

Submission by Cllr. Seán Paul Mahon (Fianna Fáil, Artane Ward, Dublin City Council) to the Dublin and Cities Electoral Area Boundary Committee.

14th March 2008

I wish to state from the outset that I have no political agenda in drawing up this submission. I will be arguing for the retention of the Artane Electoral Ward of Dublin City Council as it currently stands, but I am not driven by motives of political opportunism and have no political advantage to gain from pursuing this objective. This is clear from the very fact that the area is presently represented by four different parties.

The Artane Ward rests comfortably within obvious geographical boundaries- Kilmore Road to the south, Malahide Road to the east, the M1 motorway to the west and the Mayne River to the north. It is a natural hinterland. If the electoral ward is carved up so that some boundaries end up traversing the M1, I believe this will have a detrimental effect on local communities. I refer specifically to the localities of Lorcan and Beaumont, currently in the Artane Electoral Ward but which stray into the Dáil Constituency of Dublin North West. Beaumont and Lorcan are more naturally aligned to the areas that directly adjoin them to the east and if they were to be transferred to the Ballymun Ward, they would be completely lost. To stretch an electoral ward across such a major artery as the M1 would immediately bisect it and there would be no chance of the areas on either side being properly integrated into a single unit.

The Artane Ward has existed in its current form for more than ten years and it sits within the working sphere of the North Central Area Committee of Dublin City Council. I have represented this well-established area for almost five years and was born and raised here. My work in Artane and my regular contact with residents has convinced me that a change to the boundaries would unnecessarily imbalance a system that is working tremendously well. People in Artane are familiar with their City Council, with the North Central Area Office, its staff and its location, which is convenient to all localities in the Ward. In recent times, the government has gone to great lengths in promoting entitlements and the work of local authorities which often

administer the work of central government. The North Central Area Office of Dublin City Council is a first class facility and to force communities which are on its doorstep to familiarise themselves with a new office much further away would be unfair and unconstructive.

Finally, the population variance for the individual local authority representation of the Artane Ward lies well within the figures stated in the Committee's Terms of Reference. There are four local authority representatives in Artane and this too meets the Committee's Terms of Reference. To expect a councillor to administer a six or seven seat constituency on a part time basis is unreasonable, especially in Dublin. It would be impossible for a councillor to communicate with his or her constituents adequately and our ability to conduct our duties to the best of our ability would be severely impeded.

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