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Section A – Immediate Priorities

1.1 Key Activities and Deliverables 2020

The following table sets out a summary of the areas for immediate action, key deliverables and work streams where a Ministerial decision may be required within the next three to six months. More detail on each of the items and actions is provided in the comprehensive Ministerial briefing document. Additionally, there may be some revision of this list in the coming weeks of the listed items and actions to ensure alignment with the new Programme for Government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaeltacht</th>
<th>Area for action/Ministerial Decision</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030** | Government approval and publication of the first annual report on the implementation of the 5-year Action Plan for the Irish Language, 2018 to 2022  
Reviews of Language Assistants Scheme and Well-being Scheme published  
Approval and implementation of language plans in all 26 Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas and the first 3 Irish Language Networks | 3 months   
3 months  
6 months |
| **Legislation**                                | Official Languages (Amendment) Bill 2019 enacted and associated Regulations to be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas.  
Publication of draft standards for public bodies | 6 months   
3 months |
| **Údarás na Gaeltachta**                       | Commence review of governance structure in line with Programme for Government commitment               | 3 months   |
| **Digital Plan for Irish**                    | Government approval and publication of the Digital Plan for the Irish Language                          | 6 months   |
| **Irish in the European Union**               | Deliver 2020 target on translation as part of the overall plan to end the derogation by 2022          | 6 months   |
| North-South Co-operation | Prepare Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster-Scots Board business plans for approval by North-South Ministerial Council  
Appoint new chairperson and board members to Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster-Scots Board  
Contribute to the delivery of Irish language commitments set out in *New Decade, New Approach* | 3 months  
6 months  
6 months |
### 1.2 Programme for Government Commitments

The Programme for Government (PfG) contains detailed commitments that fall within the remit of the Gaeltacht Division. This document sets out an overview of relevant commitments and statements from the PfG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Programme for Government - &quot;Our Shared Future&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaeltacht Division</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Údarás na Gaeltachta</strong></td>
<td>The PfG does not reference funding but sets out the following actions in relation to Údarás na Gaeltachta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Support the role played by Údarás na Gaeltachta in creating employment, administering the Language Planning Process, and carrying out the work of Local Enterprise Offices, the IDA and Enterprise Ireland in Gaeltacht areas by adequately resourcing the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Review the organisational and governance structures of Údarás na Gaeltachta, including the selection/election process to the Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Prioritise the work of Údarás na Gaeltachta in strengthening the identity and branding for our Gaeltacht areas under the ‘Gaeltacht na hÉireann’ brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foras na Gaeilge</strong></td>
<td>FF commits to increase Foras funding by €3m. This will be subject to approval of North-South Ministerial Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaeltacht Support Schemes</strong></td>
<td>Specifics on Gaeltacht Support Schemes not provided but the PfG does indicate a commitment to the protection and preservation of Gaeltacht areas, to ensure that they remain at the heart of a living language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official Languages Act</strong></td>
<td>The PfG sets out the intention to strengthen and enact the Official Languages Bill by the end of 2020 and include periodic reviews to monitor the overall objective of ensuring that 20% of new recruits to the public service are Irish speakers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 COVID 19 Response

Assessing the impacts

- Údarás na Gaeltachta plays a vital role in supporting economic activity and job creation in the Gaeltacht, and in administering grants. Údarás continues to assess the effects of Covid-19 on its client companies, including on working capital and their supply chains.
- On 20 April, The Department announced the cancellation of the Irish summer colleges, following consultation with the Departments of Education and Skills and of Health and Comhchoiste Náisiúnta na gColáistí Samhraidh (CONCOS - the representative body for the majority of the 50 Irish summer colleges).
- The Department financially contributes the costs of students staying with households (‘Na Mná Tí’) through Scéim na bhFoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge (c. €4.2m per annum).
- The cancellation of the Irish Summer Colleges will have a major impact on the Gaeltacht on both the colleges, Gaeltacht households and c. 27,000 students unable to attend.

Mitigating the impacts

- On 28 May, the Department approved a once-off emergency measure of €4.7 million to support the stabilisation of the Gaeltacht Irish summer college sector.
- Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to work closely with Enterprise Ireland to ensure that Údarás is able to access and provide the necessary schemes to assist Gaeltacht companies. On 22 June, the outgoing Minister of State announced that client companies of Údarás na Gaeltachta will be able to access the full range of supports under the Sustaining Enterprise Fund, with an initial amount of €5 million being made available. This is in addition to the Government announcement (8 June) of €600,000 in funding to Údarás na Gaeltachta to deliver the Trading Online Voucher Scheme in Gaeltacht areas.
- The Department is continuing to liaise with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to ensure that liquidity and other COVID-19 supports are available to Údarás client companies in line with State aid rules.
Section B – Strategic Context

2.1 Key Policy and Strategy Documents and Legislative Framework

The Oireachtas has conferred a number of functions, duties and powers on the Minister through legislation which are supported by a framework of policies, strategies, and action plans. This framework of legislation, policy and strategy directs and informs the work of the Division. A summary of the key legislation, policy and strategy documents for the Division is provided in the tables below:

**Cross- Government strategy – National Development Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation/Policy/Strategy</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage – 2018 to 2027 (Project Ireland 2040) | A ten-year plan setting out the Government’s commitment for capital investment of almost €1.2 billion in Ireland’s culture, language and heritage. The strategy prioritises capital spending across three themes - Culture, Heritage and Language and the Islands – and 12 programme areas:  
  - €725 million for cultural infrastructure and programmes, incorporating:  
    - €460 million for our National Cultural Institutions;  
    - €265 million for a cultural and creativity investment programme;  
  - €285 million for natural and built heritage; and,  
  - €151 million for the Gaeltacht and the Irish language  
A further investment strand for the islands (€27m) has transferred to the Department of Social Protection, Community, Rural Development and the Islands. |

**Gaeltacht**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation/Policy/Strategy</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official Languages Act 2003</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Act places obligations on public bodies as to the use of the Irish and English languages and provides for the function and role of An Coimisinéir Teanga. A Bill to amend and strengthen the Act was published in December 2019 and was at Second Stage prior to the dissolution of the 32nd Dáil.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Údarás na Gaeltachta Act 1979 (as amended)**                                               |
| Provides for the establishment, governance and functions of Údarás na Gaeltachta.             |

| **Gaeltacht Act 2012**                                                                        |
| In addition to prescribing a revised approach to the appointment of the board of Údarás na Gaeltachta, the Act sets out a language planning process by providing for the designation of Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas, Bailte Seirbhísí Gaeltachta/Gaeltacht Service Towns and Lionraí Gaeilge/Irish Language Networks in respect of which language plans are now being prepared and implemented. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy &amp; Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aims to increase on an incremental basis the use and knowledge of Irish as a community language and ensure as many citizens as possible are bilingual.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **An Integrated Strategy for the Gaeltacht and Irish-Medium Arts**                          |
| Under development.                                                                           |

<p>| <strong>Digital Plan for the Irish Language</strong>                                                      |
| Under development.                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British-Irish Agreement Act 1999</td>
<td>The Act gives effect to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement by establishing the relationship between the Minister, Waterways Ireland and An Foras Teanga. The policy framework for North-South bodies is determined by the North South Ministerial Council and the Ministers of sponsoring Departments, North and South. Waterways Ireland is sponsored by the Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure and An Foras Teanga is sponsored by the Northern Ireland Department for Communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 **Cross Government Policy and Activity**

The Department is engaged in and contributes to a number of whole-of-Government and inter-Departmental initiatives and policies.

