

18.254

A chara,

I write to make a recommendation with regard to the Donabate Portrane area, currently in the Swords local electoral area, Fingal County Council.

In my view, the Donabate Portrane area should remain part of the Swords local electoral area. Donabate Portrane has always been part of the Swords LEA. There are many important links between Donabate Portrane and Swords, including geographic, transportation, economic, social and educational links.

Geographically it is only about five miles from Donabate to Swords, closer still as the crow flies. The local bus route, the 33b, travels between Donabate and Swords on a regular basis throughout the day and it is only about 10 minutes on the bus between the two. Economically many people from Donabate Portrane work in Swords, as well as doing their shopping, banking and social welfare transactions in Swords. Socially there are close family ties between many people in Donabate Portrane and Swords, and Swords is also a place where many people from the Donabate Portrane are socialise. In terms of education links, many people from the Donabate Portrane area have traditionally gone to second level school in Swords. As such, it is clear that there is a natural connection between Donabate Portrane and Swords. They should remain in the one local electoral area as they always have.

There is speculation that Donabate Portrane could be moved into a new local electoral area with Rush and Lusk, which would be a reasonable move. However if Donabate Portrane were to be moved into a new electoral area, it would make much more sense to move Donabate Portrane into the Malahide local electoral area.

The Malahide local electoral area has seen a drop in population given its older age profile and as such is somewhat “over-represented” in terms of local councillors. By moving Donabate Portrane into the Malahide LEA, it would bring the councillor/citizen ratio to the optimum level.

There are also many connections between Donabate Portrane and Malahide. Geographically they are both located on the Broadmeadows estuary, a SAC/SPA Natura 2000 site. In terms of transportation links, it is only about a 10 minute drive between Donabate and Malahide, whereas to Lusk it is about 15 minutes and Rush about 20 minutes. Donabate and Malahide are very close as the crow flies. In terms of public transport, it is only 4 minutes on the train from Donabate town centre to Malahide town centre, whereas by train to Lusk and Rush train station it takes a little longer, and is also then quite a walk from the station to either the town centres of Rush or Lusk. In terms of walking and cycling routes, it is possible to easily walk or cycle around the Broadmeadows estuary between Donabate and Malahide, and when the new Broadmeadows Way cycle and pedestrian route along the railway line is put in place (due next year) it will create even closer links between the two towns. There is no such easy walking or cycling access between Donabate Portrane and Rush/Lusk. Furthermore, there are very strong social connections between Donabate Portrane and Malahide, with many people originally from Malahide now living in Donabate Portrane. A great many people from

Donabate Portrane also socialise in Malahide. Therefore it is clear that there very strong connection between Donabate Portrane and Malahide.

In conclusion, I would strongly recommend that Donabate Portrane remain in the same local electoral area as Swords, but if this not possible, Donabate Portrane should be integrated into the Malahide Local Electoral Area for the reasons outlined above.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your reply.

Regards,