

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee



Submission on Revisions to Electoral Area Boundaries

8th May 2018

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a) Introduction:

This Report has been prepared following detailed consultation and engagement with the members of Cork County Council. There has been significant discussion at Municipal District/Divisional level, by Corporate Policy Group, and by full Council. The proposed redesign and reconfiguration of Electoral Areas and Municipal Districts as set out herein comes with the agreement and support of the elected members of Cork County. The Council is satisfied that the proposed Electoral Area changes herein represent an effective and efficient model for the delivery of local government services in Cork County. The Council requests the Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee to consider this submission and to endorse it as a revised representational model for Cork County.

The Council also notes paragraph 12.1.7 of the Expert Advisory Group Report, which is referenced in the Committee's terms of reference. Paragraph 12.1.7 of the Expert Advisory Group Report refers to a representational ratio of 5,500:1 for Cork County. As a consequence an alternative option is included in Section H of this report to address this possibility.

b) Context & Challenges:

The review of Local Electoral areas is being undertaken in prospect of the Local elections to be held in 2019, having regard to the results of Census 2016 and with the policy objectives of reducing the size of territorially large local electoral areas and of designing urban-focused local electoral areas around the larger towns.

The Local Electoral Area Boundary Committees are tasked with making recommendations on the division of council areas into local electoral areas and on the number of members of the Council to be assigned to each such local electoral area.

It is widely acknowledged that the boundary alteration process in Cork and the associated realignment of political structures represents an unprecedented challenge for local government in Cork.

It is important to recognise the scale of what is involved. It will, in effect, be the largest boundary alteration that both Authorities will ever have undertaken, with an anticipated transfer affecting some 81,000 citizens between County and City Councils. It is also the largest local government reorganisation since the abolition of the former Dublin County Council.

The 2016 Census highlights a population of 416,574 in comparison to 399,802 in 2011 in the County area of Cork. The Implementation Oversight Group, appointed by the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government, has identified a population of approx. 81,000 to transfer from Cork County Council to an expanded Cork City Council.

This will leave a population of approx. 335,000 within Cork County Council post May 2019. The reconfiguration of existing Municipal Districts to reflect this fall in population is the challenge going forward. It is important that this reconfiguration of boundaries positively reflects community identities and natural linkages which they may have.

