

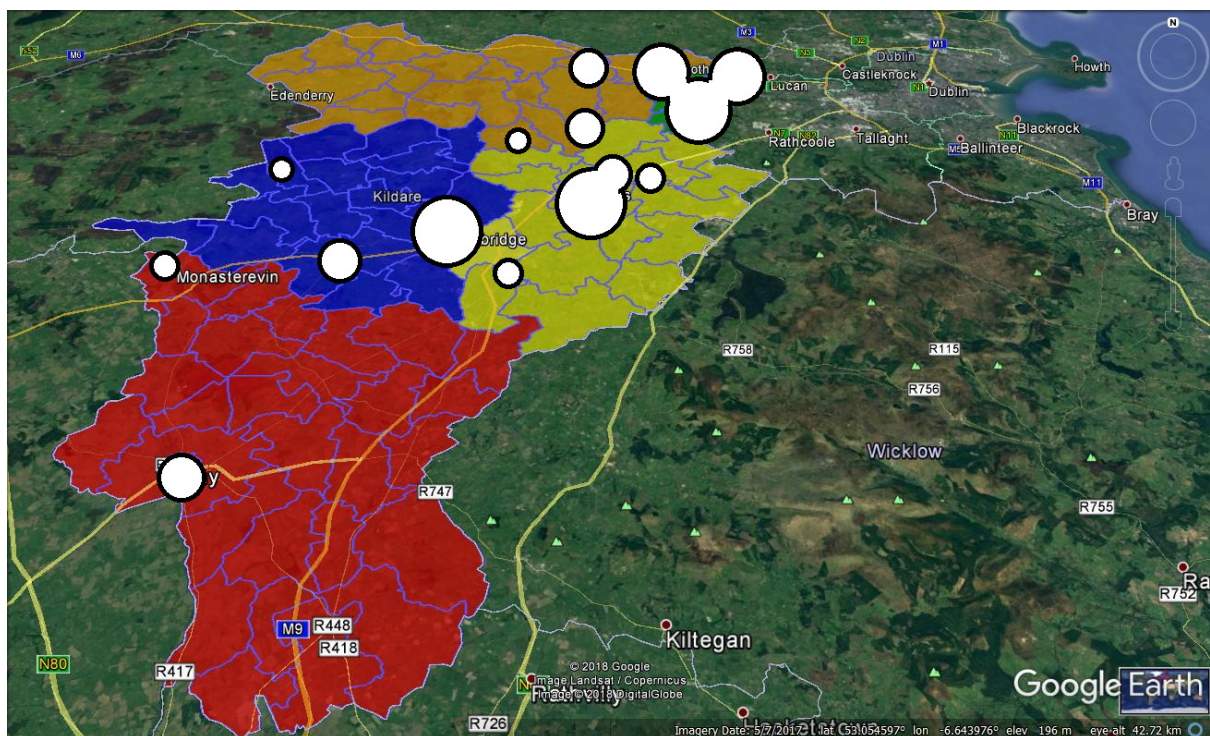
SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL AREA
BOUNDARY COMMITTEE

