mbeidh siad dátheangach agus go mbeidh cothromaíocht ann idir an dá theanga | ■ Advice and guidance on how to raise children as balanced bilinguals |
| ■ Buntáistí eacnamaíochta, fostaíochta agus oideachasúla a bhaineann le Gaeilge a labhairt le páistí | ■ Economic, employment and educational advantages of speaking Irish to children |
| ■ Bearta a dhéanamh le tuismitheoirí a spreagadh le Gaeilge a labhairt lena bpáistí | ■ Measures to encourage parents to speak Irish to their children |

So very much again, when you get into the detailed discussion groups, we are asking you to try and look at these and say whether you think these are the right things, are there things missing, are there better ways of doing this?

The next section then is Administration, Services and Community. So this is about the range of services that will be made available by public bodies. So this poses questions about what services and how do Irish speakers want to access them?

Riarachán, Seirbhísí agus Cúrsaí Pobail / Administration, Services & Community

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ Bearta don Ghaeilge sa tSeirbhís Phoiblí | ■ Measures for Irish in the Public Service |
| ■ Pleananna/Tionscnaimh Áitiúla Teanga | ■ Local Language Plans/Initiatives |
| ■ Ról Tábhachtach na hEarnála Deonaí | ■ The Important Role of the Voluntary Sector |
| ■ Ionad Acmhainní Fisiciúla | ■ Physical Resource Centres |

Local Language Plans and Initiatives. This is very much about support for local communities in terms of language planning, at a local level and it is about integrating what goes on at the house, what goes on at the school and what is going on in that local community, so that there are a range of opportunities and not just the school environment but a range of opportunities for people to use their language in the wider community.

Physical Resource Centres are next. In terms of local language centres, it is about looking at some of the things that are on the ground presently, like cultural centres, do they provide a focus for the language, do they provide support for the language and resources? Do they provide a stimulus for the area in terms of economic growth and Gaeltachts, and how Gaeltachts can be used to develop the language and to attract economic investment and benefits for particular areas.

Next up is media and technology.

Na Meáin Chumarsáide agus Teicneolaíocht / Media & Technology

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ■ An Teanga Scríofa | ■ The Written Word |
| ■ Craoltóireacht | ■ Broadcasting |
| ■ Ar líne agus na Meáin Nua | ■ Online and New Media |

I know my children get most of their information from a handheld device. They don't even wear watches now because everything is in this little magic box. So in terms of that audience, which is obviously key for the sustainability of the language in the long term, it is very important to capture them and to encourage them and engage them in learning and in wanting to use the language. So, in broadcasting and in the new media, is there enough quality content in Irish to attract them and interest them in doing that part of their social interaction with people as well as obviously the spoken word. But also it applies to the wider community in terms of what range of programmes are available on the broadcast media, in terms of newspapers and other documentation.

The next section deals with Legislation and Status of the Language, and again there are some actions identified here. This is very much about removing barriers and obstacles to the status of the language and promoting its unfettered use by those who choose to do so. The Minister has made very clear her commitment to an Irish language Bill, obviously, today's focus is on the strategy but in a sense the Bill will support and underpin the strategy. This next section looks at Economic Life and services and signage. It is about identifying opportuni-

Reachtaíocht agus Stádas na Teanga / Legislation & Status of the Language

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|--|--|
| ■ Acht um Riar na Córa (Éire) 1737 a dhíscor | ■ Repeal of Administration of Justice Act (Ireland) 1737 |
| ■ Bille Gaeilge | ■ Irish Language Bill |
| ■ Saoránacht / Cónaitheacht | ■ Citizenship / Residency |

ties so that businesses can become involved with the community, by coming together, identifying and then exploiting opportunities.

The Department has been conducting some pilots, through the Creative Industries Innovation Fund. We have partnered with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the GAA to produce a Gaelic App, for the new media in mind

An Saol Eacnamaíochta / Economic Life

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ Seirbhísí agus Comharthaíocht | ■ Signs & Signage |
| ■ Ceantair Speisialta Forbartha | ■ Special Development Needs |

and the purpose of the App is to give a digital context of what's on and where to go and what to see. So it is very much for use by the community but also by visitors in terms of event they might like to go to.

So there are a arrange of opportunities, looking at Special Development Areas, and how they can stimulate interest in, and using that differentiation of an area that has a high concentration of Irish speakers, apart from its cultural benefits, how can it be turned to an economic advantage? And again, it is working with businesses in those areas. How do you incentivise them to embark on this and consider the opportunities that exist?

The next section outlines those dull but necessary aspects of monitoring, implementing and reporting progress.

Feidhmiú, Monatóireacht agus Tuairisciú / Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

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|--|---|
| ■ Feidhmiú na Straitéise | ■ Strategy Implementation |
| ■ Monatóireacht agus Tuairisciú ar an Straitéis | ■ Strategy Monitoring and Reporting |
| ■ An Chairt Eorpach um Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh | ■ European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages |
| ■ Eagrais Phoiblí | ■ Public Bodies |
| ■ Athbhreithniú agus Leasú | ■ Review and Revision |

Clearly, this strategy, when agreed will have implications for all Executive Departments and their Arms Length Bodies, for local government and other state bodies, the private sector and all our people, and also perhaps the private sector. And, where appropriate, public bodies shall produce an Implementation Plan setting out how it will contribute to the aims, objectives and areas for action arising from this Strategy in specific and measurable terms. The proposal is that an Interdepartmental Strategy Delivery Group (ISDG) be established involving senior officials from all Executive Departments to ensure full and appropriate interdepartmental communication and the implementation of good practice across department in terms of addressing the challenging set by the agreed strategy. It is also proposed that a Strategy Unit within the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure should be established with dedicated staff to provide administrative support to the ISDG.

The ISDG will oversee the strategic planning process and monitoring the development of resources. Foras na Gaeilge will continue to deliver on its statutory responsibilities in relation to Irish. But it would be invited to advise both the ISDG and the Strategy Unit within the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure. And of course, in line with the legislation, where the Executive considers it appropriate, the strategy can be reviewed, revised or replaced.

In a sense that covers the main areas of the strategy document.

Measúnacht Tionchair Chombhionannais / Equality Impact Assessment	
Tátail	Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gan tionchar leatromach nó drochthionchar a bheith ann ■ Féidireachtaí le deachaidreamh a fheabhsú 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No discriminatory or adverse impacts ■ Potential to improve good relations

The consultation also includes an Equality Impact Assessment. It sets out the data the Department has considered in looking at the equality implications of the proposals, and our assessment is that bringing forward an Irish language strategy will have a positive impact on Irish speakers and therefore, indirectly on those from a catholic, nationalist background, those who are single, young, and people without a disability, and people with dependents because these are the groups most likely to speak Irish, based on the data we have available. There were no significant statistical differences in relation to gender and racial group. No data is available in relation to sexual orientation.

It is DCAL's view that bringing forward an Irish language Strategy will have a positive impact on Irish speakers and therefore indirectly on Catholics, nationalists, single people, younger people, people without a disability and people with dependants, which are the groups most likely to speak Irish. In DCAL's view, there are no discriminatory or adverse impacts.

Turning to the assessment of impact on good relations, we consider that the introduction of an Irish Language Strategy has the potential to improve good relations, as it will potentially give the Irish Language a more accessible platform for all sections of the community.

Again, we would be interested in your views on this. I would like to urge you to respond to the consultation so that the strategy can be as compelling and meaningful as possible.

We are very happy to attend local meetings, if organisers feel that our input would be of help. Go raibh maith agaibh.

Ceisteanna agus Freagraí Questions and Answers

Micheál Ó Duibh: (PF, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta) Is píosa eolais agus ceist iad, más féidir liom an bheirt a chur? A Dhónaill, labhair tú faoi na hacmhainní nua a bheadh de dhíth ar an phobal, níl ann ach pointe eolais ach gur féidir linn tweet a chur chuig an Aire Oideachais faoi láthair idir 11.15 agus 12.15 inniu le cibé ceist a bheadh againne agus na tweeteanna sin a chur chuige as Gaeilge... ach an cheist atá agam, baineann sí leat féin, a Arthur. An bhfuil an meicníocht ann gur féidir leis an chomhairliúchán seo tagairt do chomhairliúcháin eile atá ar siúl faoi láthair? Tá a fhios agam go bhfuil comhairliúchán ann faoi láthair a bhaineann leis na scéimeanna nua mhaoinithe agus comhairliúchán ann maidir le pleanáil ceantair ag an Roinn Oideachais, as socair go mbeidh tionchar ag an chomhairliúchán seo ar gnéithe a bhaineann le Gaeloideachas, an bhfuil dóigh le go féidir leis an chomhairliúchán seo, cibé freagraí a bheadh ann, tionchar a imirt nó na comhairliúcháin seo uilig a nascadh le chéile, le go mbeadh siad ag tagairt lean chéile?

Micheál Ó Duibh: (CEO, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta) This is a piece of information and a question, if I can put both? Dónaill, you spoke about the new resources which the community will need, and I have just a point of information, but it is possible today to send a tweet to the Minister for Education at the minute, between 11.15 and 12.15 today with whatever question we may have, and to send those tweets in Irish...but the question I have is directed to yourself, Arthur. Is there a mechanism by which this consultation can make reference to other consultations that are going on at the minute? I know that there is a consultation on new funding schemes and a consultation on area planning by the Department of Education. Since this consultation will have an influence on some aspects of Irish Medium Education, is there a way that this consultation, whatever answers are received, or influence it has, or can all these consultation be linked together, so that can refer to each other?

Arthur Scott: Thank you for your question. Yes, each Executive Department has been given the opportunity to respond to our consultation and clearly when our series of consultation responses is available, obviously officials will take account of developments and existing strategies in other Departments and that will be produced as part of the final analysis of the consultation. But I imagine there will be quite a degree of interaction between the various government departments, post this consultation, to the document actually being prepared as a draft Executive paper to go before the Executive for agreement. But clearly it would be helpful in your response to the consultation if you think there are appropriate links which you are concerned to make, just flag those up as part of your consultation response.

Cadogan Enright: (Councillor in Downpatrick) Well, I have three questions, but I don't want to hog the floor. First of all, the legal basis for the consultation. Given the emphasis that there is on education in the consultation document, I am very surprised that you didn't make reference to the High Court case from October 2011. For a number of years, Ministers for Education have been dogged by Departmental officials advising them in this that the need to promote the Irish language in education is purely aspirational and that any measures taken to promote the Irish language by the education sector had to be taken forward very carefully for fear of creating precedents with the English speaking sector. Now the case last October, when Judge Treacey ruled, said two key things. First of all, he said that there was a legal obligation to advance Irish Medium Education in the same way that there is for Integrated education, and secondly, and most importantly, he said that any measures taken to advance Irish Medium Education created no precedent whatsoever for the English medium sector and therefore any theories the Department might have about any such precedents should be set aside. I'm surprised not to see that reference in the section on the legal basis for the strategy.

Arthur Scott: The strategy does make it very clear that there is an attempt obviously to increase the numbers of people and the access to Irish Medium Education. Each department is responsible for its particular sector and this is something that will be picked up probably during the consultation, but in terms of the intention of the draft, it is to encourage and support greater numbers into Irish Medium Education, and during my presentation, I stressed the importance of engaging with people, and clearly, the Education system is a primary source of doing this, together with doing this in the home and in the community. So in terms of our Minister's intention, the strategy seeks to secure that increase. I did talk about removing barriers or obstacles if there are any,

and those would have to be considered as part of the strategy but we will note your comment and thank you.

Cadogan Enright: Two more questions. In terms of early years, I notice that the strategy document does not include any early intervention with pre-school students and I know that for instance in Wales, there are packages of books delivered out to young children, and also in Scotland, though not to the same extent as in Wales, that Welsh language books are provided to young children and pre-school students as a matter of form. Whereas of course in Northern Ireland, all that is provided is in English. Even in their first one or two years of Bunscoil (Irish Medium primary school), Irish speaking students are provided with packs of reading books in English. It seems to me that if the Welsh can provide books to Welsh speakers throughout Wales, and if it can be done in Scotland, (though I think it is only in the Highlands and Islands now and it may be only one or two books as opposed to the Welsh speaking pack they have in Wales) it seems that whole area is missed out in your strategy document. Could the Welsh and Scottish people share their experiences about that?

Iwan Evans: Yes, as a parent we did receive a pack of books when the youngest one was fairly young and it included both Welsh and English books. I also mentioned in my presentation the two initiatives, Growth which is one of the main projects we fund through our grants scheme. It is a project that works with health visitors and one-to-one sessions with parents before even the child is born. – it's to raise awareness of the advantages of bilingualism, so that's the kind of thing that is going on in Wales in Early Years.

Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir: Well I have to say that these are replicated in Scotland. There is a huge focus at the moment on pregnant women and encouraging them to consider the language issues of having children. With regard to the provision of books, I have to say the Scottish Gaelic books for children aren't that plentiful. Not half as plentiful as we would like them to be. We focus a lot on television programming for young children as well, but through our grant scheme, as Iwan mentioned, we also make provision. A popular scheme that we have at the moment is the provision of libraries for voluntary groups of one, two, three two-years olds who may be registered with a child minder in the course of the day while parents are at work, and this helps the registered child minders to have resources available for encouraging children's development through the Gaelic language. We give them support to be able to buy children's books so that is a very popular initiative. That we have in Scotland at the moment. But we are very aware of the need for there to be provision, resources provided, but unfortunately they are also a very expensive resource and we have a only limited funding available. But we are aware of it and keeping an eye on it and hoping to develop it. And we are, again working in partnership with Foras na Gaeilge through Colmcille, we have a project where we are able to develop resources jointly and it is just a matter of changing the language in books. So why double the effort when you can produce the pictures for any language. It's just a matter of changing the words, and think of the saving in doing it like that, so it is useful to work with other agencies.

Iwan Evans: Just to add to that, we are pretty fortunate in Wales because there is quite a wide range of books for children, and there is a trend for books to be bilingual as well. The Welsh text will be the main text of the book, but for parents who are maybe not Welsh-speaking, there's in small print and italics, an explanation. This helps them, well with any learning they are doing, but it also helps them to read with their children.

Arthur Scott: the Department funds Foras na Gaeilge, together with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the south, so it sounds primarily to me like an issue for An Gum or the Áisaonad, the Educational Resource Unit at St Mary's University College in Belfast who produce a range of books and educational materials to support the curriculum as well.

Cathaoirleach: Ar mhiste leat má bhogaim ar aghaidh? Tiocfaidh mé ar ais chugat don tríú cheist.

Chair : Do you mind if I move on? I'll come back to you for your third question.

Linda Ervine: (East Belfast Mission) Do you have any plans for strategies which would allay the fears of the Unionist community?

Arthur Scott: The strategy for Irish is for the entire community. Is there a question particularly, or are you referring to the consultation ongoing for Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture?

Linda Ervine: Just for Irish.

Arthur Scott: One of the aims of the strategy is to make it easier for anyone who is interested in the language to access it, to learn it, to develop a use of it and to enjoy it, using it in whatever way they do. So in that sense, it is all embracing. There may well be a need for particular measures to address a specific target groups within the overall target groups, and hopefully that will be reflected through the consultation process.

Ón urlár / from floor: Can I just make a suggestion that people say who they are and where they are from when they are asking a question?

Cathaoirleach: Cinnte

Chair: of course.

Aodan Mac Póilín: I'm Aodan Mac Póilín, Ultach Trust, cross community Irish language organisation. I just want to pick up on Linda's point there. I was really, really disappointed at the lack of attention given to the issue of Unionist fears or hesitancy about the language and the alienation of a million people from the language. This is right in the centre of the Programme for Government but has received very little attention and in terms of this document it is an appalling omission. But actually, this is not the question I was going to ask, I just happened to come after Linda Ervine. My question is addressed particularly in relation to the Welsh strategy. In Wales when there is a large critical mass of speakers of Welsh, Welsh is still being eroded as a community language in its heartlands, and the language is becoming increasingly dependent on networks of Welsh speakers in primarily English-speaking areas. The question I am asking is, what kind of strategies do you use, because this is our situation here in Northern Ireland, what strategies do you use for translating knowledge to use? Because the big weakness in Ireland has been, and you can see this in the south, you know, you have got 40% of the people who claim a knowledge of the language and 2% use it on a daily basis. It's a terrible weakness. I don't think it is quite as bad in Wales? Basically one of the challenges is that the networks of Welsh speakers that you are talking about are actually networks of bilinguals who choose one of their two languages, to speak with each other. There is a particular challenge there. So, what kind of work do you do on the psychological or attitudinal elements of that? This new discipline that I have just discovered recently, called psycholinguistics? Do you do psycho-linguistics?

Iwan Evans: I don't (laughter). Thanks. That's a huge question, isn't it? To an extent that is what the whole of the Welsh strategy is trying to achieve. We did have a previous strategy, called *Iaith Pawb: Everybody's Language*, and the aim of that was to increase the numbers> there has been a slight change in focus in the emphasis in this strategy. Yes, we want to increase numbers, but actually, we want to increase the use of Welsh by people who can speak Welsh. You mentioned, we are all bilingual in Wales, and I mentioned in my presentation about young people. They are Welsh speaking because they go to Welsh Medium schools and then the huge challenge is, even once they go out of the classroom, even in the classroom, in some instances, but out of the classroom, into the school yard, outside of the school gate, that the popular culture is mainly English, American. So how do you get them engaged? What came through our consultation, especially on the section on children and young people – and I think that's where the future lies, obviously - was that, yes, we need to give them opportunities to use Welsh and enjoy using Welsh, and it's not so much that we need to sit them down in a room and say, 'what do you want to do in Welsh and how will we make you speak more Welsh?' it's about practical things like youth camps and enjoying themselves. Things like sporting activities. There's an organisation called Urdd Gobaith Cymru (www.urdd.org) which was set up in the 1920s to promote the use of Welsh in the arts, in literature, and also increasingly now in sport. Last year, they launched a kind of Olympics style event, Gemau Cymru (<http://www.urdd.org/gemaucymru>) not quite as big as the Olympics- for children across Wales to compete through the medium of Welsh, so that people would find they could actually do things that are interesting and fun and cool through the medium of Welsh. That's one example of how we are trying to go forward on trying to get people to use Welsh outside the formal environment of the classroom.

Caoimhe Ní Chathail: Conradh na Gaeilge na Boirche Íochtar. Thug mé fá dheara go raibh an bheirt aoí-chainteoir ag caint ar thurasóireacht agus an dóigh go ndeachaigh an teanga i bhfeidhm ar thurasóireacht sa dhá thír sin. Is bhí mé ag iarraidh ceist a chur, an bhfuil plean ar bith, cineál de scéim thurasóireachta nó rud inteacht a chur ar fáil, a chuirfeadh an teanga chun cinn? Agus an mbainfidh muid leas as an teanga le turasóireacht na tíre seo a chur chun cinn?

Caoimhe Ní Chathail: Conradh na Gaeilge na Boirche íochtar. I noticed that both guest speakers talked about tourism and the way the language has impacted on tourism in those two countries. And I wanted to ask, is there a plan of any kind, to provide some sort of tourism scheme or something, which would promote the language? And will we take advantage of the language as a means to promote tourism in this country?

Arthur Scott: In the section that they had looking at the economic opportunities, they didn't specifically mention it, but clearly tourism would be one of the areas and as the department with a role in Creative Industries, we have been working in terms both with the Irish language and Ulster Scots in terms of these apps that I referred to, as pilot projects to see if we can help local communities to use that differentiation, or that concentration, of culture and language or heritage as a means to stimulate interest in people coming to the area to visit. But also to encourage people to think of it as an area to go and set up a business and also to live and work. But again, it's very much at its early stages. I think there are obviously connections between it and what a Gaeltacht area could do. I know in the Ulster Scots, they are looking at the concept of a heartland and how that concentration of people of an Ulster Scots background can be used as a potential factor to increase and stimulate tourist activity in those areas. But hopefully there will be more detail in the strategy. In some respects, the strategy will be facilitative. It will be about supporting local communities. In some respects, as even the app shows, people had the language and they had the events and facilities but it was helping them to get together with the people who have the digital know-how. It's how to make that information interesting so that we want to download it on an app and keep it on an app and use it. So in a sense, the two pilot apps are now being handed over to the community and we will be watching with interest to see how that develops. But that is just an example of some of the sorts of opportunities but you know, we are happy to support and encourage anything that can be used in that sense to encourage more people to come. And that in turn would feed into the DETI Tourism Strategy. That would be our contribution in terms of helping people to showcase their culture and tell their folklore and their stories and express themselves in their chosen language and through musical influences and so on. There is clearly potential.

