



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Report of
Regional and Minority Language Implementation Working Group of Mid Ulster District
Council

Report of Regional and Minority Language Implementation Working Group of Mid Ulster Council held on Monday 15th January 2018 in the Council Offices, Cookstown

Attendees **Members:** Cllr J Mc Namee (Chair), Cllr K Ashton, Cllr T Wilson, Cllr M Kearney, Cllr S McGuigan, Cllr R McGinley, Cllr S Mc Peake

Officers: T McCance, D Ó Doibhlin

AGENDA	MATTERS AGREED	ACTIONS & RESPONSIBILITY
1.0	Apologies	
	Cllr P Bateson, Cllr D McKinney, A McCreesh.	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
	No declarations of interest submitted.	
3.0	Report on previous meeting held on 2nd October 2017	
	A report of the previous meeting of 2 nd October was presented to the Working Group.	

4.0	Report on Language Policies Launch	
	<p>D Ó Doibhlin reported on the launch of both the MUDC's Irish language policy and Ulster Scots policy on Thursday the 7th of December 2017 in the Burnavon. Cllr Dominic Molloy chair of Policy and Resources, launched both policies following presentations on both languages by Dr Pádraig Ó Tiarnaigh of Conradh na Gaeilge and Dr Frank Ferguson, Director of the Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies, Ulster University. Music at the launch was representative of both linguistic traditions and was performed by piper Andy McGregor.</p> <p>The event and the work of the officers involved in the launch was praised by councillors Kearney, McPeake and McNamee.</p>	D Ó Doibhlin
5.0	Signage Programme update	
	<p>T McCance presented final draft designs for bilingual interior directional and exterior information signage for Council properties in accordance with Council policies on signage and the Irish language. He reported that the signage would now be installed in properties across the district to an agreed schedule. Cllrs Wilson and Ashton registered their opposition to the proposals for the introduction of bilingual signage.</p>	T McCance
6.0	Irish Language Action Plan 2018/19	
	<p>D Ó Doibhlin reported that officers were currently preparing a draft Irish language action plan for the year 2018/19. The plan would be based largely on the existing action plan with a continuing emphasis on the development of the spoken language in the home/family and community in order to encourage the maintenance of a truly bilingual society in Mid Ulster.</p> <p>Cllr Ashton asked if a similar language plan was being prepared for Ulster Scots and if not could that be considered? T McCance observed that Council did not have officers responsible for the promotion of Ulster Scots or any representation from the Ulster Scots linguistic community locally and that this constrained Council's ability to create a similar type of plan based on demand within the community.</p>	D Ó Doibhlin

7.0	A.O.B.	
	<p>Cllr Wilson observed that Ulster Scots was not a language but a culture and therefore was not able to avail of Council's RML funds to the same extent as the Irish language. He stated that money should be ring-fenced from the budget for the promotion of Ulster Scots culture. T McCance informed the meeting that in accordance with Council's recently adopted language policies, the Regional Minority Languages budget is reserved for regional minority language protection and promotion and cannot be used for the general promotion of culture.</p> <p>Cllr McPeake noted that Deirdre Speer-White of the USCN had asked for the same during her presentation to the working group at the 2nd October meeting, but that RML resources could only be directed to language promotion as had been previously decided by Council.</p> <p>Cllr Ashton stated that there was a need for work on the ground by community services to build capacity in the Ulster Scots community.</p> <p>T McCance highlighted that at the previous meeting on 2nd October that the Director of Business and Communities had offered the services of staff within Community Services to meet with any groups operating within the region to discuss the various funding support mechanisms that were available to groups across the District from Council and potentially other sources.</p> <p>Cllr Wilson left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>Cllr Kearney suggested that officers should re-engage with Deirdre Speer-White in the hope that her network could facilitate community engagement on this issue. T McCance agreed to take this matter under consideration.</p> <p>Cllr McNamee informed the group that there were significant difficulties in the provision of services to the deaf community in Mid Ulster due to the lack of access to broadband in rural areas. T McCance informed the group that the provision of improved broadband services was currently being investigated by Council officers as was reported recently to the Development Committee.</p>	<p>T McCance</p> <p>T McCance</p>

Meeting concluded at 6.45pm

Reports of Working Groups: Finalised Reports of Working Groups should be forwarded to Democratic Services on committees@midulstercouncil.org with a cover report to be scheduled on the agenda of the next available relevant committee meeting

