

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann Thuaidh
North Tipperary County Council



**Mr. Martin Vaughan,
Secretary,
Electoral Area Boundary Committee**

14th March 2008

Re: Invitation for Submissions – Electoral Area Boundary Committee

Dear Sir,

Further to your letter of 25th January 2008 inviting submissions as part of the review of the local electoral areas, the following are details of my submission in relation to North Tipperary.

North Tipperary has four local electoral areas i.e. Borrisokane, Nenagh, Templemore and Thurles. Details of the population as per the 2006 Census and number of members for each are set out hereunder:

Local Electoral Area	Population per 2006 Census*	No. of members	Average
Borrisokane	8,189	3	2,730
Nenagh	25,796	7	3,685
Templemore	14,652	5	2,930
Thurles	17,386	6	2,898
Total	66,023	21	3,144

* Please note that the population as taken from the 2006 Census is based on the figures as per Table 9 entitled “Persons, males and females in each Local Electoral Area as defined in the relevant Orders made under the Local Government Act, 1994”. The figures shown for the rural areas of Borrisokane, Nenagh, Roscrea No. 1 and Thurles as in Table 6 entitled “Population and area of each Province, County, City, urban area, rural area and Electoral Division, 2002 and 2006” are misleading as the rural areas do not contain the same District Electoral Divisions as per the local electoral areas. The attached Table illustrates the differences in terms of District Electoral Divisions.

Your letter indicates that the Committee are 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 2006 census and representation within each local authority. Based on this ratio and taking the variance of +/- 10% into account this would suggest that the appropriate average for North Tipperary for each of the local electoral areas would be between 2830 and 3458. From the above Table it can be seen that the two local electoral areas which are outside this ratio are Borrisokane (2,730) and Nenagh (3,685).

Your letter also indicates that the Committee shall have as an objective the drawing up of electoral areas which would, as far as practicable, have an urban or neighbourhood focal point (or points). Currently the main urban area in the local electoral area of Borrisokane is the Town of Borrisokane which has a population of 832 as per Table 5 of the Census. In the local electoral area of Nenagh there is Nenagh Town (7,415 not including environs), Ballina (1,861) and Newport (1,286). Both Ballina and Newport are growth areas where the population is likely to further increase. Templemore has Roscrea (4,910) and Templemore (2,255). Thurles has Thurles (6,831 not including environs). It can therefore be seen that Borrisokane does not have the same extent of urban areas that exist in the other three local electoral areas.

A further issue included in your letter is that the number of councillors representing an area as determined should not be less than four or more than seven. Borrisokane local electoral area is currently represented by three councillors.

Taking into account the current ratios, the urban focal points, the number of councillors per area and the geographical areas concerned in my view the following amendments should be considered:

1. Transfer the DEDs of Knigh and Nenagh Urban from the Nenagh Local Electoral Area into the Borrisokane Local Electoral Area.
2. Subdivide the DED of Nenagh Rural so that the townlands of Ballintotty, Ballygraique, Bawn, Benedine, Cunnahurt, Curraheen, Grallagh, Islandbawn, Knockalton, Knockalton Lower, Knockalton Upper, Lahesseragh, Lissatunny, Lisboney and Tullaheady remain in Nenagh Local Electoral Area and the remaining townlands transfer into the Borrisokane Local Electoral Area.
3. Re-name the Borrisokane Local Electoral Area to either Nenagh North or Nenagh. This should become a 5 seat area.
4. Re-name the Nenagh Local Electoral Area to either Nenagh South or Newport. This should become a 5 seat area.

The net effect of the above is as follows:

- Current Local Electoral Area of Borrisokane average representation would be 3435 approximately (this is based on an estimation of the population of the Townlands to be transferred from Nenagh Rural). The urban focal point in this area would be the town of Nenagh.
- Current Local Electoral Area of Nenagh average representation would be 3362 approximately (again this is estimated).

Consideration could also be given to the inclusion of the DED of Monsea (population 648) in the current Local Electoral Area of Borrisokane. This would be purely for geographical reasons – it would alter the ratios so that Borrisokane would then be outside of the +/- 10% recommended by approximately 107.

As the Templemore and the Thurles Areas are within the recommended ratios and each have significant urban focal points no change is recommended in relation to same in respect of achieving a representational balance based on population. It has been suggested however that consideration could be given to the following amendments in respect of individual townlands for geographical reasons based on proximity of polling stations:

1. Transfer of townlands Derryfadda, Boulabehe and Castletown currently in local electoral area of Thurles (DED Longfordpass – Polling District Two Mile Borris) to local electoral area of Roscrea. Voters in these townlands are travelling up to 4.5 miles to a polling station in Two-Mile-Borris (Thurles Local Electoral Area) whereas there is a polling station within one mile of them in the village of Moyne (Templemore Local Electoral Area).
2. Transfer of townland of Garryglass currently in local electoral area of Thurles (DED Templederry – Polling District Kilcommon) to local electoral area of Nenagh. Voters in this townland travel up to 8 miles, due to mountainous terrain, to vote in Kilcommon (Thurles Local Electoral Area) whereas they reside within half a mile of a polling station in Templederry Village (Nenagh Local Electoral Area).

While the sub-division of District Electoral Divisions between local electoral areas based on individual townlands is not desirable, the convenience of the electors in the area might be better served if the townlands were transferred to more appropriate District Electoral Divisions based on local geographical factors – in this case to DED Moyne and DED Kilnaneave respectively.

The issue of the extension of Town Boundaries for electoral purposes only which dates back to 1994 needs to be examined as developments that have taken place in affected areas since that date have created a number of anomalies. It was assumed at the time that Town Boundaries would be adjusted to include these areas but, as this matter has not been pursued since, the retention of these areas for electoral purposes only is very questionable.

Beannacht leat,

**Terry Ó Niadh,
County Manager**