Gordon McCoy: Ultach Trust. Question for Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir about the twenty Gaelic language plans of local authorities in Scotland and the practical outcomes of them. What is there now that wouldn't be there?

Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir: The main thing that is there is that anybody living in Scotland has the right to pick up the phone or to walk into any public service provider and speak the language and have the right to get a response. In the language. They cannot turn round and say, 'I'm sorry, we don't speak that language' They have a requirement, if you want to speak Gaelic, whether you are at the Council office or the registry office or at one of Historic Scotland's museums and you wish to be spoken to in your own language, you have the legal right for that to happen. Without their language plans, that would not exist. It encourages people to use the language. It provides them with the opportunity for people to use the language. It also enables the public bodies to be more responsive to the needs of the community they serve. In particular, I think of elderly people in homecare. When they employ home carers, and we have a very high percentage of elderly people who may have some English but who are certainly a lot more comfortable speaking Gaelic and if you have a home carer coming in who can only speak English, and that person to whom the care is being provided, want that care provided through their own language, they have the right to say, 'I want a Gaelic speaker because I feel more comfortable'. So it can be about quality of life issues, as well as opportunities. The Health Service has to provide the language as well. If you go into a hospital, you have the right to ask for the service to be provided through your own language. So, we are very much at the early stages with these language plans. Most of these public bodies are still at their first or second development stage of their language plans and it is mostly about providing reception services, telephone services, their leaflets, the information that they provide to the public, in the two languages and then encouraging the staff that they employ to acquire the language and to use it. So it is part of a very multi-faceted attempt to ensure that there is inclusion of the language throughout the country.

Cathaoirleach: Tá mé ag dul ar ais anois chuig Cadogan Enright.

Chair: I am going back to Cadogan Enright now.

Cadogan Enright: I'm a Councillor in Downpatrick. Just as a point of information to a previous speaker, our Council, along with two other councils, were recently refused funding by the NI Tourist Board because we

wanted bilingual signage. I do believe that is going to be another High Court case shortly. **(Daoine ag gaire)** (People laughing) it is a policy that they have across the north, apparently. My question is in regards to my job as a Governor for an Irish Medium primary school. I am directing this to the Welsh and Scottish representatives here. I am living in the South Eastern Education and Library Board but we are on the border with the Southern Education and Library Board and the travel to school policies effectively prohibit the transport of Irish speaking children to school on publically provided transport. The same applies at secondary education level, where my older daughter was refused for many years, equal access to secondary education and transport here in NI. There are 2030 buses provided daily to all the other sectors in Antrim and Down and none at all provided to the Irish Medium sector. Now this has an impact on the intake of Irish Medium schools in the Antrim and Down areas. So I am wondering, what would be the effect on Gaelic language education in Scotland and Welsh Language Education in Wales where there a prohibition on the transport of children to Welsh or Gaelic speaking schools?

Iwan Evans: Well, I travelled on a bus to what was at the time the only Welsh language secondary school in Cardiff. I travelled for an hour each day. Three quarters of an hour, maybe. Now there are four Welsh language secondary schools, so in Cardiff for example, the impact would be less now than it would have been twenty years ago. But It would be a negative effect.

Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir: I imagine that in mainland Scotland the effect would be quite devastating. I know that there is funding made available to transport children in towns in the central belt in Scotland many, many miles. They have dedicated transport systems to enable children to access Gaelic medium schools or units in English medium schools, and they cross the boundaries of the different local authorities to enable them to do that. So if one local authority is not able to provide a Gaelic-medium unit or school within their own area, they will cover the transport costs for children to attend Gaelic-medium school in another authority's area. Now if that transport was withdrawn, it could have one of two effects. It could result in a loss of children going to the Gaelic Medium schools, on the other hand it could well be that parents within each local authority area have the right to request Gaelic medium education within their local authority area. So the local authorities would then be duty bound to provide that. There is specific grant funding through the Scottish government and they would have to use that money to provide it plus some of their own. So it is cheaper for them to provide the transport across boundary.

Pamela Matthews: From Banbridge District Council. The question in the first instance is directed to Dónall, if you don't mind first of all? What do you see as being the biggest barrier to this being a success in Northern Ireland slash North of Ireland?

Dónall Ó Baoill: is dóigh liom gurb é an deacracht is mó a bheidh ann ná cúrsaí airgid. An mbeidh an rialtas sásta tacaíocht chuí airgid a chur ar fáil do na háiseanna go léir agus na gnéithe eile go léir a bhaineann leis an chur chun cinn a chur ar fáil? Mura dtarlaíonn sé sin, ar bhealach éigin a bheidh réasúnta éifeachtach, ní dóigh liom go ndéanfar an dul chun cinn atá dlite. Tá sé seo ag tarlú sa deisceart ceanna féin anois leis an Straitéis Fíche Bliain mar níor luaigh an rialtas go fóill, ainneoin go bhfuil siad ag plé leis, cén méad airgid nó costais a bheidh air, ná an mbeidh siad in ann na costais sin a sheasamh. Sílim gur sin ceann do na deacrachtaí móra atá ann, dar liomsa.

Dónall Ó Baoill: I think the biggest difficulty will be monetary. Will the government be willing to provide the appropriate financial support for all the resources and all the other elements that relate to its promotion? If that doesn't happen, and in a way that is reasonably effective, I don't think that the progress will be made that is deserved. This is happening in the south already now with the Twenty Year Strategy because the government has still not mentioned, in spite of being in discussion about it, how much money or what it will cost, nor whether they will be able to meet these costs. I think this is one of the major difficulties that there are, in my opinion.

Fergus Ó hÍr: Raidió Fáilte. Ba mhaith liom ceist a chur ar an triúr faoi na riachtanais áirithe maidir leis na meáin cumarsáide.

Fergus Ó hÍr: (I'd like to ask the three speakers a question about the particular needs of the media.) Given the importance in the development of a language community of the media, television, radio, newspapers and the

new technology, and the weakness, certainly on this island, of the media, where there is no daily newspaper a lot of the activities are just done by ‘díograiseoirí’ by dedicated people ploughing away on their own little computers here and there, and the importance of things like community radio, for giving opportunities to young people and older people to actually be involved actively, both in communications and in areas where they can use the language, the question is directed at the three people from the governments, given that broadcasting is not a devolved matter, and is retained at Westminster do you see any advantage in the three devolved assemblies actually moving to ask that the broadcast authorities be devolved to the local assemblies and are there any plans in the other strategies that mean this might happen?

Iwan Evans: you are right that broadcasting is a reserved matter in terms of Wales as well. This is kind of a hot political debate in Wales, and the strategy doesn’t make any commitments to seek the devolution of broadcasting and I am trying to think, but I think the government’s policy at the moment is not to seek devolution of broadcasting. I think I am right in saying that. If I am incorrect, I will come back to you.

Ealasaid Nic an t-Saoir: I’m unfortunately not able to give you a direct answer to that question for Scotland. But as far as I am aware, there isn’t anything in the manifesto, no direct request, although the issue has been spoken about on a number of occasions. I know that Wales has S4C and we have recently been fortunate enough through MGA Alba which is the media arm which has been set up by the British government to provide Gaelic television coverage. We now have the BBC running BBC Alba so we have made a major step forward with regard to television and I think the Gaelic community in general is quite satisfied with that step at the moment. There has been Gaelic radio available through the BBC for many years, and some of the independent radio stations are also tapping into the Gaelic language and communities are using their local radio stations as a means of practising their language and getting media experience for young people. So although I don’t think that at the moment there is a big hue and cry about it, that’s not to say that post-referendum, in 2014 that things won’t change.

Dónall Ó Baoill: is dóigh liom go bhfuil an-tábhacht le cúrsaí na meán, anois go háirithe. Tá deacrachtaí againn anseo in Éirinn maidir leis na meáin clóite, cinnte, mar níor éirigh leo. Maidir leis na meáin eile, is dóigh liom go bhfuil gá ins na straitéisí ar fad, thuaidh agus theas, go mbeadh comhordú déanta ar na nithe atá ag teastáil ag an phobal agus na bealaí is éifeachtaigh le cuid de sin a chur ar fáil, agus go háirithe úsáid a bhaint as na meáin, mar a dúirt mé sa chaint a thug mé, le gnéithe éagsúla den chultúr a chur chun cinn agus cónascú agus nascú ceart a dhéanamh ar an obair ar fad a bhíonn ar siúl, sna scoileanna, taobh amuigh do na scoileanna agus i saol poiblí an duine leis an teanga a chur chun cinn. Mura ndéanann muid é sin an cónascú agus an comhordú sin, is dóigh liom nach n-éireoidh linn.

Dónall Ó Baoill: I think media affairs are very important, especially now. We have difficulties here in Ireland with the print media, certainly, because they have not succeeded. As to the other media, I think that it is necessary in all the strategies, north and south, that co-ordination is carried out on the things the community needs and on the most effective ways of making them available’ and especially to make use of the media, as I said in my talk, to promote various aspects of culture and to carry out merging and proper linking on all the work that is going on in the schools, outside the schools and in the public life of the individual to promote the language. If we do not carry out this linking and co-ordinating, I don’t think we will succeed.

Arthur Scott: The NI Screen which is sponsored by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure does receive funding from Whitehall in terms of the Irish Language Broadcast Fund and the Ulster Scots Broadcast Fund. These funds are used to ensure good quality content on the broadcast media. We do keep a very close watch on developments in the other regions and this is all I can say at this particular stage, is that the department is considering a range of broadcasting issues. It has been mentioned as a key area in the strategy, so as we go through the consultation process and as that document is prepared for submission to the executive, there may be more specific proposals in it in relation to addressing a range of issues in broadcasting.

Iwan Evans: I’ve got an update. I remembered that the Foreword to the Welsh Strategy written by the Minister says that, ‘While broadcasting is not devolved and it is not the policy of the present Welsh government to seek devolution of broadcasting. It is clear that in terms of language policy, at least, the Welsh government will need to take a closer view of the impact of broadcasting policy on the Welsh language.’ And that was responding to S4C’s funding being cut by around, I think, £24 million per year by the UK government last year. There

has been political discussions on that between the Welsh government and the UK government . But in terms of working with, we're actually working much more closely now with S4C and the BBC in Wales to develop things in Wales like the new digital media. I said in my presentation that we are preparing an action plan at the moment to try and increase the use of Welsh in digital media and online, that things like lobbying Google, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon on one hand, and we are also setting up a grants scheme for people who want to develop Apps in Welsh. Also we are going to be providing support to quite a good network of micro-local newspapers that we have in Welsh, there is not a daily newspaper in Welsh, but there are local community newsletters, which are kind of a community activity in themselves, getting people into the local chapel to get people to print and fold the newspaper every week. We will be giving them support to go digital, to bring young people in and to develop partnerships with colleges and schools and get that initiative going to get more digital content online. So there are things that we are going from that angle.

Feargal Mac Ionnrachtaigh: (Forbairt Feirste.) Bhí mé ag iarradh ceist a dhíriú ar Dhónall, agus ar Arthur maidir leis na pointí a bhí Dónall ag déanamh níba luaithe faoin Chreat Straitéiseach agus faoi chur chuige uile-Éireann maidir le forbairt, le hacmhainní agus le roinnt áiseanna. Agus maidir le cur chuige taighde. Shíl mé b'fhéidir go mbeadh sé tábhachtach amharc ar straitéis chomónta, 32 chontae agus muid ag plé le teanga amháin, bíodh is go bhfuil muid scartha in ár ndlínsí difriúla ina bhfuil cúinsí ar leith ann. An bhfuil sé tábhachtach go mbeadh straitéis chomónta agus cur chuige comónta ann agus muid ag plé le forbairt na teanga? Bhí mé ag iarradh an cheist a chur, fáil amach an raibh aird tugtha don cheist sin?

Feargal Mac Ionnrachtaigh. (Forbairt Feirste.) I was wanting to direct a question to Donall and to Arthur about the points Dónall was making earlier about the Strategic Framework and about an all-Ireland approach to development, capability and resource-sharing. And about a research approach. I thought that perhaps it would be important to look at a common strategy, 32 county since we are talking about one language, even though we are separated into our jurisdictions in which there are specific circumstances. Is it important that there be a common strategy and a common approach as we discuss the development of the language? I wanted to put that question and find out if attention had been given to it?

Dónall Ó Baoill: Tuigim an cheist go maith. Tá cúpla rud go bhféadfá a rá faoi. Is dócha go bhfuil cúram áirithe ar Fhoras na Gaeilge maidir le chur chun cinn éigin a dhéanamh ar chodanna tábhachtacha don Ghaeilge, maidir le foclóireacht agus le foilseacháin agus le gnéithe eile, agus fiú amháin taighde a dhéanamh, agus ó tharla go raibh baint aige sin le Ciste Thuaidh Theas agus go bhféadadh siad ionchur mór a dhéanamh ann chomh maith leis an Roinn Chultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta anseo. Sílim go bhfuil b'fhéidir bealaí ann le gréasáin a bhunú ionas go mbeadh na daoine sin go léir ar an eolas faoi na riachtanais atá ann. Maidir leis na hollscoileanna agus dreamanna atá ag déanamh taighde, tuigtear dom go dtagann uachtaráin na n-ollscoileanna ar fad sa tír seo, iad ar fad agus bíonn siad ag plé gnéithe go leor agus seans gur cúrsaí gnó agus cúrsaí eolaíochta agus rudaí mar sin a bhíonn sa chomhrá ach sílim go bhfuil seans ann chur ina luí orthu go b'fhéidir go bhfuil sé in am acu chomh maith, an idirghníomhaíocht seo a mbíonn siad ag caint air go minic, idir an ollscoil agus an pobal, mar ghné thábhachtach den idirghníomhaíocht sin, b'fhéidir straitéisí níos cinnte ó thaobh taighde agus mar sin de a chur ar bun maidir le cúrsaí na Gaeilge agus na Gaelscolaíochta agus na nithe ábharthach eile a luaigh mé níba luaith inniu.

Dónall Ó Baoill: I understand this question well. There are a couple of things you say about it. Probably, Foras na Gaeilge has a particular responsibility in relation to making some progress on important parts of the Irish language, in relation to dictionary work and publications and other aspects, and even carrying out research, and that has a connection with a North South fund and they could make a major input into it as well as the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure here. I think that there are perhaps ways to establish a network so that all those people are aware of the needs that exist. As to the universities and other bodies who carry out research, I understand that the presidents of all the universities throughout the country come together to discuss many issues, and there's a chance it's about business matters and scientific issues and things like that they talk about, but I think there is an opportunity to persuade them that perhaps it is time for them too, on that interaction about which they talk so often between the university and the community, as an important aspect of that interaction, perhaps to establish more definite strategies about research and so on about Irish language matters and Irish Medium education, and the other appropriate needs which I mentioned earlier today.

Arthur: Foras na Gaeilge and the statisticians in the two departments are working together in terms of the total research picture across the island. Obviously, apart from our co-responsibility in being the co sponsor of a joint North-South body, the Minister is very keen to promote greater co-operation on a north-south basis. In relation to the actual strategy itself, in some respects I think you could say that the situation here in the north is different in terms of the needs and requirements, and therefore there may be a good and a sound case for a strategy that is somewhat different. The strategy should at any rate reflect best practice, and what is working well in other areas, in the south, here in parts of the north, in Scotland, in Wales, so in a sense we are quite happy to pinch or steal other things that work well elsewhere and where it is appropriate to try them here. Ultimately, it might be an issue for respondents to consider whether you think the strategy is so specific that it needs to be northern-based or whether there is scope for greater co-operation, but clearly in my other responsibilities in terms of sponsorship of Foras na Gaeilge, and the Ulster Scots Agency, I am in contact with these bodies on a daily basis, there is a good level of co-operation and sharing of information but in other areas, there is obviously room for improvement. But certainly in terms of research there is now greater co-ordination of what is being done so that we are using the available resources to the best effect. And if we can do something for Foras na Gaeilge, then we do it, rather than them using resources to do it and duplicate the effort of the Department. There is a high level of co-operation between the two departments, and Foras na Gaeilge in that respect.

Cathaoirleach: Níl am anois ann ach do cheist amháin eile.

Chair: There is only time for one more question now.

Declan Ó Loan: I'm a Councillor in Ballymena. Can I just endorse the point that was made earlier in relation to the Unionist community and to comment that I just don't think it is good enough that this draft strategy is simply addressed to everybody, as if that were any analysis about the situation. Because the delivery of this strategy in the particular context we have here is not easy. It is not as if there was a group of people who were very interested in the Irish language and another group who were entirely neutral about the matter. Just even as an example, I have seen a recent discussion where a local public body was discussing the possibility of including the Irish language in its logo and the nature of that discussion was not measured in the way that debate here might be. There was a high level of aggression and antagonism by Unionist councillors to any such idea. These are the realities so work needs to be done on that front, which might be both a carrot and stick approach, with reminders that there is the Equality legislation, Section 75 and so on, that has a bearing on this, and also carrot measures that work on reducing the fears that abound in relation to this matter. So that this can change attitudes and the Irish language can be seen for the valuable cultural resource that it is. Can I ask, and I know that Dónall to some extent addressed this, earlier on, there are, I think what you might call reasonable fears around the resource issue, and that there might be considerable expense on publications that are read by none or very few, so are there any pragmatic steps if we are going to move towards a country where people have the right to use their language, whether that is backed legislatively or not. Pragmatic steps might be offered and what it would mean in practice in terms of resources for public bodies.

Dónall Ó Baoill: Tá an-tábhacht silim leis an rud a raibh mé ag caint air, an feasacht poiblí, an fheasacht teanga, is é sin go mbeadh foilseacháin atá furasta a thuigbheáil, furasta a léamh ar fáil do dhaoine, do thuismitheoirí go háirithe, agus do na gnáth dhaoine a bhfuil suim acu sna gnéithe a bhaineann le teanga i gcoitianta, agus go dtabharfaidh treoir dóibh ar an úsáid is féidir a bhaint as an eolas sin, ar a bhfuil ar fáil thart timpeall orthu, sa timpeallacht ina gcónaíonn siad, is na buntáistí a bhféadadh a bheith le heolas a chur ar theanga eile agus ar na gnéithe cultúrtha a bhaineann léi agus ar na cláracha a bhíonn ar fáil ar na meáin, go háirithe ar an teilifís, agus ar fhíseanna eile agus mar sin de. Ach is ábhar an-deacair é agus bhí duine éigin ag caint ar an síc-theangeolaíocht ansin, agus bheadh níos mó na síc-theangeolaíocht ag teastáil uait. B'fhéidir go mbeadh an bata mhór ag teastáil uait, an meáchan agus gach eile rud eile chomh maith ach mar sin féin, is féidir na rudaí seo a chur i láthair ar bhealach a dhéanann i bhfad níos taitneamhaigh iad ná mar atá siad faoi láthair, i bhfad níos inléite agus níos intuigthe agus mar sin.

Dónall Ó Baoill: I think the issue I was speaking about earlier is very important, public awareness, language awareness, that is, that there should be publications that are easy to understand, easy to read, available to people, to parents especially, and to ordinary people with an interest in the elements relating to language in

general, and which would give them direction about what use you can make of that information, about what is available around them, in the environment in which they live, and the advantages that can come from learning another language and the cultural aspects that relate to it, and the programmes that are available in the media, especially television, but also other visual media and so on. But this is a very difficult subject and someone spoke about psycholinguistics earlier, and you would need more than psycholinguistics. Perhaps you might need a big stick, the weight and every other thing as well, but even so, it is possible to present these things in a way that makes them much more attractive than they are at present, more easily read and more easily understood and so on.

Arthur Scott: I think one of our earlier speakers did point to the very difficult resource climate, and clearly that's why we need as many people as possible to air their views on the consultation document because clearly we will have to prioritise what we can do within the available resources. But clearly if we need to make a case that that prioritisation would be too slow to address what is a priority area, then the quality of the responses that you make will try to form a compelling case to try and secure resources and to direct them to those areas. If we just pick up again about the analysis behind the strategy, when I referred earlier on to the strategy being for everyone, the Minister is and has been very keen since her appointment and has made efforts to depoliti-



cise the language, so it wasn't a bland answer, the strategy was drafted, as I said in my presentation, to make it available to everyone. That doesn't exclude the strategy from including specific measures to address hard-to-reach groups or groups that may feel alienated from becoming involved with the language, and the department, through the Minister's initiative has already addressed it through taking practical steps through the Líofo campaign, which is attracting people from right across the community. Now it may not be attracting the huge numbers, like the one million that Aodan referred to, but it is a very positive start and I think demonstrates the Minister's commitment, and the department's commitment to tackle this difficult area.

