

Report on	Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022
Date of Meeting	Wednesday 8 th December 2021
Reporting Officer	Tony McCance, Head of Culture & Arts
Contact Officer(s)	Déaglán Ó Doibhlin/Seán Mac Ní

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek members' approval to issue a call for Expressions of Interest from interested groups and individuals seeking to deliver activities and projects designed to encourage and promote use of the Irish Language as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022.
2.0	Background
2.1	Seachtain na Gaeilge is an international festival that runs from 1st to 17th March each year.
2.2	The Festival seeks to celebrate and promote the Irish Language throughout this period through various schemes and activities delivered by and within the wider community.
2.3	Seachtain na Gaeilge was first established by Conradh na Gaeilge in 1902 and thus it is celebrating the 120 th anniversary of the event in March 2022.
2.4	Subject to Council approval, it is proposed that Mid Ulster District Council will issue a call for Expressions of Interest for Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 activities, advertising in January 2022 in local press as well as on MUDC's website and social media platforms.
2.5	The scheme will be open to applicant community groups or individuals who wish to apply for funding support to carry out an Irish Language activity as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge celebrations within the Mid Ulster District Council area.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Officer team will advertise the scheme in local press to ensure all groups and individuals who wish to apply, are aware of the funding available.
3.2	The Officer team will seek to encourage a varied range of bilingual and Irish language events across the district in order to encourage maximum participation

	by the wider Mid Ulster community. To this end an information brochure will be compiled and publicised promoting all the events and activities being delivered.
3.3	In July 2021 the Regional and Minority Language Action Plan was submitted to Council for their approval (see appendix 1).
3.4	The Action Plan identified an allocation of £3,000 to be utilised to: <i>Cooperate with the Irish Language community to develop an online Mid Ulster Seachtain na Gaeilge programme which will feature a range of engaging activities aimed at Irish speakers and non-Irish speakers wanting to get involved in the language and profiling the Irish Language across the district.</i>
3.5	The Action Plan also identified an allocation of £13,000 to be utilised to: <i>deliver a schools Irish Language and Heritage programme in various Council venues across the district and/or in the classroom setting</i> <i>Examples include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Irish language lessons</i> • <i>Gaelic Heritage projects (Gaelic origins of townlands/surnames)</i> • <i>Workshops/site visits</i>
3.6	Further engagement with the Irish Language community has identified that, given the COVID restrictions that a schools Irish Language and Heritage Programme is unlikely to be delivered at the level initially envisaged when the Action Plan was presented to Council in July 2021.
3.7	As a result of an anticipated underspend in the schools Irish Language and Heritage Programme and an anticipated increase in demand for activity for the 120 th anniversary of the Seachtain na Gaeilge Programme, it is proposed to utilise the underspend in the schools Irish Language and Heritage Programme to enhance the allocation to the Seachtain na Gaeilge programme 2022 from £3,000 to £7,500 and to reduce the allocated budget within the schools Irish Language and Heritage Programme from £13,000 to £8,500.
3.8	It is envisaged that all events will be live face-to-face and in compliance with social distancing restrictions re Covid-19 that may be applicable at the time of activity delivery. However, it is recognised that some planned events may need to be virtual/online delivery given the difficulties and fluid situation presented by the current Covid-19 pandemic.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: The budget of £7,500 can be met from within the Regional Minority Languages budget allocation 2021/22.
	Human: Officer time only

	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>To avoid risk of groups missing the call for expressions of interest, local press and council's social media channels will be utilised to publicise the project</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>The Expression of interest process is open to all groups involved in developing Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 activities across the Mid Ulster District.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>The Expressions of interest process is open to all groups involved in developing Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 activities across the Mid Ulster District</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that members approve the reallocation of budgets as presented in the Action Plan approved by Council in July 2021, (i.e. to increase the Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 allocation by £4,500 and to reduce the schools Irish Language and Heritage Programme by £4,500).
5.2	It is recommended that members approve the call for Expressions of Interest to be issued inviting submissions from interested groups and individuals seeking to deliver activities and projects designed to encourage and promote use of the Irish Language as part of the 120 th anniversary of the Seachtain na Gaeilge programme in March 2022 with a revised budget allocation of £7,500.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 - Irish Language Action Plan Apr 2021-March 2022