



Houses of the
Oireachtas Commission
Coimisiún Thithe
an Oireachtais

Communications Plan 2010/2012

Building confidence and trust through better Communications



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For any number of reasons, there has always been significant public cynicism about political institutions and politicians. The Houses of the Oireachtas and its members have become accustomed to the fact that they have had to confront this cynicism any time they tried to engage with the public. It was against this background that the first comprehensive communications strategy was devised by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission in 2007. The aim was to promote public understanding of the work of the Houses of the Oireachtas and its Members.

Amongst other things, the economic circumstances of the past two years has exacerbated the declining public trust in national institutions. The banking crisis, in particular, has spread fear and apprehension and has caused considerable public anger. There is a growing conviction that the Houses of the Oireachtas, as presently operated, are not equipped to deal with the challenges now facing society. Issues surrounding the former Members' Allowances regime have also contributed to public disillusion and cynicism.

As part of the consultative process in the preparation of this strategy, many Members have raised serious concerns, including:

- Lack of solidarity amongst Members when speaking about the Houses and their "profession" as TDs and Senators;
- Need to change the way the Dáil does its business to make it more relevant to the general public;
- Lack of any sort of connection with young people;
- The need for greater openness and transparency in relation to financial and other issues;
- Need for a more open Leinster house, for media and visiting public;
- Need for better use of technology to engage with people.

The communications challenge facing the Houses of the Oireachtas is therefore even greater than it was when the first communications strategy was devised. Our stated aim is to significantly increase public understanding of, and respect for, the Houses of the Oireachtas and its members. At issue is public confidence and respect for politics – the very core element of a healthy democracy.

This document details the elements of a communications strategy for the period 2010-2012. It deals with specific issues we will face and addresses many of the concerns identified by Members and other stakeholders:

- The constant reduction of parliamentary coverage to discussion of expenses and foreign travel;
- The lack of balanced reportage of the proceedings of the Houses and their committees;
- The need to rebut quickly any misinformation about the institution that is published;
- The need for the institution to be proactive and relate directly to the public by offering quality visitor experiences and an outreach programme;
- The need to exploit new and social media to reach younger audiences who have no existing connection with the Houses.

Each of these elements is just one part of an overall project of national importance and urgency. The Houses of the Oireachtas must work to win and retain the confidence of the citizens who elect its Members, and who it serves.

This will require a significant change in culture on the part of those who can contribute to the effective implementation of this strategy.

CHAPTER 1: OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

As we move away from a more superficial promotion of parliament, the new high-level objective of the strategy is a more fundamental use of communications to build confidence in the Houses and its Members.

During the course of the next three years, this strategy has the following aims:

- The functions of the Houses and the role and responsibilities of Members will be communicated using clear and easy to understand language;
- Every member of the public will have opportunities to engage with the Houses of the Oireachtas;
- Unfair and ill-informed media coverage of the Houses of the Oireachtas will be robustly challenged;
- Information will be provided in an open and transparent fashion;
- The public experience of Leinster House through its guided tours will be engaging and targeted;
- The public and Members will have ongoing two-way communication through social media and public events.

CHAPTER 2: MEDIA

Our Approach

The traditional print and broadcast media is the basic means by which we communicate with the public. The fact that our message is mediated heavily through commentary and news selection that tends to be based on a fixed and somewhat cynical view of the institution and its Members provides our communication plan with a constant challenge.

However, the prioritisation of new, direct communications is paramount to achieving new and improved results. Building new media platforms (social media, on-line, etc) for greater dialogue between the public, our National Parliament and its Members is an important longer term means of dealing with the current low levels of esteem, trust and understanding.

This plan proposes better and more robust engagement with the traditional media, as well as important new ways of bridging the gap between our parliament and the public. We must learn to consider the media as an opportunity and a messenger, rather than a threat.

(a) Spokespersons

We need spokespersons with a non-partisan story to tell about the role and value of parliament. They need to be active across newsprint and broadcast media, both local and national on a weekly, if not daily, basis.

There should be three spokesperson roles:

- The Ceann Comhairle who represents the official and ceremonial voice of the Houses of the Oireachtas;
- A small, cross-party committee of Members that speaks on behalf of all Members and the institution as required;

- The Head of Communications who speaks of behalf of the institution.

The cross-party communications committee's role will be to ensure there is ongoing input and guidance from Members to the implementation of the overall strategy.

Members speaking on behalf of the Houses of the Oireachtas will be supported in articulating a factual and expert assessment of our parliament. The Communications Unit will be available and is equipped to support any Member in their efforts in explaining the role of Members and the institution of parliament with a positive message based on hard facts and expertise in contextual detail.

(b) Our message

Another challenge faced by the organisation is the lack of consistency in the messages we communicate. At its most basic level, Members should be in a position to agree a series of simple and clear messages:

Members of the Houses of the Oireachtas

- Are elected by the people to do an important job;
- Work extremely hard;
- Are well-paid but provide value for money;
- Work in an open, accessible and transparent way.

The Institution

- Serves the people and is relevant to our society;
- Is equipped to deal with the challenges facing us;
- Is an effective and efficient National Parliament;
- Is open and accessible.

The Public

- Should be given clear, accessible and relevant information about their National Parliament;

- Should be provided with every opportunity to engage with the Houses of the Oireachtas.

(c) Briefing Members

Members speaking on behalf of the Houses will be supported when explaining the role of the Houses of the Oireachtas and its Members. The Communications Unit must be equipped to support any Member in their efforts to answer questions about their role and its relevance to the public. Members are invited to use the Communications Unit briefing service to assist them when talking to both national and local print and broadcast media. All sections of the office will provide the necessary expert information sought by the Communications Unit to ensure that an expert and factual briefing service to Members is provided promptly.

(d) Proactive Responses

Inaccurate, imbalanced and misinformed media coverage is a regular part of the Houses of the Oireachtas media experience. The Communications Unit will promptly challenge any such coverage and decide on the nature of the response (e.g. a call to the media outlet, a statement, a broadcast interview etc). Members will be encouraged to bring any such coverage to the attention of the Communications Unit, particularly in instances of local/regional media.

(e) Reporting of Houses and Committee business

In the first Houses of the Oireachtas Communications Strategy, achieving better media relations for Houses of the Oireachtas Committees was prioritised. There has been considerable improvement in this area and the feedback from Committee Chairs, Members and media has been very positive. The next phase must be to extend this service to the business of both Houses and a more targeted approach to specialist and sectoral media in respect of Committees. Committee media strategies will be tailored to highlight the local and regional media context to committee business. This will help build relevance

for local media and help communicate this aspect of a Member's parliamentary work directly to their constituents. The media portrayal of Committee travel will also be addressed. Relevant media will be invited to join delegations so as to encourage informed and fair coverage how international perspectives and experience assist the performance of a parliamentary system.

(f) Local media

Local and regional radio stations are now broadcasting from the Houses of the Oireachtas broadcast facility on a regular basis. There are now regular prime time radio current affairs programmes throughout the country broadcasting regular features which show that the parliamentary work of Members is relevant to a local audience.

It is proposed that a weekly radio report entitled 'This Week in the Oireachtas' will highlight contributions by local Members of the Houses of the Oireachtas. Participating local radio stations will be supplied with a recorded audio report at the end of business every Thursday for broadcast on a Friday.

It is also proposed to continue the weekly local newspaper service initiated as part of the first Houses of the Oireachtas Communications Strategy 2007-2009. Four hundred articles per annum continue to be commissioned in local newspapers nationwide. Impartial and accessible in style, the weekly local newspaper initiative has directly communicated the local relevance of Member's parliamentary work.

