

Irish Language Policy

2 Year Implementation Plan – November 2025 to November 2027¹

Phase 1: Planning & Scoping (Months 1–3) (Nov – Jan 2026)

- Develop programme governance model for delivery
- Develop detailed programme plan
- Finalise design of new corporate logo and associated materials including brand guidelines and assets in a variety of formats.
- Audit current use of logo across Council estate
- Prioritisation for City Hall and the following category 1A assets: Waterfront Hall, Ulster Hall, 2 Royal Avenue, Falls Park and Willowbank Park. Consideration to be given to including St Georges Market as part of the initial 2-year implementation plan.
- Continue to engage with stakeholders to provide updates on progress
- Develop a communications strategy and action plan, linked to the programme plan
- Develop a clear protocol for identifying, translating and delivering bilingual content for the council's communications channels, including its social media platforms.
- Develop a protocol governing the use of bilingual branding and content in Council's programme of marketing campaigns.

Phase 2: Design & Procurement (Months 4–6) (Feb – Apr 2026)

- Design bilingual signage for City Hall and above category 1A assets.
- Procure signage contracts
- Gather new website requirements (needs assessment, customer research, user experience, functional requirements, content strategy, legislative accessibility requirements, security, etc.)
- Explore the market regarding website provision, research available solutions and suppliers including options for providing bilingual capability and new technologies.
- Consider options for interim Irish language visibility and service delivery on the Council website pending procurement of new website.
- Begin delivery of a clear calendar of bilingual content for council social media channels
- Update social media customer engagement process to facilitate the processing of requests or feedback received in Irish, in line with wider council processes adopted
- Continue to deliver information about key council initiatives and services to Irish language media outlets, where appropriate

¹ To be delivered in tandem to commitments already agreed in the Language Strategy Action Plan such as developing Irish language versions of most used forms, codes of courtesy for staff, training opportunities etc.

- Internal comms and awareness raising among staff on communications strategy and protocol for producing bilingual content (focusing on timescales, roles and responsibilities, and translation processes)
- Launch wider internal comms campaign to build awareness
- Begin public-facing promotion

Phase 3: Build & Development (Months 7–12) (May – Oct 2026)

- Begin installation of signage at City Hall
- Begin roll out of signage Category 1A assets identified above
- Start procurement process for new website, including pre-market engagement, tender process.
- Appoint research supplier to continue to gather customer feedback to determine the requirements (Includes workshops with identified personas; City Matters survey, public survey).

Phase 4: (Year 2, Months 13–18) (Nov – Apr 2027)

- Complete City Hall signage rollout
- Continue roll out of signage at other Category 1A assets identified above.
- Go to market for website developers (design and build); UX (user experience) experts and accessibility partner

Phase 5: Review and Evaluation (Months 19–24) (May – Oct 2027)

- Review impact and feedback from signage
- Develop an updated draft implementation for broader rollout including identifying additional category 1A assets.
- Committee Approval for Implementation Plan for next 3 years (2028 – 2031)
- Appointment of website suppliers (design and build; UX and accessibility)

Strategic Oversight – to sit alongside Implementation Plan

Monitoring Guidance from the Irish Language Commissioner

- Staying informed on official guidance and policy updates
- Ensuring compliance with evolving statutory requirements
- Integrating Commissioner feedback into planning and implementation
- Reporting alignment status to Committee and CMT

Assess Budget / Rate Setting Implications

- Track actual vs projected costs across signage, website, branding, and translation
- Align spending with the Council's rate-setting process and financial planning cycles

- Identify cost-saving opportunities through lifecycle alignment and phased rollouts
- Prepare financial impact reports for Committee and CMT review
- Recruitment of comms staff to support with implementation of actions (subject to approval of growth proposals as part of the rate setting process)

Monitor Technological Developments for language provision

- Stay informed on emerging AI tools for content generation, translation, and accessibility
- Evaluate opportunities to enhance bilingual services using automation and smart interfaces
- Engage with peer councils and technical partners to share best practices and pilot innovations

Customer usage and feedback

- Monitor customer comments and feedback in relation to bilingual content on council communication channels to further improve service and/or adapt as needed
- Monitor data and usage of bilingual content to further inform annual targets or areas for future expansion