DJ Moore

February 2018

GENERAL COMMENTS

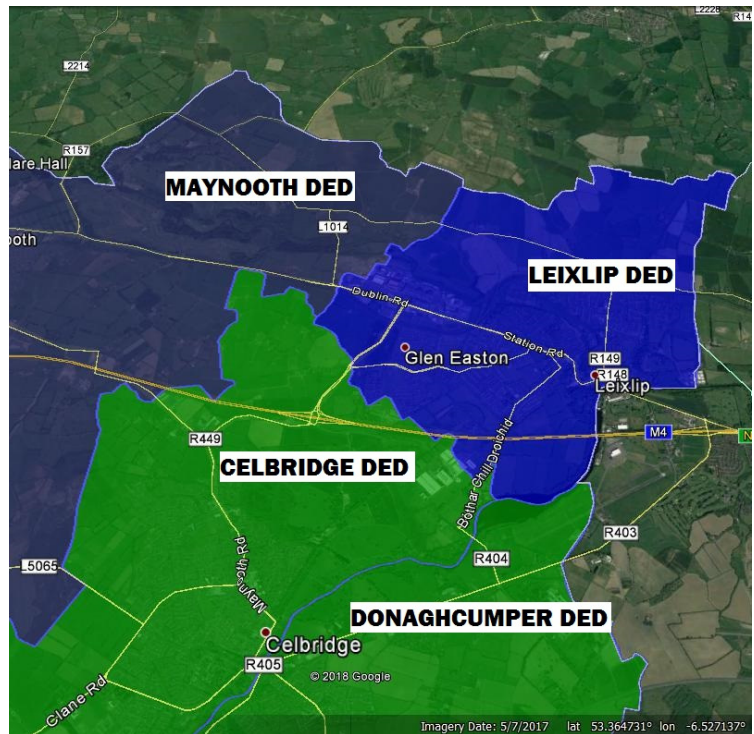
The first point I'd like to make is the unsuitability of the Terms of Reference for a county such as Kildare given the assumption that seems to be made that large towns (ie those of over 14,500 population) are by their nature spatially dispersed throughout a county serving large rural hinterlands. This is not the case in Kildare – 4 of the 5 towns with over 14,500 population are based in the North-East quadrant of the county along the M7 and M4 motorways. I've included a map below to show the position of all towns with a population in excess of 2,000 in Kildare (the size of the Bubble being proportionate to the population of each town) – the five largest bubbles are towns with populations of above 14,500 people.



Also, the fourth section of the Terms of Reference (in the First Committee) states that “...***a distinct urban-focused local electoral area or areas, as appropriate, shall be designated in respect of each town the population of which within the county as ascertained at Census 2016, when rounded to the nearest 1,000, is equal to or greater than 15,000. The number of members of the county council to be assigned to each such local electoral area shall not be less than 5, as far as practicable. Each such electoral area shall be based, as far as practicable, on the areas of the "census town" as defined for the purposes of Census 2016.***” There are three such towns cheek-by-jowl in the North-Eastern corner of Kildare – Celbridge, Leixlip and Maynooth.

If each of these towns is to have their electoral area – under the Term of Reference above – this means that Leixlip will effectively be landlocked as it is situated in the North-Eastern tip of Kildare and is bounded by Maynooth to the West and Celbridge to the South, and therefore has no hinterland (in Kildare) and would have to form a 3 seater. The Map on the right shows the area concerned.

Finally, I'd also ask the Committee to consider – in light of the relatively short time period allowed for submissions and the small number of submissions that have been made – to consider allowing a further two weeks for submissions.

