



Sub 16/115

**THOMAS P. BROUGHAN T.D.**

Tel: 618 3557 or 618 3798, Fax: 618 4545  
Email: [thomas\\_p\\_broughan@oireachtas.ie](mailto:thomas_p_broughan@oireachtas.ie)  
[www.tommybroughan.com](http://www.tommybroughan.com)

DÁIL ÉIREANN  
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2



The Secretary  
Constituency Commission  
Room 1.65  
Custom House  
Dublin 1

6<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**Re: Submission regarding Dublin Bay North constituency to the Constituency Commission review of constituency boundaries following the 2016 Census**

Dear Secretary,

On behalf of my supporters and constituents, I wish to submit the following comments for consideration by the Constituency Commission.

Our first preference would be to return to the previous constituency boundaries of Dublin North East and (if necessary for the restoration of a 3-seat constituency) have Portmarnock, Balgriffin and Kinsealy included again in that constituency.

Dublin North Central should also be then reconstituted as a 3-seat constituency with any necessary additional territory and population returning from the Santry area of Dublin North West and lower Fairview/North Strand in Dublin Central.

Our second preference would be to leave the constituency of Dublin Bay North as it is and to not lose any territory or population.

**INDEPENDENT**  
DUBLIN BAY NORTH

(The 28 or so parishes of Dublin Bay North have a close social, economic and cultural affinity and civic and political groups and organisations are just getting used to this merged constituency).

I believe that the terms of reference for the Constituency Commission are too restrictive. (In my submission to the Commission during the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil, I argued that the Dáil should not be cut in size to 158 T.D's and that the 166 member Dáil should at least be retained). From your terms of reference and the increase in population to 4,758,000, it seems that you are restricted to a Dáil of between 153 and 160 T.D's. Under those terms, you should certainly propose a Dáil of 160 T.D's with the additional 2 members going to Dublin and Leinster constituencies (given that Dublin and Leinster's population is now greater than that of Northern Ireland and the whole of Ulster and approaching the size of the population of Wales).

With regard to the first preference referred to above (a revived Dublin North East), I note that some submissions to the Commission advocate the promotion of 5-seat and other larger constituencies on the grounds of proportionality being maximised. But citizens who have stood for and won elections and represented tens of thousands of constituents know that a balance has to be struck between good proportionality and effective representation in a representative democracy.

In a 3-seat constituency, e.g., a committed, hardworking T.D may represent about 80,000 to 90,000 people and the electorate doesn't distinguish much between regions of a constituency and a

particular T.D (certainly in urban Ireland). People simply contact the T.D they believe will represent them best on all personal, local and national issues. So effectively many Irish T.D's, even in a 3-seat constituency, may represent a population often as large as (and generally bigger than) a UK Westminster constituency. Extending this analogy, a 4-seat constituency brings the potential population for representation to around 110,000 plus and in a 5-seat constituency this potential population rises to perhaps over 150,000 people (as in Dublin Bay North). When submissions advocate large constituencies on the basis of better equity of Dáil representation, they often seem totally unaware of the effort and organisation that goes into fairly representing tens of thousands of citizens. The huge casualty rate of sitting T.D's at each general election in which I have stood since 1989 certainly seems to bear this out. At most of these elections, 45 to 50 plus T.D's have lost their seats or retired and 2011, of course, saw an extraordinary haemorrhage of the membership of the 30<sup>th</sup> Dáil. In 2016, around 52 members of the last government coalition were also defeated or retired.

Dublin North East was a historic 4 and later 3-seat constituency that was first established in 1937 with a similar territory to, but smaller population than, the present Dublin Bay North. Between 1977 and 2011, Dublin North East generally consisted of about 16 parishes in the North Coolock, Donaghmede/Kilbarrack/Raheny Wards of Dublin City and the Howth/Sutton/Baldoyle parishes of the Fingal Howth/Malahide Ward. Throughout those decades, there were (and continue to be) powerful economic, social, community, administrative and cultural linkages across these

Dublin City and neighbouring Fingal wards. Although Howth/Sutton/Bayside and Baldoyle are presently under the aegis of Fingal County Council, there is a very strong socio-economic connection with the adjoining Donaghmede/Raheny and Clontarf Wards of Dublin City Council. (Indeed there remains a strong sentiment in the Howth peninsula and Baldoyle that the southern section of the current Howth/Malahide Ward would still be best served by being part of the Dublin City Council administrative area as it was up to the mid/late 1980's).

That is also the reason why any proposal to move the parishes of Howth, Sutton, Baldoyle and Bayside into a new Fingal East constituency would be disastrous for the socio-economic life of that area and its neighbourhood in the old Dublin North East. Such a proposal (also creating a 5 seat Fingal West) would also involve once again splitting the major town and district of Swords as in the 2007 general election which was also very unpopular and detrimental to the residents of the Swords Ward of Fingal. Anyway, in your terms of reference, the breaching of county boundaries does not include the administrative regions of the Dublin area.

