

18.101

Secretary (Committee 1)

15 February 2018

Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee

Room 1.67

Custom House

Dublin 1

Dear Sirs

This is a submission relating to the 23 counties which it is entrusted to you to review. They are set out county by county, so that you can post the relevant page to the county heading if you wish.

There are a couple of preliminary issues.

Census Town

There is set out at the introduction to the page for each county those "census towns" which seem to have a population of 15,000 or more and therefore fall to be treated in accordance with paragraph 4 of your Terms of Reference. I suspect that in some of these cases, some of the population indicated in the census as the aggregate for the town is resident in an adjacent county (eg Carlow where some of the town population is in Laois). Where the para 4 term of reference does not cover the county town, the name of the county town is set out, as that area falls to be treated in terms of paragraph 5. I am assuming that the census towns are those which appear in the long list set out in list E2016 forming part of the database annexed to the census. There does not appear to be a map attached to the census which shows the precise area of each town as measured in 2016.

Urban areas

Paragraphs 4 and 5 of your terms of reference could be construed as suggesting that the local area prescribed for a big town or a county town is confined to the urban area. However often that area will not merit five seats and even if it does so, there is no satisfactory arrangement to deal with its natural hinterland. I am therefore sometimes suggesting districts which substantially consist of the town, but also include clearly related rural areas which cannot be "divorced" from the town in a satisfactory way.

Continuity

Generally, while your terms of reference do not mention continuity, there would appear to be little merit in change for change's sake where existing districts broadly comply with term of reference 6 and are within the 5 to 7 range permitted.

Flexibility

Your terms of reference are somewhat inflexible for counties with 18 local authority members of which you have 7 to review. These now have to be either 6 x 3 or 7,6,5 to comply. Similar inflexibility

arose with these counties on the last review. The position is only marginally better for counties which have 19 or 20 members being Laois, Offaly, Westmeath. If some of these counties are to be divided into logical areas, there may be a need to resort to 3 or 4 seat areas.

I am suggesting a number of 3 and 4 seat areas. I am interpreting the term geographic size being disproportionately large in the context of the county. For example the Muinebheag area of Carlow is not objectively over large, but it is unsatisfactory and overlarge in the context of Carlow county.

Keeping adjacent areas together

I think one of the big issues with the existing boundaries is that towns and their natural hinterland are not kept together because of the inflexibility of the pre-2014 terms of reference. It is ludicrous to have areas to the north west of Roscommon town in Athlone LEA and the shores of Galway Bay in Killaloe LEA. Primarily in this submission, I have tried to put areas where they belong. However the current terms of reference do create anomalies, for example the necessity to associate Enniskerry with Greystones.

Small pockets subject of representations

I note a number of submissions related to associating small areas with a local town, for example those related to Baltrasna and Ashbourne. I would strongly favour taking small areas from DEDs to accommodate these obviously strongly held views. As a resident of Terenure, I know it has helped enormously in terms of council issues that Terenure has been in one council area for the last five years, so I completely understand how relevant these types of submission are.

For convenience in describing areas, I am using the numbers specified in database E2013 in the census. The census DEDs are grouped by reference to long standing rural divisions, but the current census does not name them. I believe the old rural districts are frequently a good indicator of hinterland to towns and hence areas that should be left with towns for local government purposes where possible.

Brendan Heneghan

CARLOW - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Carlow 24,272 population

County population 56,932; average population per seat 3,163

Neither of the current electoral areas in this county is permissible under the terms of reference.

The combined population of Carlow Urban, Carlow Rural, Graigue Urban and Ballinacarrig is 21,536 which justifies 6.81 seats. Therefore I would suggest that this form a seven seat area (Carlow LEA). There is a case for annexing the parts of the adjacent DEDs inside the M9.

It follows that the balance of the county is split 6:5. I doubt Carlow could be considered so geographically large (however desirable) to justify 4,4 and 3 based on the old local authority areas.

A possible alignment is for Tullow to consist of the 8 DEDs in the former rural district of Baltinglass and then Ballintemple, Ballon, Burton Hall, Clonegall, Cranemore, Grangeford, Johnstown, Kellistown, Kilbride, Killerrig, Myshall, Rathrush, Shangarry, Tankardstown, Templepeter, Tullowbeg, Tullow Rural and Tullow Urban. I believe these are largely areas focussed on Tullow as their local town (or if not, they are the eastern hinterland of Carlow town). The population is 19,766 which justifies 6.25 seats (or 6 seats as Tullow LEA). If the defining line with Carlow Urban were the motorway, this would reduce towards 6

The balance of the county has 15,630 population (4.94 seats) and justifies 5 seats(Muinebeag LEA)

Recommendation

CARLOW 7 seats

MUINEBEAG 5 seats

TULLOW 6 seats

CAVAN - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 76,176; average population per seat 4,232

County town Cavan pop 10,914

The three existing districts in this county arguably do not need any change as they are all within tolerable limits for six seats.

If there is an openness to allowing for a three seat area, a possible combination is a three seat area for those districts to the west of the Erne and then five seats in each of Bailieborough-Cootehill, Ballyjamesduff and Cavan. This would allow a more logical re-alignment of the areas around the key population centres.

