



**Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall**  
Donegal County Council

**Donegal County Council**  
**Language Scheme**  
**2014 - 2017**

Under Section 15 of the  
Official Languages Act 2003

**(3<sup>rd</sup> Scheme)**

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# **Donegal County Council Language Scheme**

2014-2017

under Section 15 of the  
Official Languages Act 2003

## **Section 1: Background**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This is the third scheme prepared by Donegal County Council under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003.

The primary objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

### **1.2 Preparation of the Scheme**

This scheme has been drawn up in accordance with the Guidelines under Section 12 of the Official Languages Act 2003.

Donegal County Council, in conjunction with the Ballyshannon, Letterkenny, Bundoran and Buncrana Town Councils, published a notice under Section 13 in March 2013 inviting

submissions in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme from any interested parties. All submissions made are available on the Council's website at [www.donegalcoco.ie](http://www.donegalcoco.ie)

For the purposes of this document, and given that the various Town Councils within Donegal are to be merged with Donegal County Council in 2014, all the above local authorities shall be referred to collectively as "Donegal County Council" or "The Council" save as otherwise stated.

The Scheme seeks to support and build upon the commitments made in our first and second Schemes, which commenced in 2005 and 2010 respectively.

The scheme builds on the extent to which services are currently available through Irish as a starting base. Areas for future enhancement of the service provided by Donegal County Council are identified in the body of the scheme.

The scheme takes account of the initial process of decentralisation undertaken by Donegal County Council between 2000 and 2008, including the differing levels of demand and the differing contexts within which each of our Public Service Centres operates. The Scheme also takes into account recent changes as a result of reorganisation in the changing economic climate (eg recentralisation of specific services, establishment of Customer Contact Centre, moratorium on recruitment, significant reduction in staff numbers). Particular attention is focussed on the consolidation and further development of services through the Irish language provided by those Centres that serve Gaeltacht communities, and also on the use of the main Council website and social media sites to maximise all elements of the Council's written and printed communications in Irish to the public in a cost-effective, yet comprehensive manner. However, Donegal County Council also recognises the development of Irish speaking communities outside the Gaeltacht, particularly the development of Gaelscoileanna and other Irish-medium educational communities, and the need to cater for these growing communities.

The scheme also includes a commitment to assess on an ongoing basis the level of demand for services through Irish and to ensure that the Council continues to meet this

demand in a planned, coherent and accessible way. The Council will gauge the level of demand for its services in the Irish language by carrying out regular and timed audits through a system of counting/measuring the level of queries/requests for services through Irish in a defined period.

### **1.3 Commencement Date of Scheme**

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and The Gaeltacht. The scheme is commenced with effect from 24 February 2014 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

### **1.4 Customers and Clients of Donegal County Council**

Members of the public, customers and community groups throughout County Donegal, including the Donegal Gaeltacht

Applicants for services under various schemes

Government Departments, State Agencies and other public services

Business community

Other local authorities and regional authorities

County Development Board structures and Emerging Social and Economic Committees

Social partners, sectoral interests and Local Development Agencies

Local and National Media, both electronic and print

### **1.5 Functional Areas of Donegal County Council**

Housing and Corporate Services

Community, Culture and Planning Services  
Finance and Emergency Services  
Water and Environmental Services  
Roads, Transportation and Capital Housing Services

## **1.6 Offices covered by this Scheme**

All Donegal County Council Offices throughout County Donegal, including  
Public Service Centres, Outreach Centres, Community Libraries, Fire Stations,  
Museums, Arts and Cultural Centres, Training Centres, Depots, etc  
All Town Council Offices (Letterkenny, Bundoran, Buncrana and Ballyshannon), in  
use prior to, or subsequent to, the proposed merger with Donegal County Council in  
2014.