**Brexit**

Since 2016, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has overseen the co-ordination of the whole-of-Government response to Brexit through the cross-Departmental coordination structures chaired by that Department. This included contingency planning for a no-deal or worst-case outcome, bringing together the detailed work being undertaken by individual Departments. This work has provided baseline scenarios for the impact of Brexit across all sectors, which is capable of being adapted as appropriate in light of developments in the EU-UK negotiations, which are now focused on the future relationship between the EU and UK.

The Withdrawal Agreement, signed in January 2020, provided for the orderly withdrawal of the UK from the EU on 31 January 2019. Key to this work is the Political Declaration agreed in 2019 between the EU and the UK, which provides the foundation for an ambitious and comprehensive future relationship.

This Division continues to participate in inter-Departmental preparations for Brexit and continues to monitor the future relationship discussions, assess the impact of potential outcomes on the Department’s sectors and, given the difficult negotiations, prepare for a hard Brexit scenario.

The primary focus of Brexit preparations in the Division is in the Gaeltacht policy area, given the role of Údarás na Gaeltachta as an enterprise development agency for Gaeltacht regions. In 2019, 60% (or €449million) of revenue in client companies of Údarás na Gaeltachta was generated by exports. Approximately 60% of raw materials used in Údarás client companies come from the UK and 28% of their exports go to the UK. This is high compared with the overall figures for the Irish economy (14% of exports to the UK), Údarás has been working with its client companies over the past 3 years to help them identify markets outside the UK, organising seminars to provide information on planning for Brexit and providing grants to support Brexit preparedness through the Bí Réidh scheme.

The Division will continue to assess the outcome of the future relationship discussions on its North-South body, An Foras Teanga.
Project Ireland 2040 - The National Planning Framework and National Development Plan

In February 2018, the Government finalised and approved Project Ireland 2040, composed of the National Planning Framework (NPF) - a spatial strategy intended to guide planning and development - and the National Development Plan, 2018-2027 (NDP) - , which set out a 10-year investment programme to underpin the development objectives of NPF. The NDP includes 10 strategic priorities to achieve the 10 national strategic outcomes (NSOs) identified by the NPF.

Table 2.1: NPF National Strategic Outcome and aligned NDP Strategic Investment Priority, 2018-2027

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>National Strategic Outcome (NSO)</th>
<th>Strategic Investment Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Compact Growth</td>
<td>Housing and Sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enhanced Regional Accessibility</td>
<td>National Road Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rural Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sustainable Mobility</td>
<td>Environmentally Sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills</td>
<td>Enterprise, Skills and Innovation Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>High-Quality International Connectivity</td>
<td>Airports and Ports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Enhanced Amenity and Heritage</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture, Heritage and Sport</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient</td>
<td>Climate Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sustainable Management of Water and other</td>
<td>Water Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health</td>
<td>Education, Health and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resources available under the NDP have been directed to projects which are aligned with these outcomes. The NDP outlined €116 billion in capital investment by the state between 2018-2027, composed of €25 billion in planned expenditure by state-owned enterprises and €91 billion in exchequer capital expenditure.
2.3 EU Engagement and Agenda

Engagement with the European Union takes place at Ministerial level through meetings of the relevant Council of the European Union configuration, at official level through attendance at Committees and Working Groups of the Council of the EU, and at a technical level through attendance at Expert Groups that inform and assist in later policy and legislative developments by the European Commission.

**Policy Engagement by Officials**

Officials from the Division attend the following Committees, Working Party and Groups:

**Gaeltacht:**
- EU Monitoring Group for the Ending of the Irish Language Derogation to set annual priorities and assess delivery in respect of recruitment to the institutions, capacity of external service providers, collaboration on language resources and issues relating to the availability of the *acquis*;
- LEX Terminology Project Management Group;
- Topic-specific expert meetings;
- Ongoing informal engagement with the EU institutions regarding implementation of the Action Plan for the Ending of the Irish Language Derogation;
- European language data sharing project meetings.

Further details on ending the derogation for the Irish language is presented in section C of this brief.
2.4 Project Ireland 2040 – Divisional Capital Investment Plan

Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018-2027 prioritises capital spending across three themes - Culture, Heritage, and Language:

- €725 million for cultural infrastructure and programmes, incorporating:
  - €460 million for our National Cultural Institutions;
  - €265 million for a cultural and creativity investment programme;
- €285 million for natural and built heritage; and,
- €151 million for the Gaeltacht and the Irish language.

A fourth investment strand for the islands (€27 million) has been transferred to the Department of Social Protection, Community, Rural Development and the Islands.

Project Ireland 2040 - Language Investment Programme
The €151m Language investment programme incorporates 3 investment programmes:

- a €105 million allocation to Údarás na Gaeltachta to support investment in economic development and infrastructure in the Gaeltacht (see section 3.14);
- a €33 million allocation to the Gaeltacht Language Planning Process to support and strengthen its use as the principal community language in the Gaeltacht and increase opportunities for its more widespread use outside traditional Gaeltacht areas (see section 3.15);
- a €13 million allocation towards supporting Irish Language Networks and Gaeltacht Service towns, including Irish Language and Cultural Centres in Gaeltacht Service Towns, and a €4m contribution, in partnership with other Departments and State agencies, to the creation of a Irish Language and Cultural Hub in Dublin City Centre (see section 3.11).

