



OUR 5 POINT PLAN FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

REMOVE THE NI PROTOCOL

APRIL 2022

Introduction

Rt Hon Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP

At this election I am campaigning on the basis of our 5-point plan for Northern Ireland. A key element of my plan is to work to remove the Northern Ireland Protocol. I want to see this plan implemented after the election and with your support we can do just that.

Since it came into operation in January 2021, the Northern Ireland Protocol has damaged both the Northern Ireland economy and our democratic arrangements. It has created a border down the Irish Sea resulting in lengthy and time-consuming customs checks, increased bureaucracy, reduced availability of goods available for Northern Irish consumers, supply chain disruption, and confusion for businesses surrounding taxes imposed on items deemed to be 'at risk' of entering the European Union through Northern Ireland.

The problems that the Protocol has caused Northern Ireland must be resolved or both our political and economic future will be blighted.

At this election we are campaigning to:

- ✓ See the Protocol replaced by arrangements that restore our place within the United Kingdom.
- ✓ Ensure new arrangements can command the support of Unionists as well as Nationalists.

We will judge any new arrangements against our 7 tests to determine whether they respect Northern Ireland's position as part of the United Kingdom.

Now is the time to remove the long shadow of the Protocol from Northern Ireland and to find a better way forward. I believe that is possible.

Jeffrey Donaldson



The Irish Sea Border Must Go

The Northern Ireland Protocol has created a border in the Irish Sea.

The Protocol represents an existential threat to the future of Northern Ireland's place within the Union.

The longer the Protocol remains, the more it will harm the Union itself.

The checks on the Irish Sea border are the symptom of the underlying problem, namely, that Northern Ireland is subject to a different set of laws imposed upon us by a foreign entity without any say or vote by any elected representative of the people of Northern Ireland.

Why should anyone seeking election to the Assembly want to deny themselves the right to have a say or a vote on vast swathes of the laws governing our economy and which affect the people of Northern Ireland so directly?

The DUP is seeking the restoration of democratic decision making to the Assembly replacing the democratic deficit created by the Protocol.

That places the power in the hands of all the parties in the Assembly.

Why will Pro-Protocol parties not join us in order to give their voters a say in the laws that will govern them?

How can they be happy to remain powerless law takers rather than empowered lawmakers?

There are those who say that the Protocol represents the best of both worlds, but that's not the reality on the ground - even with only a partial implementation.

With grace periods and other measures in place, we have seen only a fraction of the Protocol implemented but it is already taking a toll on our economy and the political process.

Northern Ireland Dependence on GB

It is an undisputed fact that Northern Ireland purchases from Great Britain are four times more valuable than from the Republic of Ireland. Barriers to trade have been created with our largest market, inevitably leading to devastating consequences. Every day Northern Ireland is subjected to some new protocol problem that bedevils a business, a consumer, a sector or the population.

In the recent Chancellor's Spring statement, Northern Ireland had to be excluded from important cuts to VAT for households installing energy efficiency measures because of the operation of the NI Protocol. That is simply unacceptable.

Protocol Checks and Costs - Adding to the Cost of Living Crisis

Every day, it is estimated that £2.5 million is the cost of the Protocol to our economy. It's not a question of addressing the Protocol or addressing the cost-of-living crisis - the Protocol contributes to the cost-of-living crisis.

Every day elected representatives of all parties spend time trying to advise constituents about navigating the new and ever evolving arrangements born out of the Protocol.

At a time when households and businesses can least afford it, haulage costs between GB and Northern Ireland have **risen by 27%** as a direct result of the Protocol.

Indeed, it has been estimated by the University of Ulster Business School's senior economist, Dr Esmond Birnie that the Protocol could **add several hundred**



million pounds annually to Northern Ireland's grocery bills. The reality is that trade friction with Great Britain is fuelling the cost-of-living crisis.

The £500 million Trader Support Scheme and the so-called grace periods, which have temporarily shielded Northern Ireland from the worst excesses of the Protocol, will soon come to an end.

The EU has stated clearly that the number of checks currently being carried out is only 30% of what they should be. The rigorous implementation of the Protocol would devastate trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. And if the retail easements, which were due to finish in April 2021, were to end it would have a devastating impact on supermarkets.

The EU Demands Even More Checks...

The European Commission has even demanded that passengers from Great Britain be stopped when they enter Northern Ireland and have their personal luggage searched to check for some of the most basic foods. That too is not something that we can accept.

Making Progress

We have made progress in convincing many of the merits of our case to remove the Protocol.

This time last year the EU had been prepared to trigger Article 16 and was insisting that there could be no renegotiation of the Protocol. They even commenced legal action against the UK when grace periods were unilaterally extended. Now there is an acceptance that the arrangements between GB and Northern Ireland are not the same as an international border. The pressure that we have applied is paying dividends.

The Government knows that the Protocol does not enjoy the support of Unionists - not a single elected unionist supports the Protocol - and Brussels can be in no doubt that the Protocol has cast its long shadow over Northern Ireland's political arrangements.

The UK Government's Command Paper last summer was a step in the right direction, but we need agreement or unilateral action.

Now is the moment to send a clear signal that the Irish Sea border must go and the Protocol must be replaced by arrangements that restore Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom internal market.

7 Tests

We will judge any new arrangements against our 7 tests to determine whether they respect NI's position as part of the UK.

New arrangements must:

1. Fulfil Article 6 of the Articles of Union, which requires that everyone in the United Kingdom is entitled to the same privileges.
2. Avoid any diversion of trade.
3. Not constitute a border in the Irish Sea.
4. Give the people of Northern Ireland a say in the making of the laws that govern them.
5. Result in "no checks on goods going from Northern Ireland to Great Britain or from Great Britain to Northern Ireland."
6. Ensure no new regulatory barriers develop between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom unless agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly.
7. Preserve the letter and spirit of Northern Ireland's constitutional guarantee requiring the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland for any diminution in its status as part of the United Kingdom.

We want to see the issues resolved and a path to a better more sustainable future created.

The Protocol must be replaced with arrangements that protects Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom.





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