

# **Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí Cork City Council**

## **Re: Boundary Extension**

A Ard-Mheara agus Comhairleoirí,

The City Council requested me to prepare a report and map outlining the proposed borough boundary extension. The purpose of this report is to set out the case for a boundary extension.

The range of possible options for an extension vary from minimal to extensive. However the selected “best fit” option which takes in the areas which are contiguous to the city was selected based on the considerations and arguments outlined in the report below.

The report addresses the boundary extension within the parameters of the Local Government Acts 1999 and 2001. Boundary extensions are made in the interests of “**effective and convenient local government**”, which is a wide ranging concept. Local governance has assumed greater importance as society has become more complex, prosperous and diverse. This has been reflected in the provision of the Local Government Act 2001 and various national agreements. In general terms, the effectiveness and convenience of local governance of an urban area the size of the Cork, will be greatly enhanced by enabling it to be administered and managed by a single local authority.

As a consequence of developments in local governance, particularly in the socio-economic and cultural spheres in the City, the roles of City Council, the demands upon it - and the expertise of both Councillors and officials in response - have developed rapidly.

The definition of effective and convenient local government can be interpreted in terms of the goals set out in Cork City Council’s Corporate Plan 2004-2009. The general case for a boundary extension set out in Part I will be structured around the four goals of the Corporate Plan:

### **A. CIVIC LEADERSHIP**

*Cork City Council will provide democratic leadership and manage its resources to improve the overall well-being of the entire community*

### **B. DEVELOPING THE CITY**

*Cork City Council will ensure the economic, social and environmental development of Cork in a sustainable manner together with our local businesses and communities*

### **C. QUALITY SERVICE**

*Cork City Council will deliver efficient, focussed quality services in an effective manner to meet the needs of its citizens*

## **D. BUILDING SYNERGIES**

*Cork City Council will continue to create and develop linkages with other organisations to enhance its effectiveness*

In addition the City Council now work closely with its various stakeholder – public, community, business and voluntary – to achieve their common objectives. This Corporate Plan was proofed against the Cork City Development Board’s Strategy “Imagine Our Future 2002-2012”. It is therefore supported by statute and is in accordance with the goals of the City Council’s major stakeholders.

This report is structured in two parts. The first part sets out the general case for a boundary extension. The second part justifies the choice of the selected area set out in the attached map.

### **1. GENERAL CASE FOR A BOUNDARY EXTENSION**

The general case for a boundary extension will be structured around the 4 No. Goals set out in the Corporate Plan. Each is addressed in turn below

#### **A. Democratic Leadership**

The themes addressed under this Goal are:

- Enfranchisement
- Boundary confusion

##### ***Enfranchisement***

Many of the citizens who own businesses (and pay rates) and many who are employed in the city do not live within the existing city boundary or vote in the city. Thus Cork City Council provides a large number of services to many who have no electoral voice in electing members to Cork City Council. An important aspect of effective and convenient local government is a local authority’s ability to: “give the users of services a democratic voice in the decisions that affect them”.<sup>1</sup>

A boundary extension would address this imbalance by enfranchising a greater number of commuters who avail of city services but who are outside the boundary.

##### ***Boundary Confusion***

For many residents of the contiguous urban area located within the County’s administrative area, the boundary is confusing and unnecessary. Better Local Government envisaged

*“the prime concern at all times must be the effective organisation of services and convenient services to the public, to whom intra-organisational anomalies are simply a source of inconvenience”<sup>2</sup>.*

Many people in these contiguous urban areas consider themselves to be part of the city or at the very least consider these areas as part of “Cork City”.

The Electoral Area Boundary Committee Report 1998 stated that:

*“in many cases local authority boundaries ..... do not bear a close relationship to the pattern of living to-day – be it transport patterns, travel to work, shopping, school catchment and social life generally.”<sup>3</sup>*

It is important in considering effective and convenient local government that the widest view of local authority services is taken particularly in relation to the sustainable development role of local authorities. The 1998 report stated further that a boundary extension may be contemplated for a city authority

*“to bring the natural hinterland under City control and thus facilitate the co-ordinated development of the City and its hinterland as a single unit”.*

Another consideration in relation to effective and convenient local government is that for local authorities to be effective they must work in conjunction with a host of other public agencies. In the local authorities wider role as the co-ordinator of the Development Boards, a boundary extension would streamline integration and co-ordination.