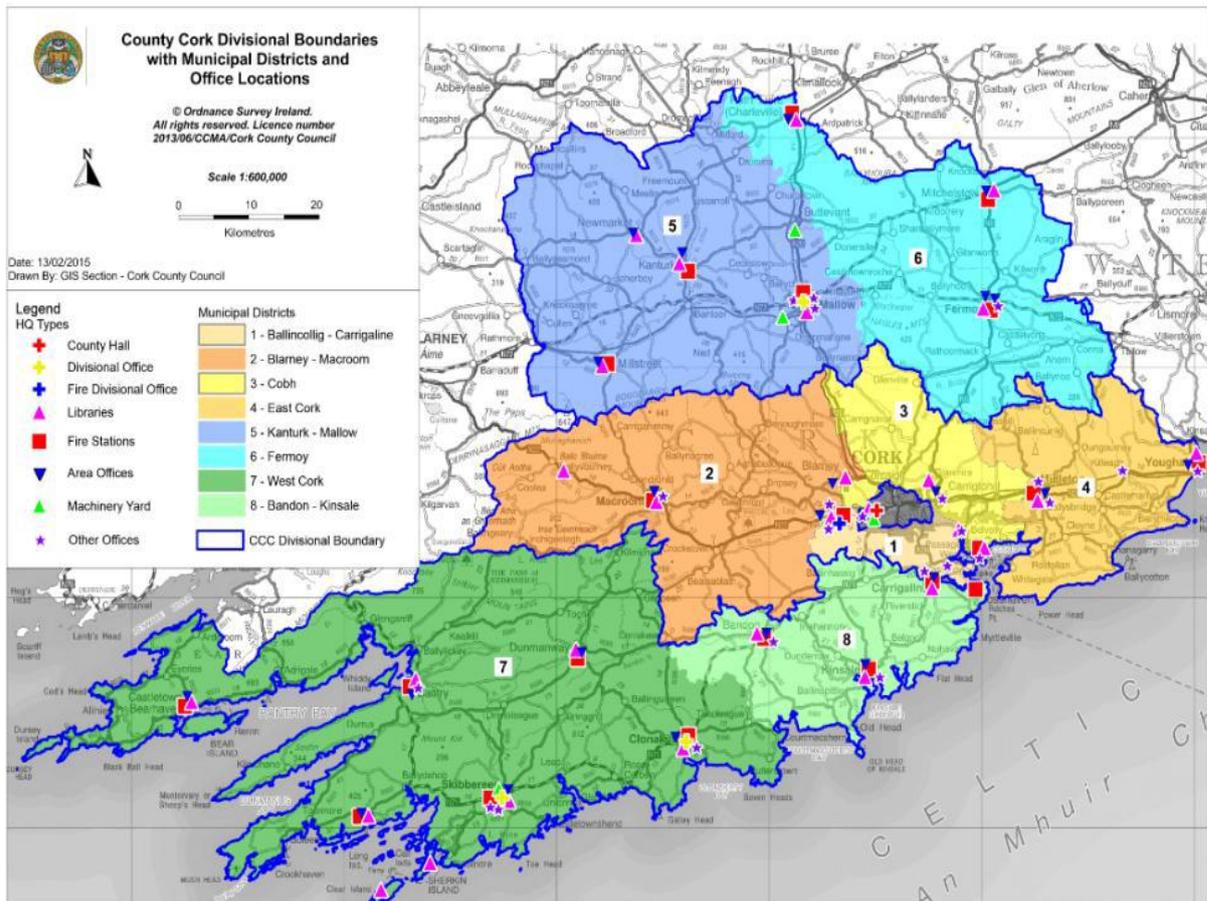
c) Existing Municipal District Structures:

The Municipal District Structure currently in place across Cork County consists of 8 Municipal Districts which elect 55 members to Cork County Council. The population to representation ratio for the County as a whole is 7269:1, compared to the national recommended figure of 4830:1. When the County’s population increase between 2011 and 2016 is factored in this ratio increases to 7574:1.

The following table shows the current situation per Municipal District based on the 2016 census population figures:

Municipal District	Population	Members	Representational Ratio
West Cork	56,892	8	7,112
East Cork	45,384	6	7,564
Bandon/Kinsale	45,480	6	7,580
Ballincollig/Carrigaline	74,484	10	7,448
Blarney/Macroom	45,119	6	7,520
Kanturk/Mallow	48,532	6	8,089
Fermoy	44,125	6	7,354
Cobh/Glanmire	56,558	7	8,080
Totals	416,574	55	7,574

The following map highlights the varying size and geographical spread of the Municipal Districts across the County currently.



d) Impact of County Boundary Alteration on Existing Structure:

The current Municipal Districts of West Cork, East Cork, Fermoy, Bandon-Kinsale and Kanturk-Mallow will not be impacted on by the envisaged boundary changes. However, Blarney- Macroon will be impacted on through the loss of both the Blarney and Tower areas to the City. The remaining two Municipal Districts of Ballincollig-Carrigaline and Cobh-Glanmire adjacent to the existing City boundary will be significantly impacted on.