Ceardlann ar Reachtaíocht Workshop ar Legislation

Éascitheoir: Mar sin an chéad cheist atá againn, an dóigh linn go bhfreagraíonn fíis na straitéise dréachta le riachtanais an phobail ag an am i láthair? An bhfuil sibh sásta leis an fhís mar bhealach chun tosaigh? An leor í? An bhfuil bearnaí inti?

Facilitator: So then the first question that we have is, do we think that the vision as laid out in the draft strategy answers the needs of the community at this time? Are you happy with this vision as the way forward. Is it enough? Are there gaps in it?

A: Can I just start by saying that it is a very welcome document. I think Dónall Ó Baoill mentioned that we could look for areas in common with the twenty year strategy in the Republic of Ireland, and the key lesson there is that it is being implemented far too slowly. And if you look at the way this document has started off, it was first mentioned in 2006, so the big item for me is that time scales should be made clear for when it will be enacted. In the Republic of Ireland, they said they wanted to move towards 250,000 daily speakers, and a number like that would be something to hang your realistic objectives on. You could bench mark how you are progressing. So I would be concerned about how slow the process is. A concern that a lot of the Irish language community might have is that it's very well drafted, good legislative language, but that there is actually no detail: how children in the Gaelscoileanna for example will have more educational opportunities open to them, such as in learning centres; what extra activities will be available to them outside the school gates, that sort of thing.



B: I totally agree with that because the speaker from the Department said that the draft was deliberately kept without targets or funding mentioned; that this was deliberately done in order not to stifle people's expectations, and not to spike the debate, and I can understand that to a degree. But at the same time, in my Council area, we are after drafting an Irish language policy, and even at the very ,very early stages of that, when it was still almost like a wish list, we still had to insert dates, times, numbers, figures, and money with things. So, welcome and all as this is, without that kind of detail, I think it weakens the document. Without those targets and resources for the things mentioned in the strategy, it is something that could be pulled together by anybody in a couple of days.

A: And to date, no actual budget has been set aside in the Republic of Ireland and it looks like we are going to make that same mistake, by not suggesting where the finance will come from. I know times are hard, but...

B: (briseadh isteach air) Má chuireann tú sin ar an mhéar fhada - ní fada go mbeidh an mhéar ró-fhada...

B: (interrupting) If you put that off on the long finger – it won't be long before the long finger is too long...

C: **Cinnté, tá an ceart agat...**

C: Absolutely, you're right...

D: The whole thing will break down if there is not the funding to implement it. And the best example of that so far is the Líofo initiative. The Department is directing people to adult Irish language classes throughout the north, but there is no budget made available to help people run these classes, to pay for tutors, so I mean the initiative can't be implemented if the resources aren't there to help put it into effect.

Éascaitheoir: Ceart go leor. Aon pointí eile faoi fhís na straitéise? Tá muid ag labhairt faoi fhís agus cur i bhfeidhm anois, is dócha.

Facilitator: OK. Any other points around the vision of the strategy? We are touching on vision and implementation now, it seems.

E: I think the vision thing is maybe a part of 2.9. There are seven bullet points, and they seem very sound, but, but, and you are absolutely right, you miss it being specific. It needs targets and timelines. And as to the implementation, the other thing is the resource thing. Resources will have to be coming from a number of different departments, and that could be another issue.

A: It's like the Good Friday Agreement. When we saw the words, 'take resolute action', people in the Irish language thought, 'we have landed now.' We thought, how can they take action without it having an impact, if that action is to be 'resolute'. But what happened was that it was just a nice form of words and when it came to its implementation, we are here in 2012 and what has been gained? I think the status of the Irish language has improved and that is an area where this strategy will help because for the first time, the government will have laid down its views on the Irish language, and at least, in terms of status, it will probably impact on paper if not in practical terms on the working of some of the departments. Again, in the Republic of Ireland, all the departments have a duty to produce Irish language strategies but already a lot of them haven't, and probably the worst offender is the Department of Education in the south. My fear is that the same will happen here. Using the same phrase used by another previous speaker, welcome and all as this proposed strategy is... One thing that Líofo did, which was very positive, was to set up the scholarship fund. Now that was an actual benefit to people. And it has an impact on the Irish language because it helps teenagers and adults to go to the Gaeltacht and by extension it's helping the development of the Irish language by supporting the Gaeltacht areas.

F: We seem to be at the bottom of the pile because the next step on from this vision is getting information on the ground, and after that the next step apparently – and I could be corrected here – is to go on to the NI Assembly. And even then I foresee as another speaker mentioned earlier on, there are going to be huge difficulties there. But the difficulties don't stop there, because then there's the intergovernmental level, the two governments then, and that's a further step. And as someone over there pointed out, we don't want to be following the aspirational level which is all the Irish language has in the south. Because from 1922 on until this moment, it has been an aspiration that Irish be the first language of the country but in terms of what happened in the 70s, the actual status of the language was downgraded at a time when it should have been improved when we went into Europe. Really, I suppose, then after we have finished with the two governments then in terms of legislation, then Europe is the next. So, if there is a wee bit chipped off here and a wee bit chipped off there, and a wee bit at the next level, as that speaker there said, 'is fada go raibh an mhéar fhada ró-ghéarr. Ní bheidh a datha ar bith fágtha againn. Sílim gurbh fhiú tabhairt faoin phróiseas. (It's a long time since the long finger was too short. There will be nothing left for us. I think it is a worthwhile process) but we should be aware not to get hopes up too much. I'm a pessimist, I think.)

B: Maybe, not to hog it because I know there are a lot of people round the table, but maybe not to be too negative, just to stress that it is very, very welcome to see this in itself, but if you read through the bit of the draft document just after that, the legal basis for the strategy, here and in Europe and in the Good Friday Agreement and St Andrews and the joint declaration, if one were to read through that, if that was before this other bit, you would expect the strategy to be stronger. That's just my reading of it anyway. Once you read the legal basis, you would expect that what's in relation to that would be a bit more definite. So there seems to be a discord

there between those two things.

Éascaitheoir: An dtig leat níos mó a rá faoi sin? An dtig leat é a fhorbairt?

Facilitator: Can you say something else about that? Can you develop it?

B. Right...

F. **ag iarraidh bunús stádais ar dtús b'fhéidir?** Wanting status as a baseline first, perhaps?

B. **Bheifeá ag dream le rudaí i bhfad níos cinntigh agus i bhfad níos díoghbháilte sa straitéis. De bharr a bhfuil ráite sa rannóg ar Bhunús na straitéise, maidir le reachtaíocht na hEorpa agus mar sin.**

B: You would be expecting things that were more certain and resolute in the strategy. Because of what it says in the section on the Basis of the Strategy, about European legislation and so on.

G: Just adding on to that, I feel that the language should be promoted as part of the cultural and linguistic heritage of Europe, and as a living language in Europe.

B. Well, I am thinking about a point made earlier in the questions and answers sessions, about the alienation of the unionist community and the effect that any legislation may have on them. That certainly has to be taken into account and I have no problem with that, but it's something that I am aware of happening in other areas and the point I am making is that I would be afraid of that happening here, is that that would set the context, rather than the rights of Irish speakers. Unionist reaction becomes the primary context for what the state is going to do and it plays to the fears about alienation of the unionist community. Although this should be taken into account, it shouldn't be allowed to drive the context of any legislation or strategy.

F. There is a huge education programme there.

B. there is nothing here in the strategy about the actual rights of Irish speakers. Yet these are mentioned quite specifically in the European Charter, but this doesn't come across strongly in the vision. The rights of Irish speakers and their needs should be the foundation stone of the strategy. Agus, rudaí eile a thabhairt san áireamh, ar ndóigh – ach tús áite a thabhairt do chearta phobal na Gaeilge. And bringing in other things too, of course, but primary place to be given to the rights of Irish speakers.

Éascaitheoir: An bhfuil pointí eile ann maidir leis an fhís? Mura bhfuil, an mbogfaidh muid ar aghaidh chuig an chuid seo a bhaineann le reachtaíocht féin?

Facilitator: Are there other points about the vision? And if not, will we move on to the actual proposals on legislation? We have relatively little time to go through this, but these workshops are tasters really, a chance for people to discuss the document together before we go away and work out what we want to put into our own submissions. I'm looking at the English language version here, so it's Page 31, point 4.8. Is dócha nach bhfuil sé mar an gceanna sa leagan Gaeilge? I suppose it's not the same in the Irish version?

Roinnt daoine: leathanach 33 Several people: Page 33

Éascaitheoir: Bheadh a fhios agat go mbeadh an leagan Gaeilge leagtha amach ar bhealach difriúil ón leagan Béarla...is tromluí sin nuair a bhíonn tú ag freagairt ar cháipéisí comhairliúcháin...

Facilitator: You would know that the Irish language version would be laid out differently from the English version..it's a nightmare when you are responding to consultation documents...(addressing representative of DCAL) Just a wee point, but we have just noticed that the page numbers in the Irish language document are slightly different from the English language version. That can be a bit of a nightmare when you are responding. It's just one of those complications that people don't always take on board.

(Ag léamh) Anois, Reachtaíocht agus Stádas na teanga

(Reading) Now, Areas for Legislation and Status of the Language...

Éascaitheoir: Feicim an focal ‘dísicór’ in úsáid sa chéad mholadh agus sílim gur úsáideadh an focal mícheart ansin. Is é, ‘aisghairm’ an focal ceart, creidim. Sa Bhéarla deir sé ‘prorogued’ agus sílim nach sin an focal ceart, ach an ciall ata leis an abairt ná, ‘repealed’.

(To Michael Willis, DCAL) Michael can I just check that with you, the word in English is ‘prorogued’ the word in Irish is ‘dísicór’, is the sense of that that the 1737 Act for the Administration of Justice should be repealed?

Michael Willis: Yes, it should be ‘repealed’. We have had some responses that have pointed that out to us, so the word prorogued has been used incorrectly there. The intention would be to repeal.

Éascaitheoir: Ceart go leor. Ar mhaith libh dul fríd seo pointe i ndiaidh phointe eile? Níl mórán phointe ann.

Facilitator: Ok. Do you want to go through this section point by point? Is it worth doing that?

Roinnt daoine: Ba mhaith Several people: Yes. It’s a starting point anyway.

Facilitator: Anything regarding the proposal on the 1737 Administration of Justice Act? Anyone think we should definitely keep it?

H: Is that the one that demands English only in the courts?

Facilitator: Yes, it bans the use of any language other than English in the courts in theory. In reality, every day in the courts, ethnic minority languages are used and facilitated through translation, as they should be. So, in effect, this Act applies a ban on the Irish language.

F. Does it relate also to signage? Because I have encountered difficulty with signage, apparently there is legislation which prohibits signs in Irish..well, obviously it doesn’t prohibit if or some of the Councils that use signage would be acting illegally, but I do know in my dealings with a certain District Council, I was told that we couldn’t put up signs in Irish unless the name of the business was in Irish and that there was some sort of consultation with the Roads Service and that Roads Service had to be involved, and I think the Roads Service, I don’t know what...

B. The way it is at the minute is that Councils have the legislative power to put up street and road signs bilingually. When it comes to the names at entrances to towns and villages, they do not have that power. But the DoE tells us that if a Council agrees to put up those signs, the DoE will not take them down unless they are posing a danger to the public. Sin an cás mar atá sé anois. (that’s the case as it is at present)

Éascaitheoir: Is pointe maith sin, ní bhaineann an mí-léamh sin maidir le comharthaíocht leis an Act 1737 Riar na Córa.

Facilitator: The 1737 Act on the Administration of Justice only relates to the use of Irish in the courts, but it is very common that you find different bodies, either local Councils, sometimes the solicitors who advise Councils and other bodies, the NI Tourist Board who have an English-only policy in respect of signage, and various other bodies like Roads Service whose approach is to say you can only have a directional sign- one of the brown signs- if it is pointing to a place that is named in Irish, otherwise they will not put it in Irish. I think the one for An Droichead in south Belfast says, ‘An Droichead Cultural Centre’, so the Irish name, but then followed by English instead of Irish. I mean, it is a major problem this issue of signage and it is something we deal with every day in our office with people coming to us with problems about it.

B. there are other implications around signage, especially for road signs and street signs. If you get your driving licence and you want it in Irish, they may not do it unless the address has been officially adopted in Irish by the Council. But they seem to put every possible obstacle in your way to stop you doing that. That issue is not addressed anywhere in this proposed strategy or the bit on legislation. I think there should be something put in there about that, to make it much, much easier for people to get public bodies to let them use their names and addresses in Irish on their driving licences, on their documentation, on their passports – I suppose on their passport is easy enough – but I have had a lot of problems with my driving licence...’sorry, we can’t

do a fada' (**daoine ag gáire** / people laughing). It's ridiculous things like that that you continually come up against. That just needs legislation, so you can look, you have to do this. Since we are talking about legislation, in the absence of it, people will always just have 100 excuses not to do something..I think...**sin bunchloch na reachtaíochta atá de dhíth orainne**. (That's the foundation stone of the legislation we need). The kind of legislation we need would provide the basis for removing any excuses not to provide what we need in Irish.

Éascaitheoir: Tugann sin muid b'fhéidir chuig an chéad phointe eile. Mar a aontaíodh i gComhaontú Chill Rímhinn, caithfear Bille Gaeilge a ullmhú...caithfear an Bille seo a chur ós comhar an Tionól chomh luath agus is féidir. Smaointe faoi sin?

Facilitator: Perhaps that brings us to the next point. As agreed in the St Andrews Agreement, an Irish Language Bill will be prepared...This Bill must be placed before the Assembly as soon as possible. Any thoughts on that?

B. In ionad a luaithe agus is féidir, ba chóir a rá, 'bonn láithreach'. (Daoine ag gáire) B agus F ag caint le chéile: Is ionann 'a luaithe agus is féidir' i mBéarla agus 'ar an mhéar fhada' i nGaeilge.

B. Instead of saying, 'as soon as possible, it should say 'immediately'. (people laughing)

B. and F. speaking together: 'As soon as possible' in English means the same as 'putting it on the long finger' in Irish.

B. That's whatever I think whenever I see that in English, 'as soon as possible' it just means putting it off. This should say, do it immediately.

A. A completion date. A realistic one. Even if it's two years, three years,...

B. **Tá** / Yes

E. I think the point needs more development really. I mean, the point was made by at least one or maybe two of the outside speakers, that without a legislative base, the strategy doesn't lie.

B. It's like the lady from Scotland said, some of the services that they provide now in Scotland, before they had that legislative base for the languages strategy, they just wouldn't have been done. You are absolutely right, we do need that sort of legislative base for any strategy or people will just come up with excuses not to do it. That's not to say they would do it for badness always, it's human nature to take the line of least resistance. Everybody just wants an easy life, you know.

Éascaitheoir: aon phointe eile faoin mholadh sin? Ar chóir cén saghas bhille a phlé nó aon rud eile seachas amscála agus tábhacht na reachtaíocht seo?

Facilitator: Any other points on that proposal? Do you want to discuss what sort of bill or anything other than timescale and how important this legislation is?

F: mura miste leat, Éascaitheoir, you know the way in Wales, like Anne Robinson, the way she has gone for Welsh speakers, and I know this is...**ag cur isteach ar chúrsaí ama**..(I know this is taking up time) but is there..I know there are some people in Wales who would be against the Welsh language, purely because it would mean inconvenience for them, but we have a difficulty, people for no reason at all, seem to have an unreasoning hatred for Irish despite the fact that their own ancestry may be Irish, and that's why I am saying, do we need to do something in educative terms, to break that down while at the same time, as others have said, not to make that our priority, because we have to look after our own rights as well, and those two things are coming directly in conflict with each other, and the whole status thing, it keeps coming back to that, how the status of the language is perceived, and this is a factor throughout the United Kingdom as well.

Iwan Evans: You are right. There are people in Wales who do not want to see the language progress and would quite happily see the language die a death. Fortunately, in general, public opinion is either neutral ('oh yeh, that Welsh thing') or positive. Certainly politically, all parties in the Assembly unanimously voted for the legislation in 2011 and also backed the strategy. They will argue whether we are implementing it as quickly as we should, and are we doing the right things, but generally, there is that positivity. In my previous role, working in the Welsh government, trying to develop our services to the public bilingually, and in terms of Welsh speakers, we were like, maybe 15 per cent of the Welsh government workforce speak Welsh – so you got the other 85 per cent who don't speak Welsh, many of whom are positive towards it and wanting to do what they can to implement the policy, others are fairly neutral, and then you get others who say, this is a nuisance...but

to work, for us, we need buy-in from the 85 per cent also. Of course, we live in different circumstances...

F. They are not the same, not at all...

Éascaitheoir: Ceart go leor, bhí muid in ainm’s a bheith stoptha faoin am seo, agus caithfear bogadh ar aghaidh mar sin, mura miste libh..?

Facilitator: We were supposed to have finished by now, so I’d like to move on if people are ok with that..?

Two final points, citizenship / residence tests in Irish and important legal texts in Irish. Any comments?

B. I just wonder why that was picked out specifically? Applications for citizenship?

Éascaitheoir: bhuel, is dócha go mbaineann sé le ceisteanna a thóg POBAL, b’fhéidir.

Facilitator: Well, there’s a possibility that comes from issues POBAL has raised.

We did some work around the Immigration and Borders Act..where you could according to the Bill do your citizenship test in Welsh or in Scottish Gaelic, but not in Irish. We raised it in the context of saying that this creates the impression that there is something wrong with Irish, especially perhaps for people coming in from outside.

B. **Tá sin i gceart.** That’s fine.

On the last one, how do you define ‘important’ texts? One man’s important is another man’s waste of time? Is it about legal texts that would have some bearing on the vision of the strategy? How do you prioritise?

Éascaitheoir: bhuel, mar eolas, an dóigh a bhfuil sé déanta anois, tá 4 chinn aistrithe ag an stát ó 2001, nuair a glacadh le Cairt na hEorpa do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh. An tOrd Oideachais, a bhfuil tagairt don Ghaelscolaíochta ann, cad iad na cinn eile? Comhaontú Aoine an Chéasta é féin, agus ní chuimhin liom ar na cinn eile. Ach cúpla bliain ó shin, chuaigh duine éigin ar lorg téacs an Ord Oideachais agus ní raibh críoch leagan ar fail. Ní dhéanadh pruíf léamh air a riamh. B’shin cúig bliaina nó mar sin i ndiaidh. Is rud sin, sílim ata ag teacht le Chairt na hEorpa. Ar chóir go raibh se níos mionsonraithe nó an bhfuil sibh sásta leis mar atá sé?

Facilitator: Well, for information, there have been 4 texts translated by the state since 2001, when the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages was ratified. The Education Order, in which there is a reference to Irish Medium Education, what are the others..The Good Friday Agreement itself, I don’t recall the others. But a couple of years ago, someone asked for the Education Order in Irish and no finalised version was available. It had never been proof read. That was around 5 years later. I think this is something in line with the European Charter. So should this be more detailed or are you happy with it as it is?

B. **‘de réir iarratais’?** B. on request?

Éascaitheoir: ceann do na constaicí ata ann is nuair nach bhfuil cead ag daoine Gaeilge a úsáid sna cúirteanna, b’fhéidir nach mbeadh daoine ar lorg na dlíthe

Facilitator: When you can’t use Irish in the courts, you wouldn’t necessarily go looking the legal texts so it is kind of a full circle.

We will move on anyway to economic life, private sector companies should be encouraged to develop services through the medium of Irish, and use Irish language signage...and special development areas – Gaeltacht areas should be considered...

B. would there be any merit in putting in private sector companies too? ‘encouraged and incentivised’?

A. Yes. ‘Incentivised’ is the word, because ‘encouraged’ is too weak.

B. Yes. There needs to be something in it for them. **Sin mar a oibríonn lucht gnó.** That’s how business people work

Éascaitheoir: Aon rud eile ar an cheann sin? Níl? An chéad ceann eile?

An raibh sibh uilig ar son an cheann sin, nó an bhfuil buarthaí ar bith agaibh?

Facilitator: Anything else on that one? No? The next one? Special development areas?

Were you all in favour of that one or do you have any worries?

Iwan Evans: can I just make an observation in terms of the private sector, in Wales, many of the main retailers, like Marks and Spencer's and Next and Tescos on came on board and you will see signage like that across Wales and you may be able to use that..the fact that it is happening in Wales – these are the same companies and you can build on that experience. Because for the companies, it means they have got it in their development cycles for signage and what have you, and you might be able to build on what we are already doing.

B. So in terms of continuity and consistency for those companies...

Iwan Evans: Yes, so that might be useful. It's all voluntary. There is no requirement on them.

A: Just when I see the 'Gaeltacht' areas, and I know it is referring to Northern Ireland here, it is worth pointing out that gatherings of Irish speakers could be happening in places like Cricklewood or Boston and there are pockets of Irish speakers and they can tend to be scattered as well as gathered together in 'Gaeltacht' areas.

