



Subject:	Seachtain na Gaeilge / Irish-Language Festival
Date:	14th December 2019
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Lorraine Dennis, Equality & Diversity Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report or summary of main issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make Members aware of the events planned as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish-language Festival.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve plans for an event to launch Seachtain na Gaeilge in Belfast and any associated expenditure.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Seachtain na Gaeilge is the yearly Irish-language festival held all over Ireland between the 1 st and 17 th of March. Events include concerts, book launches, public discussions etc.

	Seachtain na Gaeilge is co-ordinated by Conradh na Gaeilge, the advocacy group for the Irish language.
3.2	Conradh na Gaeilge has contacted the Council and made a number of requests to demonstrate support of Seachtain na Gaeilge 2019, these are outlined below with recommendations on an appropriate response.
3.3	(i) Request for a specific fund to be made available to local groups to promote the event - as the 2018/2019 funding rounds are now closed it is unlikely we can meet this request within the current financial year. The Language Strategy will consider all future options and financial implications. We would recommend that the commitment to the event should be demonstrated through working in partnership with Conradh na Gaeilge to host a launch event in City Hall. The 2019 launch would provide an opportunity to show case the work done on through the Language Strategy and highlight the Council's commitment to the Irish language and languages in general. It is also planned to hold a good relations event as part of the two week festival.
3.4	(ii) Request to encourage engagement with Irish language groups: this is a key aim of the Irish Language Officer and will be ongoing as implementation of the Language Strategy is rolled out. Consultation with Irish speakers in the period leading up to the launch of the Language Strategy showed a strong desire for more events linked to the Irish language to be held at council venues. Inviting local Irish students and groups would help strengthen relationships with the Irish-language community in the city considerably.
3.5	(iii) Request to distribute the bi-lingual booklet about Seachtain na Gaeilge to all elected Members: the booklet can be circulated by email to all elected Members.
3.6	<u>Financial Implications</u> The cost of the launch event in City Hall and the good relations event will be covered within existing budgets.
3.7	<u>Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications</u> The promotion of Irish is within the aims of the Language Strategy 2018-2023 and its associated actions plans. A screening was undertaken for the year one action plan and a further screening on the year two action plan is underway.

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Letter from Conradh na Gaelige