The west of the Erne three seater would consist of the Ballyconnell (015 to 028) and Dowra (081 to 088) rural areas and then Ardue, Arvagh, Belturbet Urban, Bruce Hall, Castlesaunderson, Corr, Crossdoney, Drumcarban, Grilly, Kilconny, Killashandra, Milltown and Springfield ex the rural district of Cavan. It is a bit overpopulated for three seats. It is really notable that the "Cavan panhandle" (Ballyconnell to Dowra) justifies only about 1.3 seats despite its extent.

The key advantage of doing this is that it is then possible to create a five seat Cavan district including most of the areas adjacent to Cavan, whereas at the moment places very close to Cavan town like Ballyhaise, Clonervy and Stradone are associated with Cootehill. The three 5 seat areas would resemble the districts as they were in 2009. A problem with this is that the existing Ballyjamesduff area is too populous for 5 seats and the old Cavan and Bailieborough areas are a bit short on population. On balance I would be inclined to leave those three areas much as they currently are (excluding the new 3 seater), but moving the boundary of Cavan area to include Stradone, Drung and Drumcarn within Cavan.

I would therefore suggest

BAILIEBOROUGH-COOTEHILL	5 seats
BALLYJAMESDUFF	5 seats
BELTURBET	3 seats
CAVAN	5 seats

CLARE- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Ennis 25,276 population

County population 118,817; average population per seat 4,243

This county is quite awkward to draw because of the narrow gap between the top of the Fergus estuary and Crusheen on the Galway border, largely occupied by the Ennis urban area.

This county needs to be redrawn as existing Ennis and West Clare are unacceptable. Further the drawing of Killaloe to include islands in to Galway Bay is possibly the most ludicrous concoction from the last review, driven by the inflexible six seat minimum.

It seems to me that the census town of Ennis has almost the right population to justify 6 seats. It seems to correlate to the areas of Ennis Rural and Urban (x4) and Clareabbey. If it is feasible, the boundary could be drawn as far as the M18 motorway. The drawing of a six seat area would seem to meet the terms of reference about urban areas. There is a case for having Templemaley DED included with Ennis.

That will leave 22 seats to be distributed to the rest of the county. The areas to the west of Ennis merit nine seats and the areas to the east merit thirteen.

It seems to me that the Lisdoonvarna (006 to 016), Corrofin (017 to 025) and Ennistimon (046 to 065) rural areas belong together and merit four seats.

The Kilrush (005 and 077 to 104) and Killadysert (066 to 076 areas) grouped with the western hinterland of Ennis merit 5 seats. This seems to address the concern about the division of Kilmaley.

East Clare merits a total 13 seats, which split seven and six. The current arrangement has Shannon extending along the estuary to Limerick City. I think there is merit in reverting to the Killaloe area being largely the old Killaloe and Scarriff rural districts ((105 to 137) and to have Shannon consisting of the parts of Ennis rural district not assigned to West Clare or Ennis Urban and the old Tulla district (138 to 155). On this alignment Killaloe merits 6 seats and Shannon merits 7 seats. It might be more appropriate to call the district Ennis East /Shannon. It would of course be equally feasible to use the existing electoral areas which justify 5.44 and 6.51 seats respectively as the basis for the new split.

I would therefore suggest

ENNIS	6 seats
ENNIS EAST-SHANNON	7 seats
ENNISTIMON	4 seats
KILLALOE	6 seats
KILRUSH	5 seats

DONEGAL- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Letterkenny 19,274 population

County population 159,192; average population per seat 4,302

County town Lifford

Strictly speaking only two areas in Donegal require attention, the nine seat Inishowen area and the ten seat Letterkenny area. The other three areas are quite close to the required population for six seats and could be maintained without change.

Inishowen is too large for one area and needs to be split in two. I would also suggest that the DED known as Kincairney be added as this brings the entire to about 10 seats of population. I would suggest that Ardmalin, Ballyliffin, Carndonagh, Carthage, Castelcary, Culdaff, Dunaff, Glennagannon, Gleneely, Glentogher, Greencastle, Kilderry, Malin, Moville, Redcastle, Straid, Three Trees, Turmone and Whitecastle (population 20,729) form Inishowen East, a five seat area. The area effectively runs from Carndonagh to Derry. The balance of the existing Inishowen plus Kincairney should form Inishowen West with 20,841 population. There is little scope to do anything else with Inishowen. Extending it further west brings it into urban Letterkenny; extending it south interferes with the Stranorlar area.

The Letterkenny area also requires to be split. This is likely to require the formation of a four seat Milford area. As the Milford rural district (census reference 110 to 128) has only 13,585 population, it probably needs the adjacent areas of Ards, Crioich na Smear, An Craoslach, Caislean na d'Tuath and Dun Fionnachaidh added (population 2,892) and possibly also Min an Labain, Gartañ and Sui Corr. The Ards etc area seems in any event to be far more oriented towards there than towards a western Donegal area. If it were essential to get Milford to five seats, that could only be achieved by intruding on urban Letterkenny or by taking more from Glenties (which would have to be compensated by taking territory from Donegal); neither are at all desirable.

