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Councillor Declan O'Loan

BALLYMENA BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Amanda Morrison, Secretary, Office of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner, Forestview,
Purdy's Lane, Belfast, BT8 7AR

01 January 2007

Dear Ms Morrison,

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner, provisional recommendations : North East District

I wish to make just one point about the recommendations.

I fully understand that there is to be a further process to determine District Electoral Areas. However of course the present proposals provide the bricks for that process to build with. I want to ensure that nationalist voters will be able to be proportionately represented.

At present the Ballymena Borough Council Area has a population which is slightly over 20% nationalist. With four seats out of twenty four, there is a slight under-representation of nationalists in the existing Ballymena Borough Council, and that cannot really be bettered with the given DEAs.

The existing Ballymena Borough Council area is being replaced by nineteen wards. Proportionate nationalist representation in that area could still be four. (I do understand that the area will no longer exist in a discrete sense.) I cannot judge whether the proposed wards will allow this to happen, but I want to ask that this issue be fully considered before the ward boundaries are finalised, so that the DEA commissioner is not given an impossible task in trying to ensure fair representation.

Yours sincerely,

Declan O'Loan

Declan O'Loan (for SDLP Group, Ballymena Borough Council)

