

Ulster Unionist Party

NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 2023

**MAKING
NORTHERN
IRELAND
WORK**



Ulster
Unionist
Party



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PARTY ELECTION BROADCAST



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A MESSAGE FROM DOUG BEATTIE MC MLA



Dear voters,

Northern Ireland is an incredible place, with incredible people and a wealth of opportunity. It is for us to grow its potential. One way we can do that is with effective local government. **After all, all politics is local.**

So, **this election is about you**, it's about your relationship with your local council and local elected representatives. It is about providing the services to make your community prosper and to give focus to developing **infrastructure, the health service, housing and jobs**. This election is an opportunity to elect UUP councillors who will work for you and build a better Northern Ireland alongside you.

The last number of years have seen much stalemate and division in politics. As we continue to deal with the problems caused by the Northern Ireland protocol, the Ulster Unionist Party stands ready to provide the **strong, confident, pro-union leadership** that is needed.

This election offers an opportunity to elect Ulster Unionist Councillors with a long-term vision striving for better services, a more connected society and a brighter future. **We offer an alternative to stalemate.** We offer you a team who can deliver for you, the ratepayer.

We have shown that we can deliver. Whether it has been on putting forward solutions to deal with the NI Protocol, or our record in the Department of Health under Robin Swann, **Ulster Unionists have a record of getting things done.**

We want to make Northern Ireland work for everyone. You can help us achieve this by voting for your local Ulster Unionist candidate on **18th May 2023.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Beattie', written in a cursive style.

Doug Beattie MC MLA
Party Leader

MAKING NORTHERN IRELAND WORK

As we approach the Local Government elections on the 18th May Northern Ireland faces the same unfortunate situation we faced in the run up to the 2019 Local Government elections – a Northern Ireland Assembly that is not meeting and an Executive that is not governing.

Ulster Unionists pointed out the considerable flaws of the Northern Ireland Protocol in 2019, and since then we have consistently engaged with the UK and EU to find a commonsense alternative.

The Windsor Framework announced by the UK and EU is a stepping stone towards achieving a lasting solution to the many issues and challenges post Brexit. However, important points of legal and technical clarification remain outstanding, the Irish Sea Border has not gone, there remains issues with the VAT and State Aid Rules and continuing concerns for our agricultural industry and the long-term provision of veterinary medicines. Ulster Unionists continue to meet the opportunities and challenges of the Windsor Framework, believing that we can do so within a restored Stormont.

In the context of a non-functioning Assembly local government is more important than ever. The Ulster Unionist Party is fielding 101 candidates who are a mix of experienced councillors and people who are entering politics for the first time. They live, work and serve their communities in one way or another and understand what good delivery from council looks like and what needs to be done.

Ulster Unionists know that the economy and entrepreneurs drive prosperity in local areas and we will continue to work hard to deliver the City and Growth Deals – partnerships between the UK government, local councils and Stormont worth over £1.3 billion – and create global centres of innovation and excellence in key growth areas to create breakthrough technologies, products and services leading to more and higher paying jobs.

The rising cost of living and the energy crisis has caused difficult times for many across Northern Ireland. Ulster Unionist councillors have worked hard to keep this year's council rates increases to less than inflation. We commit to continue to work hard to keep any future increases below inflation while still maintaining the services our communities deserve.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) make up over 99% of all businesses in Northern Ireland. Late payment of invoices is a major source of stress for small businesses and Ulster Unionists commit to acting to ensure each council pays its bills promptly. We will press each Council to consider appointing a Prompt Payment Champion, publicising its payment data and paying interest on late payments.

Northern Ireland needs more housing, infrastructure and greener energy. None of these can be achieved if we do not overhaul our planning system and invest in our water and sewage system. Ulster Unionists are determined to shake up planning and take decisive action to increase our water and sewage infrastructure investment and have published proposals to achieve this.