## **1.7 Language Scheme Background**

The Official Languages Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they will provide

- through the medium of Irish
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

Section 13 of the Official Languages Act 2003 provides that public bodies have a duty to ensure that

- an adequate number of its staff are competent in the Irish language
- the particular Irish language requirements associated with the provision of services in Gaeltacht areas are met
- the Irish language becomes the **working language in Gaeltacht offices** within a timeframe to be agreed with the Minister

## **1.8 Review of Progress under the First and Second Schemes**

Significant progress has been made over the lifetime of the first two schemes and this provides a solid foundation on which we can deliver further improvements during the lifetime of this, and further, schemes. The third scheme is predicated on all of the commitments in the first and second schemes being implemented. In the event of commitments within those schemes not having been fully implemented to date, this matter is dealt with by way of review carried out under the auspices of An Coimisinéir Teanga. The objective of this third Scheme is to continue the delivery of these commitments and build on the progress achieved across the Council over the period of the previous schemes. It sets out a commitment on behalf of the Council and staff to develop the extent to which services are currently available through Irish and it identifies areas for future enhancement.

The new Scheme also builds on the principles of Quality Customer Service and will continue to ensure that persons who wish to conduct their business in Irish are facilitated.

The principal achievements under the first two schemes included:

- significant improvement in services through Irish to the Gaeltacht in the Glenties Electoral Area through a combination of recruitment, placement and training initiatives

- sustained and significant growth in the number of customers using Irish in Dungloe Public Services Centre
- Calls on the phone, and visits to Reception, in Dungloe Public Services Centre can be dealt with in Irish.
- Provision of extensive training in Irish language for a significant number of staff on a countywide basis, including the European Certificate in Irish (Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge) under the auspices of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Diplomas in Irish with Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta, Gaoth Dobhair and the University of Ulster, an intensive course in translation skills for staff already fluent in the Irish language, and staff attendance at other courses.
- the Council established a Placenames Committee which brought about major policy changes in the naming of new housing developments throughout the county, with emphasis on the Irish language, culture and traditions.
- provision of a fully bilingual website for Donegal County Council
- the provision of a full suite of application forms in Irish for the public
- the provision of over 200 full Gaeltacht Scholarships for young people in County Donegal, in conjunction with our Summer Colleges
- a staff audit to ascertain levels of Irish within the organisation, and to identify members of staff who were competent in the language
- the inclusion of Irish as an integral part of the recruitment process for specific posts in specific offices
- ongoing participation in Irish Language Week events, including Library events, dramas, social evenings etc

- use of simultaneous translation services (STE) in Islands Committee meetings, in a number of presentations to Town Councils, and at a number of conferences organised within the county by other community organisations. A new high quality simultaneous translation system was purchased for the Dungloe Public Service Centre in 2007. A more modern, mobile, radio-based system was also purchased during the lifetime of the second scheme, and it is hoped this system will facilitate more meetings with less cables, and less set-up time.
  
- continued support for, and maintenance of, Coiste na Gaeilge consisting of 9 elected members from Donegal County Council. Elected members have been given the opportunity to take up Irish languages courses within the Donegal Gaeltacht.
  
- Community and Enterprise Division of Donegal County Council closely involved in initiatives to attract, and support, major events such as Oireachtas na Gaeilge, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and An Fhéile Phan-Cheilteach to major towns in the county which had not yet experienced national and international events of this nature.
  
- inclusion of policies to support the Irish language and the Gaeltacht in Donegal County Development Plan 2006-2012, and again in the 2012-2018 County Development Plan.
  
- increased bilingualism in our signage, documentation, information brochures, invites, correspondence, posters, press releases etc

However, Donegal County Council recognises that there are a range of services that are not currently available through Irish, and welcome the opportunity provided by this third scheme to further develop and enhance our service through Irish, even in the current context of slow economic growth, difficult budgets, a moratorium on recruitment and significant reduction in staff numbers.

## **Section 2**

# **Summary of Services provided by Donegal County Council**

This Chapter provides an overview of the services provided by Donegal County Council, through its five overarching Directorates.

### **2.1 Housing and Corporate Services**

The principal services provided by the Housing and Corporate Services directorate include Human Resources, Staff Training, support to Elected Members, Register of Electors, Higher Education Grants, Irish Language Development, Housing Services, Traveller Accommodation, Rental Accommodation Scheme, Motor Tax, Freedom of Information, Information Systems, Technology Infrastructure and Networks, Communications and Media Liaisons, and Corporate Planning.

