

Submission from Danny Healy-Rae TD and Cllr. Maura Healy-Rae

We would prefer to see the Killarney Municipal District (MD) remaining the same. It's hard to lose people you work for and have supported you through thick and thin. But the new boundary commission headed up by the Fine Gael Minister and Fine Gael Government and supported by Fiana Fail have set terms of reference which insist that Local Electoral Areas (LEA) can't have more than 7 seats. This effects the Killarney MD as we already have 8 elected members. I believe that this is a strategy to undermine Independents and small Parties. This is political gerrymandering at its very best.

The other term of reference that the minister suggests that census towns with 15,000 or more should have an area of its own electing 5 members and if a town like Killarney which has a population of 14,504 should be rounded upwards to the nearest thousand would then be classed as a 5 seater LEA, leaving just 3 seats for the all the rest of the municipal area, just because of 4 people more than 14,500 the whole political landscape of the County Municipal areas would be completely changed given that we don't know where the town census relates to or how it was determined by the enumerator or how this figure of 14,504 was arrived at.

Given that we know now that on census night, 24th April 2016, 706 people were included in the Killarney Town Census who are not living in the area and were visiting the area, staying in hotels and staying with friends, with others from outside Killarney, in hospitals or health centres. So if you deduct 706 from 14,504 it brings the number well down from 15,000 to 13,798.

We would much prefer to leave the Killarney Area intact as it was in 2009 and 2014 with Castleisland, Cordal, Kilfeilm included in the Killarney MD area and it has to be remembered that from 2009 to 2014 there was just 7 elected members were representing the entire area and everyone was represented equally.

Suggestion and option have been proposed that Killeentierna, Carker, Scartaglin, Direen and Millbrook should be taken out of the Killarney Area and put in with the Tralee Area. I and the people of these areas vehemently reject this proposal as the people from these areas had never much to do with or any connections with the Tralee Area but always have been tied to Killarney and South Kerry.

However, if we have to lose a seat and lose people and territory we ask that the new 7 seater to include

- Killarney Urban and Rural
- Killbonane
- Rockfield
- Lahard
- Muckross
- Molahiffe

- Kilcummin
- Killeentierna
- Headford
- Flesk
- Doocarrig
- Coom Gneeveguilla
- Coolies
- Clydagh
- Brewsterfield
- Ballyhar
- Aglish
- Aghadoe
- Scartaglin
- Millbrook
- Derreen
- Carker
- Cordal
- Currans
- Fossa

All of these areas look to Killarney as their town and have always been intrinsically linked as far back as anyone can remember to Killarney.

Indeed Scartaglin and its other D.E.D.S, Carker, Millbrook, Derreen & Gneeveguilla form the backbone and heart of the Kerry part of the Slíbh Luachra cultural area, known worldwide for its unique heritage and culture.

It is also important to remember that Scartaglin and Currow have had elected members representing their areas in the Killarney Electoral Area and South Kerry going back almost to the foundation of the State. Cllr. Tom Fleming RIP, Scartaglin, Cllr. William Dennehy RIP, Currow, Cllr. Christy McSweeney RIP, Currow and Cllr. Tom Fleming Jnr., Scartaglin, who got elected to Dáil Éireann in 2011 to represent the constituency of South Kerry. All this without doubt proves the fact that Currow and Scartaglin were always part of the Killarney Electoral Area and South Kerry.

We honestly believe that this proposal is a fair and honest request, geographically a small compact area close together and with Killarney as a central town depending on the rural areas for support to keep their business economy going.

From a roads/engineering point of view, this area has always been serviced well from the Town Hall in Killarney by Senior Executive Engineers, David Doyle, Paul Neary, John Ahern, Breda Mulryan, Brendan Mulhern, Kieran O'Halloran, Padraig Griffin and PJ Gallavin.

The Killarney MD incorporates agriculture, industry, tourism, sports and recreation and caters for all types of individual entrepreneurs. We want to be able to continue to represent all of these interests into the future.