

Secretary
Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee No.2
Room 1.67
Custom House
Dublin 1

19 February 2018

SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE NO 2 IN RESPECT OF FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Dear Secretary,

I wish to make a submission in respect of the Castleknock Local Electoral Area (LEAs) in the western part of Fingal County Council.

Dublin 15

Dublin 15 has for the past fifteen years contained DEDs which showed among the highest population growth in the state. The total population of the Dublin 15 part of Fingal County Council in Census 2016 reached 109,895 people. The existing Mulhuddart and Castleknock LEAs elect 15 of the 40 members of Fingal County Council. Based on Census 2016 the Dublin 15 population has sufficient population for 15 members of the local authority and this should be maintained.

Village unity

The terms of reference of the Boundary Committee emphasise the importance of maintaining the unity of urban villages and using such villages as key elements within a Local Authority Area:

“Local electoral areas should be designed, as far as possible, around urban villages or have a neighbourhood focal point (or points), taking due account of local and community identities and linkages and the need to facilitate the effectiveness of the governance and representational roles of elected members”

In considering the redrawing of the local authority boundaries in Dublin 15 area, it is important to respect established community linkages and maintain the cohesion of the area. If 5 seater wards are to be created in place of the current 7 or 8 seater areas, they should be based around recognised urban villages.

Blanchardstown village

Any redrawing should keep Blanchardstown village and its environs together. This would involve maintaining the Blanchardstown-Delwood, Blanchardstown-Roselawn, Blanchardstown-Abbotstown and part of the Blanchardstown Coolmine DED within the same ward. The Blanchardstown-Coolmine 1 section of the DED, which incorporates a number of estates along the Clonsilla Road, should remain in Castleknock ward, as it is geographically contiguous to Blanchardstown village and residents identify with Blanchardstown. Any removal of this part of the DED to another ward would split the Blanchardstown urban area. The Blanch Delwood DED is also an integral part of the Blanchardstown village environs.

This would facilitate a redrawing in which other polling districts of the Blanch Coolmine DED were included in a different ward. The Mountview and Blakestown areas would be a more logical fit with either Clonsilla or Mulhuddart villages depending on the nature of the redrawn wards. The Commission should prioritise maintain the unity of the suburban villages over the unity of the Blanchardstown Coolmine DED.

Castleknock ward

The villages of Blanchardstown and Castleknock, together with the neighbouring area of Carpenterstown, have been the core of Castleknock ward over the last three local elections. It is suggested that this should be maintained in any redrawing, as Carpenterstown which has its own focal point around the Carpenter pub, shops and Castleknock Community College, has strong community linkages with Castleknock in terms of post-primary school attendance and shared membership of sports clubs and community groups. The retention of the following DEDs in Castleknock ward would certainly justify a five seater, if not a six seater, in terms of population:

CASTLEKNOCK PARK
CASTLEKNOCK KNOCKMAROON
BLANCHARDSTOWN-ABBOTSTOWN
BLANCHARDSTOWN-ROSELAWN
BLANCHARDSTOWN-DELWOOD
BLANCHARDSTOWN-COOLMINE 1 (lower Clonsilla Road)

CONCLUSION

I urge the Boundary Committee when examining the revision of boundaries in Fingal County Council to:

- Maintain existing number of Councillors for Dublin 15
- Ensure that the village of Blanchardstown is not split between different LEAs.
- Maintain the villages of the Blanchardstown and Castleknock, together with Carpenterstown, as the focal points of the Castleknock LEA.
- Divide Electoral Divisions as necessary to prioritise maintaining the unity of “*urban villages or have a neighbourhood focal point...*’ when reconfiguring the Dublin 15 EAs

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

Kind regards,

John Walsh

Labour Party Local Representative

Castleknock