

## **LEA SUBMISSION – 2018**

### **SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL ELECTORAL AREA BOUNDARY COMMITTEES UNDERTAKING THE LOCAL ELECTORAL AREAS BOUNDARY REVIEW ON BEHALF OF THE FINE GAEL PARTY REPRESENTING THE CORK SOUTH CENTRAL DÁIL CONSTITUENCY**

#### **Introduction:**

This submission on behalf of the Fine Gael party representing the Cork South Central Dáil constituency to the local electoral area boundary committee is made in response to the invitation for submissions in relation to the current review of local electoral areas (LEAs) 2018. The submission is both in respect of Cork City Council and Cork County Council and both acknowledges and welcomes the published plans for the expansion of the current Cork City boundary, with the consequent inclusion of significant areas, until now represented by Cork County Council and which is of particular significance to those residents who reside both in the Cork City and Cork County Council area of the Cork South Central Constituency.

Over 84,253 people previously represented by members of Cork County Council will as and from May 2019 will have a new local authority and will be represented by Councillors elected to Cork City Council.

## Terms of Reference:

The published terms of reference request the committee, inter alia, to take into account specifically the following matters:

- i. acknowledge the population figures published in the census of 2016
- ii. that all future LEAs should have a minimum of five and a maximum of 7 Councillors, save for unusual circumstances
- iii. the membership of both local authorities will remain at the present membership, which is namely for:

Cork City Council	31
Cork County Council	55
- iv. a distinct urban LEA shall be designated in respect of each town where the population is equal to or greater than 15,000 persons and in those circumstances the number of Councillors to represent that LEA shall not be less than 5.
- v. other LEAs shall be based around urban centres, taking into account the **“LOCAL AND COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND LINKAGES AS WELL AS NATIONAL BOUNDARIES”**

## **Cork City Council:**

- The number of Councillors to be elected to Cork City Council is to remain at 31.
- The existing three LEAs, Cork South Central, Cork South-East and Cork South-West, are wholly situate within the Dáil constituency of Cork South Central.
- The stated boundaries for the extended area of Cork City will, however, particularly on the western side of the city, encompass to a lesser or greater extent the Dáil constituencies of Cork South West, Cork North West and Cork North Central.
- Bearing in mind the terms of reference, the most significant feature which establishes “**LOCAL AND COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND LINKAGES AS WELL AS NATURAL BOUNDARIES**” is the division of Cork City by the River Lee. The pathway of the River Lee effectively divides what is south of the river and what is north of the river and if the boundary commission reviewing Dáil constituencies had an opportunity to take into account the now established new boundary for Cork City Council, it is respectfully suggested that that commission would have increased the Dáil representation from the current four to five, thus enabling the traditional local and community identity, that is what is south of the River Lee, to be represented both at local authority level, now to be Cork City Council in the future, from the western boundary of Ballincollig to the eastern side represented by the physical boundary of Cork Harbour and with the Dáil constituency of Cork South-Central to a very great degree dovetailing with the local electoral areas. Regretfully that has not occurred and as a consequence it will inevitably mean that many significant urban areas now to be incorporated within the LEA of Cork City Council will continue to be represented by Dáil constituencies other than Cork South-Central, such as Cork South-West, Cork North-West and Cork North-Central.
- There are currently twelve electoral districts included in the transfer from Cork County to Cork City. This represents a “transfer of population of over 84,253 persons”. However, it appears that only three of these electoral districts are transferred to the city in their entirety. This will create a new population for Cork City Council, both north and south of the River Lee, based on the 2016 census of some 209,010 persons. This will create a representation level on the basis that the number of elected Councillors is to remain the same at 31, of some 6,771 per Councillor (209,010 divided by 31) which is an effective increase of over 2,600 persons per Councillor.
- As the number of Councillors are to remain the same, per the terms of reference, at thirty-one and the existing local electoral areas of Cork South-Central, Cork South-East and Cork South-West will see their population in the revised Cork City boundary increase from 73,417 to

126,751. This will average a population of 7,041 per elected Council. As a consequence the existing wards of Cork South-Central, South-East and South-West, will now have to include the additional population of what is currently in the Ballincollig / Carrigaline LEA of 53,324 – the Bandon / Kinsale LEA of 10, which is effectively an increase of just short of 75%, or an average representation of an extra 2,600 persons per elected Council. This will inevitably mean vastly greater work and commitment on behalf of those 31 Councillors who from May 2019 will represent the expanded area of Cork City Council, both north and south of the River Lee.

- The vast majority of this increase is as a result of the inclusion of the town of Ballincollig and its immediate hinterland. The majority of the town of Ballincollig lies currently in the Dáil constituency of Cork North-West with the hinterland on the northern side of the River Lee lying in the Dáil constituencies of both Cork North-West and primarily Cork North-Central.
- The eastern boundary of Cork City Council is identified by the physical boundary of the River Lee existing into Cork Harbour, whereas the western boundary is delineated now by the town of Ballincollig. The existing LEAs which are within the confines of the old City Council boundary are now being expanded to include significant portions of Rochestown, Douglas, Douglas rural, Grange, Frankfield, Lehenaghmore, Togher and onto Ballincollig. In essence the western boundary is delineated particularly on the southern end by the main Cork to Kinsale Road, the N27.
- It is suggested that possibly two new LEAs could be created within the extended boundary area of Cork City Council or alternatively the existing LEAs could be expanded to include those areas. Clearly there would either be an increase or a reduction in the number of Councillors for the respective LEAs remaining however at least 18 for the LEAs that will serve Cork City Council and its constituents south of the River Lee.

## Cork County Council

- The terms of reference direct that the number of Councillors shall remain at 55.
- Bearing in mind those areas which will remain within the jurisdiction of Cork County Council and are specifically or primarily situate within the Dáil constituency boundary of Cork South Central, it is strongly recommended that a new LEA will be created that will specifically include the existing electoral districts of Carrigaline and Liscleary (population 20,998) together with Monkstown rural (886), Monkstown urban (5,219), Farranbrien (540), Ballyfeard (374), Ballyfoyle (362), Kilpatrick (526), Cullingford (95), Nohoval (316), Templebreedy (3,778), subtotal 12,496, which when added to Carrigaline and Liscleary give a grand total of 33,494 which would both satisfy the terms of reference, allowing for a LEA of 5 or possibly 6 Councillors.
- In addition this LEA would very much meet the terms of reference in creating a LEA which allows for “**LOCAL AND COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND LINKAGES AS WELL AS NATURAL BOUNDARIES**”
- The statutory boundary to the northern end is the new Cork City Council extended boundary. To the eastern side it is the natural boundary of Cork City Harbour and on the southern side again it is the natural physical boundary of the sea and on the western side it is the division created by the N27 Cork to Kinsale Road.
- If the ED of Ballygarvan was also included that would add another 1,777 persons.
- The community in this area is primarily identified as being south of Cork City surrounded by Cork Harbour and before a traditional definition of West Cork, Bandon, Kinsale, etc. commences.