The urban areas around Letterkenny Ballymacool, Castlewray, Corravaddy, Edenacarnan, Gortnavern, Killymasny, Letterkenny Urban and Rural, Magheraboy and Temple Douglas have 27,078 population and justify 6 seats.

Generally there is no need to change Donegal, Glenties or Stranorlar, save that the transfer of population out of the northern end of Glenties reduces it to meriting five seats. It should be noted that the county town of Lifford located in Clonleigh South merits less than 0.5 of a seat, so there is no scope to form an area based on it.

Therefore the following should result

DONEGAL	six seats
GLENTIES	five seats
INISHOWEN EAST	five seats
INISHOWEN WEST	five seats
LETTERKENNY	six seats
MILFORD	four seats
STRANORLAR	six seats

KERRY - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Killarney 14,504 (by 4 people!) population Tralee 23,691 population

County population 147,707; average population per seat 4,476

Both Killarney and Tralee are very large and the DEDs labelled Urban and Rural for those towns merit 4 and 5 seats of themselves. There is therefore not much scope to add adjacent areas to either before reaching the seven seat limit.

Surgery is needed to remove at least two seats from each of Tralee and South West Kerry and one seat from Killarney. This means that a new district needs to be created. Also South and West Kerry is ridiculously large; it takes about two and a half hours to drive 150k from Lauragh in the south to Ballyferriter so it needs to be split.

Tralee is difficult. Tralee Rural and Urban of themselves account for five seats, so there is only scope for two more. The areas of Fenit and Ardfert have to be associated with Tralee, as there is no scope to add them to Listowel and this largely consumes the additional two seat scope, leaving Tralee at 7 seats. It follows that all of the rural areas to the east of Tralee need to be accommodated elsewhere.

Listowel should be left broadly as is. There are some unsatisfactory aspects around Abbeydorney, but it is difficult to accommodate those areas in Tralee.

The Dingle peninsula seems to merit its own area and, if taken as far as (but not including) Blennerville DED on the north side and Milltown DED on the south side, has the population to justify three seats. Going much beyond this gets into the area being geographically too large.

The old Killorglin area should be re-instated as a five seat area, including the old Kenmare and Caherciveen rural districts and stopping pretty well at Killorglin DED.

There remain 11 seats which probably have to split 6 and 5. I am suggesting a new district centred on Castleisland with 5 seats and including also Knocknagashel, Scartaglin, Gneeveguilla, Kilcummin Ballymacelligott and Farranfore. Given that a large part of this is Sliabh Luachra, I am suggesting this name.

It follows that Killarney should have 6 seats and include some of the rural areas to the west neighbouring Beaufort. People from these areas often make representations to you to be associated with Killarney.

I am recommending the following

DINGLE (3)

KILLARNEY (6)

KILLORGLIN (5)

LISTOWEL (7)

SLIABH LUACHRA (5)

TRALEE (7)

KILDARE- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Celbridge 20,288 population, Leixlip 15,504 population, Maynooth 14,585 population, Naas 21,393 population, Newbridge 22,742 population

County population 222,504; average population per seat 5,563

Kildare is very difficult to deal with as it has five separate urban areas, each of which need to comply with paragraph 4. In the case of Celbridge, I think it is impossible to do this on its own as it is constrained by Leixlip, Maynooth and Naas. I think therefore it can only be accommodated in its current alignment with Leixlip.

Kildare also has three areas which have to lose seats to comply with the terms of reference and Naas and Newbridge pose particular challenges, given that their urban population is in the five seat territory already.

I suggest that there should be four seven seat areas based on the large towns,

Celbridge-Leixlip

Maynooth (which would include Clane and Kilcock)

Naas (which would include Kill); and

Newbridge (which would include the Liffey Valley to the Wicklow border).

The more rural areas of Athy and Kildare would also form six seat districts. The precise size of Athy would depend on whether Monasterevin is included with it or with Kildare. If Monasterevin were with Kildare, Kildare would have seven seats and Athy five. The Kildare area would include all the rural hinterland right up to the Meath and Offaly border.

In theory it would be possible to create two five seat areas based on the towns of Naas and Newbridge. However this would require a division encircling both these towns and including all their outlying areas. This seems very disjointed and undesirable

I would therefore suggest

ATHY	6 seats
CELBRIDGE-LEIXLIP	7 seats
KILDARE	6 seats
MAYNOOTH	7 seats
NAAS	7 seats
NEWBRIDGE	7 seats

KILKENNY - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Kilkenny 26,512 population

County population 99,232; average population per seat 4,135

In theory all of the existing four electoral areas could be maintained as they are.

However there are four DEDs in East Kilkenny Gowran (1,518), Goresbridge (566), Paulstown (1,025) and Shankill (866) which seem to properly relate to East Kilkenny and have population pretty well equal to a seat and I suggest they be returned there. I think these divisions needed to be associated with Castlecomer on the last revision to meet the minimum of 6 criterion which then applied. This would reduce Castlecomer to 5 seats and increase Kilkenny City East to 7. While this leaves the population of Castlecomer at 18,949 (4.58 seats) it is within the tolerance threshold of 10%.

There also seems to be some agitation around Tullagher in the south east to do an adjustment there. As Piltown has a population justifying 5.83 seats, there is scope to add some territory to correct this.

