

Major New Irish Language Forum Established in County Clare

Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir to Promote Use of Irish language in all Aspects of Clare Life

Date Issued: 12th December 2006

County Clare, Ireland, Tuesday 12th December 2006 –

Clare County Council, joined by a number of other leading agencies and community organisations, has established a comprehensive new Irish language forum. Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir will examine ways of achieving a strategic, integrated approach to the promotion of the Irish language in all sectors of society in the County.

The Forum's membership includes Clare County Council, the Gaelic Athletic Association, An Clár as Gaeilge, Health Service Executive, Chambers of Commerce throughout the County, Conradh Na Gaeilge, Clare Vocational Educational Committee, Coiste Ghlór na nGael, Inis, Clare Community Forum, Clare Tourist Council, Coiste Logainmneacha an Chláir and Glór Irish Music Centre. The group will also benefit from the participation of Féile Scoil Drámaíocht and Féile na Hinse.

“In order to effectively promote the use of the Irish language in Clare, groups and individuals who are in the public eye need to take on a proactive position towards the our native language”, stated Tomás Mac Conmara, who was elected as the first Cathaoirleach of Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir at their recent inaugural meeting. He continued

“The Irish language is relevant to all of Irish society, which is why a multi-sectoral approach like this is required. The establishment of Fóram Gaeilge will co-ordinate the efforts of individual groups in the County and will help inform official Irish language policies of the local authority as well as initiating Irish language projects throughout the county ”.

Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir's first objective will be to make recommendations to the Community and Cultural Development Policy SPC (Strategic Policy Committee) of Clare County Council. It is hoped that these recommendations will contribute to the implementation of the 2003 Irish Language Act and the full implementation Irish Language Action Plan by 2008. In the long term, the Forum aims to provide for better communication between various groups with similar aims, currently working throughout the County in isolation; to review and prioritise on an ongoing basis the needs of Irish speakers of all sectors of society in the County; to examine grant schemes and initiatives which provide for partnership opportunities with regard to the promotion of the Irish language in the County; to examine how successful models of language promotion in other countries could be implemented in County Clare; and to co-ordinate a countywide programme for events such as European Day of Languages and Seachtain na Gaeilge.

According to Emer Ní Fhlaitheartaigh, Irish Language Officer, Clare County Council, “Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir is the largest and most wide-ranging Irish language initiative

ever to be undertaken in County Clare. Its diverse and high profile membership will undoubtedly contribute to its success in achieving the numerous short and long term objectives laid out. More significantly, the Forum brings together key agencies to work towards these objectives in an integrated manner.”

-Ends-

Note to Editor:

Tomas Mac Conmara, Cathaoirleach, Fóram Ghaeilge an Chláir is available for interview and further comment. Picture opportunities can also be arranged on request. To arrange please contact Mark Dunphy of Dunphy Public Relations on 086-8534900 or media@dunphypr.com.