### **2.2 Community, Culture and Planning Services**

The services provided by the Community, Culture and Planning Directorate include Community Development, Planning, Enforcement, Unfinished Housing estates, Building Control, Conservation, Heritage, Archives, Libraries, Museum, Public Art, Art Services, Regional Cultural Centre, County Development Board (and proposed Social and Economic Committees), Economic Development, Social Inclusion, Research and Policy, Play and Recreation, Amenity Development, PEACE III Programme, EU Funding Unit, Film Office, Tourism Development, and Town and Village Renewal.

## **2.3 Finance and Emergency Services**

The services provided by the Finance and Emergency Services Directorate include Financial Management Systems, Budget Management, Annual Financial Statements, Debtors Management, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Internal Audit, Asset Management, Fire Service, and Major Emergency Management.

## **2.4 Water and Environmental Services**

The services provided by the Water and Environmental Directorate include Water and Waste Water Services, Environmental Protection, Waste Management, Pollution Control, Water Quality, Litter Management, Blue Flag Beaches and Beach Management, Civil Defence, Dog Control, Food Safety and Veterinary Services.

## **2.5 Roads, Transportation and Housing Capital Services**

The services provided by the Roads, Transportation and Housing Capital Directorate include Road Construction and Maintenance, Traffic Management, Road Safety, Public Lighting, National Road Design Office, Non-National Road Design Office, Cycle Routes, burial Grounds, Asset Management, Facilities Management, Piers and Harbours, and Building and Housing Construction.

## **2.6 Town Councils and Proposed Changes**

Key services and functions provided by the Town Councils in Letterkenny, Buncrana, Bundoran and Ballyshannon include the areas of housing, roads, town development and promotion, street cleaning, and recreation and amenity provision. It is proposed that these functions will transfer to Donegal County Council in 2014.

## **2.7 Principal Means of Written Communication with the Public**

The principal means of written communication with our customers include written correspondence, brochures and information leaflets, application forms, publications, press releases, websites, social media networks, advertisements, minutes of meetings, and reports.

### **Section 3**

## **Services Currently Available in Each Official Language.**

### **3.1 Services Operating Principally in Irish**

The following services are currently provided principally through the medium of the Irish language and this will continue to be the case throughout the lifetime of this scheme.

- Community and Enterprise (Dungloe Public Service Centre)
- Gaoth Dobhair Fire Station
- Irish Language Office (Lifford HQ)
- Festivals and Community Events: Comhordaitheoir Gaeilge - Letterkenny Public Services Centre)
- Gaoth Dobhair Community Library
- Dungloe Community Library

### **3.2 Services Operating Bilingually**

The following services are currently provided bilingually and this will continue to be the case throughout the lifetime of this scheme.

- Motor tax (Dungloe PSC)
- Front Desk Customer Service (Dungloe PSC)
- Islands Committee (Dungloe PSC)
- Housing & Building Services (Dungloe / Carndonagh / Milford PSCs)
- Electoral Area Committee (Glenties)
- Planning Section (Dungloe & Milford PSCs)
- General Planning Queries ( Lifford HQ)
- Roads and Transportation Section (Dungloe PSC)
- Water Inspection (Gaoth Dobhair Parish)
- Water Group Schemes / Well Grants / Capital Projects (Lifford HQ)
- Arts Officer

### **3.3 Services Operating Principally in English<sup>1</sup>**

- Higher Education Grants (Lifford HQ)
- Information Systems (Lifford HQ)
- Human Resources Office (Lifford HQ) – this office now has fluent Irish speaker.
- County Manager’s Office (Lifford HQ)

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<sup>1</sup> Some members of staff in the services in section 4.3 are undergoing training in Irish through the European Certificate in Irish (Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge), and are willing to use Irish to the best of their ability in delivering services to the public.

- Reception / Switchboard (Lifford HQ) – This role now taken over by Customer Contact Centre, which can provide bilingual service
- Register of Electors (Lifford HQ)
- Freedom of Information (Lifford HQ)
- Council Meetings (Lifford HQ)
- County Secretariat (Lifford HQ)
- Finance Services
- County Museum
- County Library
- County Archives Service
- Town Councils
- All other services not outlined in *3.1* and *3.2* above

## **Section 4**

# **Enhancement of Services to be provided bilingually**

### **4.1 Guiding Principles**

Donegal County Council:

- recognises that people have the right to choose which official language to use
- accepts that a person can express their needs and requirements most effectively in their chosen language
- appreciates that giving people real choice regarding the use of language in local authority services is the essence of good practice and leads to better outcomes in terms of quality of service
- appreciates the enormous historical contribution of the people of the Donegal Gaeltacht in preserving the Irish language as a spoken community language over many centuries
- recognises that we have a duty of care to facilitate and support the continuation and development of Irish as the spoken language of the Gaeltacht
- is committed to maintaining a corporate image which embraces bilingualism across all our services.

