

Submission

Mr. Chara,

I make this submission as a resident, rate-payer, past Chairperson of Meath East Co-operative Society (MECOS), and past secretary of Meath Tourism.

I respectfully request that you take cognisance of points 2 and 3 of the 'Terms of Reference' i.e.

- 2. In carrying out its review, the Committee shall have as an objective the drawing up of electoral areas which (alone or in combination) would, as far as practicable, have an urban or neighbourhood focal point (or points).
- 3. In recommending changes to local electoral areas, the Committee should, subject to paragraph 2, take due account first of the desirability of preserving natural communities or the hinterlands of population centres.

I am seriously concerned that your committee may be tempted to follow the lead of the Constituency Commission and dilute or liquidate the Laytown/Bettystown/Mornington/Donacarney area of Meath East into Drogheda/Louth. This area is an intrinsic part of Meath, home to the Tara Brooch found on the beach at Laytown/Bettystown, which is also home to the famous Laytown Races. The dissolution of this area into Drogheda/Louth would disenfranchise it and its residents of their Meath identity.

The Laytown/Bettystown/Mornington/Donacarney area of Meath East, like many other areas in proximity to Dublin, has experienced huge demographic changes over the past decade. In my view, the establishment of a Town Commission is really what should be considered for the area. The following population figures (extracted from the East Meath Local Area Plan), I think, speak for themselves:

Year	1996	2002	2004	2008	2014	2020	2024
Pop. East Meath (North)**	3,678	5,597	9,400	12,437	18,926	28,802	38,106

* defined by the East Meath Local Area Plan as the area encompassing the villages of Bettystown, Laytown, Mornington, Mornington (East), Donacarney and Julianstown.

I sincerely hope that your committee take the above into consideration, and wish you well in your endeavors.

William Gilna
Woodford
Laytown
Co. Meath.