There remains the issue of whether the current east/west split around Kilkenny City is correct. The city is on the northern edge of this and each electoral area contains a lot of rural hinterland. There seems to me to be a strong case for making Kilkenny Rural and Urban, Dunmore and St Canice with an aggregate population of 28,951 into a predominantly urban 7 seat LEA and then creating a Callan-Thomastown 6 seat area with 26,386 population (technically 6.38 seats) Your terms of reference also suggest that the Kilkenny city based area should be predominantly urban and the current arrangements may not fit the terms of reference.

My suggestion therefore is

CALLAN-THOMASTOWN	6 seats
CASTLECOMER	5 seats
KILKENNY CITY	7 seats
PILTOWN	6 seats

LAOIS- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Portlaoise 22,050 population

County population 84,697; average population per seat

In theory the three existing divisions could be left, although the population of Borris-Mountmellick is closer to a five seat threshold. I do however think that division is very unwieldy. The northern bit is separated from the rest by the Slieve Blooms. The current district excludes Abbeyleix and Ballyroan which logically form part of the area.

I am therefore suggesting the creation of a Borris district with five seats. This would include the Abbeyleix rural district (001 to 027), the Roscrea rural district (079 to 087) and other areas to the south of the Slieve Bloom (Arderin, Brisha, Cardtown, Clonin, Coolrain, Lacka, Marymount, Mountrath, Nealstown and Trumra). This area would justify 5 seats.

The populous areas around Portlaoise being Borris, Clondarrig and Portlaoighise Rural and Urban justify five seats of themselves and seem to correlate to the census town.

If one proceeded as above, the balance of the county justifies 9 seats. There is also a case for creating the old Luggacurren area covering the old rural districts of Luggacurren (6,707 population 028 to 039 on census) and Carlow (8,754 population 088 to 098 on census). To these might be added Ballycarroll, Kilcolmanbane and Kilmurry, to form a 4 seat area.

The balance of the county is focussed on Mountmellick and Portarlinton which are quite close together. They would form a five seat area and include the north west Laois hinterland of Mountmellick.

As a small refinement while Timahoe and Fossy are part of the Abbeyleix rural district, they could be included with Luggacurren, as geographically they seem to fit better there.

This would result in

BORRIS	5 seats
LUGGACURREN	4 seats
MOUNTMELICK-PORTARLINGTON	5 seats
PORTLAOISE	5 seats

LEITRIM- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 32,044; average population per seat 1,780

County town Carrick on Shannon

Arguably no change is required here as the three divisions merit 5.54 (Ballinamore), 6.38 (Carrick) and 6.07 seats (Manorhamilton) respectively.

If there is any need for change, it is possible that there needs to be some movement from Carrick to Ballinamore. The divisions of Gortnagullion (292) and Breandrum (253) could be moved to Ballinamore.

Another possible permutation would be to add Drumshanbo (1,389) to Carrick and making Carrick a seven seat area and reducing Ballinamore to 5. This would address the slightly unsatisfactory situation where areas right on the edge of Drumshanbo are currently in Carrick district.

One thing which is not possible, is to have an area substantially consisting of the county town. Carrick on Shannon DED justifies 2.29 seats, so it is necessary to associate a lot of adjacent rural areas with Carrick even to get to five seats.

LIMERICK- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Limerick population 94,192

County population 194,899; average population per seat 4,872

This county seems to work well without revision, with the sole exception that the Limerick City East 8 seat area is now not tolerable. It would seem that this could be rectified by moving Abbey C and D, Custom House, Market and Singland A from City East to City North. This moves the boundary from the old Dublin road to the Waterford road. The Ennis/Galway railway line traverses Singland B and Abbey B. If the small areas could be rationalized there is a case for a railway line boundary to the canal. The net effect would be to switch a seat to City North.

A more complex reorganization of the city could be done going to three fives and a six. However it probably remains desirable (as with Waterford too) to have districts that are partly in the old city and partly in the old county. Assuming that the six seat is City North, I suspect that one of the fives would be exclusively city and the one to the east largely county. It is however a modification that may be appropriate for the future.

I don't see any need for change in the rest of the county. While the two western districts are underpopulated for six seats, there isn't anywhere really to go to make up the deficit.

I would suggest

ADARE-RATHKEALE	6 seats
CAPPAMORE-KILMALLOCK	6 seats
LIMERICK EAST	7 seats
LIMERICK NORTH	7 seats
LIMERICK WEST	7 seats
NEWCASTLE	6 seats

LONGFORD- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 40,873; average population per seat 2,271

County town Longford pop 10,008

I don't think any change is warranted in Longford. While it is true that Granard is somewhat overrepresented, I think this is justifiable as it is the most sparsely populated part of Longford. I did consider suggesting the return of Edgeworthstown (Meathas Troim DED) to Granard making Granard 7 and Ballymahon 5, but this seems like change for change's sake.