Indicative allocation to the Gaeltacht and Irish Language 2018-2027

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Údarás na Gaeltachta</td>
<td>€105m</td>
<td>€7.6m</td>
<td>€9.7m</td>
<td>€10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Language Networks/Dublin City Language and Cultural Hub</td>
<td>€13m</td>
<td>€0.03m</td>
<td>€0.1m</td>
<td>€0.63m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaeltacht Language Planning Process</td>
<td>€33m</td>
<td>€1.3m</td>
<td>€1m</td>
<td>€2.32m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>€151m</td>
<td>€10.1m</td>
<td>€10.8m</td>
<td>€12.9m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 Business Units and Responsibilities

The Gaeltacht Division comprises three units each led by an official at the Principal Officer grade:

- Gaeltacht agus Pleanáil Teanga
- Oileán, Foras Teanga agus Logainmneacha
- An Ghaeilge (taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht agus go hIdirnáisiúnta)
Gaeltacht agus Pleanáil Teanga

Principal Officer: Seán Mac Eoin
Staff: 18 Officials
Location: Na Forbacha, Contae na Gaillimhe
Contact: sean.maceoin@chg.gov.ie
(091) 503 705

Responsibilities:
- Corporate Governance of Údarás na Gaeltachta to ensure compliance with financial and governance requirements.
- The development and implementation of schemes, initiatives and measures which support the 20-Year Strategy, and are including the Community and Language Supports Programme, the Irish Summer Colleges Sector and the Language Planning process - as set out under Acht na Gaeltachta 2012.

An Ghaeilge (Taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht agus go hIdirnáisiúnta)

Principal Officer: Micheál Ó Conaire
Staff: 8 Officials
Location: Kildare St., Dublin 2
Contact: micheal.oconaire@chg.gov.ie
(01) 631 3914

Responsibilities:
- Supporting the work of An Coimisinéir Teanga.
- Managing the Department’s Irish Language Support Schemes outside of the Gaeltacht under the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language.
- Developing and implementing a digital strategy for the Irish language.
- Provision of Irish language training and accreditation for the Civil Service.
- Overseeing developments in regard to the Irish language in the EU and internationally.
## 3.2 Details of Gaeltacht Expenditure

The Gaeltacht Division is responsible for overseeing the 2020 REV allocation of €43.2m, €30.2m in gross current expenditure and €13m in gross capital expenditure. These figures exclude administration (pay and non-pay) which will be reviewed as part of the 2020 FREV arising from Departmental reconfigurations. The main expenditure areas for the programme are as follows:

- Funding for Údarás na Gaeltachta which accounts for 41% (€23.7m) of total direct programme allocation, including:
  - Grants for Projects and Capital Expenditure on Premises (€10m)
  - Current Programme Expenditure (€4.1m)
  - Administration (€9.6m)
- Community and Language Supports Programme which accounts for 16.7% (€9.7m) of total direct programme allocation;
- Irish Language Support Schemes which account for 9.1% (€5.3m) of total direct programme allocation; and,
- Supporting the implementation of the Language Planning process in support of the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language which accounts for 6.4% (€3.7m) of total direct programme allocation.

*Direct programme expenditure overseen by Gaeltacht Division, 2020*
3.3 Official Language (Amendment) Bill 2019

The review of the Official Languages Act was published in April 2014, and a stamped copy of the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill was received from the Office of the Attorney General on 10 December 2015. The objectives of the review, which was undertaken in accordance with a commitment in the Programme for Government 2011-2016, were to ensure that the Act was an effective mechanism to support the development of the Irish language in an efficient and cost-effective manner and that the obligations arising from the Act were appropriate to ensure the satisfactory provision of services in Irish by public bodies, in line with public demand.

In 2016 the Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs announced a review of the Bill and following a comprehensive review and consultation period with the key stakeholders, Heads of a revised Bill were submitted to Government on 29th May 2017 and published in June 2017. Government approval was received to proceed with the drafting of the Bill.

Officials from the Department subsequently appeared before the Joint Committee on the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Islands chaired by Ms Catherine Connolly T.D. on 7th November 2017 and on 17th April 2018. The Joint Committee published their report in May 2018.

An updated Bill was drafted in conjunction with the Attorney General’s Office based on feedback from various stakeholders, including the Joint Committee members, An Coimisinéir Teanga, Conradh na Gaeilge and Government Departments. The Bill was approved by Cabinet on 10th December 2019.

A central element of this Bill is the manner in which Irish language speakers are recruited to the public service. Another significant element of the Bill is the replacement of the existing language scheme regime by the introduction of language standards for each government sector, with higher standards to be achieved by sectors with greater interaction with the public.

Current status of draft Bill: Dáil Second Stage commenced on 18 December 2019

Immediate priorities for the coming months

- Progress Oireachtas consideration of the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill 2019.
3.4 Irish as a full official and working language of the EU

The EU has 24 official languages, of which three (English, French and German) are designated procedural languages of the European Commission. Irish was previously designated as a ‘treaty language’ which meant that only treaties had to be translated into Irish. Directives and Regulations did not have to be translated, although it was possible to correspond with EU institutions in Ireland.

In 2007, however, Irish was made the 21st official and working language of the EU by Regulation (EC) No 920/2005. This regulation means that all legislation adopted by both the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers must be translated into Irish and that interpretation from Irish is available at European Parliament plenary sessions and some Council meetings. The regulation was, however, introduced with a derogation that only European Parliament and Council Regulations had to be drafted in Irish. The derogation was originally adopted for 5 years, but following a review in 2010, was extended for a further 5 years to 2016.

On 3 December 2015, a new regulation passed by the Council has set a definitive schedule on the gradual reduction of the derogation of the Irish language (set out in the bullet points below). This was to allow time to build up sufficient Irish language capacity within the EU institutions.

- first increment (from 1 January 2017) – Directives of the EP and the Council;
- second increment (from 1 January 2018) – Decisions of the EP and the Council;
- third increment (from 1 January 2020) – Council Regulations and Directives, and Council Decisions which do not specify to whom they are addressed; and
- fourth increment (from 1 January 2021) – Commission Regulations and Directives, and Commission Decisions which do not specify to whom they are addressed.

The Regulation also requires the Commission to report twice to the Council on its implementation before the derogation ceases to apply, one in 2019 and one in 2021.
The first Report from the European Commission to the European Council on the Union institutions’ progress towards the implementation of the gradual reduction of the Irish language derogation was published in July 2019.

The report was adopted by the European Commission on the 4th July 2019 and was broadly positive, noting:

- The first two increments towards ending the derogation have been implemented in full;
- Significant progress has been made in all aspects of the action plan aimed at ending the derogation;
- While the rate of progress in terms of recruitment of permanent staff has been lower than expected, the institutions are committed to bringing the derogation to an end; and,
- Delivery to date has been greatly facilitated by Ireland’s commitment and cooperation.