## **B. Developing the City**

The themes addressed under this goal are:

- Image and Competitiveness
- Planning and policy coherence
- Development Land
- Socio –economic Balance

### *Image and Competitiveness*

A comparison of Cork with other Irish cities, in Table 1 below, shows how out of balance the current situation is in relation to population and area.

**Table 1 Comparison of Population and Size of Regional Irish Cities**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population 2006</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>
Cork	119,100	3,961
Galway	72,000	5,057
Limerick	52,000	2,035
Waterford	45,800	4,157

Cork has the highest population and second smallest area. However with a population 60% the size of Cork's Galway has an area 28% greater. The comparison figures for Waterford are 38% and 5%. It is obvious from this comparison that Cork is being disadvantaged by lack of development land and population within its boundaries.

Population is a key competitive indicator and trends in population are a crucial part of a city's image. The population of Cork City has declined from a high of 138,267 persons in 1979 to 119,143 in 2006. This represents a decrease of 14%. The technicalities of the growth of Metropolitan Cork and the CASP areas will be lost on people researching Cork from outside of the country. The essential signal and core image will be a city in decline.

The National Spatial Strategy envisaged urban areas as the key drivers of development as demonstrated in its Gateway and Hub designations. Cork is seen as the location with the greatest potential to act as a counterweight to the over-concentration of development on the eastern seaboard. In order to play this role, Cork must be enabled to expand and move to a higher tier of city size.

An increase in the boundary as proposed would increase the area to 18,170 ha and the population to c. 180,000. This would significantly enhance the image of Cork as a "large" conurbation and allow it to grow over the decades and which would enhance dramatically its ability to compete effectively in the global marketplace for FDI.

### ***Planning and Policy coherence***

Control over the factors which significantly impact population growth, economic activity, quality of life and mobility are a necessity in the future development of the city which will allow development to proceed in a managed and cohesive fashion.

### ***Development Land***

Land for development within the existing city boundary is severely limited. Excluding the Docklands area, all land for residential development will be used up within the next four years. In seeking to provide amenity, parkland and sports fields, the city has to look outside its boundary. The priority of the City Council for land use contiguous to the city may not be shared by the adjoining local authority.

Development of land contiguous to the city boundary on the northern side including Monard should be developed in a way that complements and rebalances the city. This can best be done by the City Council with urban planning expertise and experience.

One of the critical issues identified in CASP was the regeneration of the City to serve as a regional centre for Munster. The lack of a unified control framework and land can result in new development going to the area just outside the city boundary. This can lead to under utilisation in the city and lower density unsustainable development in the County area.

The recent results for the 2006 Census in Table 2 below confirm these trends.

**Table 2 Actual and Predicted Population Levels 2006**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>CASP 2006</b>	<b>% Diff.</b>
<b>City</b>	123,062	119,143	-3	126,560	-6
<b>Rest of Metropolitan Cork</b>	134,293	153,107	+14	137,900	+11
<b>Metropolitan Cork</b>	257,455	272,250	+6	264,460	+3
<b>Ring Towns and Rural</b>	92,033	105,062	+14	97,140	+8
<b>CASP Area</b>	349,388	377,312	+8	361,600	+4%

Cork City is 6 % below its predicted 2006 population level whilst the remainder of Metropolitan Cork is 11 % above its predicted level and the outer ring is 4% above its predicted 2006.

An expansion of the city boundary will reduce these problems significantly through having control of these issues in the City Council where urban development policy objectives can be pursued with increased certainty.