LOUTH- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Drogheda 40,956 population, Dundalk 39,004 population

County population 128,884; average population per seat 4,444

Clearly the key change here is to split Drogheda into two. It seems to me that one needs to look at the old alignment of Drogheda East and West, which I believe split along the line of the old N1. This seems to work with modifications which take the boundary to the River Boyne. It seems to me that Monasterboice, St Lawrence Gate, St Mary's and West Gate when combined with that part of St Peter's to the west of the now R132 have enough population to justify 5 seats. There are 10 Small Areas in St Peter's which lie largely to the west of the R132 and they seem to have aggregate population of 3,002, which would bring the total population of Drogheda West to 21,607. The balance of existing Drogheda LEA would be Drogheda East (22,445). Given that all of the area south of the Boyne is now associated with West, I would call it Drogheda West and South

The other three areas are all arguably satisfactory, but Ardee is a little underrepresented justifying 6.53 seats. The transfer of Castlering (pop 1,031) to Ardee would cause it to justify an extra seat. Further the transfer of Barronstown and Creggan Upper (population 747 and 846) to Dundalk Carlingford would bring both existing Dundalk areas to 6 seat level. The rural hinterland north of Dundalk would now all be in the one area; it is very difficult to deal with it on a stand alone basis. Dundalk South would become largely urban as a result. There would be no need to interfere with the existing urban boundary within Dundalk which has been around for a few elections.

I would therefore recommend

Ardee (7)

Drogheda East (5)

Drogheda West and South (5)

Dundalk Carlingford (6)

Dundalk South (6)

MAYO - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 130,507; average population per seat 4,350

County town Castlebar pop 12,068

This county was divided very unsatisfactorily in the last boundary review. The West Mayo area with 7 seats is unacceptably large. There are substantial bits annexed to Ballina and Castlebar LEAs around Swinford and Kiltimagh which simply don't belong there. I reckon that the eastern part of Mayo should have about 10 seats, so therefore needs an extra area.

In the west, I am suggesting that the Belmullet district and Achill be associated in a three seat area. This would be districts reference 051 to 065 ex the census and Acaill, Ballycroy N and S, An Corran, Dumha Eige, Newport West and Slievemore. This has a population of 12,220 which merits 3 seats. It is a manageable area given the sparse population. It possibly should be called Acaill- Beal an Mhuirthead LEA. It's difficult to get to even four without annexing unrelated territory.

I am suggesting that if Baile an Chalaídh, Baile Obha, An Cheapaigh Dhubh and Abhainn Bhrain (population 998 and all west of Lough Mask) are added to the rest of the Westport rural district (areas 124 to 154), there would be enough to justify 5 seats.

The Ballina area (areas 005 to 032) with the town justifies 6 seats. The rural district of Castlebar (066 to 083) with the town also justifies 6 seats.

The eastern part therefore justifies 10 seats. It seems better that this is divided 6 Claremorris and 4 Swinford. The Swinford area would be substantively the old rural district of that name ((census 103 to 123). However this probably needs somewhere like Knock North and South added (1,020) to get to 4 seats. The former Ballinrobe (033 to 050) and Claremorris districts (084 to 102) would be a six seat area. If it is essential to have 5 seats in areas, Ballyhaunis (population 3,057) and its environs could be associated with Swinford.

This would result in

ACAILL-BEAL AN MHUIRTHEAD 3 seats

BALLINA 6 seats

CASTLEBAR 6 seats

CLAREMORRIS 6 seats

SWINFORD 4 seats

WESTPORT 5 seats

MEATH- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Navan 30,173 population

County population 195,044; average population per seat 4,876

In principle this county could be left alone. However there are a couple of untidy issues, already the subject of submissions, which both seem to arise from the untidy Ashbourne district, which shadows the Dublin border and also takes in the eastern hinterland of Navan. The Ashbourne (Baltrasna) problem can be solved by taking a small piece of Ratoath DED. If one is looking for an obvious boundary the M2 motorway where it by-passes Ashbourne could be considered – it does not however seem to solve the entire problem.

A key driver of the problem is that it is not possible to include Ashbourne, Dunboyne, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath in the one district, as the aggregate population is too large. A possible alternative is to group Ashbourne, Dunboyne and Ratoath in a seven seat area, to associate Ardcath (which is what causes the split of Duleek) and Stamullen with Bettystown-Laytown (seven seats) and to create a new district anchored on Dunshaughlin and Slane with 6 seats. This new district would be the rural end of existing Bettystown Laytown and Ashbourne and the northern part of Ratoath.

While there are some population imbalances between Kells, Navan and Trim, particularly Trim being under represented, I don't think any change is really necessary.

On balance I would suggest

ASHBOURNE-RATOATH	7 seats
BETTYSTOWN-LAYTOWN	7 seats
DUNSHAUGHLIN-SLANE	6 seats
KELLS	7 seats
NAVAN	7 seats
TRIM	6 seats

MONAGHAN- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 61,386; average population per seat 3,410

County town Monaghan population 7,678

I do not think any change ought to be made in this county, as the current arrangement is probably optimal.

In an ideal world, there would be four districts based on the rural districts within the county. However this will not work neatly. Carrickmacross merits 4.4 seats, Castleblayney merits 3.75 seats Clones merits 2.25 seats and Monaghan merits 7.6 seats. The Clones + Castleblayney area is over large and probably needs to lose some territory to Carrickmacross (to bring Carrickmacross within 10% tolerance) and gain some from Monaghan. There are possible configurations that would bring Carrickmacross to 4, Castleblayney to 4 and Clones to 3, but that involves creating three areas below the prescribed level.