The Department

The Department is working closely with the European Institutions to ensure the necessary Irish language capacity is in place for the end of the derogation and has put a strong emphasis on communication activities with a view to raising awareness in relation to Irish language posts in the EU institutions, both within the Irish language community in general and also the wider community. This includes the following actions taken by the Department to date:

- An Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative has been put in place to ensure the availability of qualified persons with Irish language skills to meet recruitment needs in Ireland and the EU. Under this scheme the Department provides funding for a range of specialised third level Irish language courses in areas such as translation, interpretation and law. In support of this work, the Department funds up to 12 Internships per annum in the European Institutions to provide graduates with an insight into the workings of the EU and opportunities to work through the medium of Irish. A fund of €200,000 has been set aside per annum for this scheme.
- A Steering Committee of the Centre for Excellence for EU Careers has been a key driver in the promotion of the opportunities for graduates within the EU. The Department works closely with our EU colleagues and an annual event is organised in the autumn with the European Commission to address matters of mutual concern. For example in 2019, a seminar was hosted at Oireachtas na Samhna to educate potential applicants in the complex recruitment process for EU positions.
- Close working are in place with EU counterparts to support them in the recruitment of suitably qualified candidates by promoting any forthcoming Irish language competitions through the Department’s various media platforms.
- The Department is part-funding the Seó Bóthair project (delivered by Conradh na Gaeilge) which visits Irish medium schools across the country to provide information about the Irish language. The project includes a piece on the career opportunities in the EU.
- The Department also supports the European Commission’s EU-wide annual translation competition for young people ‘Juventes Translatores’. This competition gives young
people a flavour of the work of a translator while still at school and hopes to inspire potential future translators to consider the career in the future.

The Department, in conjunction with the EU institutions, has been working to establish a network of Irish-speaking domain terminology experts in Ireland. This network will ensure that subject matter experts will be available to translators and terminologists to ensure that the lexicon of the Irish language is up to date. The Department is providing funding of €92,000 to DCU to commence a one-year pilot scheme to assist in the creation of a network, which commenced in July 2019.

**Staffing situation in the EU institutions Irish-language services on 31 December 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Current staffing/FTE</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>AST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSC LING GA Unit</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament, Dir. for Legislative Acts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council JL Service</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission, Legal service</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court of Justice</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court of Auditors</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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Immediate priorities for the coming months

- Continue to work closely with the EU Institutions, Irish education system and other stakeholders to ensure sufficient Irish language capacity to end the derogation by 2022.
3.5 Irish outside the Gaeltacht – Language Support Schemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Business Unit</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Ghaeilge</td>
<td>€4.7m current €632,000 capital (plus €435,000 carryover)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Officer</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micheál Ó Conaire</td>
<td><a href="mailto:micheal.oconaire@chg.gov.ie">micheal.oconaire@chg.gov.ie</a> (01) 631 3914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus of Scéimeanna Tacaíochta Gaeilge is to provide funding to a wide range of Irish language initiatives outside the Gaeltacht and abroad.

Funding continues to be provided to organisations such as An Taibhdhearc, Gaillimh le Gaeilge and Gnó Mhaigh Eo on an annual basis and for Irish language courses in third-level institutions in Ireland and overseas which promote the Irish language outside the Gaeltacht. These special initiatives include:

- The development by Fiontar agus Scoil na Gaeilge, Dublin City University, of a database of EU terminology in the Irish language.
- 3 Online Projects: - legal terminology (LEX), biographies (ainm.ie) and place names (logainm.ie).
- The development of an Irish language synthesiser project (Abair.ie) (e.g. which allows mobile phones etc to translate spoken Gaeilge to digital text).
- A joint project between UCD and DCU to digitise the National Folklore Collection. The Dúchas project is the result of a partnership, beginning in 2012, between the National Folklore Collection in UCD, UCD Digital Library and Fiontar & Scoil na Gaeilge, the Irish-medium teaching and research unit in DCU. The objective of the project is to digitise the National Folklore Collection (Dúchas.ie) and make it available to the public online.
- TEG Irish language competency testing system.
- Fáilte ar Líne, an Irish Language and Traditional Irish Culture developed by DCU (free online Irish classes via the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) format).
- GaelTech – a research and development language technology project for Irish, carried out in the ADAPT Centre, which is part of the School of Computing in DCU. The 4-year (2017/18 – 2020/21) project will contribute to enabling the Irish language to be more easily understood, processed and interpreted by computers. Automated processing of social media texts enables us to understand the evolution of the Irish language in the Digital Age and get a clearer picture of Irish as a living language. The Third Level Education Overseas scheme provides funding for the teaching of Irish in foreign universities. The objectives of the fund are to promote and foster goodwill for the Irish language outside Ireland and to provide a platform from which the Irish language can be accessed and showcased as an international language. The fund is open to
applications from third level institutions abroad wishing to provide Irish language courses as part of their academic programme. All applications for funding from 3rd level institutions located in the USA and Canada are channeled through the Fulbright Commission and the Ireland Canada University Foundation (ICUF) respectively. The Department currently funds a total of 44 universities abroad under this scheme – 15 in the USA, 8 in Canada and 21 across Europe.

- Clár TechSpace - TechSpace is a national network of digital media spaces in youth centres and schools. The TechSpace project is aimed at young people interested in developing their experience and skills in digital media and STEM. The network helps young people to create digital and technological material as they engage in activities such as digital film, web design, mobile app development and robotics, among others. Under the direction of trained instructors and mentors, young people can enhance their computer competency, while improving their self-confidence and social skills. The programme is being rolled out by TechSpace (Camara Ireland) and aims to change the lives of young people by becoming Ireland’s leading creative technology network for outcome focussed youth development through the medium of Irish. The Department also provided capital funding to this programme to support schools and youth organisations in purchasing Digital Media and STEM equipment to set up Clán TechSpace.

Under the capital element of the subhead, funding was provided to:

- Gaelsphobal Thamhlachta for the development of an Irish language and Cultural centre (café and patio) in Tallaght, Co. Dublin.
- Conradh na Gaeilge to appoint consultants to carry out a feasibility study to develop a major focal point for the Irish language community at 6 Sráid Fhearchair, Baile Átha Cliath 2.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Continue to provide funding to the services outlined above.
- Publish a digital plan for the Irish language
3.6  Project Ireland 2040 – Irish Language and Cultural Centres
Nationwide and Redevelopment of No. 6 Harcourt Street

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<tr>
<th>Responsible Business Unit</th>
<th>An Ghaeilge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principal Officer</td>
<td>Micheál Ó Conaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>€632,000 (plus €435,000 carryover) as per Language Support Schemes above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:micheal.oconaire@chg.gov.ie">micheal.oconaire@chg.gov.ie</a> (01) 631 3914</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The €13 million investment in this area under Project Ireland 2040 will facilitate the development of Irish Language and Cultural Centres in these towns and networks, thus complementing infrastructure already in place. The application process for the Irish Language centres has been finalised and application forms are available for download from the Department’s website. A number of projects/likely applications have already been notified to the Department.

