



Hold Stormont to account!

UKIP's straight-talking manifesto for the
Northern Ireland Assembly elections, 2011

0800 587 6 587

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Message from Nigel Farage MEP, Leader of UKIP

Power to local people



Hold Stormont to account – and reform it! The current Executive is accountable to no-one. Loyal opposition and proper scrutiny of laws are vital to a healthy democracy. They are absent at Stormont. UKIP would work together with the other parties where it is right. But we will not take up places in the Executive. We will become a true opposition voice within the chamber, exposing deficiencies in government and scrutinizing legislation. And, unlike the Ulster Unionists, we will oppose whether or not we can get taxpayers' money to oppose.

The people know best what is best for the people. The UK Independence Party is a truly UK-wide party of freedom and democracy. The views of the people matter more than the views of politicians. UKIP alone trusts the people to call local, regional and national referenda on key issues that affect them, with politicians bound by the results.

The United Kingdom cannot be strong without a strong Northern Ireland as one of its

four great pillars. Our Union should serve all its people without distinction. The majority of Northern Ireland's people support the Union. Therefore, any attempt to dilute or dissolve it would be profoundly undemocratic.

Funds allocated to Northern Ireland should be spent here, not handed back to Westminster as £300 million was last year.

The United Kingdom should no longer belong to the European Union. All power is passing from elected hands at Stormont and Westminster to unelected hands in Brussels. That is not democracy. We want Britain out of the undemocratic EU, while keeping free trade with it, so that we, the people, can govern ourselves again by the ballot-box and put our £2 million an hour membership fee to work where it is most needed: right here.

In the last General Election, almost a million voted for UKIP. With your help, we can do better. UKIP makes one pledge. The people come first.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Farage'.

Nigel Farage MEP

Democracy first. We, the people, shall rule

It is our national policy to –

- Refresh our democracy with binding legislative referenda.
- Redeploy billions of saved EU money to Northern Ireland and her people
- Reinvest in defence, energy, flood & coastal defences and transport
- Resign from the EU while keeping free trade with it
- Recoup £48 million a day by leaving the EU
- Release businesses in the Province and our economy from Brussels red tape
- Require the election of all key officials in national and local government
- Restrict immigration to give priority to the needs of the UK.
- Return control of our great public services to our great people
- Refine lawmaking so our laws are made at the most local level possible
- Repeal the European Human Rights Act
- Replace the Human Rights Convention with a new British Bill of Rights
- Revoke the European Arrest Warrant and Investigation Order

Making Stormont accountable to the people

We will end mandatory coalition. The mandatory coalitions that form the Stormont Executive are undemocratic because there is no way to vote out a failed party. The failed parties in the Executive – the DUP, Sinn Fein, the UUP, the SDLP and the Alliance – may all be happy with this system. UKIP are not.

We will be a real voice of opposition to hold the Executive to account. Mandatory coalition leads to weak leadership because there is no official voice of opposition to hold the Executive to account. UKIP will be that loyal opposition, and, unlike the Ulster Unionists, who say they will go into opposition if they can get funding for doing so, UKIP will be an effective, persistent opposition whether or not we can get taxpayers' money.

Cuts must begin at home for politicians. Stormont is far too expensive. We must cut its costs. Northern Ireland has far too many full-time elected politicians - more than any other territory of similar size. The

United States has just 100 Senators for 300 million people; it is therefore our long-term aspiration to reduce the number of MLAs in a manner acceptable to all communities.

In the short term we will cut the salary and allowances of MLAs by 50%.

No more double-jobbing. Being an MLA must be a full-time job. So anyone who is an MP or MEP cannot also do his job as an MLA properly.

No more jobs for the boys. We will cut most of the 400 staff of the First Minister and his deputy.

MLAs and councillors must be elected, not co-opted. At present a popular, hard-working local MLA could be replaced by someone who has never set foot in the constituency – without the voters being consulted. Of 108 MLAs in the last Assembly we had 14 completely unelected and merely filled by party political patronage. Alternates should be named publically before the election to ensure transparency and democratic legitimacy.