### **4.2 Background and Context**

As outlined in Section 5.2 of our First Scheme, Donegal County Council underwent a process of unprecedented change in the period 2000 - 2008, embracing the objectives of

Better Local Government, fundamentally changing how our services are delivered, and providing more accessible services for our customers from local Public Service Centres. The Council has a mix of staff with varying degrees of competence in Irish in each Public Service Centre, including Dungloe, and this continues to present a major challenge for the Council in the achievement of its goal to provide quality one-to-one bilingual services. The loss of significant numbers of staff between 2008 and 2013, many of whom provided services through Irish, combined with decreasing budgets, a moratorium on recruitment, and structural reorganisation have all increased the challenges faced by Donegal County Council in its provision of services through the Irish language. However, the Council remains firmly committed to developing, maintaining and improving the number, range and quality of services it provides to the public through the Irish language. We intend to do this through a combination of the use of modern technology (website, interactive online services, social media sites), reorganisation of staff and services (eg centralised Customer Contact Centre) and traditional methods (face-to-face spoken services, printed publications, correspondence etc).

### **4.3 Enhancement of Services from various offices:**

#### **4.3.1 All Offices**

A draft consultative document identifying staffing issues that need to be addressed has been prepared, and is currently being considered by the HR Department. It is our objective that this will inform the preparation of draft policies for consultation with staff and representative organisations towards furthering the aims set out throughout this Scheme. These policies will include initiatives in the areas of:

#### Recruitment and Placement

The Council, in co-operation, where appropriate, with the Public Appointments Service, and through a consultative process with staff and their representative bodies, will review recruitment policy and staff mobility policies, with the objective of recruiting an adequate number of staff proficient to provide services in the Irish language, and in that regard;

- Donegal County Council will continue to identify posts requiring competency in Irish (both written and oral) throughout the organisation, with particular emphasis on posts in council offices that serve/are located in Gaeltacht areas.
- Current arrangements will be reviewed with staff representative organisations with the objective of ensuring that staff assignment/deployment to services in offices that serve Gaeltacht areas will have regard to competency in Irish.
- The Council will continue to work with, and seek agreement with staff competent in the Irish language to provide services in the Irish language across a range of services where a demand for services through Irish may arise. With their consent, such staff will be identified for our customers on our website, telephone directory etc.

### Training and Development

The Council will continue its ongoing commitment to provide appropriate training and development for all staff, in both official languages, to meet the evolving needs of our customers and to develop the full potential of staff during their careers.

The Council will:-

- Continue to support the provision of a range of high-quality Irish language training courses to staff, both during and after normal working hours, through its Staff Education Scheme, as an integral part of the Council's overall training plan.
- Provide further courses through the medium of Irish for members of staff who are currently fluent in the language (e.g. simultaneous translation, media skills, use of Irish on computers, grammar and letter writing skills etc).
- Irish language materials and resources (dictionaries, computer software, publications etc) will continue to be made available to staff to facilitate the development and delivery of services through Irish.

- Continue to assess all courses, including Irish language courses and courses delivered through Irish, on a regular basis to ascertain how effectively they meet the Council's goals.
- Include language awareness as part of both Induction and Customer Service training courses so as to ensure that staff:
  - understand why the Council implements a bilingual policy;
  - understand the context and background to the policy;
  - are fully informed about how the policy will affect their work, and
  - gain an empathetic understanding of the needs and concerns of Irish-speaking customers
- The Council will also examine other mechanisms (e.g. award schemes) to encourage and promote the development of services through Irish by staff, and to recognise the endeavours of staff.
- Training opportunities will also be provided for elected members who wish to learn and use Irish.