In the region of €4m has been earmarked for the development of a landmark flagship Irish Language and Cultural Hub serving the growing community of Irish speakers in Dublin City and its environs for which a working group comprised of the Department, Dublin City Council, Fáilte Ireland, Conradh na Gaeilge and Foras Na Gaeilge has been formed to oversee the proposed redevelopment of No. 6 Harcourt Street, the Headquarters of Conradh na Gaeilge. A feasibility study has been completed. A planning application is currently being assessed by Dublin City Council.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- A grant of over €0.8m has been approved by the Department to build an Irish centre (Áras Mhic Amhlaigh) in Knocknacarra, Co. Galway. This will be a priority project in 2020 and 2021.
- Continue to engage with partners to progress the development of a flagship Irish Language and Cultural Hub in Dublin city.

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<tr>
<th>Responsible Business Unit</th>
<th>Gaeltacht</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principal Officer</td>
<td>Seán Mac Eoin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>€3.7m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sean.maceoin@chg.gov.ie">sean.maceoin@chg.gov.ie</a> (091) 503 705</td>
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The 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030, which represents the cornerstone of the Government’s policy on the Irish language, was published in December 2010, following cross-party support in the Houses of the Oireachtas. The Strategy contains a range of recommendations across nine areas:

- education
- the Gaeltacht
- family transmission of the language - early intervention
- administration, services and community
- media and technology
- dictionaries
- legislation and status
- economic life
- cross-cutting initiatives

The Strategy has cross-departmental ownership and, accordingly, responsibility for its implementation falls on a number of Government Departments, public bodies, Irish language and Gaeltacht organisations.

The Department has overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the Strategy.

On foot of a consultation process as to how best to accelerate implementation, the Department published a 5-Year Action Plan in June 2018 on behalf of the Government. The following are the main objectives of the Action Plan 2018-2022:

- Provide a more cohesive and coherent framework in support of the Strategy’s implementation which focuses on specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-specific actions to be implemented over the next five years to 2022.
- Further develop co-ownership, co-responsibility and accountability across Government and at agency and NGO-level around the Strategy and the actions set out in the Action Plan.
- Advance greater understanding and tie-in between relevant agencies’ and organisations’ work plans and the Plan and, by extension, the overarching 20-Year Strategy.
- Provide a more efficient, effective and accountable means of ensuring and monitoring progress.

The plan, which is cross-governmental contains circa 180 actions to be implemented under its 5-year life cycle by 60 stakeholders. Key stakeholders include the Department of Education and Skills; the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; the Department of Children and Youth Affairs; Foras na Gaeilge and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

The action plan also provides for a more efficient and effective way of reporting and monitoring progress. Key measures in this regard include:

- The establishment of an Oversight Group, under the chair of the Department, comprising representatives from Government Departments, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Foras na Gaeilge.
- The publication of an annual progress report following Government approval.

### Immediate priorities for the coming months

- Seek Government approval to publish the first progress report on the implementation of the Action Plan covering the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.
- Continue to monitor and progress implementation, under the stewardship of the Oversight and Advisory Groups respectively.
3.8 The Language Planning Process – Acht na Gaeltachta 2012

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<tr>
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The Gaeltacht Act 2012 gives statutory effect to the Language Planning process under which language plans are prepared at community level in areas which could be recognised under the Act as Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas, as Gaeltacht Service Towns or as Irish Language Networks. Under the process, communities are being given a period of time to prepare and implement language plans. In accordance with the Act, the Department is responsible for evaluating language plans prior to approval. The Department also has responsibility for periodically reviewing the implementation of the language plans.

The Language Planning process is a key element of the Government’s 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030. The first stage of the process, which began in 2014, involves the preparation of language plans - in accordance with the provisions of the Act, at community level across 26 Gaeltacht Language Planning Areas as well as up to 16 Gaeltacht Service Towns and 3 Irish Language Networks. Under the Department’s Project Ireland 2040 sectoral plan, *Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage 2018-2027*, capital funding underpinning the implementation of the process is a priority.

To the end of 2019, the language planning process was underway in all 26 Language Planning Areas and 16 language plans had been approved in the following areas: Cois Fharraige; Gaoth Dobhair, Rann na Feirste, Anagaire, Loch an Íuir; Cloich Chionnaola, Gort an Choirce, An Fál Carrach & Machaire Rabhartaigh; Na Déise; Múscraí; Ciarraí Theas; Dúiche Sheoigheach & Tuar Mhic Éadaigh; Ciarraí Thiar; Maigh Eo Thuaidh; Árainn Mhór; An Ceathrú Rua; Conamara Láir; Ráth Chairn & Baile Ghib; Dún na nGall Theas; Tuaisceart Dhún na nGall; and Ceantar na nOileán. It is expected that the balance of plans will be approved by the end of 2020.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Agree 2020 work/finance plans in relation to the process with both Údarás na Gaeltachta and Foras na Gaeilge who are tasked under the Act with supporting the process.
- Continue to support the preparation, evaluation and implementation of plans - in line with the relevant actions contained in the Plean Gníomháiochta don Ghaeilge 2018-2022 (5 year Action Plan for the Irish Language)).
- Develop a clear policy (in consultation with Údarás na Gaeltachta and other
relevant stakeholders) in relation to the evaluation of requests for observations received from relevant Local Authorities (in line with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000) in relation to planning applications in Gaeltacht regions.

- Continue to monitor the implementation of agreed 3-year work plans with relevant organisations in Gaeltacht regions in support of early years; the family and the traditional arts.
3.9 Údarás na Gaeltachta

Údarás na Gaeltachta, which was established in 1980, is tasked with the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht.

**Governance**

The Gaeltacht Act 2012:

- Provided for a reduction in the size of the Údarás board from 20 members (including 17 elected members) to 12 members.
- Provides for 5 persons to be nominated by County Councils with Gaeltacht areas within their operational areas respectively,– 4 of which to be nominated on behalf of each of the larger Gaeltacht areas of Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Kerry for the full 5-year term of the board and 1 person to be nominated on a 2-year rotational basis by Cork, Waterford and Meath County Councils respectively.
- Provides for the remaining 7 members of the board, including the Chairperson, to be appointed by the Minister in accordance with Government guidelines in relation to state board appointments.
- Provides for all board members to possess competencies relevant to the functions of Údarás na Gaeltachta, as well as the capacity to discharge their functions in Irish.