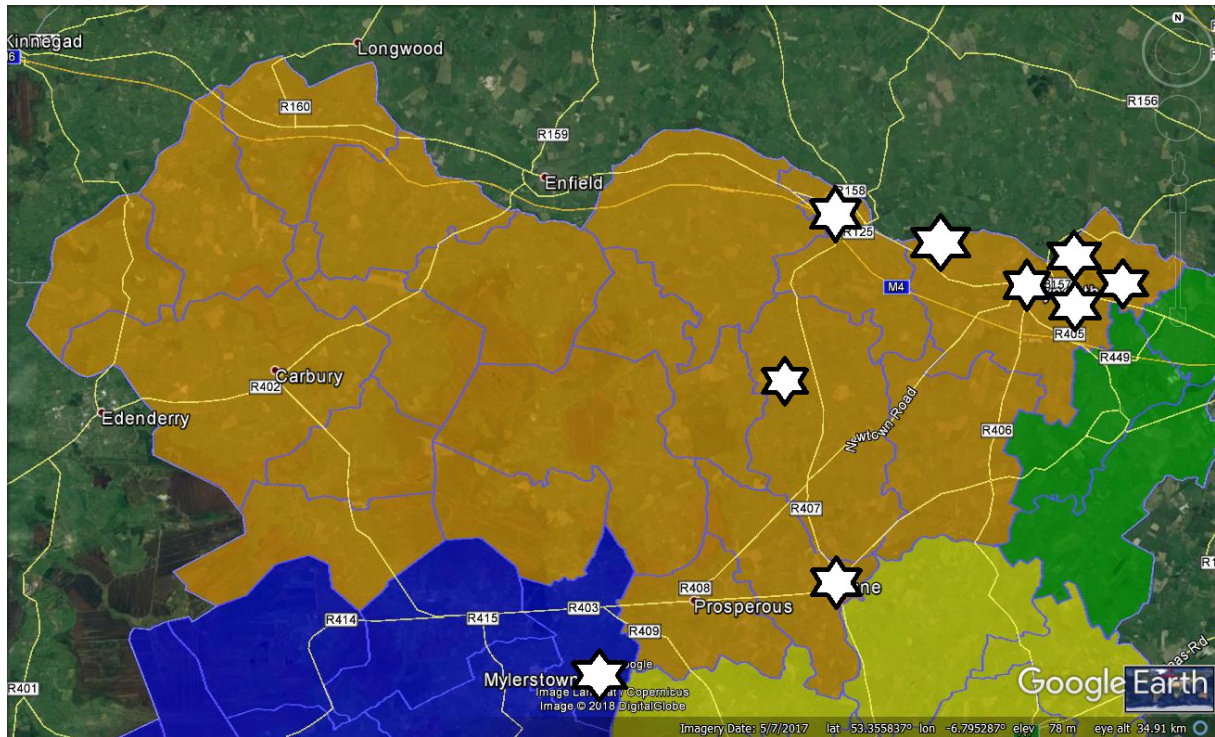


RECOMMENDATIONS

I'd recommend the Athy area stay largely as it is – with the Monasterevin and Kildangan DEDs moving into a new Kildare Area. I would posit that Monasterevin makes much more natural sense being in the hinterland of Kildare Town rather than Athy and this was reflected in the 2014 Local Elections when the sole candidate in Monasterevin took 60% of the vote (according to the tallies) in the town yet failed to take a seat.

Celbridge is effectively sandwiched between Leixlip to the North and the Naas Electoral area to the South. The Terms of Reference seem to preclude the current Celbridge-Leixlip Electoral Area remaining as is, and the only part of Naas Electoral area that a case could be made for moving to Celbridge would be the sparsely-populated Oughterard DED (population 702) – Bodenstown DED contains Sallins which is just across the motorway from Naas, and Kill is much closer and better connected to Naas than Celbridge. Expanding to the West would involve taking in Straffan DED (which a case could be made for) and then Balraheen DED (which has much more obvious alignment with the towns of Clane and Kilcock) to make a possible 5 seater. I'd recommend – IF it is not judged to be within the Committee's remit to retain the current Celbridge-Leixlip area – that a 4 seat Celbridge Electoral area be created out of the DEDs of Celbridge and Donaghcumper.

The Current Maynooth Electoral Area has 9 seats and therefore needs to be split – which is to be welcomed, given that there wasn't a single Councillor based in the West of the area (as can be seen in the accompanying map, 4 of the 9 Councillors elected lived in Maynooth town, and another one in Maynooth DED just outside the town) . I'm recommending a five seat Maynooth Electoral Area comprised of Maynooth, Kilcock, Cloncurry (Celbridge), Donadea, Balraheen and Straffan DEDs. This will be a geographically compact area where the rural areas have a strong connection with the main towns of Maynooth and Kilcock.



I'd recommend the rest of the Maynooth area be combined with Kilmeague North, Kilmeague South, Lullymore and Robertstown DEDs from the current Kildare-Newbridge Electoral area to create a new 5-seat Clane Electoral area. This would have the effect of uniting the communities of the Rural North-West along the R403 (Clane-Derrinturn Road) and it is also less likely that the town of Clane will dominate the area in the same way that Maynooth did .

