

18.021

Sligo County Council: Local Electoral Area Changes for 2019 Local Elections

(Note :)

All the proposed changes I am suggesting below take into consideration and respect the + or - 10% difference range allowed which are identified in the terms of reference (IE 3,270 – 3,996 citizens per Cllr).

Introduction:

With regard to the current status of the two LEA's in Co. Sligo, it is felt that these two areas are too large in order to be able to promote effective and meaningful political engagement and accountability on the ground.

The 10 seat Sligo LEA and the 8 seat Ballymote/Tubbercurry LEA's cover a very wide geographical area and as such do not take into consideration variances in topography, urban and rural divergences and other deviating issues. Ultimately it is felt that these two LEA's have led to political misunderstandings and much confusion about political representation.

On this basis, I am suggesting that the following changes should be made to the two current LEA's in Co. Sligo in order to promote better local governance.

1. That the current 10 seat **Sligo LEA** should be withdrawn and replaced with two smaller LEA's consisting of a 6 seat 'Sligo – Strandhill' LEA and a 3 Seat 'North Sligo' LEA.

This would be done by coupling the following Electoral Districts together.

North Sligo: A 3 seat LEA: 10,109 people divided by 3 + 1 = 3,370 per cllr.

Consisting of the following Electoral Districts: Cliffony North, Cliffony South, Rossinver East, Rossinver West, Lissadill North, Lissadill East, Lissadill West, Carney, Glencar, Calry, Drumcliff East and Drumcliff West.

Sligo - Strandhill: A 6 seat LEA: 23,290 divided by 6 + 1 = 3,882 per cllr. Consisting of the following Electoral Districts; Sligo North, Sligo West, Sligo East, Knockaree and Kilmacowen.

The make-up of these two LEA's whilst although falling outside of the suggested LEA size of between 5 and 7 seats, is consistent with the ultimate aim of the terms of references of this boundary review. This being that it unites the urban area of Sligo Town into one LEA together once more along with the landlocked Strandhill ED, and it ensures that the North Sligo LEA is ultimately designed around the urban centre of Sligo town to the point whereby other divergences begin to emerge. Furthermore, Sligo – Strandhill has historically been joined together in previous boundary reviews and it is felt that a return to this make-up would cause little disruption.

2. The current 8 seat **Ballymote - Tubbercurry LEA** should be withdrawn and replaced with two smaller LEA's consisting of a 5 seat 'South Sligo' LEA and a 4 Seat 'West Sligo' LEA.

This would be done by coupling the following Electoral Districts together.

South Sligo: 5 seat LEA: 19,153 divided by 5 + 1 = 3,831 per cllr. Consisting of the following Electoral Districts; Killaraght, Coolavin, Kilfree, Cuilmore, Kilyshalvy, Kilturra, Drumrat, Toomour, Templevanny, Aghanagh, Cloonoghill, Kilmactranny, Ballynashee, Killadoon, Lakeview, Bricklieve, Ballymote, Owenmore, Streamstown, Cartron, Coolaney, Carrownaskeeagh, Balysadare West, Ballysadare East, Temple, Collooney, Ballintogher West, Ballintogher East, Carrickbannagher, Lisconny, Drumfin, Ballynakill, Drumcolumb, Shancough and Riverstown.

West Sligo: 4 seat LEA: 13,385 divided by 4 + 1 = 3,347 per cllr. Consisting of the following Electoral Districts; Achonry West, Achonry East, Banada, Tubbercurry, Leitrim, Aclare, Kilmactighe, Breencorragh, Glendarragh, Cloonacool, Loughil, Branchfield, Mullagheruse, Templeboy South, Skreen, Dromard West, Dromard East, Toberpatrick East, Toberpatrick West, Aughris, Templeboy North, Dromore, Buncrowny, Castleconnor East and West, Kilglass, Rathmacurky, Easky west and East.

Once more the current make-up of the Ballymote - Tubbercurry LEA is too large and does not take into consideration the ranging geographic differences, such as the topography and distance. This is why I suggest splitting it into two separate LEA's as suggested above.

Conclusion:

I firmly believe that creating smaller and more comparable LEA's is required in order promote better engagement with local politics and as such better governance and accountability in our communities. This is why I believe that the suggested changes that I have above are the alterations which the boundary review commission need to implement in Co. Sligo.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my brief submission. If you would like to discuss this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kindest regards,

Blaine Gaffney,
Fine Gael Area Rep: Sligo

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