Schools: put pupils and parents first

We will give parents, heads and governors greater autonomy, taking power away from bureaucrats and giving it back to those who have the experience and skills to understand what really works in the classroom.

We pledge to recruit more teachers, special-needs teachers and classroom assistants. To pay for them, we will axe bureaucracy.

Grammar schools should never be closed merely for political reasons. Local communities, not central government, should have the power to decide by binding referendum whether they want their grammar schools. If they want them, central government should pay for them.

Universities should be free to concentrate on quality before quantity. The Government's target of 50% of young people going to university is unrealistic and risks diluting the value of a university degree. Britain has some of the world's finest universities. UKIP will keep it that way.

We will reverse the collapse of apprenticeships and vocational training. Thanks to the apprenticeship system, Britain once had the most highly-skilled workforce in the world. UKIP will restore and incentivize apprenticeships and vocational training through the Regional Colleges, to ensure that companies thinking of bringing themselves and their employment opportunities to Northern Ireland know that they will find a skilled workforce when they come here.

Policing and justice: no more soft touch

The safety of the people is the highest law and the first duty of government. There should be fewer police paper-pushers and more front-line constables on the streets. That means simplifying police procedures while keeping them fair to the accused.

Prison sentences should mean what they say. Life should mean life. Six months should not mean three weeks. Also, prison conditions will be tough enough to deter criminals. We will deny prisoners the right to vote, but encourage their rehabilitation, provide support to prevent re-offending, and ensure that the transition from prison to normal life – particularly after long sentences – is properly supervised.

We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour or under-age street drinking. Zero tolerance has worked elsewhere in the world. We will make it work here.

Police should be recruited solely on ability, not on quotas. The law should treat everybody equally, regardless of religious or political background.

Agriculture, rural development and fishing

To end the nightmare of farming and fishing policy we must leave the EU. It now has almost complete control over our agriculture (through the Common Agricultural Policy) and our fisheries (through the Common Fisheries Policy). Result: millions of acres not growing food, and fishing waters emptied of fish.

We will keep the Single Farm Payment so that no farmer will be worse off once we leave the EU.

We will target grants towards increasing UK food production. The UK now produces just 55% of her own food. Therefore, the opportunity to create thousands of new jobs where Northern Ireland most needs them – in hard-pressed rural areas – is immense.

We will work at Stormont to cut bureaucracy, especially EU bureaucracy. Our commodities ombudsman will ensure that farmers get a fair price for their produce.

We will return control of our fish stocks to Northern Ireland. Boats under 33 feet (10 metres) long will be kept free from EU interference: its appointment of a fisheries minister from a landlocked country was absurd.

We will ban the EU's policy of throwing dead fish back. This highlights the problem of allowing our fish stocks to be run from overseas by people with no understanding of fisheries.

Health and public safety: mending the NHS

We will protect front-line NHS services against funding cuts, which have led to hospitals across the Province losing beds, operations and doctors.

We oppose the European Union's Working Time Directive, which has placed additional cost and staffing burdens on hospitals and prevents surgeons from gaining essential experience. The British Medical Association, which represents Northern Ireland's doctors, says the Working Time Directive has had a detrimental effect upon hospitals.

We will cut bureaucracy in the NHS by reducing the number of NHS Trusts and returning control to local hospitals to provide much-needed doctors and nurses.

Doctors and nurses, not bureaucrats, should take clinical decisions. In Northern Ireland, each hospital ward will be run by a single clinically-trained matron, who will maintain a high standard of cleanliness and reduce the incidence of super-bugs such as MRSA.

Nurses should be trained on the job and in hospital colleges, rather than in university classrooms, to make sure that nurses gain practical, hands-on skills.

We will provide a fair deal for carers by ensuring that appropriate respite care is available.