### ***Socio-economic Balance***

Cities generally demonstrate greater levels of socio-economic disadvantage than neighbouring county areas. Cork City is no exception. Key indicators are:

- 40% of Cork City’s population live in areas designated under the Government’s RAPID Programme
- In the “Mapping Poverty” Report<sup>4</sup> issued by the Combat Poverty Agency and the Institute of Public Administration in 2005, Cork City exhibits high poverty risks for all categories in the national context nationally and in most cases is about 30 -40% higher than County Cork. Specific examples are :

a) Table 4.3: Disparities in income poverty risk by area (national average = 1.0)

Cork City -1.4; Cork County - 1.0

b) Table 4.4: Disparities in risk of modified consistent poverty by area

Cork City - 1.3; Cork County - 0.9

A boundary extension would not ameliorate absolute levels of disadvantage, but would allow social balance to be improved in a larger with the consequential benefits of

- A wider variety of role-models and networks available to residents than would be the case in area with high concentrations of social housing. This will improve access to both economic and wider quality of life opportunities
- Anti-social behaviour is likely to be more effectively sanctioned in an informal manner.
- A wider range of employment opportunities that will suit the occupants of social and affordable housing. As some of these jobs will be low-paying, the proximity of employees to their place of work will be a key factor in accessing employment and retaining it. Transport costs increase with distance between residence and employment. Distance also creates other barriers to employment. In addition many employment opportunities are conveyed by word-of-mouth, so being in the right place at the right time will also be important.
- The converse of c) also applies. It is important to have a supply of labour close to employment so that prospective employers will have an opportunity to access this resource.

In the period since 1971, the proportion of children aged under 15 and married couples has steadily decreased in the City compared to the rest of the Cork Metropolitan Area. In the same period there has been an increase in the proportion of single people and persons aged 60 and over. Continuation of these trends will lead to a decline in the most active section of the population in the city and a skewing of service provision. This will have adverse implications for both policy and operational development within the city.

### **C. Quality Services**

The themes addressed under this goal area:

- Economies of Scale – efficiency / VFM
- Immediately contiguous –convenient/faster
- Urban areas without urban services
- Additional City type services -

#### ***Economies of Scale – efficiency / VFM***

Section 63 of the Local Government Act 2001 defines the core functions of local authorities as:

- provide a forum for the democratic representation of the local community, in accordance with section 64, and to provide civic leadership for that community;
- carry out such functions as may at any material time stand conferred on the relevant authority by or under any enactment
- carry out any ancillary functions under section 65

- take such action, as it considers necessary or desirable to promote the community interest in accordance with section 66.

The functions identified under section 63 emphasise local democracy and community/citizenship development. The delivery of quality public services is a key element of effective local government. The structure, geography and size of the area within which a local authority delivers its services will impact on the quality of those services. The catchment of a local authority's area must take into account the patterns of people's working and social lives and the complex patterns of "community".

As Cork City is the second largest city in the State and has both existing and potential urban-generated communities in its immediate environs, it is logical that these communities should receive their services from a local authority with an urban focus and relevant experience. Through a boundary extension with increased area and population the City Council could provide these urban type services more efficiently economically and in doing so provide Value for Money.

### ***Immediately contiguous –convenient/faster***

The city boundary divides some communities on its periphery at present. Examples are Douglas and Togher. This results in different services being delivered to the same communities by two local authorities, diluting both community identity and the effectiveness of the services being delivered. The City Council can more effectively provide services faster and more conveniently to those areas which are immediately contiguous to the City .

### ***Urban services for Urban areas***

The new communities in the environs of the city have an urban character. Even where housing is located in a rural area, it is primarily urban-generated. Many of the residents in these areas are former residents of Cork City, who have settled in the County due to lack of housing choice or cost of housing in the City. These populations demand services that would be expected in an urban area.

The City Council has well-developed structures to build the social capital which will result in sustainable new communities.

A boundary extension would bring these communities within an urban management structure where the major service provider has the expertise and experience to deliver the expected quality of life. In particular the priorities of the City Council are in alignment with the expectations of urban communities. There are differences between urban and rural communities. These differences will influence the type of services which these communities require and the most effective way in which they should be delivered.