Northern Ireland people are present in all the Armed Services and play an essential role in the defence of our nation. Ulster Unionists will continue to support our Veterans, deepen our links with the Armed Forces and support motions in Council to celebrate Armed Forces Day.



WHERE WE STAND

SCAN HERE TO VIEW OUR 2022 ASSEMBLY MANIFESTO



OUR PRIORITIES

TO MAKE NORTHERN IRELAND WORK FOR YOU



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

ARMAGH, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON

Growth deal

Having secured the Mid South West Growth deal the Ulster Unionist group of Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council will continue to work hard to deliver a Growth deal which will help bolster employment, dramatically improve transport and digital connectivity, promote a new era of regeneration, boost tourism and generate massive economic benefits and opportunities for our Borough and the whole of Northern Ireland

Best value rates

The Ulster Unionist Councillors continue to work hard to drive significant cost saving measures across a range of areas of Council expenditure. This resulted in ABC Council as a whole being able to minimise the rates impact on our rate payers despite facing unavoidable pressures regarding energy, fuel and inflation at over 10%. As a group we will continue to maximise all efficiencies and explore all options to generate income to help drive our economy, help business and help our local communities.

Supporting rural communities and businesses

The Ulster Unionist Councillors recognise that Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (ABC) Council has the fourth largest agriculture sector in Northern Ireland (NI). As a group we spearheaded and delivered an Agri-strategy to provide practical recommendations to enable the council to best support agriculture, agri-food and agri tech, helping to develop long term viability in the sector. All merging themes of the Strategy must be delivered on including the much needed 'Agriculture Champions' and Agriculture Hub'. The Ulster Unionist group will continue to campaign for equity in rural funding within our towns, small towns and hamlets.

Maximise tourism potential

Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon is home to some of the most important tourist and conservation sites in Northern Ireland. Armagh is the Ecclesiastical capital of Ireland and home of St Patrick, Lurgan is the home of Northern Ireland's largest and arguably most striking park and Banbridge is home of the world's only Game of Thrones Studio Tour. All of these attractions and many others bring limitless benefits and opportunities for our Council borough and Northern Ireland bringing a massive boost to the tourism economy.

The Ulster Unionist Councillors will continue to promote international tourism that will attract visitors from all over the world, generating significant benefits for our local and regional economy.

Environment and renewables

The Ulster Unionist Party Councillors are committed to mitigating Climate Change and will target an 82% or better reduction in greenhouse gases and to deliver a New Green Industrial Revolution in Northern Ireland. We will continue to promote investing in clean technologies – wind, carbon capture, hydrogen and many others. We will aim to introduce carbon reduction strategies and set targets to measure progress within our Council operations. We are committed to reduce traffic emissions by promoting public transport and sustainable travel.

Health and well-being

The Ulster Unionist group want to continue to shine a light on the issue of mental health and wellbeing both in the workplace and at home. We will use the Councils leisure powers to deliver a range of initiatives aimed at developing a culture where we all live more healthy lives which can help address poor mental health in our Council area. We will continue to promote and develop our open green spaces to benefit the mental health of our whole community.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY

In the 2014 and 2019 local Government election, your substantial mandate put the Ulster Unionist Party into a leadership position within Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and they DELIVERED!

Your Ulster Unionist Councillors played a pivotal role in a council that has:

- Delivered the lowest rate increases in Northern Ireland since the new councils were formed in 2015 and provided strong civic leadership that places your council at the highest performance levels on a wide range of indices.
- Attracted record levels of investment into Antrim and Newtownabbey
- Achieved record levels of participation and growth within our Leisure and Theatre sector.

Your Ulster Unionist Candidates across Antrim and Newtownabbey will also:

Maintain their efforts to reduce the rates burden on local homes and businesses

Once again, this year, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council had the smallest district rates increase of any of the 11 local Councils. That is something that we are immensely proud of, and it comes at the same time that we are in the middle of a record £50m investment plan in our town centres and community infrastructure. Your Ulster Unionist Council team have been at the centre of this very successful model of generating large income streams through ongoing, sustainable economic development and then using that extra income to enhance the facilities available for the benefit of our rate payers. Keeping the financial burden of rates low whilst generating the income to invest in YOUR community is a key priority for all Ulster Unionist candidates.

