

## **Ulster-Scots Policy**

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### **Language Profile of the Derry City & Strabane Council Area**

The Derry City and Strabane District Council area is home to a diverse range of languages including English – the majority language; Irish and Ulster-Scots – our regional minority indigenous languages; minority ethnic languages such as Polish and Mandarin, and British and Irish sign languages.

### **Demographics**

In the Derry City and Strabane District Council area 13.92% (19,704) of the population has knowledge of Irish and 5.13% (7,266) of the population has knowledge of Ulster-Scots.

Research carried out in 2018 into the most widely spoken minority ethnic languages in schools identified the following languages in the top 5: Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Romanian and Malayalam (one of 22 languages spoken in India).

Both British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) were embraced within the Good Friday Agreement and both were recognised as languages in their own right in 2004. BSL is used by 3,500 members of the deaf population of Northern Ireland while approximately 1,500 use ISL but there is a language specific to Northern Ireland known as Northern Ireland Sign Language (NISL) which combines ISL syntax (structure) with the BSL lexicon (vocabulary).

### **Ulster-Scots Policy**

This policy sets out Council's commitments to facilitate and encourage the use and promotion of Ulster-Scots in public life. This policy builds on Council's commitments to celebrate linguistic diversity and to deliver equality of opportunity for all who avail of Council services. It also sets out Derry City and Strabane District Council's legislative obligations along with details of procedures to be implemented.

The objectives of the policy are:

- To encourage the use of Ulster-Scots in public life;
- To incorporate Ulster-Scots into the corporate identity;
- To accept and reply to written correspondence in Ulster-Scots;
- To produce information in Ulster-Scots upon request;
- To support the promotion of Ulster-Scots heritage and culture;
- To enhance the visibility of Ulster-Scots;
- To facilitate the Ulster-Scots community to access grant aid opportunities.

**What the policy means in practical terms?**

- **We respect the right of members of the public and employees to speak Ulster-Scots within the workplace and to use their names and addresses in Ulster-Scots;**
- **We incorporate Ulster-Scots into our brand and logo;**
- **We accept correspondence in Ulster-Scots and will do our best to reply in Ulster-Scots;**
- **We provide training for all staff, especially frontline staff, so that everyone understands the policy and deals with all customers in a way that respects their language needs and cultural sensitivities;**
- **We accept requests from members of the public for information to be translated into Ulster-Scots;**
- **We make sure that information produced in Ulster-Scots is done so to the same quality and presentational standard as the English;**
- **We give consideration to the use of Ulster-Scots at festivals, events, formal occasions and public meetings;**
- **We provide Ulster-Scots versions of street and road names where community consensus exists;**
- **We include Ulster-Scots on Council signage and are currently working to find out how best to incorporate language into our branding and signage going forward;**
- **We encourage applications to our Grant Aid schemes for Ulster-Scots initiatives and run a range of our own projects and partnership initiatives to support the promotion and development of the Ulster-Scots in the area.**