In line with the provisions of the Act, the current board of Údarás na Gaeltachta was appointed in January 2018 for a 5-year period to January 2023.

**Strategic Plan**

Údarás na Gaeltachta’s Strategic Plan 2018-2020 represents the overarching strategic framework by which the organisation is discharging its functions in support of the continued development of vibrant, sustainable Gaeltacht communities.

Key objectives of the Údarás include:

- Approval of 1,500 new jobs over the lifetime of the strategy.
- Support 8,000 full-time jobs created and retained in client companies.
- To preserve and develop the enterprise base, by supporting new and established companies so that they may grow and strengthen their business.
– Support the preparation of and commence implementation of 29 Language Plans (26 Gaeltacht Language Planning Area Plans & 3 Gaeltacht Service Town Language Plans).
– Support 31 Gaeltacht community organisations through a continuous objective led funding programme.
– To develop skills and employability in the Gaeltacht by supporting training, education and modern apprenticeship programmes as well as fostering links with third level institutions.

**Strategic Projects**

In support of these objectives a number of strategic projects are being advanced by the organisation. These include:

– **Gteic – Gréasán Digiteach na Gaeltachta (Gaeltacht Digital Network)**

30 innovation & digital hubs with high-speed broadband connectivity are being developed throughout the Gaeltacht as well as on 6 Gaeltacht Islands. Eight hubs have been operating in Béal an Mhuirthead in Co. Mayo, Daingean Uí Chúis in Co. Kerry, Gaoth Dobhair in Co. Donegal and An Cheathrú Rua, Carna, An Spidéal and Na Forbacha in Co. Galway and in Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh in Co. Cork. These developments will give the Gaeltacht community an opportunity to return to or live in their home area by providing remote working opportunities at hot desks, co-working spaces or private offices at these hubs. This growing digital ecosystem will be an excellent opportunity for new technology companies to establish or locate themselves in the rural areas which encompass the Gaeltacht.

– **Páirc na Mara, Cill Ciaráin – Marine Innovation Park**

Páirc na Mara is being developed as a state of the art, low carbon marine innovation park, located on a greenfield site approximately 45 miles west of Galway City. In consultation with key strategic partners plans are being formulated on a collaborative basis that will enable Údarás na Gaeltachta to develop a modern marine innovation park to drive the growth of the sector and enable economic and employment growth in the area. It is envisaged that the development of Páirc na Mara will be an important enabler for the development of the marine industry as a whole, not only in the Connemara Láir area but on a regional and national level also.

– **Tourism Management Development Scheme**

The Tourism Management Development initiative is supporting a range of strategic tourism projects in the Gaeltacht to assist those projects to add to their management, marketing, development and administrative capabilities. It is important for the tourism industry in the Gaeltacht that language, culture and the landscape including the rich Gaeltacht heritage is displayed as a central aspect of the development of products,
services and the resources that are required to maximise the economic and employment benefit to the local communities.

An agreement has recently been reached between DCHG and DBEI under which client companies of Údarás na Gaeltachta will be able to access the full range of supports under the Sustaining Enterprise Fund, with an initial amount of €5m being made available. This is in addition to the recently announced extra funding of €0.6m secured for Údarás na Gaeltachta to administer the Trading Online Voucher Scheme in the Gaeltacht and is a result of the ongoing collaboration between the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Údarás na Gaeltachta and other departments and State agencies to provide practical supports to businesses impacted as result of Covid-19.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Complete *Focussed Policy Assessment of Capital Spending by Údarás na Gaeltachta* being carried out by the Department’s Evaluation Unit, and which will be reviewed by DPER.
- Progress the development – in partnership with Údarás na Gaeltachta of two Education and Youth Centres (Ionad Óideachais agus Óige) in Indreabhán and Gaoth Dobhair in addition to 5 identified cultural tourism projects in the Gaeltacht region of Connacht: Ceantar na nOileán and Ionad na nImirceach, Carna in the Connemara Gaeltacht, Áras Éanna on Inis Oírr and Ionad Oidhreachta, Oileán Arann and the development of Áras Scéalta an Atlantaigh Fhiáin in Eachléim, Co. Mayo.
- Commence review of organisational and governance structures of UnaG in line with the PfG commitment
3.10 Community and Language Supports Programme (An Clár Tacaíochtaí Pobail agus Teanga)

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>€9.9m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Contact                   | sean.maceoin@chg.gov.ie  
(091) 503 705 |

Funding from this programme provides both current and capital support to Gaeltacht projects and organisations, in line with the relevant measures contained in the Action Plan for the Irish Language 2018-2022 and in overall support of the 20-Year Strategy and the supporting Language Planning Process and the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 (Department of Education and Skills).

Current funding under the programme

Three specific schemes are funded under the programme, namely:

- Scéim na bhFoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge
- Scéim na gCúntóirí Teanga
- Scéim na gCampaí Samhraidh

An overview in relation to schemes is presented below:

- **Scéim na bhFoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge** - In support of the Irish summer colleges sector the Department provides annual funding of €4.4m which is payable to qualified Gaeltacht households who provide accommodation to students attending on of the 42 recognised colleges under the scheme. There are currently approx. 700 such households. Approx. 27,000 students, both second and third level, availed of the current subvention (€10 per day per student) in 2019.

- A number of further measures in support of creating language acquisition and enrichment opportunities were set in train in 2019:

  - DEIS Gaeltachta (by which scholarships are provided to enable 50 students who attend DEIS secondary schools to attend Irish summer colleges).

  - ERASMUS Gaeltachta (whereby subvention is provided to facilitate third level students attend qualifying courses for an entire semester in the Gaeltacht).
— **ÁRAINN Gaeltachta** (in train for a number of years whereby up to 30 post-primary students from the mainland are provided with indirect subvention towards accommodation costs while they attend one of the 3 post-primary schools on the Aran Islands for an entire school-year).

— **Scéim na gCúntóirí Teanga** — whereby language acquisition and enrichment opportunities are supported in Gaeltacht schools by the provision of language assistants. Additional funding of €3.6m in total for a three-year period was sanctioned under the scheme in 2019 which is benefiting Gaeltacht schools participating in the *Gaeltacht Policy on Education 2017-2022* (DES). There are currently 115 such assistants working in 135 Gaeltacht schools (both primary and post-primary). Additional funding has also been provided to extend the service for an extra 6 weeks during the school year. The Department has recently concluded a review on the scheme which it is hoped to publish as soon as possible (subject to approval).

