

# Submission to Dublin and Cities Election Area Boundary Committee

## From: Dublin Mid West Progressive Democrats

### Current Situation (Information supplied by South Dublin County Council)

	Population	Seats	Population per Cllr	Variance from Average
Clondalkin	44,662	5	8,932	+7%
Lucan	49,174	4	12,294	-28%
Tallaght Central	47,287	5	9,457	+2%
Tallaght South	47,936	5	9,587	0%
Terenure-Rathfarnham	57,876	7	8,268	+14%
Total	246,935	26	9,613	

The census figures for South Dublin seem to suggest a single transfer of a seat within the county will allow the county meet the requirements of the boundary review. By transferring the 7<sup>th</sup> seat in Terenure-Rathfarnham LEA to the Lucan LEA and creating a 5 seater, the requirement of ensuring a variance of no more than 10% in any LEA is achieved. This one change is in our view inevitable.

### Proposed Changes (Information Supplied by South Dublin County Council)

	Population	Seats	Population per Cllr	Variance from Average
Clondalkin	44,662	5	8,932	+7%
Lucan	49,174	5	9,835	-2%
Tallaght Central	47,287	5	9,457	+2%
Tallaght South	47,936	5	9,587	0%
Terenure-Rathfarnham	57,876	6	9,646	0%
Total	246,935	26	9,613	

The LEA with the largest variance is Clondalkin which would become 7% overrepresented based on these census figures.

One possibility we examined was the inclusion of the Rathcoole and Saggart areas within the Clondalkin LEA. This would have the advantage of bringing the entire Dublin Mid West constituency within 2 LEAs for local government purposes. However the figures supplied suggest that this would mean a transfer of 7,000 from Tallaght South LEA to Clondalkin LEA and would lead to extra problems with the required variations. While this could be compensated for by an adjustment in the boundary between the Clondalkin and Lucan LEAs it would not seem appropriate to do this.

In our view the most straight forward approach is to simply transfer 1 seat from the Terenure-Rathfarnham LEA to Lucan LEA. It achieves the necessary consistency of representation and has the advantage of leaving the LEA boundaries that have existed in tact. It also moves South Dublin to a position of having 4x5 seat LEAs and 1x6 seat LEA. It has been consistently shown that larger LEAs generate more representative and proportionate electoral outcomes.

### **Observations**

While taking the opportunity to make a submission we would like to put on record our dissatisfaction with the current situation where there are vast disparities between the ratio of councillors to population across the country.

This system has given rise to a situation where, in our area, there is a population of 12,000 per councillor in the Lucan LEA while in places like Ballinamore in Leitrim this figure is just over 1,200. It is clearly unfair that a Lucan councillor must represent 10 times the number of constituents than his/her colleague in Ballinamore.

Not alone is this a problem in itself but it also leads to knock on consequences such as skewed voting in Seanad elections. The fact that there is an unfair spread of councillors especially between urban and rural areas means a massive concentration of this electorate come from smaller rural counties and not urban centres.

***Dublin Mid West Progressive Democrats  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2008***