(g) Media Access/Accreditation

Media access to the Houses of the Oireachtas is a basic necessity to a functioning communications programme. Combined with efforts to increase media attendance and coverage of specific elements of the Houses of the Oireachtas, such as the work of Joint Committees, a fast and effective access system is

essential. The objective will be to provide ease of access to the media, whilst having due regard to the house security needs, so that public interest is informed by coverage of all aspects of parliamentary work.

(h) Media Protocols

Leinster House is a workplace. Indeed, it is a workplace of great public importance. In that context, the Leinster House media protocol must combine the public interest of ensuring that our Parliament can do its work without distraction, whilst serving the common interest of ensuring that the public can see and understand the work of the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Parliament. The media are the primary influence of public opinion of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The way in which we engage with the media must strike the right balance between ensuring it can communicate accurate coverage of the proceedings from Leinster House while also respecting it as a workplace.

The Houses of the Oireachtas makes a sizeable commitment and investment in ensuring there is extensive media access to Leinster House. This commitment is in line with standards set in democracies worldwide. Strategically, this investment in media access makes sense as it is from here that the public obtains its information.

An open and proactive ethos can be realised as part of a more coherent media relations policy. In doing so, we can reinforce the message that the Houses of the Oireachtas is an effective and open National Parliament, contrary to the sometimes misleading coverage experienced.

All of our media relations, whether they are on-site in Leinster House, on-line or in the day-to-day

exchanges with our communications service, should be delivered in a spirit that enforces this proposed open and modern media policy.

In this context, it is recommended that the current media protocol for Leinster House be reviewed and where appropriate, revised to ensure that the Houses of the Oireachtas seizes every opportunity to communicate with the public. The Leinster House media policy and protocol should reflect the modern day-to-day media needs of Members in a way that ensure they get maximum, appropriate access to the media, whilst at all times respecting the need to avoid any interference in the work of our Parliament. A review of the media protocols and guidelines will be subject to the considerations and approval of the respective Committees on Procedure and Privileges (CPP's).

(i) Media Centre

Practically all modern parliaments have a dedicated media facility that accommodates major media events (e.g. report launches, press conferences, etc) together with dedicated interview and broadcasting zones. The creation of a media centre within the overall Leinster House complex featuring such a press conference room, adjacent interview portals and an indoor piece-to-camera interview site would bring the Houses of the Oireachtas in-line with international standards. This will also act to promote the parliamentary 'brand' or identity through the image of a working building and through the featuring of a dedicated, branded indoor space on television news bulletins, rather than the current situation where politicians and those who report on politics stand on city streets as a requirement for portrayal on television.

The Houses of the Oireachtas is a busy and important workplace and such an indoor facility will help portray it as such.

CHAPTER 3: INFORMATION

(a) Language

The language used by the Houses should help, and not hinder, public understanding of the business. Our experience is that the public are often confused by the complex jargon used every day as we explain what we do. A Plain Language Audit of all printed materials and brochures should deliver a language policy that assists all citizens to understand what it is we are trying to say.

(b) Openness and Transparency

Much of the negative comment and misunderstanding relating to the Houses of the Oireachtas and its Members relates to non-procedural matters (i.e. salary and expenses, constituency related expenditure, parliamentary travel, facilities such as fitness room, crèche, restaurants and bar). Information relating to all issues necessary to provide an effective parliamentary workplace should be freely available. The information should be provided with context and explained in a straightforward manner. This will ensure the required level of openness and will also remove the

perception that such information has to be forced from a reluctant institution.

(c) The cost of running the Houses

All expenses and allowances paid to Members of the Houses of Oireachtas should appear on a monthly basis on the parliamentary website: www.oireachtas.ie. The information will be published with context that explains the purpose and value for money delivered by such expenditure.

(d) Freedom of Information (FOI)

A new policy of publishing all information released under FOI to the Houses of the Oireachtas website www.oireachtas.ie will reflect the fundamental purpose of the FOI Act. FOI releases will become an on-line archive of information deemed to be in the public interest. Moreover, it will also demonstrate an increased openness. It will also avoid repetitious FOI requests that tie-up the workload of staff at a significant cost to the exchequer. Such information should be published on the website some time after the requestor has had an opportunity to digest the information.

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CHAPTER 4: OUTREACH, ACCESS AND PUBLIC EVENTS

(a) Outreach

A fundamental knowledge of how the National Parliament works should be available to every citizen. Media commentary can offer an informed opinion, but without a sound knowledge of our how our parliamentary democracy functions, the public cannot determine the accuracy or validity of the media's message.

As part of the 2007-2009 Houses of the Oireachtas communications strategy, 15,000 post-primary students completed a classroom workshop that sought to explain the role of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The workshop was informed by the approach taken by other national parliaments and the need to connect with young people participating in the CSPE Junior Cycle programme. Geographic disadvantage was avoided by bringing the Houses of the Oireachtas out of Leinster house into the classroom.

A new outreach programme must maintain this level of accessibility whilst serving a wider public. It is proposed that a new programme will be available in two formats designed to serve targeted groups.

- Schools Outreach: serving CSPE and Transition Year students
- Community Outreach: serving all civic and community organisations

The Houses of the Oireachtas Programme will be available on-site in Leinster House and off-site nationwide.

Schools Outreach

Serving both CSPE and Transition Year (TY), the programme will continue the existing format which involves a half-day workshop in school. An advance exercise project will be introduced, to be completed

before the programme visits a school. This will both reveal the level of interest and understanding in the classroom and ensure that the programme is demand driven.

Community Outreach

A two-hour workshop will be available to a broad range of community and civic groups. The format will be interactive and based around role-play and debate. The objective will be to explain the way in which the Houses of the Oireachtas work and places this in the context of the participating group's community experience. Youth groups, active retirement groups, unemployment organisations and community groups from all demographics will be engaged.

(b) Public Access

A new approach to the Leinster House visitor experience should be based on a modern customer-oriented approach. Currently, Members of the Houses of the Oireachtas invite constituents and others to visit Leinster House. A tour is provided that offers both the architectural and historic story of the building. As part of our first communications strategy, new visitor brochures designed specifically for target groups (e.g. children, schools visits and adults) were also added to the visitor programme.

Most visitors to Leinster House do so at the invitation of Members of the Houses of the Oireachtas. This is will continue to be the case but the ability to welcome visitors who simply turn up without appointment or invitation is proposed. Such access will be provided on non-sitting days only and limited to tour capacity available on the day. For security reasons, walk in visitors will be obliged to present appropriate identification.

Direct visitor booking is also planned whereby members of the public or groups can telephone or

OUTREACH, ACCESS AND PUBLIC EVENTS

book on-line. In this case, a centralised database will inform Members of these visits.

(c) New Tours

- **A Historic Tour** will set-out the parliamentary role of Leinster House in its overall context. This tour is designed to serve a broad but primarily adult audience. The parliamentary history of the building will be combined with events that illuminate this tradition. An optional addition of a brief historic talk will be available, subject to capacity.
Age target: 25 years upwards.
- **A Role-Play Visit** will serve young adults and third level students by incorporating a short tour of Leinster House, which focuses on its functions and the political roles of Members and office holders, followed by a 45-minute debate.
Age target: 18-25 years.
- **A Youth Tour** will serve older teenagers who are on the cusp of reaching voting age. Its focus will be on combining a tour experience with the parliamentary system and the role of Members. Role-play is central to this tour with each visitor taking on the roles of Members of a national parliament during the visit. Age target: 15-19 years.
- **'A CSPE' Tour** will cater for the Civil, Social and Political Education (CSPE) subject currently taught in post-primary schools. The CSPE Action Project is an important part of the course. This tour should be designed as an optional CSPE Action Project.
Age target: 13-15 years.

(d) Visitor Experience Space

The provision of a dedicated Visitor Experience Space that will be located within the Leinster House Parliamentary complex is a priority of the communications plan. A feasibility study will define a suitable space to accommodate a modern, interactive exhibition on the history, role and

achievements of the national parliament, particularly targeted for younger visitors.