Fulfilling our ambition to attract £1billion of investment into Antrim and Newtownabbey

Having established Antrim and Newtownabbey as the region's economic powerhouse, each of your Ulster Unionist candidates are committed to completing the plan we embarked upon in 2015 to attract an extra £1 billion of investment into our Borough. Currently we have created £751.5million, together with 2,334 jobs. We have been particularly successful in the advanced manufacturing sector culminating in the Borough having successfully competed to host the Queens University AMIC project near Glengormley at Global Point. This investment alone was worth £98million and will generate many highly paid jobs and apprenticeships for our citizens in the decades to come.

Continually invest in the health and wellbeing of our citizens

Membership of our sector leading leisure programme has increased by 100% from 5,180 in 2016/17 to 11,172 in 2022/23. The usage of our leisure facilities has increased by an astonishing 1,071,675 visits (94.51%) in the same time period.

We can only maintain our leadership influence at the heart of this high performing local authority with your votes and continued support.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN

Deliver Value for Money on Rates

We will minimise the cost to ratepayers by keeping any increase below inflation.

We will be transparent and open about our finances and plans to spend ratepayers money.

We will push for a strategic review of council services to ensure that we deliver best value to the ratepayer.

Grow Our Local Economy

We have the lowest GDP per head of any council area in Northern Ireland (£15,930 compared to NI average of £25,575) and must prioritise local economic growth.

We will drive local job creation through better support for local businesses and develop a plan to attract greater investment to our Borough.

With 9% of Northern Ireland's population we only receive 2.7% of assisted jobs and 2.8% of financial assistance from Invest NI. We will push Stormont for a fair share of economic support for our area.

We will support our large agri-food sector to further innovate and grow.

Future Proof Our Environment

We must develop an action plan that will deliver our statutory recycling target of 70% by 2030.

We will develop an investment plan to modernise and improve our Household Recycling Centres (HRC's).

We will review all that the Council does to minimise our impact on the planet.

We will deliver cleaner streets and invest in greater enforcement to reduce littering and dog fouling.

Regenerate Our Borough

We will tackle dereliction and vacancy rates in our city, town and village centres.

We will deliver events and services to create a vitality within our communities.

We will push Stormont to devolve regeneration powers to allow us to deliver more investment for our community.

Protect the Vulnerable and Improve Community Wellbeing

We will help improve mental health provision by providing signposting and support for services across the Borough.

With the oldest population of any council area we will provide more help, support and advice to elderly residents and their families.

We will strive to build safer communities and reduce social isolation through the provision of quality leisure, community and neighbourhood services.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR

BELFAST

Supporting the Most Vulnerable in Our Society

Ulster Unionists are committed to supporting the most vulnerable in our city especially at this time of cost-of-living increases and the energy crisis. During the last council term we worked within the Social Policy Working Group to bring about change including having Belfast City Council accredited as a Living Wage Employer. Through our commitment to a Social Value Procurement Policy we have set a timeline for all third party contractors to the council to pay their employees the real living wage. We will continue to campaign on these issues and others that effect low paid working families such as affordable, accessible childcare.

Continue the Transformation of Leisure Facilities and Parks

Ulster Unionists committed to the modernisation of the City's leisure facilities at the last council election and we're proud to say we delivered. The council has invested £105 million as part of a ten-year Leisure Transformation Programme to improve leisure centres delivering more outdoor leisure provision including 7 new 3g pitches at one centre, a covered sports pavilion with seating for 240 which has led to children's football clubs booking it out every night of the week. More needs to be achieved to ensure there are modern, state of the art leisure and spa facilities across Belfast and Ulster Unionists re-commit to delivering for the people of our great city.