Éascaitheoir: an míbhuntáiste sin? Facilitator: Is that a disadvantage?

A: No I am just thinking that the two examples are Carntogher and presumably West Belfast, the Gaeltacht Quarter. But does the Shaw's Road fall into the Gaeltacht Quarter?

Roinnt daoine: Ní dóigh liom é. Several people: No, don't think so.

A: So there are issues. I would like to have a reference to the pockets of Irish speakers that are maybe connected with bunscoileanna, (Irish Medium primary schools) in places like Newry, Crossmaglen...

B: Yes, see where it says there, 'Gaeltacht areas should be considered for support,' and then it gives 2 wee examples, I would even go a step back there. I think the support should be given to those areas that you (to A.) refer to, so that they can become Gaeltacht areas.

Oifigeach POBAL ag teacht isteach: Go mo leithscéal a chairde, tá an t-am istigh...

POBAL Officer entering: Sorry folks, but the time is up...

B. Do you know what I mean? Some support so they can take that other step? And that would bring with it then other sorts of incentives and support once they get that status.

F. I thought it was interesting that in Cardiff there were a greater number of Welsh speakers than in some of the Welsh speaking areas where there were up to 80% of people without Welsh...

Iwan Evans: There are 30,000 people...in terms of urban areas generally in wales, there are more Welsh speakers than in the main population itself, but certainly numbers wise...

A: That might beg the question is one born and bred Gaeltacht Irish speaker, in terms of linguistic importance, worth 4 or 5 urban Irish language speakers? (**Daoine ag Gáire** / Laughter) Is it the same in Wales? You know the urban Welsh, do they have the same standard of need ?

Iwan Evans: Well, I'm a native Welsh speaker from Cardiff so I would like to think that my Welsh was ..well generally, I don't think we tend to have that thing of a Gaeltacht population. Our policies are generally 'all-Wales' although we might do things differently in areas where you have go communities where you can walk down the street and hear Welsh than we might do in Cardiff, but in Cardiff it's more like networks and promoting that kind of thing rather than the way we do it in the west, where there are more issues around development and giving people jobs just to sustain the area.

G: Enterprise should be encouraged through incubation units or even the thing they have in DCU, Fiontair, you know, where it is campus-based so there is support for various aspects. You know, that that should be encouraged because you know, the two areas that are mentioned there are physical areas but as other people were saying, you have a lot of other communities that have grown up around schools and there should be some sort of support...

B. rather than geographical communities?

G. yes.

Iwan: ...and digital communities as we are trying to do.

Éascaitheoir: Ok folks, an deis deireanach anois,

Facilitator: Last chance to throw in any really important points that we haven't raised yet...

G: Just tourism, you know, based on the linguistic heritage – that should be encouraged.

B. See just on that, I'll just ask this question at the end of this. We keep saying that this language is a great resource, that there is a potential great resource for cultural tourism, is there any evidence from Wales or Scotland to show how this is the case?

Iwan: I don't know to be honest. But we certainly do promote Welsh as part of our selling point – you know – 'Come to Wales, it's different' – but I don't know about the research evidence.
(people discussing)

Éascaitheoir: Ar chóir bogadh ar aghaidh chuig mhonatóireacht? Should we move on to monitoring?

Facilitator : it's being suggested we move on to Monitoring and Evaluation.

A: Arthur mentioned the Inter Departmental Strategy Delivery Group, and although that would probably be a useful body, but it depends on people and they will probably be senior civil servants, so the question I would have is will there be a figurehead who will represent the Irish language...

B: A Gaelic tsar...

A: Yes, like a Gaelic tsar...

Ceardlann ar Oideachas

Éascaitheoir: Tá 45 bomaite againn don cheardlann seo- agus is dócha go gcaithfidh muid an chuid is mó de sin ar Oideachas, mar sin de d'iarrfainn oraibh a bheith measartha gonta le bhur gcuid pointí sa dóigh is gur féidir linn seo a éascú. Beidh muid ag caint faoi réamhscolaíocht, bhunscolaíocht, mheánscolaíocht agus iarmheánscolaíocht. Chomh maith, beidh muid ag caint faoi Fhís na straitéise agus a cur i gcrích, agus feiceáil an bhfuil bearnaí sa straitéis. Mar sin de, seal s'agaibh.

A: I just want to repeat some of the points I asked as questions in the first session. Since the emphasis of this session is on education, I'll just make the point again that the legal basis of the consultation is stated in the document but it omitted the only case law that exists on the support for Irish Medium Education so far in Northern Ireland, ie the case of Judge Treacy last October/November. But I think given the importance and the clarity of that position as it affects all aspects of Irish Medium Education I really can't see how it's now being stated as a starting point in this respect. I have a number of points I'd like to make through the session but I would like to start with that one.

Éascaitheoir: Duine ar bith eile?

C: Go díreach pointe i dtaca leis an fhís de. Tá tagairtí déanta san fhís don tábhacht atá leis an Ghaeilge mar chuid den éagsúlacht chultúrtha agus mar chuid den fhéiniúlacht do chuid den phobal anseo i dtuaisceart na hÉireann ach níl tagairt ar bith an don oidhreacht a bhaineann leis an teanga agus an tábhacht oidhrechtúil a bhaineann leis an teanga nach mbaineann le cuid ar leith ar bith den phobal nó nach mbaineann le féiniúlacht inti féin ach a bhaineann le oidhreacht agus le - is dócha - le timpeallacht oidhrechtúil an chuid seo den oileán.

D: An dtig liom cur leis sin? Tá cuid mhór sa réamhrá is cuid mhór sna haidhmeanna a bhaineann le cúrsaí trasphobail agus comhoidhreacht agus rudaí mar sin ach nuair théann tú isteach sa cháipéis féin, níl rud ar bith ach tá tagairt amháin do chúrsaí Feasachta Teanga ach sin a bhfuil ann.

Éascaitheoir: Sílim go bhfuil an dualgas orainne, na bearnaí a líonadh agus sin an fáth a bhfuil muid anseo.

D: Agus an fhadhb atá ann, mura bhfuil an toil ann - is cuimhin liom go raibh cúrsaí teanga agam sa

Workshop on Education

Facilitator: We have 45 minutes for this workshop – and most of that will probably be spent on Education, so I would ask you to be quite brief with your points so we can facilitate the discussion. We will be including Early Years, Primary Education, Secondary and Further and Higher levels. As well, we want to look at the vision of the strategy and implementation, and see if there are any gaps in the draft document. So, over to you all.

A: I just want to repeat some of the points I asked as questions in the first session. Since the emphasis of this session is on education, I'll just make the point again that the legal basis of the consultation is stated in the document but it omitted the only case law that exists on the support for Irish Medium Education so far in Northern Ireland, ie the case of Judge Treacy last October/November. But I think given the importance and the clarity of that position as it affects all aspects of Irish Medium Education I really can't see how it's now being stated as a starting point in this respect. I have a number of points I'd like to make through the session but I would like to start with that one.

Facilitator: Anybody else?

C: Just a point in relation to the vision. There are references in the Vision to the importance of the Irish language as part of the cultural diversity and as part of the identity of some of the community here in the north of Ireland, but there is no reference to the heritage that is linked to the language and to the importance in terms of heritage of the language which is not associated with any given section of the community, nor with identity per se, but with heritage and with, I suppose, the heritage environment of this part of the island.

D: can I add to that? There is a great deal in the Introduction and a great deal in the Aims that relate to cross-community matters and common heritage and so on, but when you get into the document itself, there is nothing but one reference to Language Awareness courses, and that's all.

Facilitator: I think it is up to us ourselves to fill in the gaps and that is why we are here.

D: And the problem is, if the will isn't there - I remember I ran language courses in the Department of

Roinn Sláinte agus Roinn OFMDFM (Oifig an ChéadAire is an Leas-ChéadAire) sa bhliain 2000 agus ansin cuireadh an Tionól ar fionraí de bharr go raibh éigeandáil pholaitiúil ann agus ní raibh siad ag iarraidh na ranganna ar ais mar ní raibh déabhlóid ann agus ansin dúirt siad liom ‘Níl an t-airgead againn fá choinne ranganna,’ agus dúirt mise, ‘Tá mé sásta na ranganna a chur ar fáil saor in aisce,’ ach dúirt siad ‘Níl muid á n-iarraidh.’ Mar sin de, ag caint faoi easpa acmhainní, bhí mise ag cur acmhainní ar fáil saor in aisce ach ní raibh an t-am acu glacadh leis.

Ceist ón urlár: Ní raibh an t-am ag cé?

D: An Roinn de chuid OFMDFM. Ní raibh siad ag iarraidh ranganna Gaeilge de bharr nach raibh déabhlóid ann.

E: Tá nasc an-láidir idir Gaeloideachas agus Athbheochan na Gaeilge. Sílimse féin go bhfuil cás ar leith ann fá choinne grúpa oibre tras-roinne leis sin a fhorbairt mar tá cuid mhór rudaí luaite sa straitéis seo a bhaineann le oideachas agus níl – i mo bharúil féin – níl an Roinn Oideachais ag tabhairt faoi/faoi deara na rudaí atá scríofa sa straitéis agus ní bheidh go dtí go mbeidh tuiscint cheart acu ar athbheochan na Gaeilge agus an comhphobal. Agus níl an tuiscint cheart acu ar chor ar bith ar Ghaeloideachas, mar ó thaobh athbheochan na Gaeilge de- amharcann siad uirthi mar oideachas agus oideachas a sholáthar, agus níl na spriocanna céanna acu.

F: Bhí mé ag rud mar seo a bhí ag an Roinn Oideachais, seachtain ó shin, agus sílim gur chóir dúinn a aithint – tá mé ag caint ach go háirithe faoi áiseanna oideachais, agus an dóigh a bhfuil baol ann go dtitfidh áiseanna idir dhá roinn. Tá an Roinn seo ag maoiniú Foras na Gaeilge agus tá an Roinn Oideachais ag maoiniú CCEA. Go díreach le bheith cinnte go bhfuil mar chuid, fiú den fhís go bhfeicfeadh muid go bhfuil riachtanais ann agus gur chóir, b’fhéidir amharc ar a bhfuil ann anois agus feiceáil air sin a thógáil. Ba chóir go mbeadh plean ann chomh maith, ach ba chóir go raibh an dá roinn ag caint lena chéile agus go bhfuil an straitéis bunaithe air sin.

G: Tchítear dom go mbéinn ag teacht leis an mhéid atá ráite ag F. ansin. Má tá muid ag dul a thabhairt faoin straitéis seo, agus má tá muid ag dul a amharc air ceann de na cuspóirí atá ann, ná go lorgáítear eolais i dtaca leis na bealaí is fearr leis an Ghaelscolaíocht a éascú agus a spreagadh, sílim féin nach féidir le roinn amháin a bheith ag déileáil leis seo go gcaithfidh na ranna uilig a bheith ag caint lena chéile.

Health and the department of OFMDFM in 2000 and then the Assembly was suspended because of political crisis and they didn’t want the classes back because we didn’t have devolution and then they told me, ‘We don’t have the money for classes,’ and I said, ‘I am happy to run the classes for free,’ but they said, ‘We don’t want them.’ Therefore, talking of a lack of resources, I was providing resources free of charge and they didn’t have the time to accept them.

Question from floor: Who didn’t have time?

D: The Department of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister. They didn’t want Irish classes because there wasn’t devolved government.

E: There is a very strong link between Irish Medium Education and the Irish language Revival. I think myself that there is a case for an interdepartmental working group to develop this, because there is a lot mentioned in this strategy that relates to education but in my opinion, the Department of Education is not dealing with / noticing the things that are written in the strategy and they won’t be until they have a proper understanding of the Irish language Revival and the (Irish speaking) community. And they don’t have the correct understanding at all of Irish Medium Education, because from the perspective of the Irish language Revival – they look at it as education and providing education and the goals are not the same.

F: I was at a thing like this for the Department of Education, a week ago, and I think that we should recognise - I am talking especially about education resources - that there is a danger that resources will fall between two departments. This department is funding Foras na Gaeilge and the Department of Education is funding CCEA. Just to be sure that even as part of the Vision that we would see that there are needs, and that we should perhaps look at what is being provided now, and try to build on that. There should be a plan, too, but the two departments should be talking to each other and the strategy should be based on that.

G: I think I would agree with what F said there. If we are going to attempt this strategy, and if we are going to look at one of the aims in it, that is how we identify the best ways to facilitate and encourage Irish Medium Education, I don’t think one department can deal with this, I think all the other departments need to be talking to each other. This is the reason behind my asking the question of the panel itself, because

Seo an rud is cúis leis an cheist a bhí agamsa ar an phainéal féin nó tá athbhreithniú faoi láthair ag dul ar aghaidh faoin Scéim Choitianta Mhaoinithe, an dóigh ina maoinítear scoileanna; tá athbhreithniú ag dul ar aghaidh faoi láthair maidir le pleanáil ceantair, an dóigh ina bpleanálfar soláthar oideachais amach anseo taobh istigh de sin. Sin maith go leor do hearnálacha eile taobh istigh den Roinn Oideachais mar ní bhíonn aon bhaint acu le cur chun cinn teanga. A fhad is muintir na Gaelscolaíochta, tá ann den bhaint sin. Má tá muid leis an Bhille Oideachais atá againn faoi láthair ba cheart go n-imreodh an comhairliúchán seo tionchar ar sin fosta. Tchítear domsa má tá muid ag amharc ar phleanáil, má tá muid ag amharc ar na dóigheanna leis an Ghaelscolaíocht a éascú agus mar sin, an Ghaeilge féin a chur chun cinn, go gcaithfidh spreagthachtaí de shórt ínteacht a bheith ann a bheith agus a bheith aitheanta agus sin oibríste amach fríd scéimeanna maoinithe, sin a bheidh – in sna scéimeanna maoinithe seo ba cheart go mbeadh dóigheanna ann ionas nach mbeadh Gaelscoileanna in iomaíocht le scoileanna a chuireann oideachas ar fáil trí mheán an Bhéarla. Fríd na scéimeanna maoinithe sin, más féidir, an pobal ar bhealach éigean a ‘shuaimhniú’- tá leisce orm an focal sin a úsáid - má tá scoil Bhéarla in aice le Gaelscoil tá iomaíocht ag dul a bheith ann, ach más féidir fríd struchtúr maoinithe a chur i bhfeidhm nach bhfuil ann don iomaíocht sin, cuirfidh sé sin leis an normalú. Caithfidh aird ar leith a bheith ann taobh istigh den phleanáil cheantair agus taobh istigh den scéim mhaoinithe a spreagfadh an pobal ar fad amharc gur rogha í an Ghaelscolaíocht dóibhsean agus go gcaithfidh gach straitéis sin a fheiceáil agus go gcaithfear fiú má tá ann do phobal Gaelscolaíochta ba cheart go mbeadh ranna eile ag amharc air seo, an Roinn Sláinte cuirim i gcás- cad iad na seirbhísí a ba cheart a bheith ar fáil do dhaltáí na Gaelscoileanna –tá siad uilig ceangailte le chéile agus tchítear domsa má tá muid ag iarraidh go n-éireodh leis seo caithfidh cur chuige ilrannach a bheith againn.

Éascaitheoir: Sílim agus muid ag caint faoin seo gur cheart dúinn a bheith ag smaoineamh ar an chur i gcrích fosta go háirithe agus ba mhaith go mbeimis ag caint faoina leithéid de mhaoiniú fosta.

A: I worry about some of the submissions that are being made here because they are very much based on the idea that were talking about education in Northern Ireland and the Irish Medium sector on the basis of the people working in the Department of Education are either fair minded or observant of the law and there is no evidence to suggest that that is the case. The people who are advising the last two ministers made repeatedly made mistakes which were obvious

there is a review currently underway on the Common Funding Scheme, that is, the way in which schools are funded; there is a review underway at present on area-based planning, how the education sector will be planned in future forward within that. That’s good enough for other sectors within the Department of Education as they have nothing to do with language promotion. People involved in Irish Medium Education, however do. If we are in agreement with the Education Bill we currently have then this consultation should also have an influence. I think, if we are looking at planning, if we are looking at ways to facilitate IME and so on, to promote the Irish language itself, then we need incentives and for those to be recognised and worked out through funding schemes. That is, in the funding schemes that there should be ways to ensure that Irish medium schools are not in competition with schools which teach through the medium of English. Through those funding schemes, if possible, the public can be ‘reassured’ – I’m reluctant to say that – if an English school is situated next to an Irish school, there will be competition, but if a funding structure can be put in place which does away with that competition, that adds to the normalisation. Special attention needs to be given within area-based planning and within the funding scheme which will inspire the public to see that IME is a choice for them, and every strategy must see that and even if it exists for the IME community that other departments should be looking at this, the Department of Health, for example – what services should be available to Gaelscoil pupils – they are all connected and I think that if we want this to succeed, we need an interdepartmental approach.

Facilitator: I think that as we talk about this we should be thinking about the implementation especially as well and it would be good if we talked about the likes of funding too.

A: I worry about some of the submissions that are being made here because they are very much based on the idea that were talking about education in Northern Ireland and the Irish Medium sector on the basis of the people working in the Department of Education are either fair minded or observant of the law and there is no evidence to suggest that that is the case. The people who are advising the last two ministers made repeatedly made mistakes which were obvious

to those who were observing them, that they were making mistakes that have been highlighted, as I've said before by the court cases last year. But more particularly I've been examining the consultation documents from the various educational library boards which have been circulated for all sectors excluding the Irish Language sector over the last number of months in order to reorganise the secondary sector in for education in Northern Ireland and in particular looking at the Northern Education and Library Board's submission and the South Eastern Education and Library Board's submission. I took time out to review this last week with a solicitor who was nominated by the Law Society as the UK solicitor of the year, and he had a few points to make on this. When we looked at those two submissions in particular, first of all they categorised statistically every form of education in Northern Ireland with the exception of Irish Medium Education. Now believe it or not, there are no students attending secondary schools through the medium of Irish in either the Northern ELB or the South Eastern ELB. Now there is a vague reference at the top of the document of the South Eastern Education and Library Board that there is intention to have a future consultation on Irish Medium Education at some future date. Now what is worrying about this is that these documents are being sent out to all the secondary schools all around Northern Ireland in order to open up the possibility of alliances, federations, ways of working together creatively, but they have excluded the Irish Medium sector and not only excluded the Irish Medium sector but excluded any reference to the Irish Medium sector to statistical analysis of the Irish Medium sector. So my brother's feeling was that those two consultation documents were straight out illegal. Now we looked then at the Belfast Educational Library Board consultation document. Now at least that recognizes the existence of Coláiste Feirste and the number of students attending Coláiste Feirste but it doesn't make any reference to the fact that people have been denied access to Coláiste Feirste and that its sister colleges have big catchment areas that the maps supporting the consultation show spread throughout the Greater Belfast Area. And strangely enough the catchment area of Coláiste Feirste is very much limited to West Belfast and to buses that can access West Belfast. It doesn't make any reference to how that came about. Furthermore it has Coláiste Feirste within the Catholic medium sector whereas by law at the very least it ought be within the integrated sector in terms of categorisation because the legal requirement to support the Irish Medium sector are identical to those that support the integrated sector. But in actual fact in order to be truly lawful the Irish Medium Sector needs to be shown as a sector on its own under the law. Now given the fact that the

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Department of Education clearly lost the case last year in the High Court, it has flagged up once and for all the intentions of this the people who are advising the minister and who are behaving illegally in this way failing to provide the minister with the ability to do his job properly in the department of education need to be challenged again and again. I really wonder whether what we are saying today will have any effect at all until we change the attitude in the Department of Education as is epitomized by the consultation documents on secondary sector reorganisation in Northern Ireland.

Basically in areas like the South Eastern Education and Library Board, and indeed across most of Northern Ireland, there is going to be no opportunities to develop alliances. For instance, the new Irish Medium sector in somewhere like Castlewellan will have no opportunity under this consultation document. It doesn't exist. (According to the consultation document) there are in fact no Irish speakers in Castlewellan attending school and they have no opportunities to ally themselves say for instance with Coláiste Feirste or to build up the skills necessary or the subjects necessary to achieve twenty four or twenty seven subjects, as is under the minister's otherwise very laudable education document. Now I am sorry to take so much time at this but I am emphasising the point that where the Department of Education is repeatedly breaking the law in an obvious way that you don't even have to be a legal expert to spot it, but in actual fact I have a legal expert to spot it, and we need to consider if our contributions are taken seriously.

