

18.261

Secretary (Committee 2)

15 February 2018

Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee

Room 1.67

Custom House

Dublin 1

Dear Sirs

This is a submission related to local area boundaries in Dublin

#### DUBLIN CITY

In Dublin the north city merits 37 seats and the south city merits 26 seats. I note the terms of reference refer to the “desirability, where it may be possible to do so, of aligning local electoral area boundaries with Dail constituency boundaries”. This is possible in the south city but only partly in the north city. The necessary population per seat is 8,202.

#### Dublin City South

In south Dublin, the area covered by the Dublin Bay South constituency merits 14 seats and the area covered by the Dublin South Central constituency merits 12 seats.

If a seat were switched from Pembroke-South Dock to Rathgar-Rathmines, that would rectify those areas. A logical course to follow is to extend the eastern boundary of Rathgar-Rathmines to the N 11. This road is used as a boundary throughmost of Dun-Laoghaire-Rathdown, so it is logical to use in the city too. This would involve annexing an area called, as it happens, Rathmines East B and part of Pembroke East D to Rathgar Rathmines. It probably doesn't quite rectify the population imbalance, but both areas are fine for 7 seats. If there is a big issue about splitting Donnybrook, including those areas between the N11 and Herbert Park (which form part of Pembroke West B) could be considered.

As a technical point, I am always amazed that this area is not called Rathmines-Terenure. Pretty well all of Terenure is in the city and it is a significant part of the area. Except in the mind of an estate agent, very little of Terenure is in the county – some areas there incorporate the word Terenure in their name, but not even an estate agent would call those areas Terenure.

In South Central, the current division works mathematically, but associates a mish mash of areas. It seems that the inner city forms a logical 5 seat area' if a little short population wise (Merchants Quay x 6, Ushers x 6 and Kilmainham B and C). The balance would then be 7 seats. This incidentally deals with the splitting of Drimnagh. It would probably be better than Crumlin and Ballyfermot are

separate areas; however there is simply not enough population to sustain both with the 5 seat minimum.

#### Dublin City North

This is messier. The constituencies have the following (city) population

Dublin Central	113,765 (12.92 seats)
Dublin North West	70,496 (8.09 seats)
Dublin Bay North	126,381 (14.35 seats)
Dublin West (part)	14,743 (1.67 seats)

It is not possible to stick to North West Dail boundaries and comply. The West bit needs to be accommodated with Central. A curiosity of the west portion is the detachment of a small bit north of the river in Phoenix Park and putting it with the southside (from which it is separated by a vast area of railway tracks and Kilmainham Park). It seems more logical to put it with Arran Quay and have people vote at that area's polling station.

There is also the issue of losing two seats from Beaumont Donaghmede and one seat from North Inner City and as the existing electoral areas can only absorb one seat, there is a need to create an extra electoral area in the middle. I would be exceptionally focussed on keeping the North Inner City as intact as possible. This is an area which has exceptional needs and suffers from low turnout exacerbated by a large non-Irish population who are usually not registered– it would likely be poorly represented were it to be carved up.

There are many ways to proceed, but I think the following works (where all divisions A to D etc are included in an area, I just state the name)

Ballymun Finglas (Ballygall, Ballymun, Finglas North, Finglas South, Whitehall A, B and C) 7 seats

Beaumont Drumcondra (Beaumont, Drumcondra South A, Grace Park, Kilmore, Priorswood, Whitehall D) 7 seats (between Swords Rd and Malahide Rd)

Cabra-Glasnevin (Ashtown, Botanic, Cabra East, Cabra West, Drumcondra South C, Phoenix Park) 6 seats

Clontarf (Clontarf East, Clontarf West, Harmonstown, North Dock A and B) 5 seats

Donaghmede (Ayrfield, Edenmore, Grange, Raheny) 5 seats

North Inner City (Arran Quay, Ballybough, Drumcondra South B, Inns Quay, Mountjoy, North City, North Dock C, Rotunda) 7 seats

This largely reflects the constituency boundaries with only Beaumont A, Drumcondra South A, North Dock A and B and Whitehall D divorced from their constituency. Drumcondra South C could be switched to balance numbers a bit better.

## DUN LAOGHAIRE

This area needs very little change, save that Dun Laoghaire needs to drop a seat to comply with the terms of reference. Logically it would seem that the transfer of a couple of DEDs to Killiney-Shankill would work. Possible bits are Dalkey Upper/Dalkey Hill, Sallynoggin East/South or Cabinteely Pottery/Foxrock Beechpark.

Glencullen-Sandyford is somewhat too big in population for 7 seats and Stillorgan somewhat too small for 6 seats. The balance would be helped by moving that part of Glencullen DED now in Dun Laoghaire constituency to Stillorgan. There also might be merit in considering moving Cabinteely-Loughlinstown (and an associated seat) from Glencullen to Stillorgan or to Killiney-Shankill. This would leave Stillorgan as the only area straddling the two constituencies. If Cabinteely-Loughlinstown were moved to Killiney-Shankill, then Stillorgan could take Pottery and Beechpark to solve the Dun Laoghaire 8 seat issue.

