

Review of Northern Ireland Local Government Boundaries
Written Submission on behalf of
Larne Borough Council

Introduction

Larne Borough Council wish to formally record their appreciation of the efforts of the Commissioner's officers in attending the Development Committee of Council on the 26th January 2007 to give Members further insight into the work undertaken by the Commissioner in preparing the report and recommendations under discussion.

Furthermore, whilst Council accepts that the Commissioner's work has been undertaken within a legislative framework that dictates a seven-council model, it wishes to formally record its opposition to this model and confirm its support for a 15 council model.

New Council Name

Council hold the view that it is a matter for the new Council to determine and make no suggestions in that regard.

Proposed Ward Boundaries

It has already been recognised by the Review of Public Administration task group that a key issue for any new council structure in Northern Ireland will be local community identity. On this basis the proposed ward boundaries will pose additional difficulties for communities within Larne Borough.

It has been confirmed that the legislative framework within which the boundary reviews have been undertaken also dictates the timeframe and information from which electorate data can be derived. Larne Borough Council wishes to draw attention to the fact that this information is in at least one case erroneous in addition to being outdated. For example, the maps contained within the Commissioner's report in relation to the Seacourt estate show a number of properties separated from the Ballygally Ward and included within Blackcave. These properties were actually demolished during 2002/03.

Over the last two years considerable residential development has taken place within the Borough and the population within the proposed Wards is currently different from the figures identified. Such development continues at a fast pace and it would appear to Council that some effort should be made to "future proof" these figures, at least up to the expected time of elections for the first new Councils.

Council comment on each of the proposed Wards as follows:

Ballygally – 2195

Ballygally is located on the coast and is not identifiable with the wider community of this Ward. It is suggested that it be renamed as Cairncastle as this is the name of the townland at the heart of the proposed Ward and is recognised as such as well as being the parish name, school name, etc. It is also suggested that the Ward be extended to

take in all of the Carnalbanagh area as marked on the attached map. Carnalbanagh is a rural hamlet with a strong local identity and the existing proposals effectively split the community on a 50-50 basis between Ballygally and Carnlough.

Blackcave – 2089

Query inclusion of demolished properties at Seacourt – are these included in electorate numbers?

The area known as Blackcave is located on the coast, north of the Seacourt Estate. Council suggests that the boundary of this Ward be relocated northwards to include this point and therefore the name as suggested would be appropriate. This would enable the Seacourt estate to remain within one Ward and would not effectively separate the community from its community centre and adjoining sports facilities.

An alternative option if boundaries could not be changed would be to rename the area as Town Parks or Ferris. The preferred option would be Town Parks.

Carnlough – 2218

The proposed Ward of Carnlough is a combination of two distinct communities, Carnlough and Glenarm. Council and the two communities have sought for many years to foster a belief of unity between these large villages without much success. To name the Ward as Carnlough could cause further alienation and Council would suggest renaming it as Glenlough, reflecting the joint community centre name. Furthermore, it is suggested that the boundary be amended to exclude Carnalbanagh as detailed above.

Considerable development is ongoing in this area and it is suggested that consideration be given to the implications of ongoing housing development.

Craigy Hill - 2255

For ease of community identity it is suggested that properties to right of Linn Road be excluded from the new Ward and consideration be given to renaming it as Ballyloran which is the name of the townland predominately located within the Ward.

Similarly substantial housing development is ongoing in the area over the last two years in this area recognised as Larne West.

Curran – 2177

For ease of community identity it is suggested that the area to the south of Victoria Road be included from the proposed Larne Centre Ward and that the area at Ballyhampton west of A8 be excluded.

By extending the southern boundary as marked on the attached map to include Ballysnod etc. will facilitate a better distribution of electorate population within Glynn Ward (See Glynn).

Gardenmore – 2158

Council would suggest that this Ward be renamed as Craigyhill or Greenland as the area of Gardenmore is not contained within the proposed boundaries of this Ward.

It is further suggested that The Roddens/Edward Avenue area be excluded from the Ward and move to Larne Centre. Include area to right of Linn Road from Churchill Road to Greenway (from Craigy Hill ward).

Glynn – 2208

The proposed boundary of this Ward cuts through the heart of Ballycarry village. If the southern boundary of Curran Ward is extended as suggested above, could Glynn be extended to include entire Ballycarry village? Council holds the view that the proposed name is appropriate for the Ward.

Island Magee – 2228

As suggested above, the splitting of Ballycarry village between Glynn and Islandmagee Wards would be inappropriate. Therefore the boundary of this ward should be the main road from Carrickfergus to Larne (A2) which would support the strong identity that the Islandmagee community have.

It should be noted that Islandmagee is spelt as one word.

Kilwaughter – 2285

The name of this proposed Ward is suitable as are the boundaries with a minor alteration. It is suggested that the Ward should include the Ballyhampton development to left of Highways from Curran Ward.

Larne Centre – 2154

It is suggested that this Ward be renamed as Gardenmore - Gardenmore Church and Gardenmore Place are within this ward.

It is further suggested that the Ward should exclude the area to the south of Victoria Road (move into Curran Ward), follow along A8 and exclude Ballyhampton taking in the Highways area and lower Linn Road (from Curran ward). The Ward should include The Roddens/Edward Avenue area (from Gardenmore ward).

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30 January 2007