Addressing the Need for More Affordable Housing

A safe, warm and affordable house is a necessity of life and Ulster Unionists are committed to ensuring everybody in Belfast has an appropriate, well-heated and affordable home. Unfortunately, over 40,000 are on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive lists Across Northern Ireland and only around 2,000 social or affordable homes are built every year. We will continue to call for more social housing provision and will work closely with the NIHE, housing associations and other bodies to deliver more affordable homes for Belfast.

Mental Health Provision

Many people across Belfast are struggling with their Mental Health which has an impact on their life choices and outcomes. Across Belfast and Northern Ireland we have a 25% higher overall prevalence of mental health problems than England and tragically, this has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The UUP, when Robin Swann was the Health Minister at Stormont, have already ensured additional funding for mental health, published a mental health action plan and strategy and created a new Independent Mental Health Champion role. We will continue to lobby for more resources for Mental Health provision in Belfast and build upon the great work of hard-working mental health practitioners.

MAKING BELFAST WORK FOR YOU.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS

Tourists are Welcome, Residents are Vital

We must regenerate our towns and villages across the Causeway Coast and Glens. We welcome visitors from around the world with open arms, but we must prioritise permanent residents who live here 365 days a year. We recognise that we live in one of the most beautiful places on our planet. Therefore, we must ensure a greener focus whilst ensuring the services provided to residents are at a high standard.

Cost of Living Crisis Must be Temporary

We will ensure that those affected by the current cost of living crisis are given the information and assistance they require. We will lobby and keep a watchful eye that this 'cost' crisis is a temporary one.

Regenerate with The Growth Deal

The Westminster Growth Deal provides over £70m in funding for economic development within Causeway Coast and Glens. It underscores the benefits of our amazing Union. The Ulster Unionist Party will ensure we maximise the economic benefits of the growth deal through exciting projects across the Borough.

Strong Unifying Positive Voice

The Ulster Unionist Party candidates and representatives in Causeway Coast and Glens are a united, positive and progressive group who will be a strong, confident voice in local council, ensuring the ratepayers are provided with efficient and effective council services.

Affordable Housing

For those living in coastal towns, rarely can a child of a permanent resident afford a home along the North Coast. They are being driven away from their family towns because of excessively high prices, driven by second homeowners. We will voice our concerns for more affordable social housing or for increased rates for those owning their second home.

Grow our Vibrant Agri-Food Sector

Agriculture is our largest source of income in the Borough and we will continue to support farmers to maintain open access to markets and continued delivery of a high quality product through. This requires the removal of restrictions on import of animals from GB and a long-term solution for import of veterinary products. It is also critical that we have sustainable rural transport to maintain communities in the countryside.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR

DERRY AND STRABANE

A strong Unionist voice within council is needed as we constantly face decisions which test the very meaning of equality. We frequently face decisions that are clearly dismissive of the Unionist community within the city of Londonderry and its surrounding areas.

Remediation of the Mobuoy Dump

The UUP commits to support the full remediation of the infamous Mobuoy dump until it no longer poses a threat to drinking water, river ecology and the wider environmental ecosystems. We welcome DAERA's Mobuoy Remediation Project and will be campaigning for additional financial support from the UK and will continue to call for a Public Enquiry into this threat to our drinking water, river ecology and wider environmental ecosystem.

Small and Medium Sized Businesses

Small and medium sized businesses have faced many challenges through Covid and lockdown and the recent energy crisis. Around 88% of small businesses in the Derry City and Strabane District employ less than 10 people, they are the backbone of the local economy. Ulster Unionists fully supported the Business Rates holidays in recent years and the freezing of regional rates for businesses. We will continue to fight for Small and Medium Enterprises in the next council term to ensure this element of our local economy receives the support to survive and grow.

Housing

The Derry/Londonderry and Strabane area has some of the highest amount of people in Northern Ireland presenting as homeless. There has been a particular lack of new social housing in the Waterside area, and although a new site has commenced at Caw, this falls well short of the housing requirement. Ulster Unionists will continue to campaign to increase social housing builds across the council area and will work to reconfigure how social housing is delivered across Northern Ireland.