#### 4.3.2 Dungloe Public Services Centre

Given the statutory obligations, and Donegal County Council's own stated commitment, in its First and Second Language schemes, to have Irish as the working language of the Dungloe Public Services Centre by 2020, Donegal County Council, in consultation with staff and staff representative organisations, will continue to develop policies and strategies (see Section 4.3.1 above), to further the achievement of that commitment during the lifetime of this scheme.

#### 4.3.3 Other Offices and Services located in the Gaeltacht

Donegal County Council currently has a number of other services in the Gaeltacht, including library services and fire services. Irish is currently the principal language of the community libraries in Gaoth Dobhair and An Clochán Liath, and of the fire station in

Gaoth Dobhair. This position will continue to be supported and maintained during the lifetime of the current scheme.

The Council, in consultation with staff and staff representative organisations, will continue to develop policies and strategies (see Section 4.3.1 above) to ensure that, in accordance with the commitment contained in the first scheme, Irish will become the working language of other service points within the Gaeltacht by 2020, including the Fire Stations in An Clochán Liath, Gleann Cholm Cille and An Fál Carrach.

#### 4.3.4 All Other Offices and Services outside the Gaeltacht.

Within the lifetime of this scheme, either through recruitment, upskilling or deployment, and in consultation with staff and their representative organisations, Donegal County Council will continue to ensure that:

- There shall be at least two members of staff who will be competent in delivering local authority services through Irish to the public from each Public Services Centre located outside the Gaeltacht but which provides a service to Gaeltacht areas; namely Donegal Public Service Centre, Letterkenny Public Service Centre, and the new Customer Contact Centre in Milford.
- At least one member of staff shall be able to provide local authority services in Irish from each of our Public Service Centres not serving a Gaeltacht area; namely, Carndonagh Public Service Centre. At least one member of staff shall be able to provide local authority services in Irish from the main office serving the Stranorlar electoral area, currently Lifford headquarters.
- Donegal County Council will continue to work in partnership with Town Councils, through the proposed amalgamation process, and ensure that those services currently provided by the Town Councils which will continue under the County Council will be fully subject to the commitments in this scheme, including staff training, publications, events etc. Services which are

are likely to be discontinued (eg Town Council Websites) will not be developed under this scheme.

#### **4.4 Information Systems**

The Council shall:

- Continue to maintain and develop Donegal County Council website as a fully bilingual website, both in terms of navigation and content.
- The static content on any new websites developed by Donegal County Council, or on its behalf and which are under the direct control of the Council, will be available bilingually.
- Place a minimum of 5 messages per week in Irish (average of 1 per day) on Social Media Networks, prioritising those notices and services of greatest interest to the public. (From start of scheme).
- Continue to promote the availability of the Irish language service in its various sections by listing contact details on the website for customers. As new services become available it is proposed to update this list on an ongoing basis. This will have the additional effect of promoting public confidence in the availability of a quality customer service in Irish and unlocking latent demand for services in Irish.
- The Council's web page dealing with Irish Language Development shall be maintained and further developed as an Irish language resource for the public.
- The Council's intranet system will continue to be developed as a staff resource for the promotion of bilingualism: proper spelling of placenames, help on writing letters, phrases for receptionists, names of posts and services within Council, formal speeches etc.
- The potential for expanding the use of translation software within the organisation will be examined.
- Any new computer systems being installed will be fully capable of handling the Irish language, subject to availability.

- All existing computer systems will, where necessary, be made compatible with the Irish language in conjunction with the next suitable planned maintenance or upgrade work.
- Any new interactive services which allow the general public to make applications or receive benefits on line will be introduced simultaneously in both languages, subject to availability.
- The Council will ensure that all existing on-line interactive services will be made bilingual in conjunction with the next suitable planned maintenance or upgrade work.
- The Council will ensure that the ability of all above-mentioned computer packages to handle the Irish language will be raised in all initial contacts and subsequent dealings with consultants, companies etc.
- Donegal County Council has developed a members' extranet service. The Council will explore the potential of this service for furthering use of Irish among Councillors in various ways, e.g. Irish language phrases, information on Irish services and events.

## **4.5 Application Forms**

County Donegal Local Authorities will continue its policy to always offer each customer the choice to receive application forms and associated documentation in the official language of their choice. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Local Authorities to ensure that all application forms and associated documentation are and will continue to be made available simultaneously in both official languages on our website.