We will assess the feasibility of providing free nursing care at home, similar to the scheme planned by the Scottish Parliament.

We will halt spurious "health and safety" measures that prevent even the most normal of activities on bogus grounds.

Business: a bonfire of bureaucracy

We will cut the hundreds of thousands of pages of regulation which stifle Northern Ireland's businesses and strangle them with red tape. We cannot do this without leaving the EU, which issues a new "Directive" every three hours, day and night, 365 days a year. All businesses are affected by EU legislation, not just the small minority which trade regularly with other EU countries.

We will create 30,000 new skilled jobs through public and private investment in a new five-point public-works programme: first, to provide better roads and railways; secondly, to centralize recycling; thirdly, to help Northern Ireland to grow more of its own food, not least by bringing EU set-aside land back into use;

fourthly, coastal protection, and fifthly the tourism and hospitality industry.

We will urgently install high-speed broadband as demanded by business, and we will extend it from businesses to homes as quickly as possible.

We will simplify planning to cut bureaucracy, make it more efficient and help Northern Ireland's large number of small businesses.

We will expect Invest NI to improve its efficiency.

Roads and regional development

Resurfacing the roads, particularly in rural areas, is essential.

We will investigate ways of assisting farmers, fishermen and rural dwellers with fuel prices. Recent fuel price rises have caused considerable hardship to people across the Province, but especially those living in rural areas.

We will aim to open disused railways where traffic would justify it, and in the meantime we will preserve the wayleaves of disused railways so that the tracks can be put back without undue difficulty.

We will review current rail routes with a view to increasing capacity on those which are now overcrowded.

We will create a more efficient water service without imposing water charges.

We will demand improvements to the management of NI Water to ensure that customers do not face an interrupted water supply for long periods.

Communities: equal before the law

We will ensure that the State treats Ulster Scots and Irish culture equally in funding for community activities, including sports, which the Assembly has funded unequally in the past, in a manner that is unhelpful to community relations. We will therefore ensure that where funding can be justified it is provided equitably to all communities, including enhanced development of Association Football, which has been neglected in recent years.

We oppose funding that is provided for political reasons. The opening of new Irish language schools which are undersubscribed is inconsistent with the

cuts that are now being forced upon schools across the Province. Schools should be opened only where there is sufficient demand for places to justify them.

Funding for cross-border projects should be kept within bounds. We do not oppose cross-border co-operation in principle, and we support working with our neighbours. However, funding for cross-border projects has risen so sharply that a cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken to determine whether, at a time of cuts, the increase in funding has proven cost-effective.

It should be the aim of every immigrant to learn to speak English, which would save millions currently spent on multi-lingual publications.

Foreign extremists and criminal immigrants will be deported and banned from returning to the UK.

Environment

We will save up to £18 billion a year by repealing the Climate Change Act. The current obsession with the single measure of CO2 emissions is a distraction from Northern Ireland's true environmental problems, and is damaging to businesses. The massive extra costs which the Act pointlessly inflicts on businesses and homes is uniquely damaging to Northern Ireland.

We will ban all new onshore wind farms, and cease to subsidise any wind farms. They are an expensive, inefficient blight on our countryside and cannot replace conventional power, because they do not turn when the wind does not blow. When most power is needed, on the hottest and coldest days, there is rarely enough wind to generate any power at all.

We will not pay EU fines for missing pointless environmental targets. The DOE budget could lead to Northern Ireland missing EU targets and fines being imposed, which would hit Northern Irish taxpayers directly and disproportionately.

We will work with regulators to cut power prices in Northern Ireland to the UK average, both by increasing the number of inter-connections between the Province and the mainland and by cancelling stealth taxes in the form of price increases made solely in the name of making "global warming" go away.

We will clean up our streets. UKIP would propose legislation to compel local authorities to keep footpaths and public places free from dog mess.

We will reinstate weekly bin collections in the Province and process waste centrally in a cost-efficient manner.



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