Cork City Council as an urban authority has an urban focus. This is demonstrated in the emphasis on services provided, in the planning and development policies adopted and in the functional rather than area based structure of the organisation. Cork County Council has a more rural focus with two County Health districts which are removed from the City (North and West) and South Cork which includes the City environs.

Cork County is a large and dispersed County. The historic structure of Cork County Council is one of an organisation which traditionally did not deal with a largely urbanised population.

Inevitably, the services provided and the policy emphasis does not have an urban focus. Cork City Council has specialist urban management expertise as part of its corporate asset base. A boundary extension would enable the existing urbanised area to benefit from these skills.

### *Additional City Type services and expertise –*

The following services are examples of how the City Council can better provide urban type services to dwellers in contiguous parts of the city:

#### *Main Drainage*

The areas included in the boundary are serviceable by the Main Drainage Scheme for Cork. The scheme includes the network collection system and the treatment works at Carrigrenan in Little Island. The proposed Boundary Extension will give control of the entire network and treatment plant to the City council, which will have efficiency and economy benefits in terms of maintenance, and cohesive integrated support of the DBO process in terms of wastewater pricing through its existing dedicated and experienced team. All urban dwellers will be provided with the same level of service with the same service charges. Including all development within the catchment into the City Council avoids duplication and gives an integrated single management service.

#### *Water Supply,*

In terms of water supply where there is also a pricing structure, it is best that the greatest clarity in terms of cost and pricing is available. This clarity can be achieved by having the maximum amount of infrastructure within the service area i.e. the area within the proposed boundary. In this scenario the only cross authority issue is the cost of water treatment and its delivery to the new City Boundary. There will be a close co-relationship between wastewater and water pricing. This strengthens the case to rationalise water supply in the way outlined.

#### *Traffic & Transportation*

The more complex issues which arise in respect of traffic & transport in the Metropolitan area, are concentrated within the proposed City boundary. It is considered that a single authority is in the best position to manage the integration of the different transport modes to ensure that all road users can reach their destinations safely and effectively.

The City Council, working with the public transport providers, has considerable experience in implementing an integrated transport policy. The extended area will allow the City Council to manage in an integrated way, through its existing dedicated transport team, the necessary public transport system and private vehicles along with the critical elements of the network. These include main traffic routes and junctions,

park and ride sites, quality bus corridors, cycle routes, walk ways etc. and possible light rail transport (LRT).

### *Recreation & Amenity*

The City Council has a good record in providing for passive and active recreation within the City. It has developed extensive playing pitches, public parks, public walkways, leisure facilities (including municipal golf course, state of the art swimming facilities, all weather pitches, and athletic track etc.). It has developed extensive networking with sport clubs, communities, governing bodies and has entered into strategic partnerships to deliver facilities.

The City Council through its dedicated Park Department pays particular attention to public open spaces and operates a grass cutting and landscaping programme, which provides a pleasant environment within the City. Within the proposed boundary the City Council will be able to use its skills, experiences and networks to provide a more extensive service to meet the legitimate recreational needs of the population and communities as identified in the Recreational Needs Study. There will be greater scope in terms of suitable land availability to provide an enhanced mix of facilities.

### **D. Building Synergies**

The theme addressed under this goal is:

- Service Integration

#### *Service Integration*

A key current concern of Government is the integration and co-ordination of effort within and between organizations in the delivery of publicly-funded services. This is given legal form in Section 129 of the 2001 Act which establishes and charges City/County Development Boards “... *to draw up a strategy... for the economic, social and cultural development of the county or city and the community*”. Local Government leads and supports this process.

Additionally, the local and community development system was reviewed by Government recently with the intention of streamlining the current system for greater effectiveness under a process known as Improved Local Cohesion. The objectives as set out in Circular Letter LG 06/05 include full city/county coverage for Partnerships and Leader Groups. Thus the delineation of boundaries will have a large influence on this system.