The space should also accommodate mock and youth parliaments, lectures, question and answer sessions with both Members of the Houses and Education Officers as well as featuring quality audio-visual and interactive facilities.

(e) Public Events

Public events have proved very effective in attracting public and media attention. For example, in 2008 and 2009 the Houses of the Oireachtas Family Days helped create a positive image of Leinster House.

However, events represent a higher public relations and financial risk than most other types of communications. It would be bold and ambitious, especially in today's economic climate, to seek out public and media support for a new national event that places the Houses of the Oireachtas at its core. A new public events programme will have to help build greater confidence in our National Parliament. It is proposed to develop a public events programme in the coming months which meets that aim within the financial constraints which currently exist. Public events should offer a unique forum for Members and the public to engage with one another. Informative and engaging events, delivered to a high quality but very efficiently, will be the objective.



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CHAPTER 5: USING TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMUNICATION

Exploiting the internet and social media to its maximum is critical to seriously engaging the public, especially the younger generations.

The Houses of the Oireachtas website www.oireachtas.ie has recently received an interim facelift with emphasis on public access and information. The next steps will require a cohesive new media policy for the organisation that reflects the importance of the web and matches it with a clear ambition to maximise its use.

For many people, new media offers the most efficient and effective channels for communicating. This communications plan intends prioritising new media – internet, online and other electronic communication platforms, social media networks, etc. This will position the Houses of the Oireachtas in a way that allows it to take full advantage as new media becomes the dominant media. This process is occurring with great pace.

Some important trends are clear:

- Broadband subscriptions continue to grow and topped €1.3 million in 2009;
- More of the online generation will reach voting age, making the voter population more Internet-friendly each year;
- Social media remains a key part of new media, with 23% of Irish adults using social networking or “me-media” sites and over two million accounts registered between Bebo and Facebook;
- Mobile internet continues to grow, with more than 21% of mobile phone users found to have used the internet from a mobile in 2009;
- Mass audiences for traditional media (newspapers and broadcasters) fragment into micro-audiences on the many alternative channels now available;

- New media offers cost-effective and highly-measurable channels to reach audiences that are very hard to reach by any other means (e.g. young people who spend their free time online and do not consume newspapers or traditional broadcasting methods).

New Media Strategy

To capitalise on these trends and build on its work in new media to date, the Office will include a series of new media and on-line elements as central parts of its communications strategy.

1. Build up further content and services on www.oireachtas.ie

The new technology platform put in place during 2009 means that the Houses of the Oireachtas website is now positioned to be a key component of how the Office communicates with the public, Houses of the Oireachtas Members, the media, the educational audience and other stakeholders.

2. Start a listening channel on social media

Houses of the Oireachtas communications staff will monitor relevant social media, discussion boards and websites. This will allow them to become familiar with these channels and the way in which they reflect popular trends.

3. Begin to participate more in social media

Subject to clear guidelines and training, Office staff can actively contribute to social media. Already, Oireachtas news is echoed from Oireachtas.ie to Twitter and Facebook. The next stage will involve more content being syndicated, to more social media sites, and joining in some discussions on other sites where appropriate.

USING TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMUNICATION

4. Use new media to compliment other media activity

Increasingly, organisations are using new media to complement, and in some cases, to replace other activity. For example, Oireachtas video created in the first place for media coverage can be repackaged into short programmes illustrating procedural matters such as the progress of a bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas.

5. Extend the reach of Oireachtas mobile communications

The Houses of the Oireachtas already has a good mobile version of its redeveloped main website. It will build on this by commissioning “apps” (small, specialist programs) for the most popular mobile devices. These can carry anything from live news feeds, to “Today in Parliament” schedules, to databases of Members.

6. Web TV

Priority will continue to be given to webcasting of all Houses of the Oireachtas proceedings. This is not an alternative to either a parliamentary television channel or the coverage of our National Parliament by national broadcasters. However, it does present an opportunity for the Houses of the Oireachtas to build an audience of its live proceedings.



“Increasingly, organisations are using new media to complement, and in some cases, to replace other activity.”

“Evaluating the effectiveness of the new communications plan and proving value for money will be central to the 2010-2012 strategy.”

Evaluating the effectiveness of the new communications plan and proving value for money will be central to the 2010-2012 strategy. A short research project will underpin the Communications Plan and each action proposed will be gauged against the opinions and expectations of the Irish public.

The areas which need to be tested include:

- The type of knowledge that the public have and need regarding the Houses of the Oireachtas, if our goal of greater public confidence is to be achieved?
- What forms of engagement would foster respect, confidence and trust in the National Parliament?
- Specifically, in what ways should the Houses of the Oireachtas and its people (Members and staff alike) be more open and accessible?
- The messages that should be communicated to the public and how do the public wish to be heard?

Establishing key performance indicators for the future and successfully integrating them into the implementation of the Communications Plan is critical. The research project will set a benchmark for more ongoing tracking of changing attitudes and perceptions of the Houses of the Oireachtas as the communications programme is rolled out through to 2012.



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Straitéis Chumarsáide 2010/2012

An dóchas agus an mhuinín a mhéadú trí Chumarsáid níos fearr



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Ar chúiseanna éagsúla, dearcadh soiniciúil go maith a bhí ag an bpobal i gcónaí i leith institiúidí polaitiúla agus polaiteoirí. Tá comhaltaí Thithe an Oireachtais imithe i dtaithí air sin agus bíonn orthu dul i ngleic leis an tsoiniciúlacht sin aon uair a thugann siad faoi dhul i mbun pléití leis an bpobal. Ba sa chomhthéacs sin a rinne Coimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais an chéad straitéis chumarsáide chuimsitheach a leagan amach sa bhliain 2007. Bhí sé mar aidhm leis an straitéis tuiscint an phobail ar obair Thithe an Oireachtais agus Chomhaltaí na dTithe a chur chun cinn.

“I measc rudaí eile, chuir na dálaí geilleagair le dhá bhliain anuas dlús le meath mhuintín an phobail as na hinstiúidí náisiúnta. Mar gheall ar an ngéarchéim bhaincéireachta, go háirithe, leathadh eagla agus imní agus chuir an-fhearg ar an bpobal. Tá ag méadú ar líon na ndaoine a cheapann nach bhfuil ar acmhainn Thithe an Oireachtais mar a fheidhmítear faoi láthair iad, dul i ngleic leis na dúshláin atá le tabhairt ag an saol anois. Chuir saincheisteanna a bhain le córas Liúntas na gComhaltaí le díomá agus soiniciúlacht an phobail.”

Mar chuid den phróiseas comhairliúcháin agus an straitéis seo á hullmhú, chuir an-chuid comhaltaí ábhair imní in iúl, lena n-áirítear:

- easpa dlúthpháirtíochta i measc Comhaltaí agus iad ag labhairt faoi na Tithe agus a “ngairm” mar Theachtaí Dála agus mar Sheanadóirí;
- an gá atá ann modh oibre na Dála a athrú chun é a bheith níos gaire do bheith ar aon dul le saol an phobail;
- ceangal de shaghas ar bith le daoine óga a bheith go hiomlán in easnamh;
- an gá atá le hoscailteacht agus trédhearcacht níos mó i ndáil le cúrsaí airgeadais agus saincheisteanna eile;
- an gá atá ann go mbeadh Teach Laighean níos oscailte, do na meáin agus do dhaoine den phobal ar cuairt;
- an gá atá ann úsáid níos fearr a bhaint as an teicneolaíocht chun ceangal a chothú le daoine.