As the population in Ballybay-Clones is on the light side for six seats, another DED, possibly Laragh (pop 564) may need to be added.

I would therefore suggest the best option is

BALLYBAY-CLONES	six seats
CARRICKMACROSS-CASTLEBLAYNEY	six seats
MONAGHAN	six seats

OFFALY- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Tullamore 14,607 population

County population 77,961; average population per seat 4,103

This is a county where there may be no need for change. The Edenderry area is a little over represented justifying 5.68 seats. Arguably the Cappancur DED with 1,531 population should be transferred to there. It is however more a hinterland of Tullamore but that also applies to other divisions associated with Edenderry.

I have considered whether it might be possible to re-create the old Ferbane area. However this would seem to require associating Clara with Ferbane and even then there is just about enough population west of Tullamore to justify eight seats, probably split four and four. Generally the existing Birr area does not seem sufficiently unwieldy to merit this.

Therefore I suggest

BIRR	6 seats
EDENDERRY	6 seats
TULLAMORE	7 seats

ROSCOMMON- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns none

County population 64,544; average population per seat 3,586

County town Roscommon

This county is currently divided in a very unsatisfactory manner. The Athlone area takes in areas to the north west of Roscommon town. The Roscommon area goes almost to Ballaghaderreen. I think substantial change is needed.

I would suggest that Athlone become a five seat area consisting of the former rural division so called 001 to 023 in census) but adding Lackan, Lismaha and Scregg aggregate 1,236. That area justifies five seats.

The areas covered by the rural district of Roscommon (areas 074 to 112 in the census ex the three suggested for Athlone) justify 6 seats and should form a Roscommon LEA

The balance of the county being the Boyle and Castlereagh rural areas justify 7 seats. However the area is very large, stretching from Lough Allen to Cloonfad. I would therefore suggest that the Boyle rural district (024 to 054 in census) form a three seat area and that Castlereagh (055 to 073) form a four seat area.

Therefore I would suggest

ATHLONE	5 seats
BOYLE	3 seats
CASTLEREA	4 seats
ROSCOMMON	6 seats

SLIGO- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Sligo 19,199 population

County population 65,535; average population per seat 3,641

Clearly this county needs a substantial re-draw because its two existing electoral areas both exceed the permitted number of seats. The county is difficult to deal with because it is effectively split in two by the town of Sligo and Lough Gill. North of this there is enough population to justify 2.78 seats, the town justifies 4.79 seats, the Strandhill/Collooney/Ballysadare belt justifies 2.79 seats and the balance of south Sligo justifies 7.64. It is quite difficult to rationalize this.

My first thought is that there should be a new West Sligo seat, largely consisting of the old Dromore and Tobercurry areas. The old rural area of Dromore (areas 017 to 033 in census) justifies 1.96 seats and the old Tobercurry rural area (areas 062 to 082) justifies 2.55 seats. I am suggesting this be rounded up to population for five seats by adding Coolavin, Cuilmore, Kilfree and Killaraght (population 1,911). It should probably be called Dromore-Tobercurry. While it is possible to round it down to 4, I think that such a large area justifies 5 seats. This area has 18,380 people or 5.05 seat equivalent.

I have considered extending both the old Dromore and Tobercurry areas eastwards. However even to get Dromore to three seat status requires annexing Ballysadare and Coolaney areas and the knock on on Tobercurry would mean Tobercurry and Ballymote being joined in a very large area. For that reason I think my five seat proposal is the best solution.

I think the spirit of your terms of reference suggests that Sligo urban is an area of its own. I would suggest that the 19,199 population area is quite a neat five seat area (5.27 seats)

The areas to the north of the town are geographically distinct. They are Calry (all of this DED should be included), Carney, Cliffony N/S, Drumcliff E/W, Glencar, Lissadill E/N/W and Rossinver E/W. They have 10,109 people or 2.78 seats. I am suggesting they be a 3 seat area. Unless you dismember the town, the only areas they can be joined with are quite remote from them and create an excessively large area.

The balance of the county would become Ballymote-Strandhill, a five seat area including the population hubs of Ballymote, Ballysadare, Collooney and Strandhill. This area has a population of 17,847 justifying 4.9 seats.

Obviously all sorts of different arrangements can be achieved, if one is prepared to dismember Sligo town and the adjacent southern satellite towns. The old solution of dividing along the lines of the Garravogue does not work. Sligo North justifies 1.43 seats, leaving Sligo county north of the river at 4.21 or about 4 seats (obviously not consistent with the 5-7 limit).

In conclusion

BALLYMOTE-STRANDHILL	5 seats
DROMORE-TOBERCURRY	5 seats
DRUMCLIFF	3 seats
SLIGO	5 seats

TIPPERARY - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Clonmel 17,140 population

County population 159,553; average population per seat 3,989

Tipperary poses a lot of challenges. There are three nine seat areas, all of which need to be reduced in size. There are a number of sizeable clusters of population (all around 6,000) at the edge of the county Ballina/Newport, Roscrea and Carrick on Suir which don't fit neatly into other areas.