The Cobh-Glanmire Municipal District will lose the Glanmire area and the northern city environs of Ballyvolane to the City while Ballincollig-Carrigaline Municipal District will lose Ballincollig, Douglas and the southern city environs of Frankfield, Togher etc. The following table highlights these significant changes:

Municipal District	Population	Population Transfer	Remaining Population
West Cork	56,892	-	56,892
East Cork	45,384	-	45,384
Bandon/Kinsale	45,480	46	45,434
Ballincollig/Carrigaline	74,484	52,414	22,139
Blarney/Macroom	45,119	8,588	36,531
Kanturk/Mallow	48,532	-	48,532
Fermoy	44,125	-	44,125
Cobh/Glanmire	56,558	20,339	36,219
Totals	416,574	81,387	335,187

The table highlights the transfer of a population of approx 81,000 from the County Council to the City Council.

e) Issues with the existing Municipal District Structure:

While the existing Municipal District structure has now become embedded locally within Cork County, there are a small, but significant number of issues that need addressing as part of this review process. These are outlined below:

The town of Carrigaline situated within the Ballincollig-Carrigaline Municipal District had its boundary with the Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District set along its main thoroughfare effectively cutting the town in two for electoral purposes. This needs addressing as part of the current review.

It is of paramount importance that this serious anomaly is addressed as a priority as part of the review process. It is essential that this town which will be one of the key strategic County towns is reunited and positioned at the core of a newly reconfigured Municipal District.

Less significant but equally important changes are required to reunite the villages and community of Ballineen and Enniskean as well as the Gaelteacht area of Ballingeary.

f) Proposed Overall Municipal District Structure:

Cork County Council is of the view that the current number of Municipal Districts should remain at 8 with a number of boundary changes to reflect and compensate for both the transfer of approx 81,000 citizens to Cork City and the increased County population levels

based on the 2016 Census figures. In addition the representational ratio figure of 7269:1 in respect of the 2014 Municipal District structure is not consistent with the recommended national representational figure of 4,830:1 (“Putting People First”).

Cork County Council is of the view that the current representational ratio must be reduced to deal with this divergence. Consequently Cork County Council has proposed this submission on the basis that overall number of elected members at 55. This would reduce the representational ratio to a more favourable 6,094:1.

The table below reflects these proposed overall changes across the County and across the Municipal Districts, based on a 55 member Council;

Municipal Districts	Population	Max Members	Representational ratio
North Cork	93,808	15	6,254
East Cork	81,426	13	6,264
South Cork	70,245	12	5,854
West Cork	89,708	15	5,981
Totals	335,187	55	6,094

Revised Municipal Districts	Population	Members	Representational Ratio
West Cork Bantry EA	20,108	4	5,027
West Cork Skibbereen EA	32,437	5	6,487
East Cork	45,384	7	6,483
Bandon/Kinsale	37,163	6	6,194
Carrigaline	35,423	6	5,904
Macroom	34,822	6	5,804
Kanturk-Mallow (Kanturk EA)	27,228	4	5,837
Kanturk-Mallow (Mallow EA)	29,754	5	6,727
Fermoy	36,826	6	6,138
Cobh	36,042	6	6,007
Totals	335,187	55	6,094

g) Proposed Structure by individual Municipal District:

1) East Cork Municipal District;

The East Cork Municipal District contains the towns of Midleton and Youghal. The population of the District has increased by 2,985 based on the 2016 Census figures. The representational ratio previously was 7,067:1.

Cork County Council propose maintaining the current boundary as is but increasing the number of members to 7 to both reflect the increase in population and to reduce the representational ratio to a more favourable 6,483:1. It is a Municipal District that has worked well focused on the towns of Midleton and Youghal.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Population Increase	2014 Ratio	2019 Ratio
East Cork	42,399	45,384	2,985	7,067	6,483
Membership	6	7		+1	

2) Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District;

The Bandon - Kinsale Municipal District contains the towns of Bandon and Kinsale. The population of the District has increased by 3,026 based on the 2016 Census figures. The representational ratio previously was 7,076:1.

The boundary alteration will see 46 citizens transferring from the Ballygarvan ED to the City Council around the Airport area.