A boundary extension will bring greater co-ordination to delivery of publicly-funded services through the reduction of organizations active in the extended area – One Development Board, One Local Authority, One Enterprise Board, One Partnership Company, and One VEC. In addition the extended area will have one structure developed under Improved Local Cohesion.

## **2 WHY THIS AREA ?**

The area for the boundary extension is outlined on the attached map. It represents the urban area which is immediately contiguous to the existing City Boundary.

Commencing at Poulavone Roundabout to the east of Ballincollig, the proposed new boundary travels north to Kerry Pike and then northwest to the N20/R617 east of Blarney and continues northwest taking in Monard and Rathpeacon and south of Whitechurch and Carrignavar until it meets the Glashaboy River at Dunbulloge Bridge. It then follows the Glasaboy River generally eastwards to Upper Glanmire Bridge before turning northeast along the R616 and the south to the N8, Dublin Road north of Sallybrook and Sarsfield Court. Further east of this point it then travels southwards to the Glanmire By pass and then eastwards Ballycurreen before turning southwards again to the inner harbour west of Carrigtohill to encompass Glounthane and Little Island. It crosses Lough Mahon and then down the West Passage of the river to south of Monkstown. It comes inland along Monkstown Creek at Raffeen and eastwards along the Glounatouig Stream and the R613 north of Carrigaline as far as Ballygarvan. It then swings northwards west of the Airport and then north westwards to include Waterfall and Ballynora ot the west of Curraheen. Then it continues north along the Ballincollig Bypass link road to the starting location at Poulavone Roundabout east of Ballincollig.

In essence, the additional areas included are :To the North: Kerry Pike and Killeens , Monard/Rathpeacon and Rathcooney. To the east: Glanmire/Riverstown, Glounthane and Little Island. On the West side: Curraheen, Waterfall/Ballinora. On the south, Ballygarvan, Togher/Ducloyne, Airport, Douglas/Donnybrook/Grange and Rochestown, Passage and Monkstown.

Note that all this land will not be made available for development and significant peripheral areas can be used as buffer between the expanded City and the Satellite Towns in the County.

The exact boundary lines were selected based on physical entities (eg roads and rivers)which can be easily identified on the ground. The boundary does not coincide with the majority of the rural DED boundaries for this reason but which would be have been useful from a data reporting point of view. The DEDs were severed in many instances to avoid including excessive areas within the new boundary.

The boundary as proposed represents the most practical and “best fit” solution between the large Metropolitan Cork area (including the satellite towns) and a minimalist extension which may result in the need for a further extension at some time again in the future – which is not desirable or logical. It will be sufficient to facilitate the orderly and managed development and operation of the City as it expands in the future decades.

It also has the following general positive attributes:

- it is logical in terms of services' boundaries(eg Water Supply (City and Harbour Scheme) & the City Main Drainage Catchment);
- by allowing the LUTS satellite towns to remain distinct entities, it is true to the principles of LUTS and CASP which both promoted a polycentric urban settlement pattern;
- it provides potential for the city and its structure to grow through an increase in area.
- the North Ring Road Development Zone will be within the city boundary

Using Census 2006 figures, the population of the proposed extended area is c. 180,000 persons compared with the current population of 119,143 persons within the existing city boundary and represents an increase in the city area from 3,961 ha to 22,359.79. The following Table 3 sets out the new estimated existing population of the extended Cork City and the new area contained within the boundary compared to other Irish cities.

**Table 3 - Population and Size of Regional Irish Cities**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population 2006</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>
Cork (Extended)	c. 180,000	22,359.79
Galway	72,000	5,057
Limerick	52,600	2,035
Waterford	45,800	4,157

### **3 SUMMARY**

The proposed new boundary extension will address the following issues raised:

#### **Enfranchisement**

The extension will ensure a better fit between people who use the city's services and those who have a role in electing the city council.

#### **Boundary Confusion**

In extending the City Council area to the natural hinterland of the City it will remove uncertainty in people's minds as to whether they live in City or County, especially people in the contiguous built up area.