G: Go díreach i dtaca le pleanáil ceantair - sin an rud a bhí i gceist agam i dtaca le pleanáil ceantair - tá comhairliúchán i láthair na huaire i dtaca le pleanáil ag an iar-bhun leibhéal. Tá sé tugtha le fios, agus chuir Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta comhairle ar an roinn agus ar na boird leabharlainne, go bhfeictear dúinne go bhfuil an próiseas comhairliúchán seo lochtach ó bhun go barr, go bhfeictear dúinne go bhfuil an múnla riachtanais atá acu ag an roinn agus cuirtear an Ghaelscolaíocht isteach leis an earnáil cothabhála Caitliceach amháin. Tá sé tugtha sin le fios againn in gach aon ócáid a thiofadh linn a dhéanamh agus beidh muid a dhéanamh in aighneacht s'againne agus beidh muid á thógáil sin leis an Roinn Oideachais. Tá buarthaí ag Chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta i dtaca leis an chur chuige sin agus don easpa aitheantais atá ann don Ghaelscolaíochta agus do riachtanais na Gaelscolaíochta.

H: Tá mise ag obair le Gaelscoil atá ag dul faoi aitheantas faoi láthair. Tá Rang 1, 2, 3 againn, agus níl aitheantas againn go fóill, cé go bhfuil an próiseas

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G: Just in relation to area-based planning - that's what I meant in relation to area-based planning - there is a consultation taking place at present regarding planning at the most basic level. It has been made known, and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta have advised the department and the library boards, that we believe this consultation process to be faulty from beginning to end, that we see that the department's needs model puts Irish Medium Education in with the Catholic Maintained Schools only. We have raised this at every possible event and will do so in our own submission and we will be raising it with the Department of Education. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta are worried by that approach and for the lack of recognition of Irish Medium Education and the needs of Gaelscoils.

H: I am working with a Gaelscoil which is going for recognition at present. We have P1, 2 and 3, and we still don't have recognition, although the process is

ag dul ar aghaidh, agus tá mionrudaí ag cur isteach agus ag cur moill ar sin tarlú, mar shampla línte bána a bheith tarraingte ar an talamh sa chlós, rud a shíleann an Roinn Oideachas atá fíor, fíor thábhachtach, agus tá lochtanna móra I gceist leis an chóras sin. Sílim go gcaithfidh an Roinn Oideachas tabhairt faoi sin, agus cibé bord leabharlainne atá i gceist, agus an próiseas a dhéanamh i bhfad níos fusa. Sin ráite, tá sé ráite agamsa fiche uair leis an Bhord Leabharlainne i gceantar s'againne nach bhfuil an uimhir cheart acu do scoil s'againne, agus go fóill cuireann said scairt ar an uimhir contráilte agus ansin bíonn said ag tabhairt amach domsa nuair nach bhfaighim an t-eolas. So, tá lochtanna ann ó thaobh cumarsáide de, tá cuid mhór lochtanna ann ó thaobh an phróiseas de, agus tá mé an-sásta a chluinstin go bhfuil Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta ag tabhairt faoin fhadhb sin. Go raibh maith agat.

Éascaitheoir: Sílim fosta gur gá dúinn a bheith airdeallach faoin am anseo. Níl ach b'fhéidir deich mbomáite fágtha ar Oideachas, agus rud a rinne mé féin dearmad a lua libh, ná gur cheart dúinn a bheith ag smaoineamh ar deiseanna do dhaoine Gaeilge a labhairt taobh amuigh den scoil.

I: Ba mhaith liom neartú leis an pointe a bhí A.ag déanamh. Tá sé soiléir nach bhfuil an Roinn Oideachas, nó roinn ar bith, nach bhfuil aitheantas mar is ceart tugtha acu don Ghaelscolaíocht, agus sin an fáth go bhfuil muid curtha – tá trí fóghrúpa sa tuairisc sin, agus an fath go bhfuil muid in sna trí ghrúpa Is nach n-aithníonn said go fóill na saintréithe agus an tábhacht a bhaineann le Gaeloideachas, in ainneoin athbhreithniú den Ghaelscolaíocht a bheith ann anois le trí no ceithre bliain. An earnáil mheasca, bhí siadsan ag cur isteach ag grúpa eile. Rinne said cás ar Leith, agus tugadh cead dóibh dul isteach i fóghrúpa eile. Ní chóir go mbeadh orainn an cás céanna a dhéanamh. Ba chóir go mbeadh sé aitheanta ón tús, gur earnáil ar leith muid, agus níl sin in sa chomhairliúchán seo atá ag dul thart ach an oiread. So, go dtí go mbeidh aitheantas struchtúr éigean ag an Roinn Oideachas, beidh muid mar seo – beidh muid ag dul ó straitéis go straitéis, agus teoranta in san mhéad gur féidir linn a bhaint amach.

Éascaitheoir: Agus mholfainn arís, sin a chur in bhuir aighneachtaí.

J: Sílim i dtaca leis an cháipéis comhairliúcháin do, maidir le cúrsaí oideachais, níl luaite, i dtaca le réamhscolaíocht do ach naoínraí agus réamhscolaíocht a chuirtear ar fáil nuair a bhaineann páistí leibhéal réamhscolaíocht amach i dtaca le haois de, ach níl tagairt ar bith déanta den tréimhse roimhe sin. Sílim

ngoing, and there are minor things getting in the way and slowing that up, for example white lines being drawn on the ground in the playground, something the Department of Education thinks is very, very important, and there are major faults with that system. I think the Department of Education should undertake that and whichever library board it is, and make the process a lot easier. That said, I have told the ELB in our area twenty times that they don't have the correct number for our school, and still they phone the wrong number and then give out to me when I don't receive the information. So, there are faults in terms of communication, there are a lot of faults in terms of the process, and I'm very happy to hear that Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta are tackling that problem. Thank you.

Facilitator: I think we also need to be aware of the time here. We only have about ten minutes left on Education, and something I forgot to mention to you, we should be thinking about ways for people to use Irish outside of school.

I: I want to add to the point A made. It is obvious that neither the Department of Education, nor any other department are giving the proper recognition to Irish Medium Education, and that is why we are put – there are three subgroups in that report, and the reason why we are in the three subgroups is because they still don't recognise the defining characteristics and the importance of Irish Medium Education, despite a review of IME having now been done for two or three years. The Integrated Sector, they were put into a different group. They made a special case, and they were given permission to go into another subgroup. We shouldn't have to make the same case. It should be recognised from the start, that we are a special sector, and that isn't in this consultation that is going around either. So, until the Department of Education recognises a structure of some sort, we will be like this – we will go from strategy to strategy, and limited in what we can achieve.

Facilitator: And I would recommend again, to put that in your submissions.

J: I think in terms of the consultation document, regarding educational matters, there is mention, in terms of Early Years education, only of nurseries and pre-schooling which is provided once children reach pre-school age, but there is no mention of the period before that. I think that the period before this is

go bhfuil an-tábhacht leis an tréimhse roimh sin, don Ghaeloideachas agus do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge sa teaghlach, agus gur chóir go mbeadh tagairtí ann don tréimhse.¹ Cuir i gcás an tacaíocht a bhfaigheann tuismitheoirí sa bhaile dá gcuid páistí, agus ansin don tréimhse sin, cuir i gcás, nuair a bhíonn páistí ag freastail ar ghrúpaí tuismitheoirí -tachrán agus dá réir sin. Níl tagairt ar bith déanta de sin sa chuid sin den chomhairliúchán. Níl tagairt ar bith déanta ach oiread, in sa chuid sin do a bhaineann le tuismitheoirí, ar thacaíocht a thabhairt do thuismitheoirí a bhfuil ag éirí páistí a thógáil le Gaeilge. Ta cuid mhór ann fá thacaíocht a thabhairt do thuismitheoirí a bhfuil ag éirí cuidiú lena cuid páistí a bhfuil in earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta, ach tá roinnt mhaith tuismitheoirí i dTuaisceart na hÉireann atá ag tógáil páistí le Gaeilge, agus níl tagairt ar bith in san cháipéis do na tuismitheoirí sin agus don tacaíocht a thiocfadh a thabhairt dóibh.

E: Ba mhaith liomsa a chur sa tuairisc go molaim -caithfidh muid moladh a thabhairt don Roinn don straitéis seo a ghlacadh chun tosaigh, agus is léir go bhfuil tuiscint mhaith acu ar dhul chun cinn na Gaeilge. Níl sé foirfe, ach tá tuiscint acu, rud nach bhfuil ag an Roinn Oideachas ar chor ar bith, ach is léir go bhfuil tuiscint ag an Aire (Cultúir), agus ag an Roinn, agus caithfidh mé moladh go h-ard, ach níl an tuiscint céanna ag an Roinn Oideachas ná ag an Aire ach oiread.

Éascaitheoir: So, chun an chuid seo a chríochnú – tá mé buartha - caithfidh muid toiseacht ar chaint ar cur i gcríoch. Cad é mar a chuirtear seo i gcríoch? Ach tá pointe amháin fágtha ag K.

K: Déanaimse cuid mhór obair ar an talamh leis an óige, agus caithfidh muid an-béim a chur ar an obair óige agus Gaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil, agus tá oifigh óige de dhíth i ngach ceantar le cuidiú le sin a chur chun cinn, mar tá muid uilig ag streachailt – daoine ag obair go deonach. Níl go leor infheistíochta ar fáil sa cheantar sin, agus ba mhaith liom go mbeadh tuilleadh béim curtha ar sin.

Éascaitheoir: Agus go díreach chun an chuid seo den cheardlann a chríochnú, an dtiocfadh linn caint faoin cur I gcríoch? Cad é mar a chuireann muid seo I gcríoch? Cad é mar a chinnteoidh muid seo? Cad é mar a bheas sé curtha I gcríoch?

A: Well I thought that was a major flaw in the consultation strategy – they came up with very few concrete, measurable steps, for instance – the idea they had in

extremely important for Irish Medium Education and for developing the Irish language in the family, and there should be mention made of the period.¹ For example, the support given to parents in the home for their children, and then for that period, for example, when children are attending parent-toddler groups, and so on. There is no mention of that in that part of the consultation. There is no mention made either, in the part concerning parents, of parents who want to raise their children through Irish. There is a lot about giving support to parents who want to help their children who are in the IME system, but there are quite a few parents in Northern Ireland who are raising their children with Irish, and there is no mention in the document of those parents and the support they could be given.

E: I would like it reported that I commend – we must commend the department for taking this strategy forward, and it is clear that they have a good understanding of promoting Irish. It isn't perfect, but they have an understanding, something which the Department of Education doesn't have, but it is clear that the (Culture) Minister and the department do have an understanding, and I praise them highly, but the Department of Education, nor its minister either, don't.

Facilitator: So, to finish this part – I'm sorry – we need to start speaking about implementation. How do we implement this? But K has one final point to make.

K: I do a lot of work on the ground with young people, and we need to really emphasise youth work and Irish outside of school, and we need youth officers in every area to help implement this, because we are struggling - people working voluntarily. There isn't enough investment in that area, and I would like more focus put on that.

Facilitator: And just to finish this part of the workshop, could we talk about implementation? How do we implement this? How do we ensure it? How will it be implemented?

A: Well I thought that was a major flaw in the consultation strategy – they came up with very few concrete, measurable steps, for instance – the idea they had in

1. Bíonn dá bhliain de réamhscolaíocht ag páistí in earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta. Ní bhíonn ach bliain amháin ann in earnáil an Bhéarla.

1. Children in Irish Medium education have two years in Early Years provision. There is only one year in the English Medium sector.

Wales of supplying pregnant mothers or young families with books from a very early stage. Or say, for instance, the primary school sector, or the naíscoil sector, providing them with the same level of bus transport support that would be provided in the English school sector. For instance, there is a naíscoil in Killough and a bunscoil in Downpatrick, but no way of getting from one to the other. And, sooner or later, the numbers in the naíscoil are going to suffer, because they have no way of getting to school. In a similar way, in Castlewellan, there is a bunscoil that is competing with ten local English-speaking primary schools, spread over a very wide geographical area. All the English-speaking schools have buses to get to school over much shorter distances, but there are no buses supporting the bunscoil in Castlewellan. So we need practical, measurable, easily stated things that can be written down, and then we can see in which timescales they can be achieved. And we're not asking for anything that probably isn't within our lawful rights to ask for in the first place. So I would say we need to see more specific commitments, and specific dates to deliver obvious, on the ground benefits.

L: Sílim féin go bhfuil cuid mhór taighde de dhíth ar rudaí a bhaineann le forbairt na Gaeilge agus an tumoideachas, agus ar dátheangachas sa dhlínse seo, agus go mbeadh sé sin ina chuidiú againn. Tá dhá ollscoil againn ar an taobh seo tíre, agus sílim féin gur cheart go raibh taighde acadúil ar fhorbairt an dátheangachas in sa dhlínse seo, agus ar fhorbairt teanga in sa dhlínse seo chomh maith.

M: Go díreach rud a rá, agus a aithint anseo, le tacaíocht a thabhairt, agus chun rudaí a chur i gcríoch, sílim go bhfuil níos mó daoine eile de dhíth ar an talamh, le sainaitheantas agus eolas ar leith acu. Agus le cur le na rudaí a dúirt I. agus E. – tá taighde de dhíth, ó thaobh teanga dó – cén dóigh, nó cén leibhéal ar cheart go mbeadh páistí ag aois ar leith, ag toiseacht ón réamhscolaíocht, ag dul ar aghaidh go heochair chéim 5 agus ar aghaidh go dtí na coláistí tríú leibhéal? Chomh maith leis sin, tá cuidiú de dhíth ó thaobh riachtanais ar leith, ionas go mbeidh a fhios ag na daoine proifisiúnta amuigh ansin cad é mar a oibríonn rudaí sa tumoideachas – ní hionann an dá córas. Tá muidinne istigh faoi láthair, ag iarraidh thagair mharcáil. Níl uirlisí ann mar is ceart, níl measúnaithe ann mar is ceart, so, go dtí go bhfuil muid ábalta cur faoi sin, ní bheidh muid ábalta a lán rudaí eile a fheiceáil ag dul chun cinn.

F: Rud is féidir a dhéanamh, mar, ag caint ó eagraíocht atá ann cheana féin, atá ag obair ar bhun uile -Éireann, a bhfuil rath air, agus atá i suíomh tríú

Wales of supplying pregnant mothers or young families with books from a very early stage. Or say, for instance, the primary school sector, or the naíscoil sector, providing them with the same level of bus transport support that would be provided in the English school sector. For instance, there is a naíscoil in Killough and a bunscoil in Downpatrick, but no way of getting from one to the other. And, sooner or later, the numbers in the naíscoil are going to suffer, because they have no way of getting to school. In a similar way, in Castlewellan, there is a bunscoil that is competing with ten local English-speaking primary schools, spread over a very wide geographical area. All the English-speaking schools have buses to get to school over much shorter distances, but there are no buses supporting the bunscoil in Castlewellan. So we need practical, measurable, easily stated things that can be written down, and then we can see in which timescales they can be achieved. And we're not asking for anything that probably isn't within our lawful rights to ask for in the first place. So I would say we need to see more specific commitments, and specific dates to deliver obvious, on the ground benefits.

L: I think there needs to be a lot of research done on things relating to the development of the Irish language and immersion education, and on bilingualism in this jurisdiction, and that that would be a big help to us. We have two universities in this part of the country, and I think there should be academic research on the development of bilingualism in this jurisdiction, and on language development in this jurisdiction as well.

M: Just to say, and to recognise that here, to give support, and to implement things, I think we need more people on the ground, highly regarded and with specialised knowledge. And to add to what I. and E. said – we need research, regarding language – how, or at what level, should children be at a certain age, starting with pre-schooling, going on to Keystage 5 and on to third level colleges? Also, help is needed regarding special needs, so that professionals out there know how things work in immersion education – the two systems are not the same. We are in there at present, trying to benchmark. There are no proper tools; evaluation isn't as it should be, so until we are able to tackle that, we will not be able to see a lot of other things going onwards.

F: One thing that can be done, speaking on behalf of an organisation which already exists, which works on an all-Ireland basis, which is successful, and which is

leibhéal agus atá mar chuid de coláiste a thugann seirbhís cuimsitheach ann, idir soláthar áiseanna agus traenáil múinteoirí agus rudaí, gan an tÁisaonad a dhruidim.

N: Ba mhaith liomsa go díreach tagairt a dhéanamh don taighde. Ba chóir do chomhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, nó na heagraíochtaí éagsúla, du lag caint leis na hollscoileanna. Tá taighdeoirí gairmiúla san ollscoil againn, agus tá mic léinn ansin achan bhliain – tá said ag éirí ábhar dochtúireachta, ábhar máistreachta, rudaí le staidéar a dhéanamh orthu, agus ba mhaith da mbeadh daoine ag rá linne, an dtiocfadh linne spléachadh a thabhairt air seo, sin, siúd is srl a dhéanamh, mar tá muid ansin, agus tá muid ag eiri an taighde a dhéanamh, ach cuid den am, déanann muid taighde agus ní fheicfear fiúntas an taighde, bíonn sé ina luí in oifig áit inteacht, gan dul i bhfeidhm ar an phobal, mar a deirfeá, agus is cur amú ama atá ansin.

Éascaitheoir: A chairde, caithfidh muid bogadh ar aghaidh chuig an teaghlach agus ag aistriú an Ghaeilge ó ghlúin go glúin is dócha, agus arís, beidh muid ag caint faoin fhís, agus cur I gcríoch, agus bearnaí.

E: Ba mhaith liom pointe a dhéanamh arís faoi cúrsaí taighde. Silim go bhfuil, in sa dhlínse seo, tá spectrum an-leathan de chainteoirí Gaeilge sa limistéir seo – daoine a labhraínn Gaeilge ó éirí go luí na gréine, daoine a labhraínn Gaeilge san obair, daoine a labhraínn Gaeilge sa bhaile, ach silim go bhfuil spectrum iontach leathan de sin ar an taobh seo. I mo theaghlach féin, tá an dá theanga iontach láidir. Tá an Ghaeilge níos láidre ag duine amháin de mo chuid paistí na mar atá ag an bheirt eile, agus silim féin go bhfuil cúinsí ar leith againn anseo, agus caithfidh muid díriú isteach ar – cad é an rud é an dátheangachas sa limistéir seo, agus silim go bhfuil taighde de dhíth ar sin.

H: Ó thaobh an Ghaelscolaíochta de, ba cheart go mbeadh feachtas poiblíochta mar is ceart déanta ag an Roinn Oideachas, I dtaca le Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, agus na grúpaí eile a bhíonn ag obair leis an Ghaelscolaíocht, le daoine a mhealladh I dtreo na dteanga, mar, an t-aon cineál modh oibre atá againn faoi láthair na bileoga a dhéanaimid muid féin, póstaer, dul amach ag cnagaireacht ó dhoras go doras, rud atá iontach éifeachtach, agus caithfear a dhéanamh, ach bheadh sé ina chuidiú ollmhóir dá mbeadh níos mó áiseanna ar fáil agus feachtas poiblíochta, mar is ceart, a dhéanamh ag an Roinn Oideachas agus ag an rialtas.

G: Sílim gur cheart dúinn – tá liosta iontach fada de

on a third level site and which is part of a college providing comprehensive services, between resource provision and teacher training and so on, is not to close the Áisaonad.

N: I just want to refer to the research. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, or some other organisation, should talk to the universities. We have professional researchers at the university, and students there every year – they are looking for subjects for their Doctorates and Masters, subjects to study, and it would be good if people came to us and said, could we take a look at this, that, or the other etc., because we're there, and we want to do the research, but sometimes, we do research and the value of that research isn't appreciated, it lies in an office somewhere, not affecting the public, and that's a waste of time.

Chair: Friends, we have to move on to the family and transmission of the language from generation to generation and again, we will talk about the vision, the implementation and the gaps.

E: I want to make a point again about research. I think there is a wide spectrum of Irish speakers in this jurisdiction – people who speak Irish from morning to night, people who speak Irish in work, people who speak Irish at home, but I think there is a very wide spectrum of that here. In my own family, the two languages are very strong. Irish is much stronger with one of my children than the other two, and I think we have particular circumstances here, and we need to focus in on it – what is bilingualism in this region, and I think research is needed on this.

H: Regarding Irish Medium Education, there should be a proper publicity campaign done with the Department of Education, including Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, and the other groups who work with IME, to entice people towards the language, because the only methods we have at the minute are leaflets we produce ourselves, posters, going out and knocking on doors, something that's very effective, and must be done, but it would be a big help if there were more resources available, and a proper publicity campaign, done by the Department of Education and the government.