The Council will continue to identify certain application forms and associated documentation which can be made available under one cover. The Council will ensure that such forms and associated documentation as identified are provided in both official languages under the one cover.

Where application forms and associated documentation are provided as separate Irish and English language versions, the Council will ensure that equal prominence is given to both versions at all public locations and that the Irish language version will be as readily accessible as the English language version. Customers will proactively be made aware of the availability of a separate Irish version by way of a suitable statement on the English version of the document and by any other means that the Council deems appropriate.

#### **4.6 Public Meetings Policy**

The Council conducts the majority of its public meetings in the English language.

Currently, meetings of Coiste na Gaeilge are conducted predominantly in the Irish language. There is occasional use of simultaneous translation at Coiste na Gaeilge meetings.

Simultaneous translation facilities are available at all Coiste na nOileán meetings in Dungloe Public Service Centre, and minutes are provided bilingually. This will continue during the lifetime of this scheme.

During the lifetime of the first scheme, the translation equipment was used at a number of public meetings, on a trial basis. It is intended to continue to expand the use of simultaneous translation to public meetings which are held in the Gaeltacht.

The use of simultaneous translation equipment at internal Council staff meetings will be considered to allow Irish-speaking staff the opportunity to develop skills in simultaneous translation in a safe trial-friendly environment.

Donegal County Council's simultaneous translation equipment will continue to be available, on request, to community-based organisations.

Donegal County Council has purchased a new translation system, which is a wireless system. Throughout the course of this scheme, the Council will use this equipment, on at least three occasions, on a pilot trial basis, at meetings of the County Council. Depending

on the successful use of the system, and in consultation with elected members, this may be further developed.

#### **4.7 Telephone Services**

Donegal County Council has established a centralised Customer Contact Centre for the entire county of Donegal. All calls to Donegal County Council, from any location and any electoral area within the county or from outside the county, are now dealt with from the Customer Contact Centre. The Customer Contact Centre is now the first point of contact for the public. In accordance with the commitments contained in the first scheme, Donegal County Council will ensure from the beginning of the scheme that

- the Customer Contact Centre has, and will continue to have, a sufficient number of staff to deal with calls in the Irish language, promptly and efficiently.
- all staff responding to calls from the Customer Contact Centre will give an initial bilingual response to all calls (greeting and/or name of organisation), to indicate to the customer that both language options are available.
- the frontline staff in Dungloe Public Services Centre will continue to be fully competent in dealing with fluent Irish speakers through the Irish language
- all other frontline staff in all offices will give a bilingual response to all calls (greeting and/or name of organisation or section), to indicate to the customer that both language options are available.

#### **4.8 The Media / Press Releases**

Authoritative staff in each Service will be identified, where available, to carry out interviews with the Irish language media, particularly Ráidíó na Gaeltachta and TG4.

Donegal County Council will continue to issue all Press Releases in Irish only, or in Irish and English.

## **4.9 Brochures & Information Leaflets**

Donegal County Council will continue its policy to always offer each customer the choice to receive information leaflets and brochures in the official language of their choice. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Council to ensure that all information leaflets and brochures are and will continue to be made available simultaneously in both official languages in print form and/or on our website.

The Council will continue to identify certain information leaflets and brochures which can be made available under one cover. The Council will ensure that such leaflets and brochures as identified are provided in both official languages under the one cover.

Where information leaflets and brochures are provided as separate Irish and English language versions, the Council will ensure that equal prominence is given to both versions at all public locations and that the Irish language version will be as readily accessible as the English language version. Customers will proactively be made aware of the availability of a separate Irish version by way of a suitable statement on the English version of the document and by any other means that the Council deems appropriate.

Documents relating to Gaeltacht areas will be in Irish only, or bilingual.

Documents of a technical nature will continue to be published in English only, except where there is a wider interest to the public or local significance, in which case a bilingual version or a summary in the Irish language will be made available.

## **4.10 Placenames**

In addition to the statutory requirements of An tOrdú Logainmneacha (Ceantair Ghaeltachta) 2004, Donegal County Council will continue to promote the use of the Irish language versions of Gaeltacht placenames across areas of work and activities not specifically referred to in the Order (e.g. databases, mail etc).