— **Scéim na gCampáí Samhraidh**: €330,000 is being allocated currently to this scheme which supports learning and enrichment opportunities for young people from Gaeltacht areas. Approx. 6,500 children who attended 200 summer camps in 2019 benefited from the subvention provided.

Other current supports provided under the programme include:

— Supporting the provision of third-level courses through Irish which cater for c. 2,000 students in the three Gaeltacht- campuses of Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta (NUIG) in Gaoth Dobhair, Carna and An Cheathrú Rua, thus supporting employment for c. 60 staff.

— Supporting Gaeltacht-based organisations who provide a range of language-support measures aimed at youth, the family and Gaeltacht communities – including sport and fitness programmes through Irish, delivered in 46 Gaeltacht primary schools.

— **NASC Gaeltachta** – a new 2-year initiative approved in December 2019 whereby grant-aid will be provided towards the organisation of one-off events with the aim of further enhancing ties between different Gaeltacht areas.

**Capital Funding under the programme**

Funding is also provided for a wide range of capital projects throughout the Gaeltacht to assist with the development and upgrading of eligible community and language facilities. In addition to providing capital funding under the programme for the development of a Community Centre at Carcair na Leacht on Inis Meáin, Oileán Árainn (as per Project Ireland 2040) it is intended, subject to approval, to fund 7 projects in partnership with Údarás na Gaeltachta over the forthcoming 2/3
years – namely 2 Education and Youth centres in Indreabhán, Co Galway and Gaoth Dobhair in Co Donegal in addition to 5 identified cultural tourism projects (see above section 3.14 - Údarás na Gaeltachta)

In further support of the Gaeltacht Irish language early-years sector the maximum capital grant ceiling has been increased from 80% to 95% with effect from June 2018.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Publish the Review on the Language Assistants Scheme
- Advance the aforementioned capital projects
- Complete a cost benefit analysis of TÚS MAITH – an initiative currently being implemented in Ciarraí Thiar and Theas whereby *inter alia*, home visits to participating families raising/wishing to raise their children are being provided
An independent assessment of the economic impact of arts activities in the Gaeltacht areas of Ireland, carried out by Indecon Consultants in 2009, showed that the Gaeltacht arts sector makes a very valuable contribution, not just within the Gaeltacht catchment area alone, but in the country as a whole and generates very valuable employment opportunities in a wide range of sectors, including literature, publishing, music, theatre, film, video and the visual arts.

In line with the relevant action contained in Plean Gníomhaíochta don Ghaeilge 2018-2022 (5 year Action Plan for the Irish Language), preparatory work is in train to develop a strategy setting out a clear vision for the language-based arts and containing specific actions in support of the traditional arts. The preparation of such a strategy also aligns with commitment set out in the Culture 2025 – Éire Ildánach, A Framework Policy to 2025, which specifically highlights the Irish language, Irish culture, the Gaeltacht and the Arts as a priority action area. It also fulfils the commitment contained in the overarching 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030. The Strategy is being drawn up by University of Limerick, with input from the Creative Ireland Programme and will be concluded in the coming months.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Finalise and approve the Strategy for the Traditional Arts and commence implementation of agreed actions
4.1 Bodies under the Aegis of the Division

The Division is responsible for three bodies under its aegis set out in the following table.

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<th>Division</th>
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<td>Rónán Ó Domhnaill</td>
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<td>Údarás na Gaeltachta</td>
<td>Gaeltacht</td>
<td>Anna Ní Ghallachair</td>
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<td>North/South Body</td>
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<tr>
<td>An Foras Teanga</td>
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<tr>
<td>inc. Foras na Gaeilge</td>
<td>Gaeltacht</td>
<td>Pól Ó Gallchóir</td>
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<tr>
<td>inc. Board o Ulstèr-scotch</td>
<td>Gaeltacht</td>
<td>Keith Gamble</td>
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All agencies are required to comply with the operation and governance arrangements set out for them in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. For the majority, with the exception of the North-South Bodies, the following governance typically arrangements apply:

- Designated liaison officer at PO level;
- Agreement of an oversight arrangement between the Department and the Board of the agency;
- Agreement of an annual performance delivery agreement (PDA) between the executive of the agency and Department including an annual budget and programme of work;
- Quarterly liaison meetings held to oversee delivery of the annual PDA, annual expenditure and preparation for the annual estimates process. It also typically sets out activity targets for the year, defines the outputs and outcome indicators against which performance will be measured as well as setting out the responsibilities of the Department, including the provision of grant funding and any conditions attaching to the funding provision;
- The liaison unit and Department’s HR unit provide sanction for filling posts.

The Department also supports the work of An Foras Teanga. An Foras Teanga operates under the policy direction of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and the Ministers of the Sponsor Department, and is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the
Oireachtas. An Foras Teanga is co-sponsored by the Northern Ireland Department for Communities (DfC) and its Minister, Carál Ní Chuilín, MLA.

Responsibility for fulfilling the Department’s role as co-sponsor of An Foras Teanga falls to Gaeltacht Division.

Additional details on the Údarás na Gaeltachta is provided in Section C – 3.14 of this brief.
4.2 Details of An Foras Teanga Expenditure

REV 2020 provided for the allocation of €13.4 million to support the work of An Foras Teanga in promoting the Irish language in every aspect of life throughout the island and in promoting a greater awareness and use of Ulans and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues.

These bodies also receive funding from the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

This funding makes an important contribution to maintaining the impetus around north-south cooperation established by the Good Friday Agreement and enhancing the administrative relationship between the two jurisdictions. Importantly, this funding programme protects key tourism and infrastructural resources of our waterways network as well as offering a means of raising awareness of and supports for minority languages on the island.
4.3 Restoration of Stormont

The recent restoration of devolved Government in Northern Ireland has brought a renewed focus on the position of both the Irish language and Ulster Scots within the communities. The January 2020 agreement (New Decade, New Approach) proposed by the Irish and UK Government and agreed by the political parties in Northern Ireland sets out a range of actions and initiatives to support and protect both languages and traditions as follows:

- The establishment of an Office of Identity and Cultural Expression to promote cultural pluralism and respect for diversity, build social cohesion and reconciliation and to celebrate and support all aspects of Northern Ireland’s rich cultural and linguistic heritage. This Office will provide funding streams and schemes, including publishing and broadcasting, small grants, events and tourism, exhibition and museum curation, built heritage, cultural education and tourism projects.

- The introduction of legislation (as part of the Northern Ireland Act 1998) to create a Commissioner to recognise, support, protect and enhance the development of the Irish language in Northern Ireland and to provide official recognition of the status of the Irish Language in Northern Ireland. The main function of the Irish Language Commissioner will be to protect and enhance the development of the use of the Irish language by public authorities including by providing advice and guidance, and introducing, supporting and monitoring the use of best practice language standards.