Infrastructure

Ulster Unionists will continue to push for progress in the A5 dualling over the coming years to enhance connectivity and road safety. We welcome the soon but long overdue completion of the A6 but will now campaign for a Phase 2 extension from Drumahoe to Maydown.

We will support the expansion of the present Greenway commitments and will focus on delivering the Newbuildings to Bready segment. We will also continue to campaign for funding to deliver much needed flood alleviation measures for the affected areas in Londonderry.

Freeport

Ulster Unionists support all Northern Ireland ports and airports being designated as Freeports and we will campaign to ensure that Foyle Port, City of Derry Airport and the Campsie industrial estate are included.

Ulster University at Magee

We will continue to support the aspiration for the Magee Campus of the University of Ulster to be expanded to 10,000 students. We will work with the University and Stormont to deliver this ambitious target.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

FERMANAGH AND OMAGH

Restoration of Emergency Surgery at SWAH

Ulster Unionists strongly opposed the temporary withdrawal of emergency general surgery at the South West Acute Hospital (SWAH) and lobbied for immediate restoration at the subsequent public consultation launched by the Western Health and Social Care Trust. We will continue to demand the reinstatement of emergency general surgery services at SWAH in the next council mandate.

Digital Connectivity

Fermanagh and Omagh's low ranking in league tables for digital connectivity in the UK is unacceptable. Ulster Unionists acknowledge the efforts made through Project Stratum to introduce fibre broadband, but we will continue to be concerned about the lack of mobile phone infrastructure in rural areas and the prevalence of communication dead zones. We promise to fight for improved mobile services across the entire council area and ensure that residents have reliable access to digital connectivity.

Complete the A4 Southern Bypass

Ulster Unionists are pleased to see the start of construction on the A4 Southern Bypass. Traffic congestion through Enniskillen poses significant health hazards and threatens local businesses. We will closely monitor the progress of the bypass and work to ensure its timely completion.

Fixing our Rural Roads

The deplorable state of roads throughout Fermanagh and Omagh is a matter of concern for all residents. Ulster Unionists have consistently urged the Department of Infrastructure to allocate a greater budget for road maintenance in the council area. We will make the urgent and permanent repair of potholes a priority in the next council mandate.

Increase Tourism Across Fermanagh and Omagh

Fermanagh and Omagh boasts unparalleled natural beauty, yet the local tourism industry has suffered from a lack of support. Ulster Unionists were pleased to support the recent tourism partnership between the council and Tourism NI, which aims to enhance and strengthen local tourism through the Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) for Fermanagh Lakelands & Omagh and The Sperrins. Throughout the next council term, we will work diligently to ensure the success of this strategy and promote our local tourism attractions.

Rural Proofing

Ulster Unionists fully endorse the concept of Rural Proofing, which has been a commitment of Stormont departments since 2002. The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 also imposed a legal obligation on public authorities to consider rural needs. We are determined to ensure the proper application of Rural Proofing principles across Fermanagh and Omagh and we will continue to advocate for the equitable allocation of resources and services to our rural communities.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH

Reducing the Rates Burden

In 2019 Ulster Unionist Councillors promised to keep rates below inflation each year - we delivered. We are committed to minimising the rates burden on local homeowners and businesses and we will continue to vote against any above inflation increase in rates.

Economic Regeneration

Ulster Unionist Councillors will commit to maximising the opportunities for economic development and regeneration across the entirety of the council area.

A Freeze in Parking Charges

Parking matters; easy access to shops and businesses in our villages, towns and city centre is crucial for our community. Parking must be kept affordable, to encourage people to shop locally. We were the first party to propose free parking in the run-up to Christmas, which has continued every year since. That is why all Ulster Unionist Councillors will continue to advocate for a freeze in car parking charges across the council.