Is mó an dúshlán cumarsáide atá roimh Thithe an Oireachtais, mar sin, ná mar a bhí nuair a ceapadh an chéad straitéis chumarsáide. Is í an aidhm atá againn ná cur go mór le tuiscint an phobail ar Thithe an Oireachtais agus ar Chomhaltaí na dTithe, agus meas an phobail orthu. Tá muinín an phobail as an bpolaitíocht agus meas an phobail ar an bpolaitíocht de dhlúth agus d'inneach sa daonlathas folláin.

Sonraítear sa doiciméad seo gnéithe de straitéis chumarsáide don tréimhse 2010-2012. Pléitear saincheisteanna sainsiúla ann a mbeidh orainn aghaidh a thabhairt orthu, i dteannta cuid mhaith den ábhar imní atá curtha in iúl ag comhaltaí agus ag páirtithe leasmhara eile:

- an cumhdach a thugtar do chúrsaí parlaiminte, gan dul thar phlé ar chostais agus taisteal iasachta riamh;
- tuairisceoireacht chothrom a bheith in easnamh ar imeachtaí na dTithe agus a gcoistí;
- an gá atá le friséisiú pras a dhéanamh ar aon mhífhaisnéis a fhoilsítear maidir leis an institiúid;
- an gá atá ann go mbeidh an institiúid réamhghníomhach agus ceangal díreach aici leis an bpobal trí thaithe dhearfach a chur ar fáil do chuariteoirí agus trí chlár for-rochtana;
- an gá atá ann teacht i dtír ar mheáin shóisialta nua chun dul i dteagmháil leis an óige, dream nach mbíonn aon bhaint acu leis na Tithe faoi láthair.

Níl sna gnéithe éagsúla sin ach cuid de thionscadal foriomlán a bhfuil tábhacht agus práinn náisiúnta ag baint leis. Ní foláir do Thithe an Oireachtais gníomhú chun muinín na saoránach a thoghann a gcuid Comhaltaí, agus a bhfónann siad dóibh, a ghnóthú agus a choinneáil.

Chuirge sin, beidh athrú meoin suntasach de dhíth ar na daoine sin ar féidir leo rannchuidiú chun an straitéis seo a chur chun feidhme go héifeachtach.

CAIBIDIL 1: CUSPÓIRÍ NA STRAITÉISE

De réir mar a bheimid ag imeacht ó chur chun cinn an Oireachtais ar shlí thanaí, is é an cuspóir nua ardleibhéil a bheidh leis an straitéis ná an chumarsáid a úsáid ar bhealach níos bunúsaí chun muinín as na Tithe agus a gComhaltaí a mhéadú.

As seo go ceann 3 bliana, beidh na haidhmeanna seo a leanas leis an straitéis seo:

- déanfar feidhmeanna na dTithe agus feidhm agus freagrachtaí na gComhaltaí a chur in iúl i dteanga shoiléir shothuigthe;
- beidh deiseanna ag gach duine den phobal dul i mbun pléití le Tithe an Oireachtais;
- maidir le tuairiscí sna meáin a bhíonn éagothrom nó easpach ó thaobh faisnéise de, tabharfar a ndúshlán go láidir;
- cuirfear faisnéis ar fáil ar bhealach oscailte, trédhearcach;
- beidh an taithí a gheobhaidh an pobal ar Theach Laighean trí thurais threoraithe spreagúil agus spriocdhírthe;
- beidh cumarsáid leanúnach sa dá threo idir an pobal agus na Comhaltaí trí na meáin shóisialta agus teagmhais phoiblí.



An Cur Chuige Againn

Is iad na meáin chlóite agus chraolta atá ann le fada an lá an bealach bunúsach ar a ndéanaimid cumarsáid leis an bpobal. Dúshlán leanúnach don phlean cumarsáide againn is ea an tuairimíocht agus an nuacht roghnach a bhíonn bunaithe de ghnáth ar dhearcadh seasta agus réasúnta soiniciúil ar an institiúid agus a Comhaltaí.

Tá tábhacht thar na bearta ag baint le cumarsáid nua dhíreach, áfach, má táthar chun torthaí úra feabhsaithe a bhaint amach. Is bealach fadtéarmach tábhachtach é – chun dul i ngleic leis an ísle brí, an easpa muiníne agus an easpa tuisceana – deiseanna a chruthú trí na meáin nua (na meáin shóisialta, ar-líne, srl.) le haghaidh comhphléití níos fearr idir an pobal, Tithe an Oireachtais agus a Comhaltaí.

Moltar sa phlean seo go gcothófaí caidreamh níos fearr agus níos láidre leis na meáin sheanbhunaithe, chomh maith le modhanna nua tábhachtacha chun an bhearna a dhúnadh idir Tithe an Oireachtais agus an pobal. Ní mór dúinn foghlaim conas na meáin a mheas mar dheis agus mar theachtaire, seachas mar bhagairt.

(a) Urlabhraithe

Teastaíonn urlabhraithe uainn a bhfuil scéal neamhchlaonta le hinsint acu faoi fheidhm agus luach an Oireachtais. Ní mór do na hurlabhraithe sin a bheith gníomhach sna meáin chlóite agus chraolta araon, idir áitiúil agus náisiúnta, ar bhonn seachtainiúil nó ar bhonn laethúil, fiú amháin.

Ba cheart trí ról urlabhraí a bheith ann:

- An Ceann Comhairle, a léiríonn feidhm oifigiúil agus searmanach Thithe an Oireachtais;
- Coiste beag traspháirtí de Chomhaltaí a labhraíonn thar ceann na gComhaltaí uile agus thar ceann na hinstitiúide de réir mar a theastóidh;
- An Ceannasaí Cumarsáide a labhrann thar ceann na hinstitiúide.

Is é an ról a bheidh ag an gcoiste cumarsáide traspháirtí ionchur agus treoir ó na Comhaltaí a chinntiú maidir leis an straitéis fhoriomlán a chur chun feidhme.

Tacófar le Comhaltaí a labhróidh thar ceann an Oireachtais chun measúnú fíorúil, saineolach a dhéanamh ar ár bparlaimint. Beidh an tAonad Cumarsáide ar fáil agus tá na háiseanna cuí aige chun tacú le hiarrachtaí aon Chomhalta míniú a thabhairt ar ról na gComhaltaí agus ar an Institiúid Pharlaiminteach trí theachtaireacht dhearfach arna bunú ar fhíricí tathagacha agus ar shaineolas ó thaobh mionsonraí comhthéacsúla de.

(b) Ár dTeachtaireacht

Dúshlán eile atá le tabhairt ag an eagraíocht is ea an easpa comhleanúnachais idir na teachtaireachtaí a chuirimid in iúl. Ar an gcuid is bunúsaí de, ba cheart go mbeadh ar chumas Comhaltaí tacar teachtaireachtaí simplí, soiléire a chomhaontú:

Comhaltaí den Oireachtas

- Toghann an pobal iad chun post tábhachtach a dhéanamh
- Oibríonn siad go han-dian
- Tugtar tuarastal maith dóibh ach tugann siad luach ar airgead
- Oibríonn siad go hoscailte, go hinrochtana agus go trédhearcach.

An Institiúid

- Fónann sí don phobal agus baineann sí le hábhar ó thaobh na sochaí de
- Tá na hacmhainní aici chun dul i ngleic leis na dúshláin atá romhainn
- Is parlaimint éifeachtach éifeachtúil í
- Tá sí oscailte agus inrochtana.

An Pobal

- Ba cheart faisnéis shoiléir inrochtana ábhartha a thabhairt dóibh maidir leis an Oireachtas
- Ba cheart gach deis a thabhairt dóibh dul i dteagmháil le Tithe an Oireachtais.