#### **Image and Competitiveness**

The city will have room to expand and redress its declining population with resultant poor image and fulfil its potential as a NSS Gateway and continue to attract Foreign Direct Investment.

## **Planning and Policy Coherence**

The new boundary gives Cork room for expansion but with a density comparable to Galway and Waterford. It will provide greater policy coherence with the core of Metropolitan Cork and whist also redressing the underachievement of growth targets under CASP as outlined in Table 2 above.

## **Social Balance**

It will address the current imbalance in terms of disadvantage and social/household structure through providing more opportunities for mixed tenure developments. In addition the population of the extended city will exhibit lesser extremes in household structure and more households with children.

## **Economies of Scale – efficiency/VFM**

The advantages of the proposed extended boundary will provide efficiency and value for money through:

- The removal of duplication
- Economies of scale
- Integrated decision-making and resource allocation
- Easier for partner organizations to deal with (employer/business, voluntary/community, state agencies)

## **City Type services & expertise**

The proposed new boundary will provide improved urban type services in a number of areas such as traffic management, water & drainage services and recreation & amenity through dedicated teams with a long history of experience in these areas of expertise.

## **Service Integration**

The proposed new boundary will provide improved local cohesion of publicly funded service delivery through being part of one structure developed under the Improved Local Cohesion process rather than two at present. This will provide a greater degree of co-ordination within the contiguous built-up and in future as the city expands.

## **C.A.S.P. - Greater Cork Area**

The Cork Area Strategic Plan prepared by Cork County Council and Cork City Council, in close co-operation with a range of state agencies, is widely acknowledged as an excellent model of land use and transport planning. It came about because of an excellent level of co-operation between Cork County Council and Cork City Council and the involvement of state agencies, the commercial sector and the third-level sector. The structures which have been set up to implement the plan have representation from all of these parties. These C.A.S.P. structures provide the co-operation functions which serve the larger metropolitan area. The work carried out under the C.A.S.P. structures is very important for the co-ordinated development of

Cork City and the greater Cork area. The opening up of the Midleton Rail Line, for example, can be attributed to C.A.S.P. and the working of the C.A.S.P. structures. A city boundary extension will in no way reduce the continuing need for work undertaken under the C.A.S.P. structures nor will it in any way compromise the development principles incorporated in C.A.S.P.

### **Financial Implications**

In situations where local authority boundaries are extended, arrangements have been implemented whereby the local authority which cedes land is fully compensated for any financial loss which may arise. If the areas which Cork County Council might cede to the City Council generate a surplus of income over expenditure for the County, the County Council would be fully compensated for any loss which arose.

### **Level of Co-Operation**

There is a very high level of co-operation between Cork City Council and Cork County Council in carrying out their respective duties. This is evidenced by the co-operation and good working relationship involved in the preparation and implementation of the following:

1. Cork Area Strategic Plan
2. Joint Retail Strategy
3. Joint Housing Strategy
4. Waste Management Plan
5. Fire Services
6. Mutual sharing of major road infrastructure provision

It is very important that this level of co-operation continues between the City Council and County Council. If the County Council agree in principle to accede to the wishes of the City Council for a boundary extension, details of compensation arrangements, staff transfers if appropriate, political representation changes etc would be worked through by both Councils.

### **Next Step**

If the City Council is happy with this report and with the proposed boundary extension, it should submit it to Cork County Council, with a formal request that the County Council facilitate the proposed boundary extension.

J. GAVIN,

CITY MANAGER.

08/11/06.

<sup>1</sup> Policy and Procedure Guidance to the Boundary Committee for England (Draft) – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> Better Local Government, A Programme for Change, 1996 (para. 7.20)

<sup>3</sup> Electoral area Boundary Committee Report, 1998 (Section 4, pg. 12)

<sup>4</sup> Watson, D. Whelan, C.T., Williams, J. and Blackwell, S. "Mapping Poverty: national, Regional and County Patterns" Combat Poverty Agency and Institute of Public Administration, 2005