While there are other possible shifts, it would seem to me that continuity would be best.

## FINGAL

Fingal is somewhat messy to deal with. This is accentuated by the fact that it splits logically into two bits. The western bit as currently constituted needs 15 seats, but unless there is a satisfactory 3 x 5 configuration, this does not work. I'll leave you to explore that. Further leaving 15 seats "west" complicates the division of the rest. I therefore think The Ward needs to be detached from Dublin West and re-located. The detaching of the Ward leaves the two "West" electoral areas almost even in population. There is some merit in exploring leaving the small areas in The Ward known as Tyrrellstown with Mulhuddart LEA and that might entail re-balancing further south.

While the Swords census town with 39,248 can be accommodated in one DED, this is not as easy with the entire set of DEDs which have Swords in their name. This also leads to some issues with surrounding areas, which are not neatly resolved. I think the most orderly arrangement might involve splitting Swords into two areas each with five seats.

The north county seems simple. Balbriggan, Holmpatrick and Skerries constitute a neat five seat area. Balscadden can be associated with them. There are representations about this area suggesting parts have been "divorced" in the past, which I don't think is the case.

Donabate, Lusk and Rush each have 9,000 people and together with the rest of the rural hinterland make up a neat five seats too. I don't think it is a good idea associating them with Swords.

Kilsallaghan may be an exception to this. Generally if the relatively thinly populated rural parts of Dublin are to have representation, they need to be all in the one area.

The balance is quite messy. However a configuration which works mathematically is

Howth-Malahide 6 (Baldoyle, Howth, Malahide, Portmarnock and Sutton, together with east Seatown)

Swords 5 (all divisions so named except east Seatown)

Airport-Kinsale 5 (Airport, Balgriffin, Dubber, Kinsale, The Ward, Turnapin). While this area is unsatisfactory in geographic look, it is effectively the overflow of the north city largely in Dublin North West constituency plus Kinsale. I do think however it is quite unwieldy and despite the range of largely identical submissions suggesting one Swords area, the optimum arrangement might be two Swords divisions with these as hinterland. There is a lot of merit in keeping the north city fringes from The Ward to Turnapin in the one electoral area. As the committee only currently has the task of dividing up Dublin, the exercise of exploring this should be undertaken.

## SOUTH DUBLIN

South Dublin was one of the most unsatisfactory products of the last review as the area called Templeogue-Terenure was an abomination, consisting of unrelated bits of Rathfarnham and also the Firhouse Village area joined by a slender neck of land straddling a motorway.

This time the challenge will be shedding the eighth seat in each of Clondalkin and Lucan, both relatively natural areas. In fact it seems fairly simple to divide up.

Lucan forms a natural seven seat area. The divisions of Palmerston Village, Palmerston West, Clondalkin Rowlagh, Clondalkin Moorfield and Clondalkin Monastery are close to the required population for five seats.

I note representations that the "four districts" be associated. The three divisions Newcastle, Rathcoole and Saggart have population to sustain two seats. The remaining Clondalkin divisions support three. So a Clondalkin-Rathcoole division would justify five seats. That deals fairly neatly with the north end. If Brittas is to be wholly covered, it might be necessary to split a DED. There seems to be some issue with an area called Balgaddy and a suggestion that it go to Lucan – I think it's the bit of Cappaghmore DED north of the railway line and west of R113. I think this could be accommodated.

In the south end, the divisions of Rathfarnham (x5), Firhouse Knocklyon, Ballyboden and Edmondstown justify about 4.5 seats. However there are 11 small areas in Firhouse Ballycullen within the M50, which seem to have enough population to get to five seats for a Rathfarnham area, in a division effectively bounded by the Dodder and the M50.

I note the desire to have a separate Firhouse area. If the Firhouse Village, balance of Ballycullen, Bohernabreena, Ballinascorney and Tallaght Avonbeg, Glenview and Millbrook are put together, that seems to underpin about 4.3 seats. I suspect that if those parts of Tallaght Oldbawn and Kiltipper which are to the east of the Whitestown Way/Kiltipper Way Line are added, that gets to 5 (if not 6) seat territory. This boundary starts at Shamrock Rovers and there is industrial territory to its west side, so it seems a natural line, even if in the middle of a DED.

There remain 13 seats to be allocated from West Tallaght over to Templeogue. The Templeogue and Terenure DEDs when taken with Clondalkin Ballymount, Tallaght Kilnamanagh, Tallaght Kingswood and Tallaght Tymon are in the six seat region. The balance of Tallaght not already allocated is about correct for 7 seats. There are variations on this theme which would allow Firhouse LEA to extend a bit further west and or contracting the Templeogue based ward to five seats. For the reasons discussed above, I don't think this ward should have Terenure in its name; it will effectively be Tallaght East-Templeogue. The current areas called Terenure or Templeogue are awkward to deal with, having population for 3.5 seats.

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