



24 March 2021

Chief Executive,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall Tallaght,
Dublin 24,
D24 A3XC.

Re: legislative provisions relating to the holding of plebiscites to change a placename

Dear Chief Executive,

As I understand that South Dublin County Council intends in the near future to hold a plebiscite on the changing of a placename, I am writing to update you on the current status of legislative provisions on this issue.

I wish to advise that provisions relating to placename changes in Part 18 of the amended Local Government Act 2001 were commenced in early 2019 by the Local Government Act 2001 (Commencement) Order 2019 (SI 24 of 2019). Previous provisions under the Local Government Act 1946, as amended, were repealed. In addition, provisions in the Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011, amending Part 18 of the 2001 Act, were commenced by the Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 (Commencement) Order 2019 (SI 23 of 2019).

The newly commenced provisions under the amended Part 18 of the 2001 Act require updated Regulations to be made for the holding of plebiscites to change placenames.

However, during the process of finalising new Regulations an issue was identified concerning the interaction of Part 18 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, and provisions in relation to placenames contained in the Official Languages Acts, under the aegis of the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. We are engaging with our Department's legal advisors and with the other Department with a view to resolving the issue identified.

In the meantime, I must inform you that, until new Regulations have been made, there is currently no legal basis for the holding of a plebiscite in relation to the changing of a placename.

I would like to assure you that the Department is aware of your Council's interest in this matter and will keep your officials updated on progress.

Yours sincerely,

Diarmuid O'Leary
Local Government Governance and Elected Members Section