Communities in the old Dublin North East constituency district stretching from Coolock, Ayrfield, Donaghmede, Raheny, Edenmore and Kilbarrack through Bayside, Baldoyle, Sutton and Howth have close and common concerns over a wide range of issues, including the local economy and environment, public transport infrastructure, policing, education, social protection and health services. Important North East local community, economic, social and sporting bodies such as the Northside Partnership and

Coolock Development Council have for most of their history since the mid-1980's operated right across the old North East constituency region from the greater Coolock area across to Sutton and Howth and south to Artane and Raheny.

A crucial district of the old Dublin North East of course is the developing North Fringe of Dublin City and the adjoining South Fringe of Fingal County. The district spans the territory from Clonsaugh and Belcamp across through Burnell, Belmayne and Clongiffin to the Coast, Baldoyle and South Portmarnock. At the turn of the century, it was planned to be a new huge urban region of over 25,000 housing units and ancillary community and commercial services. The development stalled in 2008 with the banking crash but over the last 2 years, construction has at last resumed and new residents have begun moving in. The resumption of population growth in the region in the 2016 census makes a strong case for the restoration of the Dublin North East constituency. It is critical however that a single Dáil constituency encompasses this North/South Fringe region to ensure a sustainable and well planned major new region of Dublin. The region should be but is not an SDZ and current and future new residents depend on occasional meetings of bodies like the North Fringe Forum which straddles Dublin City and Fingal to raise planning and infrastructural concerns. The division of the region locally between Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council has created problems for coherent and sustainable development of this new city region. It is therefore important that local Oireachtas representation to invigilate these matters is based in a single

constituency, preferably Dublin North East to ensure better accountability for the development of the region.

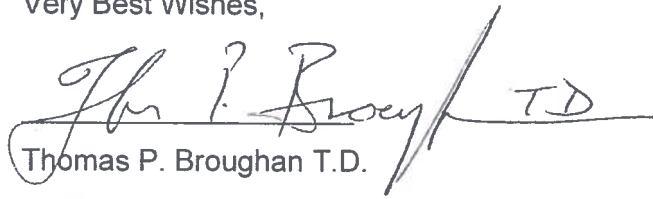
I believe that a similar case as outlined above could be made for the restoration of a 3-seat North Central constituency. That constituency operated for several decades as a 4 and 3-seat constituency and contained a coherent region of the Northside's inner suburbs. (South Raheny and parts of Artane and Edenmore of course fluctuated between North East and North Central as older populations declined). Much of that decline is now being arrested as new families move into districts like Harmonstown and St. Anne's, Raheny. The return of the Lorcan area of Santry and of East Drumcondra to Dublin North Central would be necessary to recreate that constituency. Clearly other adjustments on the Fingal boundary of Dublin North West and on the North West/Dublin Central boundaries would also be necessary to maximise both constituencies' representation as 3-seat constituencies. But both those constituencies represent coherent inner city and outer suburban regions respectively in their current structure as 3-seaters. Hence I am advocating that the additional seat for Dublin referred to above should go to restored North East and North Central constituencies.

As I indicated at the start of this submission, if the recreation of Dublin North East and North Central is not recommended, the second preference of my supporters and myself is that Dublin Bay North should be retained in its present formulation.

The present territory of Dublin Bay North was in fact the old historic Dublin North East constituency between 1937 and 1977 and many of the very powerful arguments I have listed above for the re-creation of the later Dublin North East which I represented for almost 2 decades could also be applied to the retention of Dublin Bay North in its present territory and population. The strong socio-economic and cultural ties between the 28 or so parishes North of the Tolka River, East of Drumcondra Road to Dublin Airport and South of the Moyne River as it flows to the sea at Portmarnock Bridge are very close and represent a natural major urban region in Dublin City and Fingal. (The simple enjoyment of the facilities of Dublin Bay from Clontarf Promenade to Howth Harbour by this population is a very pleasant and common aspect of all our lives).

I am therefore opposed to any attempt to hive off parts of Marino or South Clontarf or any part of the North/South fringe referred to above to adjoining constituencies because I believe those Dublin Bay North districts would then be cut off from their natural social, economic and political hinterland. Many citizens active in political and community life also make the simple point that Dublin Bay North is bedding in well as a political administrative unit and that progress on this should be allowed to continue. I believe the current constituency clearly fulfils the population requirements for 5 seats in the next 159 or 160 seat 33rd Dáil.

Very Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas P. Broughan T.D." The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Thomas P. Broughan T.D.  
Independent TD for Dublin Bay North