

The Secretariat
Waterford Boundary Review
C/O Kilkenny County Council
County Hall,
John Street,
Kilkenny.

January 11th 2016

To whom it concerns,

KCLR is the local radio station for Kilkenny and Carlow licensed by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. Independent research undertaken by ipsos MRBI as part of the JNLR survey, show that the station currently has a weekly listenership of 68,000, the largest of any station in the area.

Since the announcement of the Review of the Administrative Boundary between Waterford City and County Council and Kilkenny County Council, the issue has been the subject of extensive coverage, debate and discussion on the station.

Having worked in KCLR since its establishment in 2004 and before that in local radio in this area as far back as 1993, I have rarely seen an issue engage with the population of Kilkenny City and County in the way this has done. The passions it has aroused and the questions it has raised about local identity, "place" and the sense of belonging of people to their county has been remarkable. This has been the case not only for people who may be directly impacted by any changes as they live in the area of South Kilkenny in question, but also by people living all over Kilkenny and indeed Kilkenny people living further afield.

As part of our coverage of the issue, on January 7th the station broadcast a 2 hour programme on the topic, from "on location" in the Rhu Glenn Hotel in Slieverue. The programme involved in the region of 30 different contributors from a range of organisations and interests. It also generated considerable interaction with the issue from listeners. Regrettably it proved impossible to secure the participation of advocates of the proposed changes, a fact which makes the animation, passion and commitment of the contributors who took part in the programme all the more remarkable.

For your information I enclose a copy of a recording of the programme. I hope that it will serve to give some sense of how the proposed change goes beyond being a simple administrative measure and has become a very important issue of identity and sense of place for thousands of Kilkenny people no matter where they reside.

KCLR Position

Speaking on behalf of KCLR in relation to the proposed change, it is our position that any measure which negatively impacts on the strong sense of identity, cohesion and pride which currently exists in Kilkenny as a whole and which is a key component in the success of the county whether in economic, social, cultural or even sporting endeavours, is something which is to be avoided.

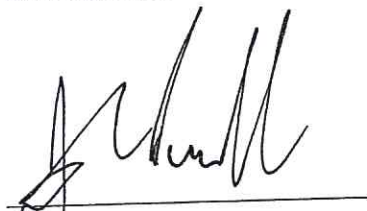
KCLR's market is our local area and we build much of our business on the strong sense of localness and belonging of our listeners in the areas we serve. In a real sense the changes in relation to Kilkenny, though apparently minor and administrative, would create a negative economic impact on this company. Accordingly, we are opposed to any change to the current administrative boundary arrangements.

In common with other contributors to the debate we believe that an approach which encompasses a regional partnership of equals is the best way to proceed. It is our considered view that the changes as mooted do not accord with this approach.

I hope that this contribution is useful to your considerations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to receive any further information or clarification.

Yours Sincerely



John Purcell
Chief Executive

