

18.083

On behalf of Laois Sinn Féin I wish to make the following submission regarding the review of local electoral areas in County Laois.

We are totally opposed to any changes to the current boundaries. We believe the status quo should remain in place i.e. retain the same 3 Municipal Districts and boundaries for the following reasons.

1. Dramatic changes, requiring major adjustments and costs, were already introduced to the districts and boundaries in 2014 - just 4 years ago - and the current Council has not even sat for a full term under these new arrangements.

2. These new Municipal Districts are now bedded in with Area Engineers, Directors of Services, Area Managers, Council staff and local Councillors.

3. They are now fully accepted as electoral and administrative districts both by Council officials and the citizens in these 3 districts.

4. The 3 Municipal Districts in Laois are the most suitable and appropriate means of dividing the County.

5. (a) The Graiguecullen / Portarlinton District, with a population of 28,281 and 6 Councillors gives an average of 1 Councillor per 4,713 population.

(b) The Borris in Ossory / Mountmellick District, with a population of 24,158 and 6 Councillors gives an average of 1 Councillor per 4,026 per population.

(c) The Portlaoise District, with a population of 32,439 and 7 Councillors gives an average of 1 Councillor per 4,634 population.

All 3 Municipal Districts fall within the range of + / - 10% of the County average in terms of the population per Councillor. Total population is 84,697 with 19 Councillors giving an average of 4,457 per Councillor.

6. All 3 Municipal Districts should remain as single electoral areas because dividing them would disadvantage Independent candidates and candidates from smaller parties and would lead to the Local Authority not being representative of the population as a whole.

7. No credible or convincing case has been put forward from any quarter to justify any type of boundary changes in Laois.

Please take our submission on board as part of the review process.

Sincerely,

Brian Stanley TD