(c) Comhaltaí a Fhaisnéisiú

Tabharfar tacaíocht do Chomhaltaí a bheidh ag labhairt thar ceann an Oireachtais agus ról an Oireachtais agus a Chomhaltaí á míniú acu. Ní mór é a bheith ar acmhainn an Aonaid Cumarsáide tacú le Comhaltaí ina n-iarrachtaí ceisteanna a fhreagair maidir lena ról agus maidir le hábharthacht an ról sin don phobal. Iarrtar ar Chomhaltaí leas a bhaint as seirbhís faisnéisithe an Aonaid Cumarsáide chun cuidiú leo agus iad ag labhairt leis na meáin chlóite agus chraolta, idir náisiúnta agus áitiúil.

Soláthróidh gach rannán den Oifig an fhaisnéis shainiúil is gá a lorgóidh an tAonad Cumarsáide chun a chinntiú go gcuirtear seirbhís faisnéisithe atá saineolach fórasach ar fáil do Chomhaltaí go pras.

(d) Freagairtí Réamhghníomhacha ar Thuairiscíú Míchruinn / Éagothrom

Is gnáthchuid den taithí atá ag Tithe an Oireachtais tuairiscíú a fheiceáil sna meáin atá míchruinn éagothrom agus mífhaisnéiseach. Tabharfaidh an tAonad Cumarsáide dúshlán aon tuairiscithe den chineál sin agus cinnfidh sé an cineál freagra a thabharfar (e.g. glao ar an tseirbhís atá i gceist, ráiteas, agallamh craolta etc). Spreagfar comhaltaí chun aird fhoireann an Aonaid Cumarsáide a dhíriú ar aon tuairiscíú den chineál sin, sna meáin áitiúla / réigiúnacha go háirithe.

(e) Tuairiscíú ar Ghnó na dTithe agus na gCoistí

Ba thosaíocht é sa chéad Straitéis Chumarsáide de chuid Thithe an Oireachtais caidreamh níos fearr leis na meáin a bhaint amach do Choistí an Oireachtais. Tharla feabhas nach beag sa réimse seo agus fuarthas aiseolas an-dearfach ó Chathaoirligh na gCoistí, ó Chomhaltaí agus ó na meáin.

Is í an chéad chéim eile an tseirbhís seo a leathnú do ghnó an dá Theach in éineacht chun cur chuige spriodhírthe a bhaint amach i ndáil leis na sainmheáin agus na meáin earnálacha maidir leis na Coistí.

Ullmhófar straitéisí meáin le haghaidh na gCoistí chun béim a leagan ar chomhthéacs na meán áitiúil agus

réigiúnda a ghabhann le gnó na gCoistí. Cuirfidh sé sin leis an ábharthacht do na meáin áitiúla agus is cuidiú é chun an ghné sin d'obair pharlaiminteach na gComhaltaí a mhíniú do na daoine sna toghlaigh.

Tabharfar aghaidh ar an gcaoi a léiríonn na meáin taisteal na gCoistí. Iarrfar ar na meáin iomchuí taisteal in éineacht le toscaireachtaí chun tuairiscíú eolach cothrom a spreagadh ar an gcaoi a gcuidíonn dearcadh agus taithí idirnáisiúnta le feidhmíocht an chórais pharlaimintigh.

(f) Na Meáin Áitiúla

Sa lá atá inniu ann, craolann stáisiúin raidió áitiúla agus réigiúnda ó shaoráid chraolacháin Thithe an Oireachtais ar bhonn rialta. Bíonn clár chúrsaí reatha ar siúl go rialta ag na buaic-amanna timpeall na tíre a chraolann gnéithe rialta ina dtaspeántar go mbaineann obair pharlaiminteach na gComhaltaí leis an lucht éisteachta áitiúil.

Tá sé beartaithe go mbeidh tuairisc raidió seachtainiúil ann, ar a dtabharfar 'This Week in the Oireachtas' agus lena leagfar béim ar obair na gComhaltaí áitiúla i dTithe an Oireachtais. Cuirfear tuairisc fuaime thairfeadta ar fáil do stáisiúin raidió áitiúla rannpháirteacha i ndeireadh an ghnó gach Déardaoin chun go gcaolfar í ar an Aoine.

Tá sé beartaithe freisin leanúint leis an tseirbhís sheachtainiúil do nuachtáin áitiúla a bunaíodh mar chuid de Straitéis Chumarsáide Thithe an Oireachtais 2007-2009. Déantar 400 alt in aghaidh na bliana a choimisiúnú i nuachtáin trasna na tíre i gcónaí. Neamhchlaonta agus éasca le léamh, le tionscnamh áitiúil seachtainiúil na nuachtán mínítear an tábhacht áitiúil a bhaineann go díreach le hobair pharlaiminteach na gComhaltaí.

(g) Rochtain/ Creidiúnú na Meán

Is bunriachtanas é rochtain na meán cumarsáide ar Thithe an Oireachtais má tá clár cumarsáide chun feidhmiú. In éineacht le hiarrachtaí chun feabhas a chur ar fhreastal agus ar thuairiscíú na meán ar aonaid shonraithe de Thithe an Oireachtais, ar nós obair

na gComhchoistí, tá gá le córas rochtana a bheadh tapaidh agus éifeachtach. Is é an sprioc atá ann rochtain éasca a sholáthar do na meáin, ag féachaint go cuí do riachtanais shlándála na dTithe, mar is é leas an phobail é go dtuairisceofaí gach gné d’obair an Oireachtais.

(h) Prótacail na Meán

Is láthair oibre é Teach Laighean. Déanta na fírinne, is láthair oibre é a mbaineann tábhacht mhór poiblí léi. Sa chomhthéacs sin, ní mór a chinntiú le prótacal na meán do Theach Laighean gur féidir leis an Oireachtas tabhairt faoina chuid oibre gan chur isteach, agus ag an am céanna go dtugtar faoin leas coiteann chun a chinntiú gur féidir leis an bpobal obair an Oireachtais – an pharlaimint s’againne – a fheiceáil agus a thuiscint.

Is iad na meáin chumarsáide go príomha a chuireann an pobal ar an eolas faoi Thithe an Oireachtais. Ní mór dúinn dul i ngleic leis na meáin sin ar chaoi go mbeidh siad in ann tuairisciú cruinn a dhéanamh ar imeachtaí Theach Laighean agus a chothrom a thabhairt dó mar láthair oibre.

Déanann an tOireachtas tiomantas agus infheistíocht nach beag chun a chinntiú go mbíonn rochtain leathan ag na meáin ar Theach Laighean. Is tiomantas coitianta é sin i dtíortha daonlathacha timpeall an domhain. Baineann ciall straitéiseach leis an infheistíocht sin, mar is ar an gcaoi sin a chuirtear an pobal ar an eolas.

Is féidir éiteas oscailte gníomhach a chur i gcrích mar chuid de bheartas comhtháite caidrimh leis na meáin. Le linn dúinn é sin a dhéanamh, is féidir linn an scéal a chur amach gur parlaimint náisiúnta éifeachtach oscailte é an tOireachtas, d’ainneoin an tuairisciú míthreorach a fhaightear in amanna.

Ba chóir gach teagmháil leis na meáin – bíodh sin ar láthair Theach Laighean, ar-líne nó i dteagmháil lenár seirbhís chumarsáide ó lá go lá – a dhéanamh ar

bhealach a chuireann leis an mbeartas meáin nua-aimseartha oscailte a mholtar anseo.

Sa chomhthéacs sin, moltar athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar phrótacal reatha Theach Laighean maidir leis na meáin agus, más cuí, é a choigeartú chun go mbéarfadh Tithe an Oireachtais ar gach deis teagmhála leis an bpobal. Ba cheart go léireodh beartas agus prótacal Theach Laighean maidir leis na meáin riachtanas poiblíochta na gComhaltáí ó lá go lá ar bhealach a chinnteoidh go bhfaighidh siad an rochtain chuí is fearr ar na meáin, ach a chinntiú i gcónaí nach gcuirtear isteach ar shlí ar bith ar obair an Oireachtais.