As I averred to in the Comments above, it seems that Leixlip has to be a standalone 3 seat Electoral Area on a literal reading of the Terms of Reference. As I also said in the paragraph on Celbridge, IF it is possible to retain the current Celbridge-Leixlip area as a 7 seater, that would be my preferred option – otherwise it has to be a 3 seat Leixlip Electoral Area comprising the Leixlip DED.

Naas – as a 9 seater – also has to be split. I'd recommend that Caragh, Donore, Carnalway, Gilltown, Kilcullen, Ladytown (and the sliver of Newbridge Rural in Naas) DEDs be moved into a new Newbridge Electoral area. Caragh is equidistant from Naas and Newbridge and Kilcullen is actually closer to Newbridge so the moves make reasonable sense. All those DEDs are in Kildare South, so it would bring the border of Naas and Newbridge Electoral areas largely in line with the Constituency border – the exceptions being

Ballymore and Killashee DEDs which I'd recommend retaining in Naas as Ballymore has a much more obvious connection with Naas as against Newbridge.

I'm recommending that a new Newbridge 6-seat Electoral Area be created consisting of the DEDs of Newbridge Urban, Newbridge Rural, Old Connell and Morristownbiller and the areas mentioned above moving from Naas Electoral Area. I'm conscious that this area would have a 9% deviation from the average population-per-Councillor figure is quite high, but it is within the 10% limit prescribed in the Terms of Reference.

Finally, I'd recommend a 5 seat Kildare Electoral Area be created comprising of the Kildare-Newbridge DEDs not already assigned to the proposed Newbridge and Clane Electoral Areas and also including the DEDs of Kildangan and Monasterevin.

The Details of the Proposed Electoral Areas are as follows :

Athy	5	26602	-4.2%	The Current ATHY Electoral Area except KILDANGAN and MONASTEREVIN District Electoral Divisions
Celbridge	4	21857	-1.6%	CELBRIDGE and DONAGHCUMPER District Electoral Divisions
Clane	5	27430	-1.2%	The Current MAYNOOTH Electoral Area except BALRAHEEN, CLONCURRY, DONADEA, KILCOCK, MAYNOOTH and STRAFFAN District Electoral Divisions as well as KILMEAGUE NORTH, KILMEAGUE SOUTH, LULLYMORE and ROBERTSTOWN District Electoral Divisions.
Kildare	5	25693	-7.5%	BALLYSAX EAST, BALLYSAX WEST, CLONCURRY (EDENDERRY), DUNMURRY, FEIGHCULLEN, KILDARE, KILLINTHOMAS, LACKAGH, POLLARDSTOWN, QUINSBOROUGH, RATHANGAN, RATHERNAN and THOMASTOWN District Electoral Divisions in the current KILDARE-NEWBRIDGE ELECTORAL AREA as well as KILDANGAN and MONASTEREVIN District Electoral Divisions
Leixlip	3	15550	-6.7%	LEIXLIP District Electoral Division
Maynooth	5	29642	6.8%	BALRAHEEN, CLONCURRY, DONADEA, KILCOCK, MAYNOOTH and STRAFFAN District Electoral Divisions
Naas	7	38999	0.3%	BALLYMORE, BODENSTOWN, KILL, KILTEEL, KILLASHEE, NAAS RURAL, NAAS URBAN, NEWTOWN, RATHMORE and OUGHTERARD District Electoral Divisions
Newbridge	6	36357	9.1%	CARAGH, CARNALWAY, DONORE, GILLTOWN, KILCULLEN and LADYTOWN District Electoral Divisions in the current NAAS Electoral Area and NEWBRIDGE URBAN, NEWBRIDGE RURAL, MORRISTOWNBILLER and OLDCONNELL District Electoral Divisions

A map of the Proposed areas is on the next page.