G: I think we should – there is a very long list of the

gach rud a ba chóir a bheith déanta, mar sin ba cheart go mbeadh muid ábalta – cad iad na tosaíochtaí atá de dhíth orainn láithreach? Cad iad na cuid atá de dhíth sa fadtéarmach, na cuid sin a aontú, agus ansin gníomhartha a chur i bhfeidhm le gur mbaintear na spriocanna amach agus é a bheith tomhaiste ar an bhealach sin. Molaim an comhairliúchán seo, sílim ar a laghad tá aird ar na riachtanais atá ar an teanga, agus i dtaca leis an teaghlach do, dar liom féin, an rud a ba mhaith leis an phobal ná go mbeadh teacht fhurasta ar rudaí, nach mbeadh ort dul sa tóir ar rudaí, nach mbeadh ort seirbhís a iarraidh, go minic, bíonn seirbhís dhátheangach ann, má iarrtar iad – in áit iad a bheith iarrfá, iad a chur ar fail agus iad a bheith furasta. Bíonn leisce ar dhaoine – sílim go raibh ann don tseirbhís sa Roinn Talmhaíochta, más buan mo chuimhne. Sílim go n-athródh sé an peirspictíocht dá gcuirfeadh siad an seirbhís ar fáil láithreach – rudaí simplí ar shuíomh idirlíon roinn ar bith, an dá rud a thiocfadh síos chugatsa, rogha Gaeilge nó Béarla. Rudaí simplí, bunúsacha den tsóirt sin a deir láithreach go bhfuil fáilte roimh cibé teanga. Rudaí simplí mar sin, nach mbeadh ar thuismitheoirí dul amach ag amharc dá teaghlach cad iad na seirbhísí, na seirbhísí a chur ar fáil daoibh, agus ansin an rogha sin a bheith acu.

K: Cosúil leis an Scéim Pobal Gaeilge atá ag Foras na Gaeilge, ina bhfuil na hoifigigh Gaeilge ag obair leis na pobail ar fud na tíre, ba chóir go mbeadh oifigigh ar leith ann ag tacú le teaghlach. Tá scéim phíolóta ar bun i gCarn Tóchair, agus bhí an-ráchairt air, agus bheadh scéim mar sin iontach, dá dtiocfadh é a leathnú amach, sílim gur sin an chineál rud atá acu sa Bhreatain Bheag. Sin ón tús – nuair a ghlacann siad na páistí abhaile ón otharlann, bíonn tacaíocht ann láithreach. Sílim dá mbeadh scéim ar leith mar sin ann, go mbeadh sé an-éifeachtach.

J: San am atá i láthair, tá a lán ar siúl sna ceantracha Gaeltachta le tacaíocht a thabhairt do thuismitheoirí atá ag iarraidh a gcuid páistí a thógáil le Gaeilge. Níl mé ag rá go bhfuil cuid mhór ar siúl, ach tá méid áirithe ar siúl, agus, is dóigh liom, in áit muidinne ag éirí theacht aníos le cur chuige eile ar fad, gur chóir dúinn amharc ar caidé atá ar siúl sna ceantracha Gaeltachta ó dheas, agus b'fhéidir athrais a dhéanamh air sin, no b'fhéidir é a chur in oiriúint leis an chur chuige atá a déanamh againn anseo. Níl cur chuige tras-teorainn, nó uile-Éireann mórán luaite sa straitéis, agus is dóigh liom go mbeadh deiseanna iontach ann cur chuige uile-Éireann a bheith ann, go háirithe i réimse an Oideachais. Tá struchtúr ann cheana féin, an Chomhaireacht Thuaidh Theas ag plé le foras na Gaeilge, cur I gcás, agus an dá roinn atá ag plé leis an Ghaeilge, thuaidh agus theas. Ach tá an t-oideachas

things that should be done, so we should be able to – what are the priorities that we need immediately? What ones do we need in the long term, then agree upon these ones, and then implement actions to reach the targets and it be measurable in that way. I commend this consultation, I think at least there is awareness of the needs of the language, and regarding the family, in my opinion, what the public wants is that things be easily accessed, that they need not go looking for them, that you need not ask for a service – often, there is a bilingual service, if asked for – instead of having to ask for it, to provide them and for them to be easy. People are reluctant – I think there was a service for the Department of Agriculture, if memory serves me correctly. I think it would change the perspective if the service was available immediately – simple things on any department's website, two choices provided Irish or English. Simple, basic thing like that, that say immediately that either language is welcome. Simple things like that, that parents wouldn't have to go searching for their families to find out what services there are, provide the service for them, and let them make the choice.

K: Like the Irish Language Community Scheme by Foras na Gaeilge, where Irish language officers work with communities around the country, there should be specific officers working with families. There is a pilot scheme in Carnatoghar, and it was in great demand, and a scheme like that would be wonderful, if it could be expanded upon, I think that's the type of thing they have in Wales. From the beginning – when they bring the babies home from hospital, there is immediate support. I think if there was a specific scheme like that, that it would be very effective.

J: At present, there is quite a lot taking place in the Gaeltacht areas to provide support to parents who are trying to raise their children with Irish. I'm not saying there is a huge amount going on, but there is a certain amount. And I think, rather than us trying to come up with another approach altogether, that we should look at what is taking place in the Gaeltacht areas in the South, and maybe copy that, or perhaps adapt it to our approach here. Cross-border or all-Ireland approaches are not really mentioned in the strategy, and I think there could be great opportunities for all-Ireland approaches, especially in the area of Education. There is a structure already, the North-South Ministerial Council, working with Foras na Gaeilge, for example, and the two departments working with Irish, north and south. But Education is mentioned there too, although there is no organisation there dealing with

luaite ansin fosta, cé nach bhfuil eagraíocht ar leith ann fa choinne an oideachas ag leibhéal tras-teorainn, tá sé luaite mar sainábhair ar leith. Ach níl an Ghaeloideachas luaite taobh istigh de sin, agus, dá mbeadh sin amhlaidh, thiofadh monatóireacht ar an chur i gcríoch i dtaca lena gnéithe den straitéis seo a bhaineann le cúrsaí oideachas, thiofadh monatóireacht a dhéanamh orthu sin ar leibhéal i bhfad níos éifeachtaigh ag leibhéal tras-teorainn. Ach silim gur chóir na gnéithe tras-teorainn den straitéis uilig a fhorbairt I bhfad níos mó na atá curtha in iúl sa cháipéis comhairliúchán.

E: Bhí K ag lua scéim atá ar siúl i gCarn Tochair faoi láthair, ag tacú le teaghlaigh. Chur an grúpa áitiúil an t-airgead sin ar fáil ó chiste s'aige féin agus ag an pointe seo, tá iarratas istigh leis an Roinn sa deisceart do thionscadal comhpháirtithe tras-teorainn idir an grúpa agus Comharchumann Forbartha Ghaoth Dobhair. Mar sin, le cuidiú Dé, beidh sin ann, agus sin an cineál rud atá de dhíth orainn. Níl sé ag tarlú faoi láthair, agus sílim gur sin, mar a deirtear, an 'Holy Grail', Gaeilge a chur ar ais sa teach, agus caithfidh muid a bheith ag díriú isteach I bhfad níos mó – tá an córas oideachas iontach tábhachtach, ach sin an sprioc, ag deireadh an lae, an Ghaeilge a bheith ar ais sa teach, agus tá sin iontach, iontach tábhachtach.

Éascaitheoir: Agus sílim go bhfuil muid ag caint ar bearnaí, I dtaca le soláthar do theaghlaigh fosta.

M: Rud gasta. Is féidir an dhátheangachas a cheiliúradh, a thaispeáint nó a rá – is scil ar leith é. Má fheiceann teaghlaigh sin go bhfuil ceangal ann idir teaghlaigh agus oideachas, gur scil ar leith é sa 21ú aois.

A: I must say, I was surprised at the dearth of research that is contained in the strategy document. I've read a lot of research now, over the last couple of years, from places as diverse as Canada, Scotland, Corsica and other areas, to show that bilingual children outperform their peers. I think that if this information isn't put into the strategy document, to advise decisions within it, then we become subject to bias, and misconception. I remember, back in 2007 I think, we assumed that anti-Irish bias existed only in Northern Ireland, but it existed in Southern Ireland as well. Now what I remember is how the Education minister intervened in the Irish Medium sector, to try and prevent immersion education for Irish speaking children at Primary school level, and she did this in the absence of any research on literacy through the English medium. Now fortunately, research was able to be brought forward quite rapidly, that demonstrated that

education at a cross-border level, it is mentioned as a specific subject. But IME is not mentioned within that, and, if it was, the implementation could be monitored in terms of the elements of this strategy which relate to education, they could be monitored far more effectively at a cross-border level. But I think that all cross-border elements of the strategy need to be developed better than indicated in the consultation document.

E: K mentioned the scheme in Carntogher at present, supporting families. The local group provided the money for that from its own funds and at this point, there is an application in with the department in the South for a co-operative cross-border project between the group and Comharchumann Forbartha Ghaoth Dobhair. Therefore, hopefully, that will happen, and that's the kind of thing we need. It isn't happening at present, and I think that's the 'Holy Grail', putting Irish back into the home, and we need to be focussing in a lot more – the education system is very important, but that's the target, at the end of the day, Irish being back in the home, and it's very, very important.

Chair: And I think we are talking about gaps, regarding provision for families as well.

M: Just briefly. Bilingualism can be celebrated, shown or spoken – it's a particular skill. If families see that, that there is a connection between families and education, that it's a particular skill in the 21st Century.

A: I must say, I was surprised at the dearth of research that is contained in the strategy document. I've read a lot of research now, over the last couple of years, from places as diverse as Canada, Scotland, Corsica and other areas, to show that bilingual children outperform their peers. I think that if this information isn't put into the strategy document, to advise decisions within it, then we become subject to bias, and misconception. I remember, back in 2007 I think, we assumed that anti-Irish bias existed only in Northern Ireland, but it existed in Southern Ireland as well. Now what I remember is how the Education minister intervened in the Irish Medium sector, to try and prevent immersion education for Irish speaking children at Primary school level, and she did this in the absence of any research on literacy through the English medium. Now fortunately, research was able to be brought forward quite rapidly, that demonstrated that

the Irish medium sector in the Republic had levels of literacy approximately 25% better than their peers in the English medium sector, and particularly in deprived areas – the Irish medium schools in deprived areas were performing something like 30-35% better than their equivalent in English speaking schools in deprived areas. So when you don't have this Prima Facia evidence, that has been done in a fair and open-minded way, to advise policy, then you can be subject to bias and ignorance, which is one of the problems we have with people who are advising the education sector in Northern Ireland.

Éascaitheoir: Tá bomaite amháin fágtha againn anois. Má tá pointe ar leith ag duine ar bith, bheadh sé galánta é a chluinstin.

K: Tá cuid mhór ráite sa straitéis faoi naisc leis an Ghaeltacht a láidriú, agus sílim go bhfuil sin iontach ó thaobh saibhreas na Gaeilge. Sílim go bhfuil sé iontach tábhachtach fosta go mbeadh muid ag láidriú pobal na Gaeilge chomh maith, go bhfuil muid ag tabhairt tacaíocht do na pobail, ag cur deiseanna ar fáil do dhaoine atá ag éirí an Ghaeilge a úsáid taobh amuigh den seomra ranga, tacú le teaghlaigh, agus ócáidí móra chun próifil na Gaeilge a ardú.

G: Tchítear go luaitear Foras na Gaeilge sa cháipéis comhairliúcháin, agus go bhfuair comhair agus treoir ón Fhoras i dtaca le cur I bhfeidhm moltaí na straitéise. Tchítear dom go b'fhéidir go mbeadh sé ar leas na straitéise agus ar leas an comhairliúcháin dá bhféadfadh eagrais eile bainte – má tá gnéithí ar leith a bhaineann le Gaelscolaíocht, ba cheart go mbeadh an eagrais atá ag plé le Gaelscolaíocht luaite ann, ach eagrais eile – ní foras na Gaeilge agus Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta amháin, ach dá mbeadh eagrais eile ann, más féidir sin a dhéanamh fríd shruthanna oibre, le go féidir an oiread saineolas agus is féidir a tharraingt I gceann le chéile, agus déanamh comhordú, sílim go rachadh sé sin ar leas na rudaí a' bhfuil muid ag iarraidh a bhaint amach.

F: Go díreach le cur leis an pointe deireanach ansin - tá grúpa ann, CATOC, a bhaineann le gach soláithreoir, gach seibhíseoir don Ghaeloideachas, agus sílim gur chóir b'fhéidir sin a lua mar phointe teagmhála.

Éascaitheoir: Go raibh maith agaibh, sílim go bhfuil muid críochnaithe le seo, agus mholfaínn daoibhse ar fad aighneacht a chur isteach. Ní féidir linn na bearnaí a líonadh muna deirimid cad iad na bearnaí.

the Irish medium sector in the Republic had levels of literacy approximately 25% better than their peers in the English medium sector, and particularly in deprived areas – the Irish medium schools in deprived areas were performing something like 30-35% better than their equivalent in English speaking schools in deprived areas. So when you don't have this Prima Facia evidence, that has been done in a fair and open-minded way, to advise policy, then you can be subject to bias and ignorance, which is one of the problems we have with people who are advising the education sector in Northern Ireland.

Chair: We have a minute left. If anyone has a point to make, it would be great to hear it.

K: A lot of mention is made in the strategy of strengthening the links with the Gaeltacht, and I think that is great in terms of the value of the language. I think it is very important also that we be strengthening the Irish speaking community as well, that we are supporting the community, providing opportunities for people who are trying to use Irish outside the classroom, supporting families, and big events to raise the profile of Irish.

G: I notice that Foras na Gaeilge are mentioned in the document, and that they got advice and guidance from Foras in relation to implementing the recommendations in the strategy. I feel that it would benefit the strategy and benefit the consultation if other organisations are included – if any elements relate to irish Medium Education, the organisation dealing with IME should be mentioned, but other organisations – not just Foras na Gaeilge and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, but if there were other organisations, if that could be done through areas of work, in order to pull together as much expertise, and to coordinate, I think that would benefit what we are trying to achieve.

F: Just to add to that last point – there is a group, CATOC, which is connected to every provider, every service provider for Irish Medium Education, and I think perhaps they should be mentioned as a point of contact.

Chair: Thank you all very much, I think we are finished here, and I would urge you all to put in your submissions. We can't fill the gaps if we don't say what they are.



Ceardlann ar na Meáin Workshop on the Media

Éascaitheoir: Na meáin anois. Ar mhaith le duine ar bith rud éigean a rá faoin fhís féin?

Facilitator: We're going to look at Media, primarily. We are also going to look at the vision of this strategy, and how the strategy can be implemented.

A: Tá cuid mhaith smaointe agam, ní go díreach ar an fhís. Ar mhaith leat é a mhíniú dúinn ag an tús?

A: I have a lot of thoughts but not directly on the vision. Do you want to explain it first?

Facilitator: Aidan McCann is here from DCAL. Aidan, A. is saying about the vision behind the strategy. Maybe you would like to say a few words on that?

Aidan McCann: Well, as has been talked about all morning, and as Arthur has repeated a number of times this morning – Arthur being the Director of our section – Media and Technology is just one of the areas of the plan of action that we see would contribute to a meaningful and robust strategy for protecting and developing the language, and within that, obviously we have the written word, and we are talking about how newspapers, magazines, book, textbooks etc. are used, what needs to be done, what needs to be changed, in order for that to contribute to an effective strategy. We also move on to Broadcasting. We are all probably aware of Raidió Fáilte, but what else do we need to do? Do we need to do more with Raidió Fáilte? Do we need to provide extra means? I see all the young people here today, and as we've mentioned, the use of the internet, the use of the apps, the use of Facebook. What more do we need to have to contribute? It was mentioned there, towards the end, the fact that broadcasting is a reserved matter, so the executive doesn't have it within its gift to demand that programmes on the BBC do this or do that, however, within that constraint currently, what is it that we can do? What ideas?

B: Can I just say that as an adult learner, coming from the Unionist community, what I am hearing from a lot of adult learners – the online resources are so poor, there are so little – Blas, the 'Giota Beag' one, would be the only thing worth using. In this day and age, where there is so much available on the internet for free, I think it's terrible there isn't something there.

Aidan McCann: I am sure that the people in the Irish community will be able to point you towards this, that and the other thing, but if that's a point, that the only thing really visible...

B: There is so little... And it's needed in the Ulster dialect.

Aidan McCann: Yes, and on the BBC site..... That is correct, but it is elements like that, that is what is apparent to someone going along, trying to dip their toe in for the first time, if that is the only thing they can find, that is worth noting, worth mentioning.

B: Just for me, it's a great resource for reaching out to people, and making it accessible to people, and helping people with their learning. I mean, I was quite surprised – I think we are very fortunate here in Belfast, because there are a lot of learning resources, as in community places where you can go to, but I was speaking to learners from Armagh, and I was shocked at how difficult they found it to access classes. Obviously people in more rural areas, if there were more online resources, probably they would be able to enhance their learning.

Aidan McCann: On a broader basis, the strategy aims to be, deliberately – I was going to use the word 'vague', but that's probably not a good word – but it certainly leaves a lot of space for the people we are consulting with, that is, hopefully, everybody, to fill in those gaps.

B: I think the other thing with online learning is – you know, when you are a new learner, especially when you come from my community – you need the sound, and you don't get that with a book, and DVDs and CDs and

things are very limited. But i just think online resources are a fantastic way to go – plus it's a media now that people use.

Éascaitheoir: B'fhéidir gur seo rud atá bainte leis an dá phointe atá Aidan agus B. ag déanamh. An ceist sin, an straitéis seo. An ndéanann an straitéis seo dualgais i leith na teanga a chomhlíonadh?

Facilitator: Does this strategy fulfil the needs of the language? And there's one gap already that B. has mentioned, in terms of Internet technology and Computing. That's one thing that's missing. And maybe the way to look at the strategy is, first of all – is it 'all-encompassing' enough? Does it cover everything, or where are the gaps? And maybe if we can identify the gaps, that's something we can go back to DCAL with and say, 'These are the things that, as a community, we have seen, that would strengthen this strategy, and help it move forward. And after that, we'll look at how we implement that.'

Aidan McCann: That's right. The strategy does cover online and new media, but really, I suppose what we're really interested in – are the hooks there, basically? Are the headings there on which, once we get the implementation, to be able to say 'Yes, that heading is there – now, what's the detail of that?' And I think that's the important thing at this stage.

B: And I think it's important there are online resources. Obviously there will be things aimed at more fluent speakers, but I think there has to be stuff there for very basic learners that people can manage on their own, without help.

Éascaitheoir: Ar mhaith le duine ar bith eile rud ar bith a rá faoi...

Facilitator: Anyone else want to mention something on

A: An dtiocfadh liomsa? Níl aistriúchán anseo, an bhfuil? Labharfaidh mé Béarla mar sin de. (Can I? There is no translation system here is there? I will speak English then.) Regarding this strategy, I think the whole emphasis – it's important that there is an emphasis on the Media. The outline of how we develop a language community is fairly well covered in the document, in so far as there is emphasis on the transition, from parents to children, and the education system, and that's the driving force of the whole 'athbheochan', the whole revival. But then you have the issues of; what do people do once they have the language? There's jobs, there's social life, and i think what runs through all that is the media, the means of communication, insofar as – practically every hour, when people aren't working or eating, or even sometimes when they are – they're listening to radio, they're watching television, they're online, and they're reading newspapers. It just goes right through our lives, and for a language community that's trying to grow, the media thing has to very strong. We don't have an Irish language newspaper, daily – there's one online – sorry there are a couple of things online – but, we had a daily newspaper, but it has gone by the wayside – we've fallen back. I think that, even though things have gone on to the electronic age, the ability to sit down with a cup of coffee, or on the bus, and actually read a newspaper and go through whatever, magazines for young people, all that sort of stuff, is vitally important still, so I think we need to go to that. The overall media – the major media, in terms of the BBC and ITV and so on – BBC do some, but they don't do enough. I think the amount of Irish language on the BBC, both radio and television, needs to be beefed up. What they do is very good, but there's not enough of it. In terms of the community radio, which I'm involved in with Radio Fáilte, I think that is very important and does a job that the BBC doesn't do, because anybody here can come in and get training and do a show, and there's actually at some level a real feeling of real ownership. It's all based on volunteers coming in and getting stuff on their CVs and getting training – young people are going in and then going and getting jobs in media. It's a place where people can use the language, can learn new skills, can actually be in a real situation where they are doing a real job, they are communicating and they are talking and they are learning new skills, they're listening to music and that sort of stuff. So I think the idea of community media is very important. The way it's set up at the moment is – I don't want to get into too much detail in all of this, but – it's restricted – you're only allowed to broadcast five kilometres, so what we've been doing is trying to get other Irish language groups throughout the North to set up groups, and a couple will be, but there's big restrictions on that, because of Ofcom's rules, and because the whole thing is controlled by London, and that's why I raised the point before – if they could devolve the powers of, broadcast powers from London to the local Assemblies, it would give the ministers here and DCAL – whoever the minister is there – much more opportunity to do this sort of

thing, to give out licenses and to set up community radio stations, so I think it is very important that's done. And the other thing is the electronic media – apps and online stuff, as Linda raised, it's vitally important that that is promoted. Okay, someone else asked me, because they are in another workshop, to raise a point, with regard to the ILBF funding. The point she raised is that there are a lot of trainees coming through. The ILBF is funding a training programme at the moment for young people to learn to use television, to get training in television, and it's also giving money to the radio, where we are training people to get radio skills. But the point that was made was that there are a lot of young people coming through these courses over the last number of years, and there aren't jobs for them at the end of that, and that therefore there should be some investment put into the local companies that are producing radio and television for TG4 and BBC, so that the people who are actually being trained can actually get jobs. That's not my point, that's a point someone else made earlier.