Beidh athbhreithniú ar phrótacail agus treoirlínte maidir leis na meáin faoi réir thuairimí agus cheadú na gCoistí um Nósanna Imeachta agus Pribhléidí faoi seach.

(i) Ionad na Meán

Tá saoráid thiomnaithe do na meáin ag mórán gach parlaimint nua-aimseartha ar domhan agus is ansin a cheiliúrtar mórócáidí na meán (mar shampla: seoladh tuarascálacha, preasagallaimh, srl.) chomh maith le limistéir thiomnaithe le haghaidh agallamh agus craolacháin. Dá mbunófaí ionad craolacháin ar láthair Theach Laighean agus seomra den chineál sin a bheith ann le haghaidh preasagallaimh, i dteannta bothán agallamh in aice láimhe agus láthair agallamh faoi dhíon i gcomhair cainte os comhair ceamara, thabharfaí Tithe an Oireachtais cothrom le caighdeán idirnáisiúnta. Ba chuidiú é sin freisin chun ‘branda’ nó céannacht an Oireachtais a chruthú as íomhá an fhoirgnimh oibre agus trí áit bhrandáilte, faoi dhíon, a thaispeáint ar chlár nuachta teilifíse, seachas mar a dhéantar faoi láthair mar is gá do pholaitoírí agus do thuairisceoirí ar chúrsaí polaitíochta seasamh ar shráideanna na cathrach má tá siad chun a bheith ar an teilifís.

Is láthair oibre bhroidiúil thábhachtach iad Tithe an Oireachtais, agus chuideodh saoráid faoi dhíon den sórt sin chun iad a thaispeáint amhlaidh.

CAIBIDIL 3: FAISNÉIS

(a) Teanga

Ba chóir go gcuideodh an saghas teanga a úsáidtear sna Tithe le tuiscint an phobail ar a ngnó, seachas a mhalairt. Is é an taithí atá againn gur minic go gcuirtear mearbhall ar an bpobal leis an mbéarlagair chasta a úsáidimid gach lá chun ár gcuid oibre a mhíniú. Ba chóir go dtiocfadh beartas teanga as Iniúchadh Teanga Soiléire ar ár gcuid bróisiúr agus ar ár n-ábhar clóite go léir, rud a chabhródh leis na saoránaigh ár dteachtaireacht a thuiscint.

(b) Oscailteacht agus Trédhearcacht

Baineann cuid mhaith den chaint dhiúltach agus den mhíthuiscint maidir le Tithe an Oireachtais agus a gcuid Comhaltaí le hábhair seachas nós imeachta (.i. tuarastal agus costais, caiteachas a bhaineann leis an toghlach, taisteal parlaiminteach, áiseanna lena n-áirítear an seomra aclaíochta, an naíolann, na bialanna agus an beár). Ba chóir go mbeadh fáil éasca ar an bhfaisnéis i ndáil leis na saincheisteanna go léir is gá chun gur láthair oibre éifeachtach é an tOireachtas. Soláthrófar an fhaisnéis go comhthéacsúil agus míneofar i dteanga shimplí í. Cinnteoidh sé sin an leibhéal oscailteachta is gá agus cuirfidh sé deireadh leis an mbarúil go mbíonn

ar na meáin an fhaisnéis a tharraingt as eagraíocht atá drogallach.

(c) Costais Reatha na dTithe

Ba chóir na costais agus na liúntais go léir a íoctar le Comhaltaí den Oireachtas ar bhonn míosúil a thaispeáint ar shuíomh gréasáin an Oireachtais: www.oireachtas.ie. Foilseofar an fhaisnéis i gcomhthéacs a mhíneoidh an cuspóir agus an luach ar airgead a bhaineann leis an gcaiteachas sin.

(d) Saoráil Faisnéise

Beidh beartas nua ann maidir leis an bhfaisnéis a chuirfear ar fáil faoi Shaoráil Faisnéise a fhoilsiú ar shuíomh idirlín an Oireachtais www.oireachtas.ie, rud a bheidh ag teacht le bunchuspóir an Achta um Shaoráil Faisnéise. Cuirfear gach a scaoilfear faoi Shaoráil Faisnéise ar fáil mar chomhad ar líne d'fhaisnéis a mheastar a bheith ar leas an phobail. Ina theannta sin, taispeánfaidh sé sin breis oscailteachta. Cuirfidh sé deireadh le hathiarratais Saorála Faisnéise a chuireann ualach mór oibre ar an bhfoireann agus costas ar an Státchiste. Foilseofar an fhaisnéis seo ar an suíomh idirlín tar éis deis a bheith ag an iarratasóir an fhaisnéis a úsáid.

“Soláthrófar
an fhaisnéis go
comhthéacsúil agus
míneofar i dteanga
shimplí í.”

CAIBIDIL 4: FOR-ROCHTAIN, ROCHTAIN AGUS ÓCÁIDÍ POIBLÍ

a) For-rochtain

Ba chóir go mbeadh buneolas ar fáil do gach saoránach ar an gcaoi a fheidhmíonn an pharlaimint Náisiúnta. Is féidir tuairim eolach a fháil ó na meáin ach, gan eolas maith ar an gcaoi a fheidhmíonn ár ndaonlathas parlaiminteach, ní féidir leis an bpobal cruinneas nó bailíocht na teachtaireachta a thugann na meáin a mheas.

Mar chuid de straitéis chumarsáide Thithe an Oireachtais 2007-2009, chríochnaigh 15,000 mac léinn iarbhuioideachais ceardlann seomra ranga lenar tugadh faoi ról Thithe an Oireachtais a mhíniú. Bunaíodh an cheardlann ar thaithí parlaimintí eile, agus ar an ngá atá ann dul i gcion ar dhaoine óga a bhíonn ag glacadh páirte sa chlár OSSP sa Sraith Shóisearach. Seachnaíodh an míbhuntáiste ó thaobh taistil fhada de tríd an Oireachtas a thógáil amach as Teach Laighean agus isteach sa seomra ranga.

Ní mór don chlár for-rochtana nua leanúint leis an leibhéal seo rochtana agus ag an am céanna freastal ar phobal níos leithne. Moltar dhá leagan de chlár nua a chur ar fáil chun freastal a dhéanamh ar dhá spriocghrúpa:

- For-rochtain Scoile: Freastal ar dháltaí OSSP agus Idirbhliana;
- For-rochtain Phobail: Freastal ar gach eagraíocht shibhialta agus phobail.

Cuirfear Clár Thithe an Oireachtais ar fáil ar an láthair i dTeach Laighean agus timpeall na tíre.

For-rochtain Scoile

Déanfar freastal ar an gclár OSSP (Oideachas Sibhialta, Sóisialta agus Polaitíochta) agus ar an Idirbhliain. Leanfar leis an gclár mar atá sé faoi láthair – ceardlann leathlae sa scoil. Tabharfar isteach réamhthionscadal a bheidh le déanamh sula dtabharfaidh an clár cuairt ar an scoil. Ar an dóigh sin, feicfear leibhéal na suime agus na tuisceana sa seomra ranga, agus cinnteofar gur ar bhonn éilimh a sholáthrófar an clár.

For-Rochtain leis an bPobal

Beidh ceardlann dhá uair an chloig ar fáil do raon leathan grúpaí pobail agus cathartha. Beidh formáid idirghníomhach i gceist agus bunófar ar rólghlacadh agus díospóireacht í. Is é an cuspóir a bheidh ann ná míniú a thabhairt ar an tslí a oibríonn Tithe an Oireachtais agus cuirtear an méid sin i gcomhthéacs thaithí an ghrúpa rannpháirtigh sa phobal. Déanfar teagmháil le grúpaí óige, grúpaí gníomhaíochta lucht scoir, eagraíochtaí dífhostaíochta agus grúpaí pobail ó gach déimeagrafach.