Cork County Council is proposing the transfer of the following Electoral Districts to a new Carrigaline centred Municipal District;

- 183 Carrigaline
- Templebreedy
- Liscleary
- Kilpatrick
- Dunderrow
- Ballygarvan
- Ballyfoyle
- Farranbrien

In addition the ED's to the north of Bandon in the current Municipal District of Blarney – Macroom namely: Murragh, Templemartin, Brinny, Knockavilly and Ballymurphy are to transfer to Bandon- Kinsale. All of these ED's are naturally orientated to the town of Bandon.

In the South West the ED's of Abbeymahon, Butlerstown, Courtmacsherry, Kilmaloda East and West, Templeomalus and Timoleague are to transfer in from West Cork as these too have a more Bandon focus.

This will have the effect of stabilising the population of the Bandon – Kinsale Municipal District at 37,163 with no change in the number of elected members (6) for the area. This will have the effect of reducing the representational ratio to 6,194:1.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Transfer to City	Transfer to Carrigaline MD	2019 Ratio
Bandon - Kinsale	42,454	45,480	46	11,393	6,194
Membership	6	6			

3) Carrigaline Municipal District;

The new proposed Carrigaline Municipal District will contain the remainder of the Ballincollig – Carrigaline Municipal District centred on the town of Carrigaline (urban centre greater than 15k population). The Boundary alteration with the City will see the transfer of approx 52,414 citizens to the City Council area. This is substantial, and one which has the most significant impact of all on the existing Municipal District structure.

Previously the MD had a population of 71,946 with 10 elected members with a representational ratio of 7,195:1. Cork County Council proposes the transfer of the following Electoral Districts from the Bandon – Kinsale Municipal District which are naturally geographically linked to Carrigaline;

- 183 Carrigaline
- Templebreedy
- Liscleary
- Kilpatrick
- Dunderrow
- Ballygarvan
- Ballyfoyle
- Farranbrien

The remainder of the Ballincollig ED (rural area) with a population of 2,336 is to be realigned with this area.

These changes result in a population of 34,822 remaining for a more community focused Municipal District. Cork County Council proposes retaining the number of elected representatives at 6 thus reducing the representational ratio to a more favourable 5,803:1.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Transfer to City	Revised Population	2019 Ratio
Macroom	43,398	45,119	8,588	34,822	5,803
Membership	6			6	

5) Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District;

The Kanturk – Mallow Municipal District contains the hub town of Mallow and the towns of Kanturk, Newmarket & Buttevant. It has a large geographic rural hinterland. The population of the District has increased from 47,305 in 2011 to 48,532 based on the 2016 Census figures. The representational ratio previously was a very high 7,884:1 the highest of all the Municipal Districts in Cork.

Cork County Council proposes splitting the Municipal District into two electoral areas, one focused on the Kanturk side of the MD and the other focused on the Mallow side. In addition it is proposed to move the ED's of; Miltown, Newtown, Rathluirc from the Fermoy MD to the Kanturk EA, with Imphrick and Springfort to the Mallow EA. These areas would have always been more geographically and more community aligned with the Kanturk-Mallow area.

In the south the ED's of Knockantota (Macroom MD) and Blackpool (Cobh MD) would realign with the Mallow EA with which they are naturally linked. The geography around the EDs' of Charleville, Imphrick and Springfort, and their appropriate accommodation within specific Electoral Areas, proved challenging. Notwithstanding this, the members expressed their overall support for the proposals set out in this document.

It is proposed that the 2 no. electoral areas combined would constitute the Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District.

These changes will result in a population of 56,982 (27,228 Kanturk EA, 29,754 Mallow EA) remaining for a more community focused Municipal District. Cork County Council proposes increasing the number of elected representatives to 9 (4 for the Kanturk EA and 5 for the Mallow EA) thus reducing the representational ratio to a much more favourable 6,331:1.