Facilitator: There is a point around that as well, that – Arthur Scott actually raised this at the start of the day – that funding isn't mentioned at all in the strategy, and he gave the reason why. And one of the thoughts that I had, one of the questions I had, was – how effective can a strategy like this be, without actually looking at funding? Without looking at how those jobs would be created? When I was reading the strategy, there were suggestions for 'one-stop shops' across the North, for cultural needs and for educational needs, and there is also talk about a resource centre in a different section, which is sort of similar to the 'Cultúrlann in every town' idea of the 20 year Strategy, and the question that I would have would be – After the end of the consultation, would there be some sort of budget, or idea given, of how these resource centres or one-stop shops will be set up? Because it seems to be that the community will do that. It's not very clear who will do it. Where do the jobs to come from? At this time, everybody is down to the bare bones in terms of funding. Where do the jobs come from for those young people coming through the Irish Language Broadcast Fund's training schemes? Where do the jobs come from to run the Resource Centres? Who is actually going to put together the apps and the online services, for learners and for people who are at every level of competence in Irish? So there are questions like that, and that, I suppose, is part of implementing – how can you implement it if you don't have a clear idea of where funding comes from, and should part of the vision be to draw down, from some source, funding to implement later. That's just the sort of thought I had. Also, another thing, in terms of online technology, something I noticed – perhaps it was overlooked in the strategy itself – is e-books, are a big source now. I have a Kindle, and I love it. I have a Kindle app on my phone and I love that too, when I leave my Kindle at home. But if you go to Amazon or places like that, and try and download books in Irish, there are very, very few of them - I think there is only one available on Project Gutenberg, which are only books which are outside of their copyright. And I also have another book that I got from someone else. I don't know where they got it from, but somebody had scanned each page and made a pdf of it and then downloaded it, so you can't actually do anything with it – you can't highlight parts or bookmark it. So e-books are something else that I think should be looked at, for a resource to be set up so that books can be translated and made available for download.

Éascathéoir: Maith go leor. Cad faoin cur i bhfeidhm?

Facilitator: What about the implementation? How do people see this strategy being implemented?

Dónall Ó Baoill: I think there are several areas where the government itself, and its departments, might have some influence in how the thing is implemented. If we take the arts in general, and what is actually happening to them, there's no real support, and it's a vast area, and the question would be – how can what happens in schools, what happens in the general population, but culture in general, mass culture or whatever, how is that being expressed?

Facilitator: I remember a couple of years ago, I remember a couple of years ago, you, D. you were able to tell us, from the Arts Council funding, how much was spent, per person, on Arts here, compared to in England?

D: Yes, it was £6.70

C: £6.70. It's very low.

D: In the South they were spending around €12, over €12 per head, per person.

C: On the Arts, in all their forms?

D: Yes.

Dónall Ó Baoill: I don't know what the government can do. Whoever is in charge of contracts, they could very well specify that a certain percentage could be shown, X and Y, will have to be shown, on television, or on TG4, or whoever it may be. Another area which we need a lot more information on, in terms of being up to date on, is the development of electronics and digitisation and all that stuff. What are they actually doing, that would benefit the Irish language? Who is doing it? Because the government will have more contacts, they can act as conduits to a whole set of issues. I think, if they did that, and inform us at the same time that this is coming down the lines, that would be really useful, rather than a whole lot of different people trying to define some things, or estimate them and so on. I think that would be very helpful. I don't know how much of that can go into a strategy – some of it could, in terms of who has the contacts.

Facilitator: We're not just talking about Media here, though Media is vital, it runs through everything. It is the Arts, in every form that we're looking at as well and maybe when we're looking at that vision, we should be looking at more, we should be looking at the Arts as well, because there is one community radio station broadcasting in Irish, there's one theatre group working through the medium of Irish. We're in single figures, and very low single figures in every one of these categories.

Dónall Ó Baoill: Recent research has shown the huge impact the Arts have on economic development or revitalisation. There have been two in the South, one in 2009 and one in 2010. I think you can show that this has a huge impact.

Facilitator: Yes. We should be looking at how much money does the Irish language bring into the North every year, because I know that when a lot of tourists come to Belfast, to the North, they're interested in the language and the culture. And we should be looking at it like that – how economically viable is the Irish language, and how economically viable can we make it in the future?

B: If we could create an Irish language centre – I know the Cultúrlann does a great job – but if we could create an Irish language centre that could attract tourists, in a neutral space, I think that would help to get the other community on board too.

Facilitator: Absolutely, which could be the resource centre mentioned in the strategy. And, if that's the case, how many of them would you have, because we're not just talking about Belfast. How many would you have? Who funds them? Who staffs them?

A: Just on the money issue, and I'd like to hear the younger generation where we're doing it all wrong, money is always an issue, but it shouldn't stop us doing stuff. What happens is – people get together, they get a room, they get an idea, and then they go out and get the funding. It's a lot of hassle, it's a pain, but there's money from the Arts Council, the CRC, but once the thing is started and you get a group of people, then the money can be got, pressure can be put on the government to actually get it. So my attitude has always been to get things started, get things on the go, and things will come together, if you have a good team there pushing for it

D: Just on the implementation, I thought it was a really useful point about when there are cultural events in the city, and picking up that information from tourists and visitors as to what did you come over for and how much did you spend, that's usually the onus of the major funder, I would say – the folks who organised the MTV Awards were very quick to come back to say, that generated X number of millions for the city, I'd be just a little bit worried there would be duplication. If we're going to ask the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to collect all of that information, because that's something they do day and daily. It seems like they have the resources, they have the staff, to collect that sort of information. For example, my company is funded by three (funders), and I don't want to have to collect this information, knowing there are three other bodies collecting that same information. That's not going to work, but it is a vital piece of information that would be really valuable. It's the reason why you have terms like the 'Grey Pound' or the 'Pink Pound', it's because there has been analysis done on how much each of those sectors spend, and how much economic power they can exert. But let's just have one body doing it. Make it a requirement in the implementation that one body collects that information. NITB is my recommendation.

A: There's also the point about access to that information. Dónall Ó Baoill raised a point about those statistics, and I would like to see those statistics but I don't have that rein, so it would be good if all those relevant statistics could be readily available to the groups who could use them for funding, and for arguments and debates and for pushing the point. Could you send me those?

(Dónall indicated he could)

B: I think it's another way to put the language in a positive light as well. That information should be made public. People have to come on board, and if this is going to help peoples' pounds and pence, it's important that they know that. I think there is so much in the Irish language world that people aren't aware of that could be publicised more in the media – papers that both sides buy, TV programmes, clips in the news, public image – those public interest things that come up on the news – they very seldom do things on the Irish language. When I think about POBAL's Cearta & Ceiliúradh / Rights and Revelry event – fantastic- did that get any TV coverage, and if not, why not?

Facilitator: UTV covered it, and it's the first thing in a long time on the language that they have featured.

D: You remember it because it's so unusual.

Facilitator: It stood out as well because it was actually positive. It was entirely in English, but it was an Irish language event that they put a very positive spin on it. So, it's about getting the media on board, getting them to see the positive outcomes, for them as well.

B: But the BBC a have a couple of things.

Facilitator: There's news on BBC Radio Ulster in Mandarin. Could there not be at least one news programme in Irish?

A: To come in on the point B. was making, and I think it's one of the very subtle things the media do, perhaps not directly connected with the strategy, but we should perhaps be conscious of it, and perhaps think of ways to counter it – when the media talks about the Irish language, it is sort of presented, subtly, as belonging to one side of the community, and I think we need to get away from that. The councils do this. If they are doing something for Irish, they say, 'Oh, we'll do something for Ulster Scots', as though, if they do something to keep one side happy, they have to do something to keep the other side happy, as if to say these things have to do with one side, instead of saying the whole thing belongs to everybody. And I think we need to get into the media and stop them from presenting the Irish language as being for Catholics, to be blunt about it, and that it does belong to everybody. Because I find that on the ground, there is much less hostility towards the Irish language in the Unionist community than is presented on the media. I remember when Raidió Fáilte was launched, we were up on the Shankill Road, we were talking to people, and they were either totally not interested, or they were curious. There was nobody who came to us and said it was a Catholic language or a Fenian language. So I think we need to get the media to stop, and a lot of the councils and the government even, to stop presenting the Irish language as for Catholics, and that it is for all the community. That's a long battle, but I think it's something that needs to be addressed when we're talking about the Media.

B: The other problem with the Media, when we talk about government, we see the division there, and that's played on. From the very top, we're told that this has nothing to do with your community, so we will be hostile towards it because we're being told we should be.

A: We saw that up at Stormont recently with the ads (in Irish) on TV a few weeks ago. They were up in arms about it. What was the reaction on the ground about that?

B: None. I didn't hear a single thing said about it. I think what the Media needs to do is, it needs to be primetime TV, interesting programmes, that show Protestants using the Irish language, the history of the Irish language, shared heritage in the Irish language, and that means that we push and push, in magazines, on radio, on TV and in newspapers, but not something at 11 o'clock at night or 8 o'clock in the morning. It needs to be prime-time, and it needs to be hammered home all the time. Normalisation. It needs to be shown as being for everyone, and let's not go down that road.

Facilitator: Would anyone from Coláiste Feirste like to say anything?

CF1: I think the point that was made earlier about learning – not everyone can learn by reading out of a book, and understand it all, like with the digital switchover recently, and TG4 will be lost to some people for a while. And I know in our school, there's a unit for people with learning difficulties. I think a lot more interactive programmes on TV for people learning Irish or with difficulty in learning would be good.

CF2 : Caithfidh na meáin íomhá a chruthú, nach bhfuil rud ar bith cearr le bheith ag caint i nGaeilge.

CF2: The media need to create the image that there's nothing wrong with speaking Irish, something they're not doing at the minute, especially with young people, bunscoil and secondary school. They're going back home and speaking English, they speak English with their friends, and then when they go back to the schools, it's back to Irish. I think there's a lot of emphasis put on education and the school, and not on social life. **Cuid mhaith béime curtha ar scoil, ach níl ar an saol sóisialta.** (There's a lot of emphasis put on school but not on social life.)

Facilitator: I think it is actually in the strategy, looking at different age groups, and looking at different activities outside of the school. There are a lot of different aspects here that all come under the term 'normalisation'.

B: I think that was one of the points with the BBC2 programmes, that tried to normalise it and use it outside school and help people take that political sting out of it, that these aren't politicians, these are ordinary people going about their lives, their families and friends.

CF2: On top of that, those programmes on BBC are on at 10.30 or 11.00 at night. It should be primetime.

B: Exactly. It could start off small, just a wee Irish language slot, and let it grow; see how successful it can get.

CF3: I think there should be more magazines and books in Irish for young people, because the books that are there are, not depressing (laughter) but very serious and it just puts young people off.

CF4: The Irish programmes that are on BBC have automatic subtitles in English, so it's like promoting English again.

A: But might that be a good idea for learners?

B: well, it could be an option instead.

CF4: Yes, like you would have a choice to switch them off as you become more fluent.



Nótaí Aischothaithe ón Cheardlann ar Reachtaíocht

Fís, Bunús na straitéise, Reachtaíocht, Saol Eacnamaíoch, Cur i gcríoch

Fís na Straitéise

- Fáilte curtha roimh an doiciméad.
- Nuair a luaitear ceachtanna ó áiteanna eile, tá ceacht le foghlaim ón deiscirt. Cur i gcríoch Plean 20 bliain ó dheas i bhfad ró-fhadálach. Mar sin, ó thuaidh, caithfear an straitéis a chur i gcríoch go gasta, taobh istigh d'achar ama réasúnta, sonraithe go poiblí.
- Targaidí de dhíth - spriocanna intomhaiste le cur isteach sa straitéis.
- Níl go leor mionsonraí sa dréacht cháipéis. Ba chóir go mbeadh sé soiléir cad iad na deiseanna breise / nua do pháistí mar shampla ag eascairt as an straitéis. Dúradh le linn an tseimineáir gur shocraigh an Roinn gan targaidí a leagan amach, 'le díospóireacht saor a chruthú', ACH gan na sonraí, níl fiúntas leis an straitéis.
- Targaidí, spriocanna agus áiseanna le sonrú.
- Níl buiséad luaite don Plean 20 Bliain ó dheas – níor chóir dúinn an mheancóg chéanna a dhéanamh.
- Cur amú ama atá sa straitéis gan go leor áiseanna maoinithe.
- Mar shampla, togra Líofa 2015, níl acmhainní ar leith ann dó; níl buiséad ann do ranganna breise srl.
- Is féidir fís a bheith maith, ach tá targaidí agus spriocanna de dhíth.
- Caithfear gníomhartha a shonrú leis na focail breá. Smaoinigh faoi Chomhaontú Aoine an Chéasta, agus an gealltanas maidir le 'gníomh díongbháilte'. Bhí an pobal ag dúil le cuid mhaith, ach níor tharla sé.
- Má léann tú an caibidil sa doiciméad faoi chúlra agus bunús na straitéise sa dlí, bheifeá ag dúil le i bhfad níos mó ón straitéis.
- Cuideoidh an straitéis le stádas na Gaeilge - polasaí oifigiúil agus ba chóir go mbeadh tionchar aici ar roinnt do na ranna ach an mbeidh sí in ann tionchar a imirt orthu uilig? Amhrasach. Ó dheas, níl na ranna uilig ag comhlíonadh a gcuid dualgais.
- Fáilte roimh an straitéis ACH - an gcuirfear i gcríoch í?
- Rud amháin praiticiúil a rinne Líofa 2015 - bunaíodh scoláireachtaí.
- Inní go mbeidh an Ghaeilge ag bun liosta na dtosaíochtaí go fóill. Beidh deacrachtaí ag leibhéal an Tionóil. Ansin, beidh gnó le déanamh leis an dá rialtas agus le parlaimint na hEorpa.

Feedback Notes from the Workshop on Legislation

Vision, Background to the Strategy, Legislation, Economic Life, Implementation

Vision of the Strategy

- Document is to be welcomed.
- When lessons from other places are mentioned, there is a lesson to learn from the south. Implementation of the 20 Year Plan for Irish is very slow. Therefore, in the north, the plan must be implemented rapidly, within a reasonable time, which is detailed publicly.
- Targets are needed – measurable goals should be put into the strategy.
- There are not enough details in the draft document. It should be clear what extra / new opportunities for children, for instance, will come from the strategy. It was said during the seminar that the Department decided not to lay out targets, to 'encourage free discussion', BUT without the detail, the strategy has not value.
- Targets, goals and resources should be detailed.
- There has been no budget announced for the 20 Year Plan in the south – we shouldn't make the same mistake.
- The strategy will be a waste of time if it does not have enough financial resources.
- For example, the Líofa 2015 project has no specific resources; there is no budget for extra classes etc.
- A vision can be good, but targets and goals are still needed.
- Actions must be outlined along with fine words. Think of the Good Friday Agreement, and the promises made about 'resolute action'. The community expected a lot, but it didn't happen.
- If you read the section on the legal basis for the strategy, you would be expecting a lot more from the strategy.
- The strategy will help with the status of Irish – official policy and it should have an influence on some of the departments but will it be able to influence all of them? – Doubtful. In the south, not all the departments fulfil their duties.
- Strategy is welcome, BUT will it be implemented?
- Líofa 2015 did one practical thing, it established the scholarships.
- There are concerns that Irish will still be at the bottom of the list of priorities. There will be difficulties at Assembly level. After that, there will be work needed with the two governments and with the European Parliament.

- Níor chóir cur chuige ‘aislingíochta’ an deiscirt a leanstan - níl ann ach íomhá folamh agus bolscaireacht. Ní dhéantar go leor don teanga sa deisceart. Mar shampla, cé go bhfuil an Ghaeilge aitheanta mar theanga oifigiúil de chuid na hEorpa, níor ardaíodh an aitheantas seo stádas na teanga ó dheas.
- Maidir leis an phróiseas comhairliúcháin, is fiú é, ach caithfidh torthaí dearfacha a bheith ann ag an deireadh.
- We should not follow the south’s ‘aspirational’ approach - it is nothing but hollow imagery and propaganda. Not enough is done for the language in the south. For example, even though Irish is recognised as an official European language, this recognition has not raised the status of the language in the south.
- As to the consultation process, it is worthwhile, but there have to be positive results at the end.

Bunús na Straitéise

- Ba chóir go léireodh an Straitéis dualgais na ranna agus dreamanna eile ar bhealach níos cinnte, láidre.
- Ba chóir an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn mar theanga bheo na hEorpa.
- Cad é faoi na hAontachtaíthe atá in éadan na Gaeilge? Caithfear iad a chur san áireamh, ACH níor chóir go dteorannódh sé sin an straitéis. Caithfear tús áit a thabhairt do chearta na nGael agus do riachtanais an phobail.

Reachtaíocht

- Ba chóir an tAcht 1737 Riar na Córa a aisghairm.
- Tá reachtaíocht de dhíth le comharthaíocht Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn - go fóill tá sé mar a bheadh cosc ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí. Mar shampla, dearcadh Seirbhís na Bóithre, cuid mhaith Comhairlí, NITB. Ní bhíonn ann ach constaicí agus fadhbanna.
- Níl rud ar bith ann sa straitéis le húsáid na Gaeilge a éascú, gach áit agus in gach gné den tsaol. Is léir go bhfuil reachtaíocht de dhíth don Ghaeilge.
- Fáilte roimh thagairt de Bhille na Gaeilge, ach caithfear an tagairt a dhéanamh níos cinnte, láidre. Ba chóir é seo a rá, ‘Acht na Gaeilge a thabhairt isteach bonn láithreach’. Tá dáta cinnte de dhíth - ba chóir amscála d’fhorfheidhmiú na hAchta a shonrú. Is mír seo sa doiciméad atá le forbairt - mar, gan reachtaíocht, ní éireoidh leis an straitéis.
- Ceachtanna ó Alban agus ón Bhreatain Bheag? Sa Bhreatain Bheag, cuid is mó do na páirtithe ar son na teanga, nó ‘neodrach’. Oideachas de dhíth ar dhaoine agus ról tábhachtach ar leith ag an stát seirbhíseach ann, ach níor chóir an gné sin a bheith níos tábhachtaigh na cearta na ndaoine.
- Mír 4.8.4. Níl sé soiléir cad é mar a roghnófar na téacsanna ‘is tábhachtaí’. Spriocanna, amscála agus tuilleadh eolais de dhíth sa mhír seo.

Saol eacnamaíoch

- Mír 4.9.1. ba chóir béim a chur ar ‘spreagadh’

Basis of the Strategy

- The strategy should reflect the duties of departments and other bodies in a more certain and stronger manner.
- Irish should be promoted as a European living language.
- What about the Unionists who are hostile to Irish? They must be included, BUT this should not limit the strategy. The rights of Irish speakers and the needs of the community must be the primary driver.

Legislation

- 1737 Administration of Justice Act to be repealed.
- Legislation is needed to promote Irish language signage - it is still as if there were a ban on the use of Irish in public life. For example, the attitude of the Roads Service, many Councils and the NITB. There is nothing but obstacles and problems.
- There is nothing in the strategy about facilitating the use of Irish, everywhere and in all aspects of life. It is obvious that Irish language legislation is needed.
- The reference to the Irish language Bill is welcome, but the reference must be more certain, stronger. It should say, ‘The Irish Language Act will be introduced immediately’. A definite date is needed - the timescale for the implementation of the Act should be laid out. This clause in the document needs to be developed - without legislation, the strategy will not succeed.
- Lessons from Scotland and Wales? In Wales, most of the political parties are either for the language or are ‘neutral’. Education is needed for people and civil servants have an important role to play in this, but this element must not take on more significance than people’s rights.
- Section 4.8.4. Not clear how the ‘most important’ texts will be chosen. Targets, timescales and more information needed in this clause.

