[IC – Alliance Party]

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Belfast East

Overall, Alliance supports the proposed new boundaries for Belfast East. However, we have some concerns around the transferral of Garnerville ward to North Down. Geographically and on a community basis, Garnerville is part of East Belfast, rather than North Down. This proposal could affect the community cohesion of the area. However, due to the legislative requirements placed upon this process, we acknowledge the necessity of this decision and argue it is preferable to the alternative of extending the North Down constituency down the Ards Peninsula.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Belfast North

Ward of Ballyhenry should remain in South Antrim, creating a clear distinction between Glengormley (North Belfast) and outlying parts of Newtownabbey. Keeping Ballyhenry ward within South Antrim would result in both South Antrim and North Belfast meeting statutory requirements, with 73728 and 70250 electors respectively.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Belfast South and Mid Down

Alliance supports the initial proposal for Belfast South and Mid Down. The extension outwards along the commuter line is reasonable. The addition of 'Mid Down' to the constituency name also better reflects the makeup of the current constituency.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of East Antrim

Alliance supports the initial proposals for East Antrim.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of East Londonderry

The ward of Eglinton should remain in the Foyle constituency. On a community level, Eglinton has far more connections with the city of Derry ~ Londonderry rather than communities in Coleraine and Limavady. Moving Eglinton ward to East Londonderry could have an adverse effect on the village’s community and political representation.

If Eglinton (2834 electors) is moved to the Foyle Constituency, then Foyle will meet legislation requirements (75308 electors). The ward of Swatragh (2475) can then be transferred from Mid-Ulster to East Londonderry giving totals of 71358 and 71854 respectively, also fulfilling the requirements of the legislation.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Foyle

The ward of Eglinton should remain in the Foyle constituency. On a community level, Eglinton has far more connections with the city of Derry ~ Londonderry rather than communities in Coleraine and Limavady. Moving Eglinton ward to East Londonderry could have an adverse effect on the village’s community and political representation.

If Eglinton (2834 electors) is moved to the Foyle Constituency, then Foyle will meet legislation requirements (75308 electors). The ward of Swatragh (2475) can then be transferred from Mid-Ulster to East Londonderry giving them totals of 71358 and 71854 respectively, also fulfilling the requirements of the legislation.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Mid Ulster

As previously argued, the ward of Swatragh should transfer to the East Londonderry constituency, in order to meet legislative requirements if Eglinton ward remains in Foyle constituency. This suggestion also acknowledges the strong community connections Swatragh has with Garvagh and Kilrea, both of which are in the East Londonderry constituency.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of North Down

Overall, Alliance supports the initial proposal for North Down. It acknowledges the strong community connections between Bangor and Holywood and is more cohesive than previous boundary proposals. Additionally, the current proposals acknowledge the connections between Newtownards and the Ards Peninsula through the newly defined Strangford & Quoile constituency.

As previously noted our only concerns are regarding the transfer of Garnerville ward from Belfast East. We acknowledge, however, that this option is preferable to extending the North Down constituency to include the Ards Peninsula.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of South Antrim

Ward of Ballyhenry should remain in South Antrim, creating a clear distinction between Glengormley (North Belfast) and outlying parts of Newtownabbey. Keeping Ballyhenry ward within South Antrim would result in both South Antrim and North Belfast meeting statutory requirements, with 73728 and 70250 respectively.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of South Down

Alliance is concerned by the dramatic changes to the South Down constituency. The initial proposals would see it split in two and separated from its traditional geographical focal point of the Mourne mountains. This would be damaging to community cohesion and adversely affect parts of the constituency now in ‘Strangford and Quoile’ which sees as culturally and geographically separate from the greater Belfast area, which most of Strangford and Quoile is representative of.

Comments on the Commission's initial proposal for the constituency of Strangford and Quoile

Aside from the concerns outlined in relation to the South Down constituency, Alliance supports the initial proposal for Strangford and Quoile.