- The introduction of legislation to create a second Commissioner (as part of the Northern Ireland Act 1998) to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots / Ulster British tradition and to provide official recognition of the status of the Ulster Scots language in Northern Ireland. The legislation will also place a legal duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the use of Ulster Scots in the education system. The main function of this Commissioner will be to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots/ Ulster British tradition in Northern Ireland.

- A commitment to establish a central Translation Hub in the Department of Finance (within three months of an agreement), in order to provide language translation services for the 9 Executive Departments, Arm’s Length Bodies, Local Government and Public Bodies.

- The amendment of the Assembly’s Standing Orders to allow any person to conduct their business before the Assembly or an Assembly Committee through Irish or Ulster Scots. A simultaneous translation system will also be made available in the Assembly to facilitate this change.

The agreement also provides that both Commissioners should undertake their work in close cooperation with An Foras Teanga (Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster Scots Agency). Waterways Ireland (WI) was set up on 2 December 1999, being the largest of 6 North South Implementation Bodies established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999.
4.4 An Foras Teanga – Oversight and Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Business Unit</th>
<th>Oileáin, Foras Teanga agus Logainmneacha</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>€13.4m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Officer</td>
<td>Sorcha de Brúch</td>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sorcha.debruch@chg.gov.ie">sorcha.debruch@chg.gov.ie</a> (091) 503 737</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background**

An Foras Teanga, the North South Language Body, was set up on 2 December 1999, being 1 of 6 North South Implementation Bodies established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999. An Foras Teanga comprises two separate agencies, i.e.

- **Foras na Gaeilge**, successor to Bord na Gaeilge, with the responsibility of promoting the Irish language in every aspect of everyday life throughout the Island of Ireland, and
- **Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch** (the Ulster-Scots Agency), with the responsibility of promoting the awareness and use of Ullans, and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the Island of Ireland.

Co-funding is provided from the Department and the Department for Communities (DfC) for Northern Ireland to Agencies in accordance with budgets approved by the North South Ministerial Council on the following basis:

- Foras na Gaeilge: 75% from D/CHG and 25% from DfC
- The Ulster-Scots Agency: 25% from D/CHG and 75% from DfC.

**Foras na Gaeilge**

The functions of Foras na Gaeilge are:

- The promotion of the Irish language;
- facilitating and encouraging its use in speech and writing in public and private life in the South and, in the context of Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in Northern Ireland where there is appropriate demand;
- advising both administrations, public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors;
- undertaking supportive projects, grant-aiding bodies and groups as considered necessary;
- undertaking research, promotional campaigns, public and media relations;
- developing terminology and dictionaries;
supporting Irish-medium education and the teaching of Irish.

In terms of its recent lexicography work, Foras saw significant increases in traffic to its dictionary sites with more than 3.9 million users in 2019. This represents an increase of 12% for focloir.ie and 29% for teanglann.ie. Foras intends to build on this work in 2020 with the development of a book form Irish language dictionary.

Foras also provides a wide range of grants to community and youth education organisations, as well as for publishing activities. In 2019, it provided €4.6 million to the six language lead organisations to supporting a range of community level schemes including Gaelbhratach, the Seosamh Ma Donncha Trust as well as a wide range of activities for young people. Already for 2020, Foras has committed to providing funding to Oireachtas na Gaeilge which was due to be held in Galway as part of Galway 2020, but is now to be delivered online.

**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- Backlog of documents for approval by NSMC - No meetings of the NSMC have been held in recent years; budgets and business plans for these years will require clearance by the NSMC once it resumes.
4.5 Foras na Gaeilge – Board Appointments

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Business Unit</th>
<th>Oileáin, Foras Teanga agus Logainmneacha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Officer</td>
<td>Sorcha de Brúch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sorcha.debruch@chg.gov.ie">sorcha.debruch@chg.gov.ie</a> (091) 503 737</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**Background**

As a result of appointments at NSMC Plenary on 11/12/15, a significant number of board vacancies arose for North/South Implementation Bodies in December 2019, including 9 vacancies for An Foras Teanga (comprising a combination of the boards of Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster Scots Agency).

As of 12 December 2019, 5 terms of appointment, which fall for ministerial nomination from the southern jurisdiction, expired. A further 3 board vacancies on the Foras na Gaeilge board fall for ministerial nomination from the northern jurisdiction.

The board is running at 50% capacity. While the Department is informed that, in the short term, this is not causing any difficulties in ensuring a quorum at board meetings and in regard to servicing sub-committees, addressing these vacancies is a priority.

All appointments to the Board of Foras na Gaeilge are subject to subsequent NSMC approval.

*Table 6.2: Overview of Board of Foras na Gaeilge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORAS NA GAEILGE</th>
<th>Term of Appointment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>From</strong></td>
<td><strong>To</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Pól Ó Gallchóir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chairperson</td>
<td>Barra Ó Múirí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Immediate priorities for the coming months**

- List of suitably qualified nominees to be presented to the NSMC for approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Appointment Date</th>
<th>Expiry Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Máire Ní Neachtain</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>13/12/2016</td>
<td>12/12/2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Sorcha Ní Chéidigh</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>13/12/2016</td>
<td>12/12/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Conor McGuinness</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>24/06/2016</td>
<td>23/06/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Niall Ó Gallochobhair</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>13/12/2016</td>
<td>12/12/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mairéad Farrell</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>13/12/2016</td>
<td>12/12/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mairéad Connolly</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>13/12/2016</td>
<td>12/12/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>North</td>
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</table>
### 4.6 Ulster-Scots Agency – Board Appointments

**Table 6.3: Overview of the Board of the Ulster-Scots Agency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ulster-Scots Agency</th>
<th>Term of Appointment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Gamble</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>South</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Andrews</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David McNarry</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iain Carlisle</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background**

As a result of appointments at NSMC Plenary on 11/12/15, a significant number of board vacancies arose for North/South Implementation Bodies in December 2019, including 9 vacancies for An Foras Teanga (comprising a combination of the boards of Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster Scots Agency).

As of 12 December 2019, 4 terms of appointment, which fall for ministerial nomination from the southern jurisdiction, expired.

In the short term, these vacancies are not causing any difficulties in ensuring a quorum at board meetings and in regard to servicing sub-committees. However the Department is of a view that addressing these vacancies is a priority.

All appointments to the Board of the Ulster-Scots Agency are subject to subsequent NSMC approval.
Immediate priorities for the coming months

List of suitably qualified nominees to be presented to the NSMC for approval.