(b) Rochtain an Phobail

Ba chóir go mbunófaí cur chuige nua maidir le heispéireas cuairteoirí ar Theach Laighean ar chur chuige nua-aimseartha atá dírithe ar an gcustaiméir. Faoi láthair, tugann Comhaltaí Thithe an Oireachtais cuireadh do dhaoine sna toghlaigh agus do dhaoine eile cuairt a thabhairt ar Theach Laighean. Cuirtear turas ar fáil a insíonn scéal ailtireachta agus scéal stairiúil an fhoirgnimh.

Mar chuid dár gcéad straitéis chumarsáide, cuireadh bróisiúir nua do chuairteoirí leis an gclár do chuairteoirí freisin – bróisiúir a dearadh go sonrach dár spriocghrúpaí (mar shampla: leanaí, cuairteanna ó scoileanna agus daoine fásta).

Tagann an chuid is mó de na cuairteoirí chuig Teach Laighean tar éis dóibh cuireadh a fháil ó Chomhaltaí an Oireachtais. Leanfar den nós seo ach tá sé beartaithe go gcuirfear fáilte roimh chuairteoirí a thagann isteach gan choinne ná cuireadh. Ní chuirfear rochtain den chineál sin ar fáil ach ar laethanta nach mbeidh na Tithe ina suí agus beidh sé teoranta don acmhainn turais a bheidh ar fáil an lá sin. Ar chúiseanna slándála, beidh sé d'oibleagáid ar chuairteoirí a shiúlann isteach doiciméad aitheantais cuí a thaispeáint.

Tá sé beartaithe freisin go mbeidh cuairteoirí in ann áirithint dhíreach a dhéanamh lena bhféadfaidh daoine den phobal nó grúpaí glaoch a chur nó áirithint ar-líne a dhéanamh. Sa chás seo, cuirfear Comhaltaí ar an eolas faoi na cuairteanna sin trí bhunachar sonraí láraithe.

FOR-ROCHTAIN, ROCHTAIN AGUS ÓCÁIDÍ POIBLÍ

(c) Turais Nua

- **Turas Staire** ina leagfar amach ról parlaiminteach Theach Laighean ina chomhthéacs iomlán. Deartar an turas seo chun freastal a dhéanamh ar lucht éisteachta leathan, ach daoine fásta den chuid is mó. Tabharfar cuntas ar stair pharlaiminteach an fhoirgnimh mar aon le cuntas ar imeachtaí lena dtugtar léargas ar an traidisiún sin. Beidh óráid ghearr stairiúil ar fáil mar rogha bhreise, faoi réir acmhainne. Spriocais: 25 bliana agus os a chionn sin.
- **Cuairt Rólghlactha** a fhreastalóidh ar aosáigh óga agus mic léinn tríú leibhéal trí thuras gearr a dhéanamh ar Theach Laighean mar chuid den chuairt – turas lena ndíreofar ar a fheidhmeanna agus ar ról polaitíochta na gComhaltaí agus na sealbhóirí oifige, agus a mbeidh díospóireacht 45 nóiméad ar siúl ina dhiaidh. Spriocais: 18–25 bliana.
- **Turas don Aos Óg** a fhreastalóidh ar dhéagóirí níos sine atá beagnach ag an aois vótála. Díreofar ar eispéreas turais a mheascadh leis an gcóras parlaiminteach agus ról na gcomhaltaí. Beidh rólghlacadh ina ghné lárnach den turas seo agus glacfaidh gach cuairteoir ról comhaltaí de pharlaimint náisiúnta le linn na cuairte. Spriocais: 15–19 mbliana.
- **Turas ‘OSSP’** a fhreastalóidh ar an gclár OSSP a bhíonn á mhúineadh sna hiarbhunscoileanna. Is cuid thábhachtach den chúrsa é an Tionscadal Gníomhaíochta OSSP. Ba chóir an turas OSSP seo a dhearadh mar rogha don Tionscadal Gníomhaíochta OSSP. Spriocais: 13–15 bliana.

(d) Spás Eispéiris do Chuireoirí

Is tosaíocht don phlean cumarsáide é Spás Eispéiris tiomnaithe do Chuireoirí a sholáthar a lonnófar laistigh de mhórláthair pharlaiminte Theach Laighean. Saineofar spás oiriúnach le staidéar féidearthachta chun áit a sholáthar do thaispeántas

nua-aimseartha idirghníomhach faoi stair, ról agus éachtaí an Oireachtais, a dhíreofar go háirithe ar chuairteoirí óga.

Ba chóir go ndéanfaí éascaíocht leis an spás freisin do dhálacha bréige agus dáil na n-óg, léachtaí, seisiúin cheisteanna agus freagraí le Comhaltaí den Oireachtas agus oifigigh oideachais agus go gcuirfí saoráidí ardchaighdeání closamhairc agus idirghníomhacha ar fáil freisin.

(e) Imeachtaí Poiblí

Is léir go mbíonn imeachtaí poiblí an-éifeachtach chun aird an phobail agus na meán a mhealladh. Mar shampla, sna blianta 2008 agus 2009, chabhraigh Laethanta Teaghlaigh Thithe an Oireachtais chun íomhá dhearfach a chruthú de Theach Laighean.

Baineann priacal níos mó ó thaobh caidrimh phoiblí agus airgeadais de, áfach, le himeachtaí i gcomparáid leis an gcuid is mó de na cineálacha cumarsáide eile dá bhfuil ann. B’uailmhianach an gníomh é, go háirithe i gcúinsí geilleagair an lae inniu, tacaíocht an phobail agus na meán a fháil d’imeacht nua náisiúnta a mbeadh Tithe an Oireachtais mar ghné chroílárnach de.

Beidh orainn clár nua imeachtaí poiblí a úsáid chun cabhrú muinín níos fearr a chothú as ár bparlaimint náisiúnta. Tá sé beartaithe go bhforbrófar clár imeachtaí poiblí le linn na míonna amach romhainn lena mbainfear an aidhm sin amach laistigh de na srianta airgeadais atá i bhfeidhm faoi láthair. Ba chóir go soláthrófaí fóram uathúil do Chomhaltaí agus don phobal chun gníomhú a dhéanamh i dteannta a chéile. Is éard a bheidh i gceist leis an gcuspóir sin ná imeachtaí faisnéiseacha spreagúla a chuirfear ar fáil ar ardchaighdeán ach go han-éifeachtúil.

CAIBIDIL 5: AN TEICNEOLAÍOCHT A ÚSÁID LE HAGHAIDH CUMARSÁIDE

Tá sé rithábhachtach go mbainfeadh an leas is fearr agus is féidir as an idirlíon agus as na meáin shóisialta ionas gur féidir teagmháil chearta a dhéanamh leis an bpobal, go háirithe le daoine óga.

Rinneadh athchóiriú eastramhach le déanaí ar shuíomh gréasáin Thithe an Oireachtais, www.oireachtas.ie, a leagtar béim ann ar rochtain agus faisnéis don phobal. Éileofar, mar chuid de na bearta eile atá le glacadh, beartas nua comhtháite i leith na meán don eagraíocht lena léireofar an tábhacht a bhaineann leis an ngréasán agus uailmhian shoiléir chun an leas is fearr agus is féidir a bhaint as.

Dar le han-chuid daoine, is iad na meáin nua na modhanna is éifeachtúla agus is éifeachtaí chun cumarsáid a dhéanamh. Tá sé beartaithe leis an bplean cumarsáide seo tosaíocht a thabhairt do mheáin nua – an t-idirlíon, léibhinn ar-líne agus léibhinn leictreonacha eile, gréasáin mheán sóisialta, srl. Socrófar go ndéanfar éascaíocht do Thithe an Oireachtais chun go mbeidh siad in ann lántairbhe a bhaint as na meáin nua, de réir mar a thiocfaidh na meáin nua sin chun tosaigh ar na meáin eile. Tá dlús nach beag leis an bpróiseas seo.

