

Ramsey Town Commissioners
Barrantee Rhumsaa

T. P. Whiteway
Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Commissioner for Oaths

Please address all correspondence to
the Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Telephone: (01624) 810100

E-mail: enquiries@rtc.gov.im

Web: www.ramsey.gov.im

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TPW/MPC/WD 8

28th May, 2021.

Mr S. Willoughby
Executive Officer
Local Government Unit
Central Support and Change Division
Department of Infrastructure
Sea Terminal Building
Douglas
IM1 2RF

Dear Stephen

Further to your letter of 27 April 2021 the questions raised were discussed at the Commissioners May public meeting. My email of 18 May 2021 refers regarding the reports of the previous boundary extension.

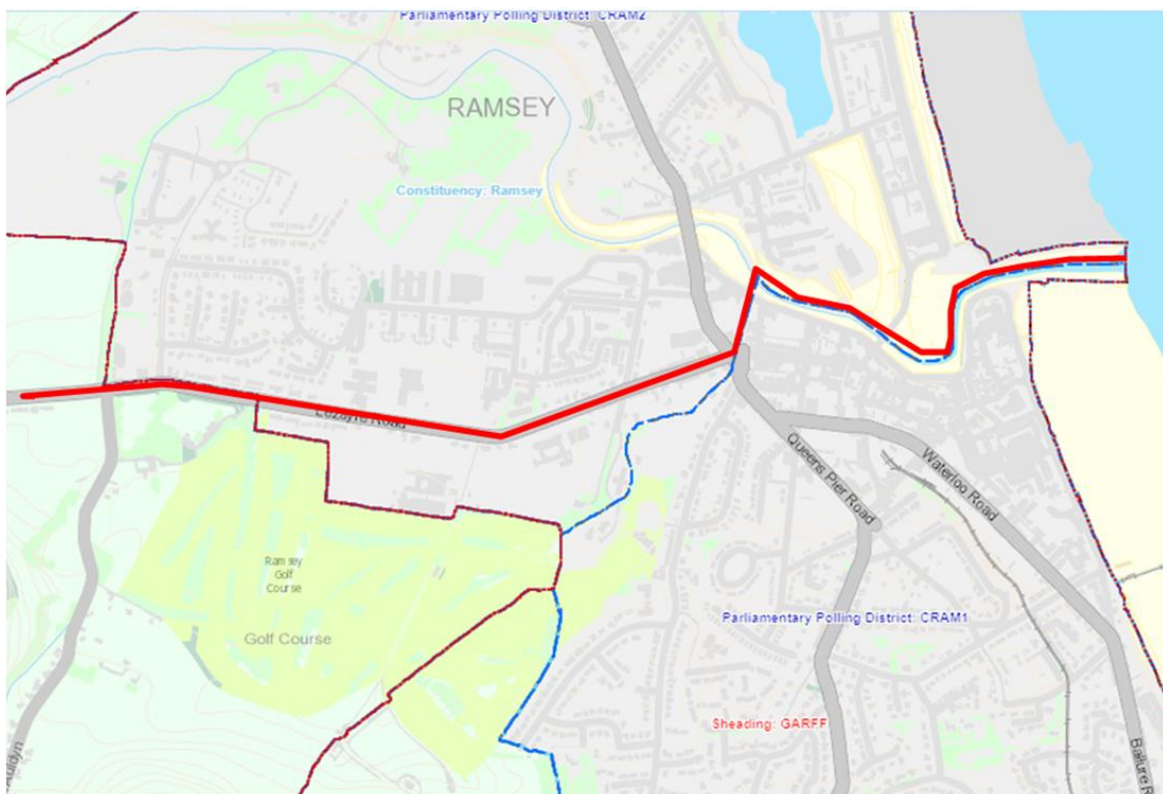
For ease of reference the questions are discussed below:-

1) Future electoral ward boundaries. Is there a proposal to incorporate the residents in the affected areas into the current North and South Wards of the Town?