Further having put two counties together, there is a rather modest boundary breach and the Holycross neck of land is still surrounded by a South Tipperary area. I am suggesting that the Thurles area should breach the boundary more extensively, albeit that may be unpopular. There is also the issue of significant mountain barriers. The Silvermines separating the north west from the rest of the county and the Galtees separating the south west from Tipperary town; these ideally should not be traversed.

The only satisfactory resolution of the existing Nenagh area seems to be to break it into a five seat Nenagh area and a four seat Ballina/Newport area. The Nenagh area should mirror the former Nenagh area from 2009 with boundaries at Monsea, Nenagh Rural and Ballygibbon.

The Ballina/Newport area should consist of the Nenagh rural district (024 to 051) excepting Aghnameadle (to Roscrea), Ballygibbon, Ardcroney, Knigh, Latteragh (to Roscrea), Monsea and Nenagh Rural. It would have 4 seats. There is really nowhere for it to go to have a fifth seat, without leaving somewhere else short.

There should be a Roscrea area (five seats) consisting of Roscrea, Templemore, Borrisoleigh and Upperchurch and their hinterland.

The Thurles area, also five seats should straddle the two former counties. Thurles (Rural and Urban), Rahelty, Longfordpass, Twomileborris, Littleton, Ballymurreen, Moycarkey and Holycross should come from the former North. The nine DEDs which border the former North from Fennoir to Clonoulty East (plus Ardmayle and Nodstown) should become part of Thurles. The area is slightly overpopulated for five seats.

In the south, the rural district of Clonmel (132 to 139) and the Tipperary rural district (153 to 177) with their towns merit 6 and 5 seats respectively. Tipperary needs Clogher, Clonoulty West, Kilpatrick and Oughterleague added.

The real problem is with Cahir, Cashel and Carrick. None on their own is anywhere near five seats. I am suggesting that Cashel Rural and Urban, Killeenasteena and Knockgraffon be associated with the Cahir Rural District (117-131) in a five seat area with the area from Carrick around to Cashel forming the last five seat area. This does create the undesirable situation where the hinterland of Cashel is associated with Carrick, as has often been the case.

I suspect there will be some desire to have a standalone Cahir, Cashel or Tipperary. Tipperary is the only one near viable with a minimum of five seats and I am proposing that. Cahir justifies 3.3 and Cashel needs most of the western end of Carrick area to get the necessary territory, which would reduce Carrick to 3 seat territory.

So the proposal is

BALLINA-NEWPORT	4 seats
CAHIR-C ASHEL	5 seats
CARRICK ON SUIR	5 seats
CLONMEL	6 seats
NENAGH	5 seats
ROSCREA	5 seats
THURLES	5 seats
TIPPERARY	5 seats

WATERFORD- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Waterford 53,504 population

County population 116,176; average population per seat 3,630

The only need for change in Waterford is the loss of a seat in Dungarvan-Lismore. However this is not easy. The Comeragh area already comes very close to Dungarvan and in order to reduce Dungarvan-Lismore to seven seat population, it would be necessary to take in Cappoquin and Colligan to Comeragh, which is very unsatisfactory .

I have therefore come to the conclusion that the only solution to the west Waterford area is to add population equivalent to a seat and then divide in two. I think this entails adding the Nire Valley DEDs of Ballymacarbry, Grangenagower, Kilmacomma and Kilronan and then detaching from Comeragh the DEDs of Ballynamult, Mondelligo x 2 and Seskinan. There may also be a case of taking Knockaunbrandaun. These areas are all the far side of the Comeraghs from the rest of the area and accessed via Dungarvan anyhow. All of this will bring population to over 9 seats equivalent.

I would suggest that a four seat Lismore area be created of Lismore (053 to 069)and Youghal rural areas (085 to 092) justifying 2.27 and 0.96 seats respectively, together with the Nire Valley piece. The balance of the existing Dungarvan-Lismore would form a five seat area called Dungarvan.

As Comeragh has lost population, there is now barely enough to justify five seats. I am deliberately leaving St Mary's and Gurteen divisions with Comeragh as they connect directly to other areas. Indeed there is a case for annexing areas close to Tramore to Comeragh. However I think it is best to tolerate a slightly over represented Comeragh area.

If a four seat area cannot be tolerated, it is always possible to swap a seat into Lismore. However the knock on would mean that extra population adjacent to the city would need to be added to Comeragh. I do not think it is sensible to break the integrity of the metropolitan area. The fundamental problem is that the existing county areas only justify 13.3 seats, so 14 is a generous allocation and does not split easily into 2 x 7.

I dont think there is a particular need to change the Waterford City areas. Possibly Morrison's Avenue and Morrison's Road should be transferred to South to even populations. There is always a case for trying to divide City West and City South in a wholly different way. On balance I think it is a good idea to have bits of former city and county in each area.

I would therefore propose

COMERAGH	5 seats
DUNGARVAN	5 seats
LISMORE	4 seats
TRAMORE-WATERFORD W	6 seats
WATERFORD EAST	6 seats
WATERFORD SOUTH	6 seats

WESTMEATH- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Athlone 21,349 population, Mullingar 20,928 population

County population 88,770; average population per seat 4,438

The existing areas could be left stand and are the most mathematically precise in any county—they are however unsatisfactory in associating large rural areas with bits of urban Mullingar. It is possible in this county to construct largely urban five seat areas around the two principal census towns. In the case of Athlone, I suspect some of the indicated population is in Roscommon, but census areas 001, 002, 003 and 014 when aggregated are at over 18,000, so a few thousand more would get to five seat level.

