

18.416



Secretary,  
Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees,  
Room 1.67,  
Custom House,  
Dublin 1,  
D01 W6X0

8 May 2018

**Re      Review of Cork City and County Council Local Electoral Areas**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ballincollig Business Association wish to make the following representation in respect of the above consultation. Specifically, this submission is made in support of the establishment of Ballincollig as a distinct and standalone urban municipal district area.

Ballincollig Business Association represents almost 100 business in the Ballincollig Area. Our objective is to promote Ballincollig, Corks largest town, as a place in which to live, work and do business in. We have a strong proven track record attracting investment and are home to two large Multi-Nationals who are both members of our organisation. In conjunction with other volunteer groups in the town, we also organise many Community Events to increase the profile of the town externally.

BBA have been very active in promoting the area through the creation and sustainment of business activity and employment so as to ensure that Ballincollig continues to be a thriving and vibrant business base, and an attractive location for external interest and investment. We have been active participants in making submissions with the County Development Plan and Local Area Plans and these submissions have focussed primarily on the provision of infrastructure and the following issues:

1.      Transport & Mobility
2.      Physical Infrastructure
3.      Town Centre & Retail
4.      Social/Green Infrastructure

### **Background**

On the 23rd March 2018, the Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform appointed the existing Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees to review and make recommendations on local electoral areas in Cork City and Cork County. The review will be conducted on the basis of the revised boundary between the city and county, as proposed by the Cork Implementation Oversight Group and agreed by Government, and which will be given legal effect by forthcoming legislation.

Separate and concurrent reviews are being completed by Cork City Council and Cork County Council having regard to the new city and county area boundaries to be enacted.



Clause 5 of the established terms of reference for Cork County provides for the consideration of the following:

*"5. 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 Cork 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".*

Clause 5 of the established terms of reference for Cork City provides for the consideration of the following:

*"5. Local electoral areas should be designed, as far as possible, around urban villages or have a neighbourhood focal point (or points), taking due account of local and community identities and linkages and the need to facilitate the effectiveness of the governance and representational roles of elected members, including, in particular, the need to avoid designating local electoral areas which are territorially very large or extend over very long distances or over multiple urban villages, or which divide individual urban villages or natural communities".*

### **Request**

It is also stipulated under Clause 6(ii) that "the recommendation in paragraph 12.1.8 of the report of the Expert Advisory Group on Local Government Arrangements in Cork, dated April 2017, that "A newly expanded Cork City Council should also move to introduce an area-or district based structure for the wider city area, based on five areas (including the city centre). This will allow for the devolution of operational decisions at area level and the representation of distinct areas and communities within the city."

### **Rationale**

Having regard to the above, we request that Ballincollig be established as a distinct municipal district. The rationale for this is based on a geographical locational as well as governance requirements. In spatial terms, Ballincollig represents a distinct geographical area which functions as a natural and significant individual sub-set of the newly defined Cork City. It is presently bounded to the north, south, east and west by Metropolitan Greenbelt and its positive social and economic influence permeates out into these areas which cumulatively make up approximately 20% of the total area of the new Cork City.



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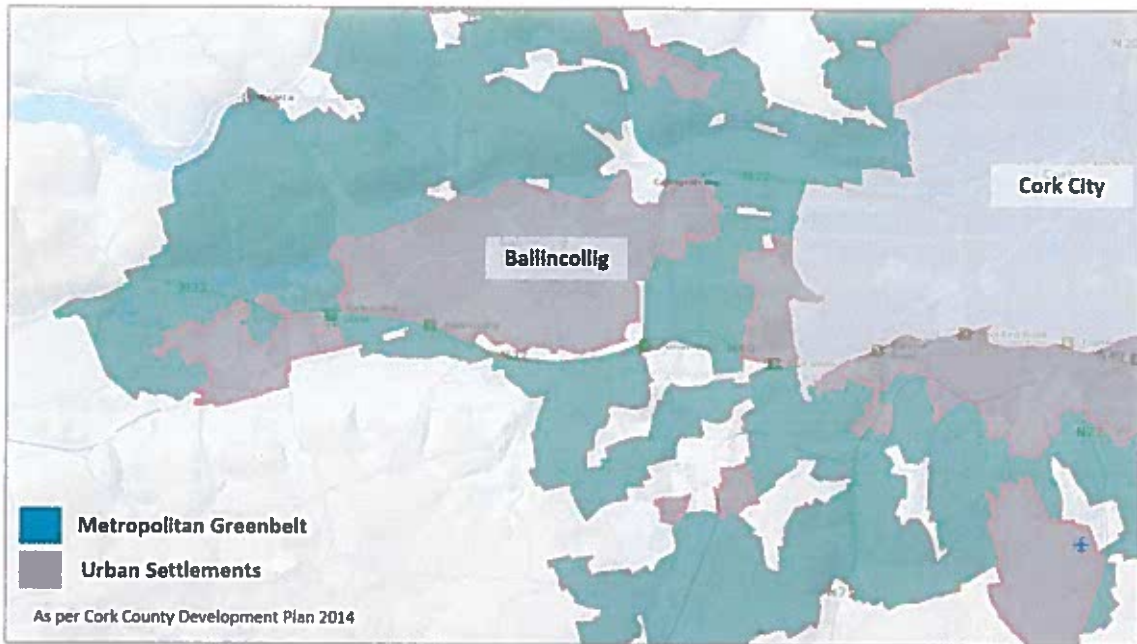