Economic Life

- Section 4.9.1. Emphasis should be on ‘encouraging’

nó ‘incentivisation’.

- Mór chomhlachtaí príobháideacha, cuireann roinnt acu comharthaí dhátheangacha in airde sa Bhreatain Bheag - eiseamláir maith gurbh fhéidir a úsáid anseo le comhlachtaí a spreagadh leis an rud ceanna a dhéanamh anseo?
- Mír 4.9.2. Gné idirnáisiúnta leis an Ghaeilge. Pobal na Gaeilge beo i Londain agus sna Stáit Aontaithe, mar shampla. Pobal na Gaeilge scartha óna cheile chomh maith in amanna – níor chóir pócaí de Ghaeil a fhágáil as an áireamh – tá tacaíocht de dhíth orthu le bogadh chun tosaigh. Dúradh linn go bhfuil níos mó cainteoirí Breatnaise ann taobh amuigh do na ceantair ‘traidisiúnta’ sa Bhreatain Bheag. Ba mheancóg í, neamart a dhéanamh ar a leithéid anseo. Sa Bhreatain Bheag, béim ar ‘an teanga sa phobal’ - gach áit, in áit a bheith ‘sa gheiteó’. Níl duine amháin in áit amháin ‘níos fearr’ ná 4 duine atá scartha óna chéile. Níos mó le coincheap na nGaeltachtaí ná an gné tíreolaíochta amháin. Tábhacht le gréasáin agus le cairde.
- Ba chóir fiontraíocht a spreagadh, campas-bunaithe, b’fhéidir, cosúil le Fiontair DCU.
- Ba chóir turasóireacht teanga a spreagadh. An bhfuil fíricí ann ó áit ar bith eile go n-oibríonn turasóireacht teanga?

Cur i bhfeidhm

- Grúpa idir rannóga ar leith leis an straitéis a chur i bhfeidhm - thioctadh leis a bheith úsáideach, ach cé bheadh mar cheannasaí? Saineolas de dhíth.
- Tsar na Gaeilge de dhíth.

Nótaí Aischothaithe ón Cheardlann ar Oideachas

Fís & Cur i gcríoch

Bearnaí sa straitéis?

- Oidhreacht na teanga - timpeallacht oidhreachtuil
- Cúrsaí trasphobail agus OFMDFM - ní raibh siad ag iarraidh seirbhís cé gur cuireadh ar fáil saor in aisce é
- Roinn Oideachas - Níl tuiscint ceart acu ar phobal na Gaeilge nó ar Gaeloideachas - Spriocanna a chur in iúl dóibh ó thaobh cur chun cinn na teanga de
- Áiseanna oideachais - Riachtanais (Cad é atá ann, cad é atá in easpa?)
- Aiseolas ar dhóigheanna is fearr le Ghaeloideachas a chur chun cinn - idirphlé de dhíth leis na grúpaí ar fad - níos mó cumarsáide - Scéimeanna maoinithe? Le Gaeloideachas a éascú agus pobal a chur ar a suaimhneas

or ‘incentivising’

- Some large private companies in Wales put up bilingual signage - a good example that could be used here would be to encourage companies to do the same?
- Section 4.9.2. Irish has an international element. Living Irish speaking communities can be in London, or the United States, for example. The Irish speaking community in sometimes dispersed from each other – pockets of Irish speakers should not be excluded – they need support to move forward. The seminar was told there are more speakers of Welsh outside the ‘traditional’ areas in Wales. It would be a mistake to ignore their likes here. In Wales, the emphasis is on the ‘language in the community’ – everywhere, not ghettoised. No one person in one place is ‘better’ than 4 people who may be dispersed from each other. The concept of ‘Gaeltachtaí’ is about more than just geographic location. Networks and friends are important too.
- Enterprise should be encouraged, campas-based perhaps, like Fiontair DCU.
- Language tourism should be encouraged. Are there any statistics from elsewhere to show that language tourism works?

Implementation

- Specific inter departmental group to implement the strategy - could be useful, but who will be in charge of it? Expertise needed.
- Tsar na Gaeilge needed.

Feedback Notes from the Workshop on Education

Vision and Implementation

Gaps in the strategy?

- The heritage of the language - Heritage environment
- Cross-community matters and OFMDFM - they didn’t want a service which was being provided free of charge
- Department of Education - They don’t properly understand the Irish speaking community or Irish Medium Education - Inform them of goals in terms of developing the language
- Educational resources - Requirements (what do we have, what is needed?)
- Feedback on the best ways to develop Irish Medium Education - dialogue needed between the different groups - more communication - Funded schemes? To facilitate Irish Medium Education and reassure the public

- Cur chuige ilranna?
- Cuirfear le normalú agus rachaidh sé i ngleic le hiomaíocht agus eagla/buaireamh na scoileanna Béarla
- Easpa eolais ar earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta taobh istigh de NELB & SELB
 - Gan tagairt orthu
 - Meancóga déanta acu ar bhuneolas fá Ghaeloi deachas
- Caithfear dul i ngleic leis an Roinn Oideachas fá dhearcadh fá Ghaelscolaíocht
- Níl gach dream/scoil luaite
- Locht ar Bhord leabharlainne fá láthair
- Níl aitheantas ceart ag an Gaeloideachas sna Rannata, go háirithe an Roinn Oideachas
- Bíonn orainn (pobal na Gaeilge) na cásanna ceanna a dhéanamh arís agus arís eile
- Réamhscolaíocht - níl tagairt déanta don tréimhse roimh Naíscolaíocht
- Grúpaí teaghlaigh agus tuismitheoirí srl - níos mó de dhíth sa tréimhse tábhachtach seo
- Níl tacaíocht/tagairt do thuismitheoirí atá ag tógáil clainne le Gaeilge
- Níl tuiscint ag an Roinn Oideachas/Aire Oideachas fán Ghaelscolaíocht
- Béim de dhíth ar Óige taobh amuigh den scoil - Oifigigh Óige?
- Interdepartmental approach?
- Increase normalisation and it will combat competitiveness and fears/worries of English speaking schools
- A lack of knowledge of IME within NELB & SELB
 - No mention of it
 - Basic mistakes made by them in regards to IME
- Must engage with Department of Education about attitude towards IME
- Not every group/school is mentioned
- Library Boards to blame at present
- IME hasn't proper recognition at present in Departments at present, especially Dept. of Education
- We (the Irish speaking community) have to make the same cases again and again
- Pre-schooling - there is no mention of the period before Nursery
- Family and Parents' groups etc - more needed in this important period
- There is no support/mention of parents raising their families with Irish
- The Dept. of Education/Education Minister have no understanding of IME
- Focus needed on Young People outside of school - Youth Officers?

Modheolaíocht - leis seo a chur i gcríoch

- Cearta céanna ag na páistí i nGaelscolaíocht ó thaobh taistil de srl., agus atá sna scoileanna eile
- Measúnú déanta ar éileamh praiticiúil
- Taighde de dhíth ar thumoideachas agus ar fhorbairt an dátheangachas
- Níos mó daoine de dhíth ar an talamh a bhfuil sa-neolas acu
- Cuidiú de dhíth ó thaobh riachtanais ar leith/níl uirlisí nó measúnú mar is ceart
- Ná druid an tÁisaonad (ag Coláiste na hOllscoile Naomh Muire)
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta - moltar dul i dteagmháil leis na hollscoileanna
- Feachtas poiblíochta Gaelscolaíochta srl a dhéanamh

Ó Ghlúin go Glúin - Bearnaí

- Tosaíochtaí a roghnú de réir ord & fadtéarmach srl.
- Seirbhísí Gaeilge a dhéanamh níos fusa teacht orthu - suíomh idirlíon - rogha teanga a bheith agat
- Oifigigh teaghlaigh a chur ar bun - scéim maoinithe a chur ar fáil
- Foghlaim ó na ceantair Gaeltacht
 - Cur chuige tras-teorainn
 - Cur chuige uile-Éireann
- Nasc a dhéanamh leis na 26 Contae ó thaobh

Methodology - to implement this

- Children attending Irish schools have the same rights regarding travel etc., as other schools
- Assessment made of practical demands
- Research needed on Immersion Education and on the development of bilingualism
- More people needed on the ground with expertise
- Help needed in terms of specific needs/there are no tools or proper assessments
- Don't close the Áisaonad (Irish Medium Resource Unit at St Mary's University College)
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta - recommended they contact universities
- Advertising campaign on IME etc.

From Generation to Generation - Gaps

- Priorities identified according to order - long term etc.
- Make Irish language services easier to find - web sites - have a choice of languages
- Create Family Officers - provide funded schemes
- Learn from Gaeltacht areas
 - Cross-Border approach
 - All-Ireland approach
- Form links with 26 Counties regarding schooling

scolaíochta de

- Comhpháirtíocht le grúpaí Gaeltachta le Gaeilge a chur isteach sa teach
- Ceiliúradh a dhéanamh ar an dátheangachas
- Tacú leis na grúpaí Gaeilge deiseanna labhartha a chur ar fáil
- CATOC mar lárghrúpa comhordaithe
- Co-Partnerships with Gaeltacht groups to bring Irish into homes
- Celebrate bilingualism
- Support Irish language groups to provide opportunities for speaking Irish
- CATOC as central co-ordinating group

Nótaí Aischothaithe ón Cheardlann ar na Meain Chumarsáide

Fís, Na Meáin, Cur i gCríoch

- Fís - Forbairt na teanga fríd na meáin. Raidió Fáilte agus cad é eile?
- Acmhainní ar líne? An bhfuil go leor ann? Bearnaí ar an idirlíon. Ag freastal ar gach duine? Foghlaimoirí agus daoine líofa ina measc.
- Páipéar nuachta laethúil de dhíth
- BBC agus UTV - Ní dhéanann siad go leor.
- Bíonn na meáin thart orainn i gcónaí Apps agus a leithéid - iontach tábhachtach
- Daoine óga - ag déanamh na traenála ach cá bhfuil na postanna? Tá easpa airgid ann. Cé a chuirfidh seo i gcríoch?
- E-leabhair - ceann amháin as Gaeilge!
- Airgead - cé chomh maith a thig leis an Ghaeilge a bheith do gheilleagar na tíre? Ba chóir eolas a chur ar fáil - staitisticí
- Caithfead na meáin a fháil ar bord. Píosa maith ar UTV faoi Chearta agus Ceiliúradh de chuid POBAL, ach is annamh go mbíonn an Ghaeilge luaite.
- Íomhá a chruthú - ar son gach duine.
- Cláir suimiúla faoin Ghaeilge - oidhreacht, stair, srl - ag an fóirsteanach (Prime Time)
- Fotheidil - rogha a bheith ann (gan iad a úsáid) - clár Gaelach le Béarla - foghlaimeoirí
- Leabhair agus irisleabhair

Feedback Notes from the Workshop on the Media

Vision, the Media, Implementation

- Vision - the development of the language through the media. Raidió Fáilte and what else?
- Online resources? Are there enough? Gaps in the internet. Serving everyone? Among them, learners and fluent speakers.
- Daily newspaper needed.
- BBC and UTV - they don't do enough
- The media are around us all the time.
- Apps and such like - very important
- Young people - doing training, but where are the jobs? There is a lack of money. Who will implement this?
- E-books - one in Irish!
- Money - how beneficial can the Irish language be for the economy of the country? Information should be made available - statistics.
- The Media must be brought on board. Good piece on UTV about POBAL's event, Cearta agus Ceiliúradh, but it is rare that Irish is mentioned.
- Create an image - for everyone's sake.
- Interesting programmes about Irish - heritage, history etc- at an appropriate time (Prime Time)
- Optional subtitles (so don't have to use them) - Irish programmes with English (subtitles) - learners
- Books and magazines



Críoch an tSeimineáir Seminar Closure

Arthur Scott,
Stiúrthóir Cultúir na RCEF
Director of Culture for DCAL

You have provided us with a very wide range of valuable comments and suggestions on the strategy which I am sure the team and I will be able to use to improve and strengthen the quality of the strategy, so I am very grateful to you for doing that. In terms of the Minister's expectations and the department's expectations of this event, I think that you have more than satisfied those so thank you.

I trust that you will see how we do take account of the points made when we reach the post consultation phase of the process when there will be a detailed report setting out all the comments made and what action the department has taken in the light of the comments and suggestions received, not only at events like today, but also through the formal consultation process. In the meantime, I would just like to repeat my offer that I or my team will do our very best to meet with you, either to discuss further some of the points today which I know people felt very passionately about and maybe we just didn't have enough time to get to the bottom of them, because we had so much to get through, or help groups go through other aspects of the strategy and help groups in preparing your final submissions. Finally, I would like to thank Janet and her team for facilitating this event on behalf of the department. Also our guest speakers for coming and sharing their experience with us on how these challenges that we face have been addressed in other areas and how that work is ongoing. Closing date is 27th November so I just want to remind you of that again.

Críoch an tSeimineáir

Janet Muller
Príomhfheidhmeannach POBAL

Sna pacáistí eolais, tá foirmeacha le haghaidh freagraí ann, ach creidim nach gá iad a úsáid más fearr libh bhur bhfreagraí a scríobh ar bhealach eile. Tá an Roinn sásta glacadh le haighneachtaí scríofa ar bhealach ar bith. An bhfuil sé sin ceart, a Arthur?

Arthur Scott : Yes, yes.

Janet Muller: Ní raibh deis againn inniu gach uile rud a phlé. Mar sin, fiú nuair a thugann muid cuntas cruinn beacht scríofa don Roinn ar an ócáid inniu, ní bheidh gach rud clúdaithe ach amháin má tá sé ráite inniu. Molaim go láidir libh labhairt le daoine eile, grúpaí Gaeilge, grúpaí Béarla, daoine aonaracha, gach dream, agus go gcuireann sibh in iúl chomh tábhachtach is atá sé freagraí a chur isteach chuig an chomhairliúchán. Ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a ghabhail leis an Aire, Carál Ní Chuilín, le foireann na Roinne, lenár gcainteoirí, agus libh féin, na comhairleoirí, na hoifigigh Gaeilge, na grúpaí, na hionadaí ó eagrais poiblí agus cearta daonna, agus na daltaí ó Choláiste Feirste, go raibh maith agaibh uilig as ucht bhur n-ionchur. Tá mé buíoch chomh maith d'fhoireann POBAL, a chur an-obair isteach sa próiseas seo.

Seminar Closure

Janet Muller
CEO POBAL

In the information packs, there are response forms, but I believe that you do not have to make use of them if you prefer to write your responses in some other way. The Department is willing to accept written submissions in any format. Is that correct, Arthur?

Arthur Scott : Yes, yes.

Janet Muller: We did not have time today to discuss everything. Therefore, even when we present an accurate and detailed report to the department of this event, issues will not be covered unless they were raised today. I strongly urge you to talk to other people, to Irish language groups, to English language groups, to individuals, to everyone and to let them know how important it is to put in responses to the consultation. I should like to thank the Minister, Caral Ní Chuilín, the departmental team, our speakers, and yourselves, the councillors, the Irish language officers, the groups, the representatives from public bodies and human rights groups, and the pupils from Coláiste Feirste, thank you all for your input. I also want to thank POBAL's team, who put great work into this process.

Tinreamh an tSeimineáir

Seminar Attendance

Duine - Person	Eagrais - Organisation	Ról - Role
Cadogan Enright	Comhairle an Dúin Downpatrick District Council	Comhairleoir Councillor
Brídín Ní Mháirtín	Bord Oideachais is Leabharlainne Oir-Thuaisceart North eastern ELB	Comhairleoir Réigiúnaí Regional Adviser
Brian Patterson	An Roinn Foghlama agus Léinn Department of Education and Learning	
Tommy McLaughlin	Comhairle An Fhear Manach Fermanagh County Council	Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí Good Relations Officer
Valerie Keys	An Roinn Talmhaíochta agus Forbartha Tuaithe Department of Agriculture	Rannóg an Chomhionannais Equality Branch
Seán Mac Corraidh	Coláiste na hOllscoile Naomh Muire St Mary's University College	
David Burkin	Ofcom	Bainisteoir Gnóthaí Rialúcháin Regulatory Affairs Manager
Seán Mac Giolla Cheara	Comhairle Mhachaire Fíolta Magherafelt Council	Comhairleoir Councillor
Caoimhe Ní Chathail	Ath na Long Annalong	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Fergus Ó hÍr	Raidió Fáilte	Bainisteoir Manager
Dairín Ó Dochartaigh	Raidió Fáilte	Craoltóir Broadcaster
Feargal Mac Ionrachaigh	Forbairt Feirste	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Gordon McCoy	Iontaobhas Ultach	Oifigeach Officer
Ursula Mhic an tSaoir	Comhairle an Iúir agus Mhuirn Newry and Mourne Council	Oifigeach Gaeilge Irish Language Officer
Deirdre McBride	Community Relations Council	Stiúrthóir Director
Leonne Ní Loingsigh	An Carn	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Mary Hanna	Comhairle Ard Mhacha Armagh Council	
Pamela Matthews	Comhairle Dhroichead an Banna Banbridge Council	Ceannasaí Seirbhísí Pobail Head of Community Services
Garaí Mac Roibeaird	ESAIT	Bainisteoir, Togra an Ghaeiloideachais Manager, Irish Medium Project
Marie Craig	Comhairle Bhéal Feirste Belfast City Council	Caidrimh Poiblí Good Relations
Bernard Moane	An Roinn Comhshaoil DOE	
Niall Ó Catháin	An Carn	
Micheal Ó Duibh	Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	PF CEO
Liam Mac Giolla Mheana	Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	Oif Forbartha Oideachais Education Development Officer
Réamonn Ó Ciaráin	Gael Linn	Bainisteoir Réigiúnach Regional Manager
Conall Ó Corráin	Gael Linn	
Eve Stewart	An Roinn Oideachais DENI	
Diarmuid Ó Breasláin	Ionad Uíbh Eachach	
Roise Ní Bhaoill	Iontaobhas Ultach	
Declan O'Loan	Comhairle Bhaile Meánach Ballymena Council	Comhairleoir Councillor

Duine - Person	Eagrais - Organisation	Ról - Role
Monica Digney	Comhairle Bhaile Meánach Ballymena Council	Comhairleoir Councillor
David Andrews	Comhairle Bhaile Meánach Ballymena Council	Oifigeach Officer
Gearóid Trimble	Foras na Gaeilge	
Kevin Goodwin	Comhairle an Ómaigh Omagh Council	Oifigeach Gaeilge Irish language Officer
Pól Ó Mórdha	Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	Oifigeach Airgeadais Finance Officer
Ursula Uí Dhonnaile	Líofa	Oifigeach Officer
Edel McMahon	DCAL RCEF	Oifigeach Officer
Caoimhe Deery	Public Interest Litigation Support Project	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Jerome Dawson	DCAL RCEF	Oifigeach Officer
Séamas Mac Giolla Phádraig	Comhaltas Uladh	
Jim Mac Amhlaidh	An Droichead	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Pilib Ó Ruanaigh	Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta The Irish Medium Trust	Príomhfheidhmeannach CEO
Jackie Patton	Comhairle Bhaile Meánach	
Linda Ervine	East Belfast Mission	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Ciarán Ó Pronntaigh	An tÁisaonad Irish language Resource Unit	Bainisteoir Manager
Trevor Lunn	Alliance	
Maolchoilm Scott	Colmcille	Bainisteoir Manager
Gregory Toner	Ollscoil na Ríona QUB	Ollamh Professor
Gearóid Ó Domagáin	Ollscoil Uladh University Of Ulster	Lectóir Lecturer
Seán Ó Coinn	Foras na Gaeilge	Leas-Phríomhfheidhmeannach Vice CEO
Brónagh Fusco	Glór na Móna	Oifigeach Forbartha Development Officer
Máirtín Mac Gabhann	Coláiste Feirste	Foireann teagaisc Teaching staff
Lauren Nic Cailín	Coláiste Feirste	Dalta Pupil
Caoileann O Miacháin	Coláiste Feirste	Dalta Pupil
Clíodhna Tailiúir	Coláiste Feirste	Dalta Pupil
Orlaith Nic an Lia	Coláiste Feirste	Dalta Pupil
Luc Mac Roibín	Coláiste Feirste	Dalta Pupil
Dónall Ó Baoill	Ollamh Emeritus	cainteoir
Easlasaid Nic an t-Saoir	Bòrd na Gàidhlig	cainteoir
Iwan Evans	Riatas na Breataine Bige	cainteoir
Arthur Scott	DCAL	
Michael Willis	DCAL	
Ann Perry	DCAL	
Áine Gaughan	DCAL	
Aidan Mc Cann	DCAL	