Recycling

Recycling is good for the environment, and our council suffers financially if recycling targets are not met. Ulster Unionist Councillors are committed to improving recycling across the council area and making it easier for all of our residents to recycle household waste.

Addressing the Challenge of Poor Mental Health

Too many people suffer from poor mental health, and the aftermath of Covid has only increased this number. We will use the Council's leisure powers to deliver targeted activities to address poor mental health in the council area.

Making Planning Deliver

According to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement the overall objective of the planning system is to further sustainable development and improve well-being for the people across Northern Ireland. To do that however requires planning decisions that help support communities, both now and into the future. That is why Ulster Unionist Councillors in Lisburn and Castlereagh will continue to ensure that developers make a fair contribution to community infrastructure as a condition of their planning permission.

Being a Fair Voice for Everyone Across the Entire Council Area

Whilst there is no doubt that the administrative centre of the new council is Lisburn City we are committed to ensuring that the many other towns and villages across the council area, including the large urban centre of Dundonald, have their views heard right in the centre of the Council.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

MID AND EAST ANTRIM

Improving Wellbeing and Safety

By 2030 it is predicted that almost 25% of Mid and East Antrim residents will be over 65. This significant figure will contribute to a growth in loneliness, isolation, dementia and increased demand for public services. Ulster Unionists will promote initiatives such as the development of the 'chatty bench' and 'chatty café' schemes, fund the upkeep of community halls and ensure access to adequate public and third sector support services.

Rural Communities

40% of Mid and East Antrim residents live in rural areas. These rural areas face challenges such as access to education, internet, welfare, employment, transport and health. Ulster Unionists commit to working to ensure defibrillators are placed in areas such as community halls, that bus routes are maintained, resilience grit piles are strategically placed prior to adverse weather and to encourage and promote rural entrepreneurs.

Good Health and Wellbeing

Ulster Unionists will continue to work with local sporting organisations to improve facilities, which will boost engagement and promote better health and wellbeing and combat health and social deprivation and inequality through Area Community Plans. We will promote the development of Greenways and outdoor gyms, work to keep leisure centre costs affordable and ensure that playparks are maintained to encourage children to stay active and get outdoors.

Employment and Business Support

Recent research has identified that over 2000 jobs have been lost to the local economy due to the closures of major employers. This will have a knock-on effect on the local economy. Ulster Unionists will work to increase prosperity by promoting town/village centre rejuvenation along with the night-time economy, work to keep rates levels below inflation, while preserving frontline services and collaborate with central government to improve infrastructure, such as transport and broadband services.

Climate Action

Ulster Unionists will work to reduce Council carbon footprints through energy efficiencies. We will seek to secure DAERA funding to increase air quality monitoring and work to identify funding to secure triple stack bins, which provide higher quality recycling and save money on landfill costs.

Policing

Ulster Unionists have always been the Party of Law And order, no ifs, buts or maybes. We will continue to support the rule of law across the borough and oppose paramilitarism through constructive membership of the Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP).

Veterans

The Armed Forces are a fundamental part of the life of our Borough. Ulster Unionists will continue to support our Veterans, deepen our links with the Armed Forces and work to pass a motion of support for Armed Forces Day in the council chamber.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

MID ULSTER

Cookstown Bypass and Dungannon and Moneymore Bypasses

After years of continued lobbying by Ulster Unionists for infrastructure investment in major bottleneck areas, the Cookstown bypass is now at an advanced stage. We will continue to lobby for more much needed transport investment for Dungannon and Moneymore.

Lobbying for Mid Ulster farmers

Mid Ulster is a mainly rural district and we have a high density of farming in our community. We are fortunate to have a state-of-the-art College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) campus in our district as well as many meat processing factories. Ulster Unionists will always speak up for the rural community and be a strong voice for the Agri-Food industry.

Regeneration of town centres and villages across Mid Ulster.