Donegal Local Authorities will continue to encourage staff to make greater use of the Irish version of placenames outside the Gaeltacht.

Donegal County Council established a Placenames Committee in 2004. The Committee's terms of reference includes promoting the use of Irish language, heritage and culture in the selection of names for new housing developments, streets etc. This work will continue over the duration of this third scheme.

#### **4.11 Donegal County Development Plan**

Donegal County Council will continue to implement all the provisions relating to the Gaeltacht and the Irish Language contained within the Donegal County Development Plan 2012-2018.

#### **4.12 Other Promotional Measures**

The following are additional proposals which the Council shall continue to provide and/or seek to develop over the life of the plan:

- Continuation of Scholarship Scheme in conjunction with Gaeltacht Colleges
- Participation in Irish Language Week (e.g. events/exhibitions in library services)
- Ongoing support for, and participation in, Irish language events within County Donegal (e.g. Oireachtas, etc)
- Sponsorship of Glór na nGael Award for local community group which advances the use of our Irish language services among the public.
- Promotion of voluntary Fáinne Scheme among staff so that Irish-speaking staff are readily identifiable to the public and to each other.
- Organisation of Irish language social events for staff through social club, including Irish language coffee mornings and lunch breaks

- Inclusion of substantial Irish language material in any staff organ, either in print form or electronic form
- Where a service in Irish is available, greater efforts will be made to make it clear to visiting customers what service is available, where, and from whom.
- Where the Council organises, or participates in the organisation of festivals throughout the county (e.g. Féile an Earagail, Bluestacks Festival, Bealtaine, Weanfest etc), we will continue to encourage the use of the Irish language and Irish language events as part of these festivals.
- The local authorities will take the linguistic needs of our Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools into account in any events and competitions.
- Recognising the important work carried out by a number of national and local Irish language organisations, and other agencies involved in the promotion and preservation of the Irish language, Donegal County Council intends to engage in ongoing consultation with these agencies throughout the lifetime of this scheme, to explore any benefits that may result from further co-operation.

## **Section 5**

### **Implementation, Monitoring and Revision**

#### **5.1 Senior Management**

Once this scheme has been approved, overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Scheme lies with the Senior Management Team. Each Director will identify the key milestones against which progress will be benchmarked, by way of an annual progress report from each directorate to the County Manager. The Senior Management Team will keep the effective operation of the scheme under review, principally through the mechanisms outlined here.

#### **5.2 Public and Elected Members**

The elected members of Donegal County Council, and various Town Councils, will continue to play a key role in sustaining the approach outlined in this Scheme. The primary responsibility for this will lie with the relevant Strategic Policy Committee.

Progress on implementation of the Scheme will be reported to the public and elected members via the Annual Report.

#### **5.3 County Partnership Committee**

The County Partnership Committee will provide the mechanism through which staff and their representative organisations can participate fully in the further development of the Irish language within the organisation and in the range and quality of services to customers.

#### **5.4 Irish Language Development Officer**

The Irish Language Development Officer, as well as providing ongoing specialist support to line managers and staff, will regularly review and report on progress on the implementation of the commitments within the scheme to Senior Management.

The Council may initiate further development activities not covered in this scheme, including a number of proposals within the submissions received from the public.

## **Section 6**

### **Publicising of Agreed Scheme**

The contents of this scheme will be publicised to the general public by means of:-

- Press Release
- Official Launch of Scheme
- Circulation to appropriate agencies and public bodies
- Council Websites.

Wherever Donegal County Council has established the capacity to provide a service in the Irish language, we will promote the availability of the service through our website, signage, and information at Public Service Centres etc.

As well as the above, the Council will take every opportunity in its day-to-day interactions with customers to promote and publicise the services it provides through Irish, including by:

- directly informing customers on a pro-active basis of the option of dealing with the Council through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available and also by prominently listing these on Council websites;
- including footnotes on selected guidelines, leaflets, and application forms explaining that these documents are also available in Irish (in cases where bilingual printed material is not produced under a single cover); and
- including notes in publications and advertisements that the Council provide services through Irish and, accordingly, welcomes customers who wish to deal with it in Irish, according to the commitments in this Scheme.

A copy of this Scheme has been forwarded to An Coimisinéir Teanga's office.

The **English** language version is the original text of this scheme.