If one divides the county east/west along a line Piercetown, Skeagh, Rathconrath, Greenpark, Hopetown, Belvidere, Gaybrook, Milltown (with all of these being in the western division), one is getting close to an even split of the county. The western area is Kilbeggan-Moate and is in effect the M6 corridor. The eastern half would be Coole-Kinnegad. It's difficult to do the exact math without knowing the precise boundaries of the two census towns. If there is a need to swap territory to get to two acceptable 5 seats, it would seem that the area to the west of Mullingar is the place to find it.

I am therefore suggesting

ATHLONE	5 seats
COOLE-KINNEGAD	5 seats
KILBEGGAN-MOATE	5 seats
MULLINGAR	5 seats

WEXFORD - Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Wexford 20,188 population

County population 149,722; average population per seat 4,404

There is a need to remove a seat from each of Enniscorthy, Gorey and New Ross and to remove three seats from Wexford to comply with the terms of reference. This is somewhat unfortunate as particularly the existing Enniscorthy and Gorey LEAs are satisfactory and the people living in the "two seat area" to be excluded will likely be aggrieved. I note an interesting suggestion of a three seat Bunclody area. This is probably not permissible and probably also difficult to construct.

The county has (and has always had) four natural hubs and there is really nowhere on which to fix a fifth district. Logically the best solution seems to be to remove areas to Wexford and then to split Wexford into 2, Wexford Urban LEA and Wexford Rural LEA.

I would suggest that a number of coastal DEDs in east Wexford around Cahore and Kilmuckridge be removed from Enniscorthy and Gorey and re-allocated to Wexford. This will bring both Enniscorthy and Gorey into the 7 seat range. I am suggesting 3,078 population (Ballyvaldon, Cahore, Ford, Killincooly and Wells) be removed from Gorey and 4,623 population (Bolaboy, Castle Ellis, Castle Talbot and Kilmallock) be removed from Enniscorthy. I accept that this is likely to be seen as unsatisfactory, but it seems to be the easiest way to comply with the terms of reference.

I think New Ross as it currently exists should be allocated seven seats. It will be underrepresented. Consideration could be given to moving Duncormick/Taghmon etc back into Wexford, but I suspect over time these areas will need to be associated with New Ross to maintain seven seats, so any move will be temporary.

The Wexford area will now merit 13 seats and will clearly have to be split in two. The Wexford Urban and Rural DEDs and the contiguous areas of Carrick, Drinagh, Rathaspick and Rosslare have a population of 26,238 and merit six seats. This seems to be in keeping with term of reference 4 which seems to envisage a tight urban area. The other seven seats should be allocated to Wexford Rural which will include the areas transferred from Enniscorthy/Gorey. Of course there are other possible splits, but these seem to involve dividing the town area into two.

The end position will be

ENNISCORTHY (7)

GOREY (7)

NEW ROSS (7)

WEXFORD RURAL (7)

WEXFORD URBAN(6)

WICKLOW- Brendan Heneghan submission

Large towns Bray 32,600 population, Greystones-Delgany 18,140 population

County population 142,425; average population per seat 4,451

County town Wicklow 10,584 population

The only step which absolutely has to be taken in Wicklow is to reduce the representation of Bray (which merits 7.98 seats) by one. The census suggests that the population of Bray town is 32,600. That justifies 7 seats if the portion of it actually within Wicklow can be identified. In practice the area would consist of Bray 1, 2 and 3, Rathmichael and that portion of Kilmacanoge which is clearly the south western suburbs of Bray.

The areas excluded from existing Bray being Enniskerry and Powerscourt and the rural part of Kilmacanoge would then be associated with Greystones-Delgany. That area would have 7 seats too. This is somewhat unsatisfactory, but it is difficult to see how Enniskerry can be fitted with Bray without the population being too big for 7 seats.

A more complex re-organization of north east Wicklow could involve associating Newcastle Upper with the area and dividing the resultant 15 seat allocation into three 5 seat areas. However it is difficult to do this without a dividing line in both Bray town and between Greystones and Delgany. The latter would seem to infringe the terms of reference.

In theory the other existing three areas in the county are fine. However it is unsatisfactory that Rathdrum is associated with Arklow. Further there is a very long tradition of a distinct electoral area in the west of the county, which is geographically isolated. I would therefore favour the adding of 3,500 population (Ballinacor, Dunganstown West and Rathdrum) to Wicklow, with the consequent addition of a seat. I would favour the re-establishment of the Baltinglass area (areas 008 to 031 in the census) with 19,034 population and 4 seats and the re-association of Carnew/Shillelagh/Tinahely (population 7,908, a small number of whom are included in Arklow at the moment) with Arklow.

The end position would be

ARKLOW	7 seats
BALTINGLASS	4 seats
BRAY	7 seats
GREYSTONES-DELGANY	7 seats
WICKLOW	7 seats