

Report on	Regional Minority Languages Bursary Programme 2022/23 and Irish Language Activity Funding Programme 2022/23
Date of Meeting	Thursday 13th January 2022
Reporting Officer	Tony McCance
Contact Officer	Déaglán Ó Doibhlin

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 update Council on the proposed Regional and Minority Language Bursary programme 2022/23 and Irish Language Activity Funding Programme 2022/23 and to seek approval from Council to publicly advertise both schemes.
2.0	Background
2.1	The purpose of the Regional and Minority Language Bursary programme promoted to the public across Mid Ulster District Council is to assist residents of the district in attending approved residential courses in order to develop their language ability and/or achieve fluency in a regional or minority language.
2.2	The purpose of the Irish language activity funding programme is to identify, to assist and to support groups and organisations seeking to provide events and activities that promote and develop the Irish language across Mid Ulster from April 2022 to March 2023.
2.3	In 2019/20, 145 local people availed of a Regional and Minority language bursary from Mid Ulster District Council. Due to public health restrictions related the Covid Pandemic no courses have taken place in the interim however we anticipate that courses will again be available this incoming summer. It is anticipated that there will be a high level of interest and uptake in 2022/23.
2.4	In 2021/22, 17 voluntary and community groups, schools, sports, arts and cultural organisations organised events and activities in their local areas through the Irish Language with assistance from Mid Ulster District Council Irish language activity funding.
2.5	The Action Plan for the Development of the Irish Language, as approved by Council identified the following key themes: Theme 1: <i>Promoting Opportunities to Learn Irish</i> , funding support would be made available for local people to attend recognised residential language learning courses and Theme 2: <i>Irish Language in the Community</i> , funding would be made available for external language, cultural and sporting organisations for the promotion of Irish language events.
2.6	Subject to Council approval a public call will be issued in relation to the 2022/23 Regional and Minority Language Bursaries, detailing funding support opportunities available and to

2.7	<p>which individuals will be invited to submit funding applications. Officers within Culture & Arts Services will process applications for submission to Council for approval.</p> <p>Subject to Council approval a public call will also be issued in relation to the 2022/23 Irish Language Activity Funding Support opportunities. Groups/organisations will be invited to submit expression of interest applications. Irish Language Officers will follow up on Expressions of Interest with all interested groups to discuss their project ideas and to support and develop them prior to submission to council for further consideration.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Mid Ulster District Council has adopted an Irish Language Policy which commits Council to the implementation of an Action Plan to develop the language in the district, and the above actions are specified within the plan.
3.2	The proposed actions will help to fulfil Council's legislative obligations to promote the Irish Language.
3.3	The activities delivered in 2022/23 will be reviewed on completion to measure success and to shape future planning.
3.4	<p>Community events and activities supported will complement existing Council services including Arts and Culture, Tourism and Community Development activity.</p> <p>The Regional and Minority Language Bursary programme 2022/23, may be subject to restrictions, due to COVID implications. All Bursaries awarded to individuals will be allocated on basis that the Regional and Minority Language course to which they have applied, will take place.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: The required funding to support the delivery of the Regional and Minority Language bursary scheme and the Irish language Activity Funding Programme has been identified within the proposed 2022/23 Regional and Minority Language budget.</p> <p>Human: Irish Language officers and other relevant staff within Arts and Cultural Services will offer assistance and support in terms of knowledge and experience for all applicant groups and individuals where required.</p> <p>Risk Management: Budget allocations are subject to Council approval. Awards allocated are subject to the levels of demand and the resources available.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Screening and Impact Assessments</u></p> <p>Equality and Good Relations Implications: The implementation of the Activity Funding and the Regional and Minority Language Bursary programmes will strengthen partnerships between Council and community,</p>

	empowering communities at grass roots level and encourage greater collaboration among groups.
	Rural Needs Implications: Rural needs implications are considered as part of the delivery of projects and funding support provided to groups and individuals through both the Irish Language Activity Funding and the Regional and Minority Language Bursary programmes.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that Council grants approval (subject to funding) to publicly advertise the 2022/23 Regional and Minority Language Bursary Programme
5.2	It is recommended that Council grants approval (subject to funding) to issue a call for expressions of interest for proposed projects and initiatives under the Irish Language Activity Programme 2022/23
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A