



To  
The Secretary  
Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee.

18<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

**Re: Submission to the Committee | Cllr Tania Doyle.**

Dear Sir/Madam.

The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Eoghan Murphy TD, has commenced a review of the size of Local Electoral Areas (LEA). John Paul Phelan T.D., Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform has established two committees to review and make recommendations on LEAs and to report to him not later than 13 June 2018. For the purpose of the review, the Committee will have regard to the population as ascertained at Census 2016.

LEAs currently have a minimum of six seats (with a small number of five seat Areas in limited circumstances) and a maximum of ten seats. The proposal put forward by the Fine Gael Ministers envisaged this range of 6 to 10 members changing to a new range of 3 to 7 members which would be capable of applying in any part of the country. Unsurprising this has now been adopted by the current Commission in its Terms of Reference.

The Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee Report 2013 recommended an alteration to the current boundary at that time between the Mulhuddart and Castleknock LEAs. Major increases in Council seats eventually took place within local authorities with large populations along the east coast, including all four Dublin Councils and as a result Fingal gained an extra 16 councillors to bring its total to the maximum 40. We have to look at this for what it both was and still is, a confirmation born out in Census figures that Fingal was the fastest growing county in the country. The 2016 Census figures bear this out yet again.

Fingal also boasts three of the fastest growing electoral divisions in the state, of which the Mulhuddart LEA is one. It is quite startling when you think that in 1991 the population of Fingal was 152,766 and in 2016 the population stood at 296,214, representing a population increase of 94%.



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The massive development taking place within the Mulhuddart LEA again, is clear evidence of our fast growing population, who require homes for their families. I have been to the forefront in calling for suitable and affordable housing for our communities. Mulhuddart LEA takes within its existing Boundary the communities of Clonsilla, Ongar, Hartstown, Huntstown, Corduff, Littlepace, Mulhuddart, Castlecurragh, Parslickstown, Hansfield, Barnwell and Hollystown. It is vital that it maintains its current levels of public representation and cannot be subdivided for the benefit of certain political interests, for the consolidation of their power base to the exclusion of others.

Reintroduction of smaller LEAs is a retrograde step which would impact negatively on the Communities. We need our communities to use their voice through the vote. The comment that I hear on the doors and on the streets, is that members of our communities have lost interest in the body politic. They don't believe in the established organisations. "why should I vote for someone I don't believe in, just for the sake of voting" is sadly a comment I hear all too often.

Independent Non Party Representatives provide the community with an alternative to the run of the mill mainstream parties. Independent Non Party Representatives provide those with no desire to have a political affiliation, the clear opportunity to make their voice known at Council level. Independent Non Party Representation and its Representatives are the corner stones and the underpinning of democracy, not only on the macro level, but significantly more important I would argue, on the micro level.

Is Mise le Meas.

*Tania*