Tá roinnt treochtaí tábhachtacha soiléir–

- Tá méadú leanúnach ag teacht ar na síntiúis leathanbhanda agus sroicheadh breis is 1.3 milliún sa bhliain 2009.
- Sroichfidh níos mó den ghluín ar-líne an aois vótála, rud a chiallaíonn go mbeidh níos mó úsáidí Idirlín i measc an daonra vótálaithe in aghaidh na bliana.
- Is cuid thábhachtach de na meáin nua iad na meáin shóisialta, agus suímh gréasánaithe sóisialta nó meáin phearsanta (“mise-mheáin”) á n-úsáid ag 23% de na daoine fásta in Éirinn agus os cionn dhá mhilliún cuntas cláraithe idir Bebo agus Facebook.

- Tá fás leanúnach ag teacht ar úsáid an Idirlín ar an nguthán póca, agus tá sé faighte amach gur úsáid breis is 21% de na húsáidí gutháin póca an tIdirlín ar an nguthán sa bhliain 2009.
- Roinntear luchtanna éisteachta móra na meán traidisiúnta (nuachtáin agus craoltóirí) ina mionluchtanna éisteachta leis na cainéil dhifriúla go léir atá ar fáil anois.
- Soláthraíonn meáin nua cainéil, atá éifeachtach ó thaobh costais de agus atá intomhaiste go mór, chun teagmháil a dhéanamh le luchtanna éisteachta a bhfuil sé an-deacair teagmháil a dhéanamh leo ar mhodhanna eile (mar shampla: daoine óga a chaitheann a n-am saor ar-líne agus nach léann nuachtáin ná nach n-úsáideann modhanna craolacháin seanbhunaithe).

Straitéis Nua i leith na Meán

Ar mhaithe leis na treochtaí seo a úsáid ar an tslí is fearr agus is féidir agus cur leis an obair atá déanta ar na meáin nua go dtí seo, cuirfidh an Oifig sraith gnéithe meán nua agus ar-líne san áireamh mar chuid dá straitéis chumarsáide.

1. Cur le hábhar agus seirbhísí breise ar www.oireachtas.ie

De bharr gur cuireadh léibheann nua teicneolaíochta ar bun i rith 2009, tá sé d’acmhainn ag suíomh gréasáin an Oireachtais a bheith ina phríomhghné den mhodh ar a ndéanfaidh an Oifig cumarsáid leis an bpobal, le Comhaltaí den Oireachtas, leis na meáin, leis an lucht éisteachta oideachais agus le leas-sealbhóirí eile.

2. Cainéal éisteachta a thosú ar mheáin shóisialta

Déanfaidh baill foirne cumarsáide den Oireachtas faireachán ar mheáin shóisialta, ar phlé-fhóiraim

AN TEICNEOLAÍOCHT A ÚSÁID LE HAGHAIDH CUMARSÁIDE

agus ar shuímh ghréasáin iomchuí. Tabharfaidh sé sin an deis dóibh dul i dtaithí ar na cainéil sin agus ar an tslí ar a léiríonn siad na treochoitaí coitianta.

3. Tús a chur le rannpháirtíocht níos mó sna meáin shóisialta

Faoi réir treoirlínte soiléire agus oiliúna, is féidir le baill foirne na hOifige cur leis na meáin shóisialta ar bhealach gníomhach. Déantar nuacht an Oireachtais a chur ar aghaidh cheana féin ó www.oireachtas.ie chun go léireofar ar Twitter agus Facebook é. Is éard a bheidh i gceist sa chéad chéim eile ná níos mó ábhair a shaindálleadh ar shuímh mheán sóisialta eile agus ceangal a dhéanamh le roinnt pléítí ar shuímh eile nuair is cuí.

4. Meáin nua a úsáid chun cur le gníomhaíocht meán eile

Bíonn meáin nua á n-úsáid ag eagraíochtaí diaidh ar ndiaidh chun cur le gníomhaíocht eile agus, i roinnt cásanna, úsáidtear iad in ionad na gníomhaíochta sin. Mar shampla, is féidir físeán an Oireachtais a cruthaíodh ar an gcéad dul síos i gcomhair poiblíochta ar na meáin a athphacáistiú i gclár ghearra a léireoidh ábhair níos imeachta – an dul chun cinn a dhéanann Bille tríd an Oireachtas, mar shampla.

5. Raon chumarsáid shoghluaiste an Oireachtais a leathnú

Tá leagan maith soghluaiste dá shuíomh gréasáin athfhorbartha ag an Oireachtas cheana féin. Cuirfead leis sin trí fheidhmchláir (ríomhchláir bheaga shainiúla) a choimisiúnú le haghaidh na ngaireas soghluaiste is coitianta. Is féidir leo seo aon ní a fheidhmiú – fothaí nuachta beo, sceidil “Inniu san Oireachtas” agus bunachair shonraí Comhaltaí, mar shamplaí.

6. Teilifís Líonra

Leanfar de thosaíocht a thabhairt do chraoladh imeachtaí uile Thithe an Oireachtais ar an Líonra domhanda. Ní rogha eile é sin ar chainéal teilifíse parlaiminte ná cumhdach craoltóir náisiúnta ar ár bparlaimint náisiúnta. Cuireann sé deis ar fáil don Oireachtas, áfach, chun cur lenár lucht féachana ar ár gcuid imeachtaí beo.

“Bíonn meáin nua á n-úsáid ag eagraíochtaí diaidh ar ndiaidh chun cur le gníomhaíocht eile agus, i roinnt cásanna, úsáidtear iad in ionad na gníomhaíochta sin.”

“Gnéithe lárnacha de straitéis 2010-2012 is ea meastóireacht a dhéanamh ar éifeachtacht an phlean nua cumarsáide agus luach ar airgead a chruthú.”

Gnéithe lárnacha de straitéis 2010-2012 is ea meastóireacht a dhéanamh ar éifeachtacht an phlean nua cumarsáide agus luach ar airgead a chruthú. Beidh tionscadal gearr taighde mar bhonn taca leis an bPlean Cumarsáide agus déanfar gach gníomh a bheartófar a thomhas in aghaidh thuairimí phobal na hÉireann agus an méid a mbeidh siad ag súil leis.

Ar na réimsí is gá a thástáil, áirítear–

- An cineál eolais atá ag an bpobal agus atá ag teastáil ón bpobal maidir le Tithe an Oireachtais, má táimid chun an sprioc atá againn ó thaobh muintín níos airde a chothú i measc an phobail a bhaint amach?
- Cad iad na cineálacha teagmhála a chothóidh meas, muintín agus iontaoibh sa pharlaimint náisiúnta?
- Cad iad na bealaí, go sonrach, ar ar chóir go mbeadh an tOireachtas agus na daoine a oibríonn ann (Comhaltaí agus baill foirne araon) níos oscailte agus níos inrochtana?
- Na teachtaireachtaí is cóir a chur in iúl don phobal agus conas is mian leis an bpobal go dtabharfaí éisteacht dóibh?

Tá sé rithábhachtach go mbunófar príomhtháscairí feidhmíochta don am atá romhainn agus go ndéanfar iad a chomhtháthú go cuí mar chuid de chur i ngníomh an Phlean Chumarsáide. Socrófar tagairtmharc leis an tionscadal taighde freisin chun a thuilleadh rianú a dhéanamh ar na dearcaí agus na braistintí atá ann i leith Thithe an Oireachtais – dearcaí agus braistintí a bhíonn ag síorathrú – de réir mar a dhéantar an clár cumarsáide a chur i bhfeidhm ar aghaidh go dtí 2012.