Our town centres and villages are at the heart of our communities and they reflect our civic pride and the vibrancy in the places we live and love. Ulster Unionists will work to ensure our villages and towns are maintained to a high standard and further regeneration and investment is delivered.

Lobbying for Improvements to the Water and Sewage Infrastructure.

There has been a prolonged lack of investment in vital water and sewage services. This has severely impacted current developments and the possibilities of future developments. We need an updated, future proofed infrastructure strategy and investment plan, capable of handling all further future development opportunities. Ulster Unionists will campaign for a new long-term strategy to increase infrastructure investment across Mid Ulster and surrounding areas.

SUPPORTING INVESTMENT IN MID ULSTER



OUR PRIORITIES FOR

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN

Ulster Unionists will work to develop measures to reduce the rates burden on local households and businesses and work to deliver more efficient and effective Council services.

Inward Investment and development of entrepreneurial spirit is vital to enhancing economic prosperity. Our district is strategically placed to play an important role in the key economic corridor between Belfast and Dublin and we will take full advantage of our location by highlighting its benefits to key investors and employment creators.

We will support the development of housing schemes, working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Executive, which serve to regenerate our City, Towns and Villages across the District.

Ulster Unionists will work closely with local educational establishments including Post Primary Schools and our local Regional Colleges to promote skills training and apprenticeships for our young people which will boost the long term prospects of our local economy.

Our fishing, farming and agri-foods industries serve as a vital component of our local district economy. We will request Council creates a comprehensive strategy that targets and delivers necessary support to these industries to ensure their future sustainability and development.

We are committed to continued development of local sports and leisure facilities to protect the health and well-being of our local population and encourage a new generation of young people to thrive in their respective sports.

Local government must support rural communities. We will promote the need for Council to develop strategies aimed at empowering and increasing capacity within our rural areas. We must also support the protection of vital community hubs including rural schools which serve in many instances as the focal point of the local community.

Our District is considered to be one of the premier tourist destinations in Northern Ireland. The potential associated with areas of natural and outstanding beauty like the Mournes, Gullion and Lecale and the rich cultural heritage associated with our region is considerable. We will ensure the Council's tourism strategy delivers the necessary provisions and facilities to support this industry and guarantee our local area is a very attractive and welcoming place to visit.

We recognise that many forms of disability and chronic illness can impact people's ability to access Council services. The Ulster Unionist Party proposed during the recent Council term the adoption of the social model of disability. We committed to working with local businesses, the wider community and service providers to ensure facilities and services are accessible for everyone and that any new service or facility is developed through a co-design approach with disability organisations and local groups. We will seek the full implementation of this strategy in the new Council term.

We will seek to deliver a more efficient and effective local planning system for ratepayers and one which serves to assist those who wish to invest and promote economic development within our district.

There is an ever-increasing focus on our natural environment and the need for more green space. Our wonderful forest park facilities allow our residents to embrace the great outdoors with the associated benefits to physical and mental wellbeing. Ulster Unionists will work to ensure such facilities are cost friendly and easily accessible.

If we are to develop a modern infrastructure network which will boost the economic competitiveness of our District, projects such as the Southern Relief Road and A24 Ballynahinch Bypass must be progressed. We commit to working with the Northern Ireland Executive to deliver these major infrastructure schemes.

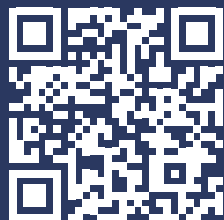
Ulster Unionists will work in conjunction with the Veterans Commissioner and local Veteran Support Groups to identify support measures which can be provided by Council to those personnel who served in our Armed Forces. We will whole-heartedly support whoever is appointed to the Veterans Champion role in the new Council term.

A BETTER NORTHERN IRELAND

2023 NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION

VOTE ULSTER
UNIONIST

SCAN HERE
TO FIND YOUR LOCAL
CANDIDATE



18TH MAY 2023

VOTE

ULSTER UNIONIST



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MAKING NORTHERN IRELAND WORK



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