



# Comhairle Chontae Liatroma

## Leitrim County Council

Áras an Chontae,  
Carrick-on-Shannon,  
Co. Leitrim.

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Civil Defence  
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Community and Enterprise  
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Community Wardens  
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Corporate Services  
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County Library  
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County Managers Office  
(071) 9650465

Customer Service  
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Environment Hotline  
1890 205 205

Finance Section  
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Fire Service  
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Higher Education Grants  
(071) 9650463

Housing Loans  
(071) 9650418

Housing Rents  
(071) 9650417

Housing Section  
(071) 9650426

Human Resources  
(071) 9650460

Motor Taxation  
(071) 9650431

Planning Section  
(071) 9650450

Rates Section  
(071) 9650419

Register of Electors  
(071) 9650461

Roads Section  
(071) 9650420

Stores  
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Veterinary Inspector  
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Water Charges  
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Water Services  
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Water Services Hotline  
1890 302 302

THIS MATTER IS BEING DEALT WITH BY Jackie Maguire TEL. No. 071 9650465 EXT. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2008 Our Ref: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

The Secretary,  
Electoral Area Boundary Committee,  
Room 2.03,  
Custom House,  
Dublin 1.

**Re: Electoral Area Boundary Committee – Invitation for Submissions**

Dear Mr. Vaughan,

I refer to your letter of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2008 in relation to the establishment of the Electoral Area Boundary Committees and the invitation for submissions in this regard. I wish to confirm that this invitation to make a submission has been brought to the attention of the elected members of Leitrim County Council.

I have set out hereunder a submission on behalf of Leitrim County Council in this regard and we look forward to the Committee's favourable consideration.

It is noted that the Electoral Area Boundary Committee is mandated to review the ratio of population to elected members in each local electoral area and to ensure a reasonable relationship (as far as practicable within a variance of +/- 10%) between the population as established by the 2006 Census and representation within each local authority.

The table below details the population figures in respect of each Electoral Area in County Leitrim, together with the population per Elected Member in each Electoral Area and the deviations from the Leitrim average in each case. The average ratio of representation in Leitrim is one seat per 1,315 persons - the deviation from the Leitrim average varies from minus 194.08 persons (-14.75%) in the Ballinamore Electoral Area to plus 129.59 persons (+9.85%) in Carrick-on-Shannon Electoral Area.

Electoral Area	Population per 2006 Census	No. of Elected Members	Population per Elected Member	Deviation from Leitrim average (persons)	% Deviation from Leitrim Average
<b>Leitrim County</b>	<b>28,950</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1,315.91</b>		
<b>Ballinamore</b>	6,731	6	1,121.83	- 194.08	- 14.75%
<b>Carrick on Shannon</b>	8,673	6	1,445.5	+129.59	+ 9.85%
<b>Dromahaire</b>	6,682	5	1,336.4	+20.49	+ 1.56%
<b>Manorhamilton</b>	6,864	5	1,372.8	+56.89	+ 4.32%



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The Ballinamore Electoral Area is the only Electoral Area in Leitrim where the ratio of population to elected member is outside of the +/- 10% variance. It needs to be borne in mind however that a variation of +/- 10% in the Leitrim context represents 132 persons and it is considered that the actual variance, at 194 persons, is not so significant as to warrant any adjustment to the Electoral Area boundaries.

In the interests of preserving natural communities and the hinterlands of population centres, and maintaining continuity in arrangements of local Electoral Areas (in line with the Terms of Reference for the Review) it is recommended that no change be made to the boundaries of the Electoral Areas in Leitrim.

As outlined by the Association of County & City Councils in their submission of 11<sup>th</sup> February 2008, cognisance needs to be taken of the fact that proportionality in the setting out of electoral areas may not be possible in some rural areas where very big geographical electoral areas would be a consequence. Leitrim is a predominantly rural county and has the smallest population in the State, with an average population density figure that is three and a half times lower than the average for the State.

As has also been outlined in other submissions, Electoral Areas have assumed additional status and importance for local authorities, and indeed the local population, as management and operational areas as part of the local government modernisation and reform process. Leitrim County Council has a network of Area Offices delivering services within each of the Local Electoral Areas – Council Headquarters are located in Carrick on Shannon while Area Offices are located in Ballinamore, Dromahaire, Manorhamilton and Mohill. It is considered that significant divergences from the current electoral area boundaries should be avoided if at all possible.

It is recognised that the Terms of Reference also require that the Committee have regard to, where possible, aligning local electoral area boundaries with Dáil Constituency boundaries.

The recently published Constituency Commission Report recommends the continued splitting of County Leitrim for the purposes of Dáil Constituencies. It is considered that this represents a very serious injustice to County Leitrim and that the reinstatement of County Leitrim as an electoral unit within a constituency is essential to ensure that the electorate in County Leitrim have an opportunity to elect a representative to Dáil Éireann. Leitrim County Council continues to actively lobby to ensure that the Constituency Commission recommendations in this regard are rejected by the Oireachtas, and it is understood that the report is to be debated in the Houses of the Oireachtas over the coming weeks.

With regard to the other Terms of Reference for the Committee it should be noted that the Leitrim Electoral Areas as they currently exist fully meet the requirement of ensuring that electoral areas have an urban or neighbourhood focal point or points.

In terms of population growth, it should be borne in mind that County Leitrim is still at an early stage of its development. It is anticipated that the county will continue to grow over the coming years and it is considered that any change to the boundaries of the Electoral Areas would be premature at this point.

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As outlined previously, while the ratio of population to elected member for the Ballinamore Electoral Area is outside of the recommended +/- 10% variance, the actual deviation beyond the recommended variance represents just 62 persons and is not considered so significant as to warrant any adjustment to the Electoral Area boundaries. Furthermore it should be borne in mind that the Ballinamore Electoral Area is in fact the largest Electoral Area in Leitrim in terms of road kilometers at 654km compared to 429km for Carrick-on-Shannon Electoral Area, 522km for Dromahaire Electoral Area and 538km for Manorhamilton Electoral Area.

Leitrim County Council anticipates your favourable consideration of this submission – in the meantime should you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

*J. Maguire*  
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R Jackie Maguire,  
Leitrim County Manager.  
AMcG/JM