Figure 1: Ballincollig Settlement Context

- The population of the Ballincollig itself is approximately 25,000, exclusive of attendant functional areas. It is the largest town in County Cork. Ballincollig has exhibited high rates of population growth relative to other areas over the last intercensal period, trends which will continue into the future having regard to housing and associated and land use zoning objectives for the settlement<sup>1</sup>.

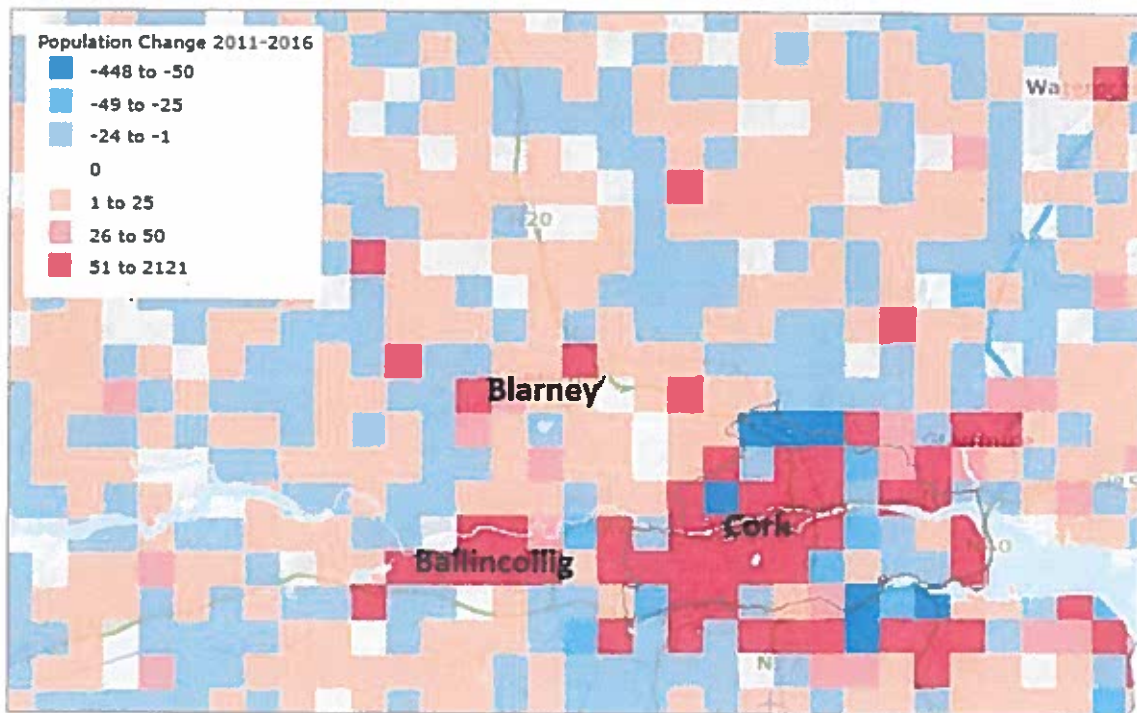


Figure 2: Population Change 2011-2016 by 1 km2 grid, CSO Census of Population 2016

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the current Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017.



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- The recent and successful development of Ballincollig has been founded on its very strong community ethos and the unique identity that has been built in the town. The future planning of Cork City should be driven by and respect the concepts of 'place' and 'identity' which are fundamental to sustainable development. The designation of the town as a municipal district represents a natural fit for Ballincollig upon which its strong track record in attracting businesses and inward investment can be further leveraged.
- Ballincollig has very distinct governance requirements and in the past may have suffered from the lack of being designated as a Town Council or Urban District Council. This manifest itself most sharply in the fact that despite its scale and the size of its urban area, it has yet to benefit from the installation CCTV, when smaller urban areas, which were formerly Town or Urban District Council have long since benefitted from this and other investments.
- Ballincollig has a significant number of active voluntary organisations which make valuable contributions locally. The formal establishment of a municipal district area and associated appropriate level of representation is a must to coordinate the various levels of community input and it will act as an important conduit for the ongoing efficient and effective development of the area.

In summary, the identified basis for the establishment of an area or district-based structure in the newly defined Cork City is to provide for appropriate representation of distinct areas and communities. Ballincollig is the very embodiment of this, having regard to its scale, geographical location, zone of influence, and the dynamic way that it operates from a community/voluntary perspective. A successful Ballincollig will mean a successful Cork City. Given the town's track record in economic, environmental and social development, it should be at the core of a new municipal district area.

Yours sincerely,

***Emer Cassidy***

Chairman

