



## Irish Language Services Advisory Committee

### Minutes - Meeting 12 – 26 January 2024

**LOCATION:** Foras na Gaeilge, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1

**DATE:** Friday, 26 January 2024

**TIME:** 10:30 – 13:00

**PRESENT:**

Name	Organisation	Role	Means
Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Chairperson	On Site
Sinéad Coleman	Public Appointments Service	Member	Via Remote Connection
John Howlin	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform	Member	On Site
Superintendent Seán Glynn	An Garda Síochána	Member	Via Remote Connection
Mags Campbell	Department of Education	Member	Via Remote Connection
Eithne Fox	Health Service Executive	Member	On Site
John Prendergast	Gaeltacht Communities	Member	On Site
Mairéad Ní Ghabháin	Irish Speaking Communities Outside of the Gaeltacht	Member	On Site
Elaine Bird	Department of Social Protection	Member	On Site
Emily Maloney	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Secretary	On Site
Dr. Kerron Ó Luain	University of Galway	Research Fellow – Research Team	On Site
Colm Ó Cinnseala	University of Galway	Research Fellow – Research Team	On Site

**ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES:**

- Jim Molloy and Breandán Mac Craith, representatives of the Local Government Management Agency and Foras na Gaeilge respectively, were unable to attend the meeting. Sadhbh Ó Cinnseala, the relevant Principal Officer from the DTCAGSM, was also unable to attend.

**KEY DECISIONS MADE:**

- It was agreed that the members of the Committee would approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting by email within a week;
- It was agreed that the members of the Committee would approve the draft terms of reference for the technical working group to be established pursuant to Section 9A and Section 9B of the Act together with Interactive Services by email within two weeks;
- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 23 February 2024, in the Foras na Gaeilge building, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1;
- It was agreed that Conradh na Gaeilge would be invited to present its recommendations to the Advisory Committee at its next meeting on 23 February 2024.

### **FULL AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSED:**

#### **1. Welcome from the Chairperson:**

- The meeting began with an opening statement from the Chairperson of the Committee, Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic;
- He gave a particular welcome to Elaine Bird, the new representative of the Department of Social Protection on the Committee.

#### **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

- It was agreed that the members of the Committee would approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting held on Friday, 24 November 2023 by email within a week.

#### **3. Matters Arising:**

##### **3.1. Section 9A of the Amended Act - Terms of Reference for Technical Working Group:**

- The Committee reviewed the draft terms of reference for the technical working group to be established pursuant to Section 9A and Section 9B of the Act together with Interactive Services, and a general discussion was had on those;
- Regarding the bodies proposed for participation on the technical working group, it was recommended that an independent representative with language expertise be included on the working group. It was advised that either of the two independent representatives on the Advisory Committee could also participate if they so wished;
- It was agreed that the members of the Committee would approve those draft terms of reference by email within two weeks.

#### **4. Presentation - University of Galway Research Team:**

- The Chairperson welcomed the University of Galway research team who were in attendance to present the current status of the research to the Committee;

- Following the presentation, there was a questions and answers session which included:
  - the 20% recruitment target of the legislation and the inclusion of new recruits together with current public sector employees who achieve a role with Irish through promotion;
  - a general discussion on recruitment in the members' organisations;
  - a discussion on the surveys to be issued to public bodies in relation to the relevant items of the research, especially the marketing of those surveys to ensure adequate response rates.

## 5. Development of the National Plan:

- It was stated that the research contract was extended until 31 March 2024 to ensure continuity in the service for the statutory deadline.

## 6. Commentary Regarding the Committee in the Media:

- It was stated that there were various relevant articles in the media since the last meeting, as follows:
  - An article dated 29 November 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding funding for the Irish language in 2024 and the additional €500,000 received for the successful implementation of the language legislation.
  - An article dated 7 December 2024 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding the 'Aistritheoirí Óga' (Young Translators) competition for post-primary students and reference was made to the number of opportunities for those with a competence in the language increasing in Ireland as well due to the impact of the Act.
  - Various articles on the appointment of the new Language Commissioner and his views on the priorities ahead:
    - Dated 6 December 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie);
    - Dated 6 December 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie);
    - An interview dated 6 December 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie);
    - An article dated 13 December 2023 on [RTÉ](https://www.rte.ie); and
    - An article dated 14 December 2023 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie).
  - An article dated 16 December 2023 in the [Sun](https://www.sun.ie) regarding the number of Gardaí who have declared having competence in the language - more than one in ten according to the relevant Government Department.
  - An article dated 10 January 2024 on *Seachtain* of the Irish Independent regarding the approval of a grant to establish and develop an Irish language network for the public sector.
  - An article dated 24 January 2024 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding concerns expressed by the Foras na Gaeilge Board regarding the standard of Irish in advertisements by public bodies.
  - An article dated 25 January 2024 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding the use of the TEG system as part of Irish language learning at post-primary level.

- An article dated 26 January 2024 on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) regarding the provision of public services in Irish by the Health Service Executive;
  - It was clarified that although this article referred to a meeting between the Irish Nurses and Midwives Association and the Department of TCAGSM, that no such meeting had taken place and that the record had been corrected at the request of the Department.
- The article on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) of 24 January 2024 was discussed, especially in the context of the Seal of Accreditation for Translators and advertising and the importance of continuing with that certification.
- Another article on [Tuairisc.ie](https://www.tuairisc.ie) of 25 January 2024 was mentioned in regard to the restoration of the Gaeltacht allowance paid to workers in the public service and there was a general discussion on that.

**7. Date of Next Meeting:**

- It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday, 23 February 2024, in the Foras na Gaeilge building, 63-66 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.

**8. Any Other Business:**

- The meeting was informed that the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and the Public Appointments Service went before the Joint Committee on the Irish Language, Gaeltacht and the Irish-speaking Community on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 to discuss recruitment policy in relation to their respective roles in recruitment for the civil service.

*Emily Maloney.*

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**Secretary**

2 May 2024

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**Date of Approval**