The Kanturk EA in particular, is rural in nature and character with a widely dispersed population. It is for this reason that it is proposed that it would constitute a 4 no. elected member Electoral Area. The constraints imposed by the Boundary Committee’s terms of reference are such that creating a 5 seat Electoral Area here is not possible.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Proposed MD Pop	2014 Ratio	2019 Ratio
Kanturk - Mallow	47,305	48,532	56,982	7,884	6,331
Membership	6		9		

6) Fermoy Municipal District;

The Fermoy Municipal District contains the towns of Fermoy, Mitchelstown and Charleville. The population of the District has increased from 42,226 to 44,125 based on the 2016 Census figures. The representational ratio previously was 7,038:1.

Cork County Council proposes to move the ED’s of; Miltown, Newtown, Rathluirc from the Fermoy MD to the Kanturk EA, with Imphrick and Springfort moving to the Mallow EA of the Kanturk-Mallow MD. These areas would have always been more geographically and more community aligned with the Kanturk-Mallow area.

In the South the Watergrasshill area was previously cut in two between two Municipal Districts (Fermoy and Cobh-Glanmire). The area is to transfer in its entirety to the Cobh MD under this proposal, resolving that local issue, with the ED of Glenville transferring from Cobh to Fermoy as this area is more closely affiliated with the Fermoy area.

These changes result in a population of 36,826 remaining for a more community focused Municipal District. Cork County Council proposes retaining the number of elected representatives at 6 thus reducing the representational ratio to a more favourable 6,137:1.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Proposed MD Pop.	2014 Ratio	2019 Ratio
Fermoy	42,226	44,125	36,826	7,038	6,137
Membership	6		6		

7) Cobh Municipal District;

The Cobh – Glanmire Municipal District contains the town of Cobh and the ever expanding areas of Glanmire and Carrigtohill. The population of the District has increased from 53,544 to 56,558 based on the 2016 Census figures. The representational ratio previously was 7,649:1.

The boundary alteration will see the loss of the Glanmire area in the North West to the City Council resulting in a reduction in population of approx 20,339 from the following Electoral Districts;

- Whitechurch 938
- St. Marys (pt) 5,522
- Rathcooney (pt) 7,382
- Riverstown 3,176
- Caherlag 3,321

In addition the area of Blackpool (Bottlehill) is more naturally aligned with Mallow and will transfer to that MD under this proposal. The Watergrasshill area was previously cut in two between two Municipal Districts (Fermoy and Cobh-Glanmire). The area is to transfer in its entirety to the Cobh MD under this proposal, resolving that local issue.

These changes result in a population of 36,042 remaining for the Municipal District. Cork County Council proposes reducing the number of elected representatives from 7 to 6 thus reducing overall the representational ratio to a more favourable 6,007:1.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Transfer to City	Proposed MD Pop	2019 Ratio
Cobh	53,544	56,558	20,339	36,042	6,007
Membership	7			6	

The concept of a proposed Harbour Municipal District was mooted (Carrigaline MD and Cobh MD combined). The elected members of Cork County are totally opposed to any such model as the two Municipal Districts (Electoral Areas) have no commonality or common interests in this regard.

8) West Cork Municipal District:

The current population of the West Cork Municipal District stands at 56,892 and can be compared with the population of counties such as Longford, Leitrim and Carlow. The geographical extent of the District is significant to say the least. It contains the towns of Bantry, Clonakilty, Dunmanway and Skibbereen, three of which hug the coastline. It is indeed a unique and challenging area.

Cork County Council proposes maintaining one Municipal District, spread between two Electoral Districts namely the Bantry ED and the Skibbereen & Clonakilty ED.

In the South West the ED's of Abbeymahon, Butlerstown, Courtmacsherry, Kilmaloda East and West, Templeomalus and Timoleague are to transfer from West Cork to the Bandon-Kinsale MD as these have a more Bandon focus. In the north the West Cork areas of Ballingearry (Beal Atha an Ghaorthaidh), Bealock, Carrigboy, and Teerelton will transfer to the Macroom Municipal District thus reuniting the split Gaelteacht community of Ballingearry and the community of Inchageeladh.

