

18.285

A chara,

Thank you for your public consultation on our local area boundaries. I note however from the following term in your terms of reference

*'In general local electoral areas should have between 5 - 7 seats however local electoral areas of 3-4 seats will be considered in areas where a 5-7 seat LEA would be disproportionately large'*

that it would seem that a decision has already been made with regard to the desired size of LEAs without any consultation or any given rationale which is of concern. My concern with regard to this term of reference arises from the possible exclusion of local area candidates that represent smaller parties or none, that represent minority cultures or indeed in some cases female candidates (where there is not a history of female candidates) should we move en masse to LEAs with 5-7 seats. The knock on effect of this policy down the line is potentially a follow-on national reduction in diversity within political representation within our Dail and Seanad.

With regard to the general consultation and any LEA boundary change I consider the following should be taken into consideration:

- not splitting local communities between LEAs but more particularly between Local Authority areas, General Election boundaries
- having a broad balance of socio-economic areas within any one LEA where possible
- the name of the LEA should have a better bearing on the actual area covered by the ward

My own LEA of Beaumont/Donaghmede has 9 seats while the neighbouring LEA in the North Central Area of Clontarf has 6 seats - This area works well as 2 LEAs but under the 5 - 7 seat criteria in the terms of reference it might be the view that the area be divided into x 3 LEAs of 5 seats each. As noted above, this would potentially impact on the democratic process across the entire area and result in a more homogenous larger party dominated representation.

Kind Regards,

*Alison*

Cllr Alison Gilliland

Beaumont/Donaghmede Ward in Dublin Bay North