The Register of Electoral for the town's wards show that at 1st April 2021 there are 3,596 voters in North Ward and 2,650 voters in South Ward. The majority of lands sought to be incorporated within the proposed boundary extension are identified for future expansions/ development needs and therefore have few residents, with the exception of Glen Auldyn which contains approximately 100 properties and has 144 persons on the Register of Electors. It would seem reasonable therefore, in the event that a boundary extension was to include Glen Auldyn, to add voters in that area to the Register of Electors for Ramsey South Ward.

The Commission has also reviewed the existing boundary. Ward Boundaries generally follow geographic lines, the existing boundary is the ancient parish boundary between Lezayre and Maughold and follows the course of Leighany Stream. Alternative boundary lines of the Sulby River or the former railway line have been considered however the impact of such is merely to create a similar imbalance with a larger number of properties (and therefore voters) in South Ward than in North. (e.g., moving the boundary to the former railway line would move approximately 1000 votes from North to South Ward)

A minor adjustment in voter numbers might be achieved by following the line of the ancient parish boundary to Parliament Square but that at that point adjusting the ward boundary so that it follows the line of Lezayre Road with properties to the south of the road in South Ward with those to the north remaining in North Ward. This would result, based on the current Register of Electors, in approximately 91 persons being move from North Ward to South Ward. The revised boundary is shown below marked in red, with the existing boundary shown in blue dashed line.



The following table shows the impact on voter numbers which would result if Glen Auldyn were incorporated within Ramsey South Ward and if the Ward boundary were adjusted to follow Lezayre Road from Parliament Square as shown above.

	North Ward	South Ward
Existing voters (1/4/21)	3596	2650
Glen Auldyn (if approved)		114
Lezayre Road	-91	+91
Revised Voter Numbers	3505	2855

The matter of Ward Boundaries will inevitably have to be considered as future development occurs particularly as all the areas presented for development fall within the areas abutting to the current North Ramsey Ward. Any change would need to allow for the progress of future development or reflect actual development as it occurs. In the circumstances the Commission would seek to change the Ward boundary so that it follows Lezayre Road from Parliament Square, and thereafter further consider the question of wards and membership once a new town boundary has been agreed and in the light of progress of development.

2) Will there be any changes to the number of local authority members in Ramsey to reflect the proposed boundary change?

The Commission has previously discussed the number of Members and remains of the view that the town should be served by 12 Members, six in each of two Wards. Any future review of wards would of necessity consider whether there should a single electoral area or 2 or more wards, overall representation, and the number of members serving however many wards are settled upon.

3) With the assumption that the Commissioners are looking to take into consideration that those currently in Maughold and Lezayre will be paying significantly lower sums in their rates has consideration be given to how many years will be set out to equalise the rates for everyone and at what factor? This would be expected to be over at least 5 years.

The Commissioners recognise that there is a differential within the amount of local authority rate charges between Ramsey, Garff and Lezayre, and note that in previous boundary change processes the transition to the payment of a higher rate has been phased over 10 years. The Commissioners feel that this would be an appropriate timescale to enable gradual transition of properties brought into the town.

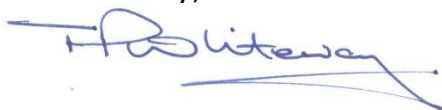
The Commissioners note also that areas of the proposed extended boundary are presently not development and would expect that any new development which takes place following the boundary extension, if approved, would be subject to the application of town rates on habitation without any transition.

I hope that the above answers your questions.

The requirement for the Department to consult with those authorities is of course acknowledged. The Commission has already written to and met with representatives of Maughold Ward, Garff Parrish, and Lezayre Parish Commissioners when the rationale for the application, and the criteria, were discussed. The Commissioner initial submission in regard the application of criteria was comprehensive however I will produce a summary table detailing the criteria and application as you have indicated that this will make consideration and response by the authorities easier.

You may be aware that copies of all correspondence and reports have been made available on our website at <https://www.ramsey.gov.im/your-commissioners/proposed-boundary-extension-order/>.

Yours faithfully,



Town Clerk and Chief Executive.