The revised population of the two areas based on the 2016 Census figures is:

- Bantry ED, 20,108
- Skibbereen & Clonakilty ED, 32,437

The total number of elected members is proposed to increase from 8 to 9 reflecting the wide geographical spread of the Municipal District. This would be reflected in 4 members being elected from the Bantry ED with 5 from the Skibbereen & Clonakilty ED. This will reduce the representational ratio from 7,066:1 in 2011 to a more favourable 5,838:1 within the Municipal District.

Municipal District	2011 Population	2016 Population	Bantry ED	Skibbereen ED	2019 Ratio
West Cork	56,530	56,892	20,108	32,437	5,838
Membership	8		4	5	

It is important to recognise the unique demographic and geographic profile of the area. The Bantry EA, in particular, comprises a combination of peninsular areas as well as remote, peripheral, rural areas. It is also important to acknowledge the logistical challenges presented by the 7 no. inhabited islands attaching to the Bantry and Skibbereen electoral areas. It is necessary in this case to propose a 4 seat Electoral Area for the Bantry EA. The constraints imposed by the Boundary Committee's terms of reference are such that creating a 5 seat Electoral Area here is not possible.

h) Alternative Option:

The Council also notes paragraph 12.1.7 of the Expert Advisory Group Report, which is referenced in the Committee's terms of reference. The following is an extract from the Committee's terms of reference:

8. The Committee shall have regard to:

(i) Government policy in relation to local government, including any further reports, statements or decisions in that regard during the course of the review, and to any further guidance or requirements issued by the Minister;

(ii) The recommendations in relation to local electoral areas and municipal districts (in particular at paragraph 12.1.7) in the report of the Expert Advisory Group on Local Government Arrangements in Cork dated April 2017.

Paragraph 12.1.7 of the Expert Advisory Group Report refers to a representational ratio of 5,500:1 for Cork County. If the Committee are of the opinion that such a representational ratio is more desirable based on the findings contained in that report Cork County Council would propose the following:

The amendments to each of the MD boundaries outlined in section (f) would remain, with a 61 member Council based on the representational ratio of 5,500:1 constituted as follows across the MD's:

61 Members based on revised Municipal District Boundaries.

Municipal Districts	Population	Max Members	Representational ratio
North Cork	93,808	17	5,500
East Cork	81,426	15	5,502
South Cork	70,245	12	5,854
West Cork	89,708	17	5,277
Totals	335,187	61	5,508

Revised Municipal Districts	Population	Members	Representational Ratio
West Cork Bantry EA	20,108	4	5,027
West Cork Skibbereen EA	32,437	6	5,406
East Cork	45,384	8	5,673
Bandon/Kinsale	37,163	7	5,309
Carrigaline	35,423	6	5,904
Macroom	34,822	6	5,804
Kanturk-Mallow (Kanturk EA)	27,228	5	5,446
Kanturk-Mallow (Mallow EA)	29,754	5	5,951
Fermoy	36,826	7	5,261
Cobh	36,042	7	5,149
Totals	335,187	61	5,495

i) Summary:

The changes highlighted above in section (f) continue to embed the existing Municipal District Structure while at the same time dealing with the significant movement in population between the County Council and the City Council areas.

The maintaining of 55 elected members across the 8 redefined Municipal Districts favourably addresses the significant representational imbalance that existed previously reducing that ratio from a high of 7,269:1 to a more acceptable 6,094:1.

The table below reflects these proposed overall changes, and the proposed names of the reconstituted Municipal Districts;

Municipal District	Population	Members	Representational Ratio
West Cork	52,545	9	6,321
East Cork	45,384	7	6,483
Bandon/Kinsale	37,163	6	5,674
Carrigaline	35,423	6	5,577
Macroom	34,822	6	6,089
Kanturk/Mallow	56,982	9	6,067
Fermoy	36,826	6	6,304
Cobh	36,042	6	6,037
Totals	335,187	55	6,094

