

ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY PROPOSALS FOR STRANDS - TWO AND THREE.

These Proposals are prepared on the basis of Acceptable Constitutional Change and on the understanding that they form part of a wider agreement which replaces the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

There shall be a body established, called say the Council of the British Isles (hereinafter called 'The Council') to deal with the Totality of Relationships within these islands.

The Council shall enable and facilitate discussion, consultation, and co-operation on matters of mutual interest between the constituent elements of the British Isles.

The Council shall be composed of representatives of the British and Irish Governments, and of the Regional Elected Administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Representatives from the Administrations of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands may be invited to participate, as will representatives of any English Regional Administration established.

Summit Level Meetings of the Council, involving all Administrations shall be convened at least twice a year. However, meetings of the Council may also be convened between two or more Administrations (i.e. between the British and Irish Governments, between Elected Regional Administrations, and between the Irish Government and Regional Administrations of the United Kingdom). When such meetings take place between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland they shall be known as the North/South Ministerial Council.

Where such a meeting is convened, discussions will be restricted to matters within the jurisdiction of the Administrations represented in the meeting.

Council Meetings may be held at a General or Sectoral Level with Representatives of the appropriate Departments/Committees present. Thus the Council will operate on the basis of variable geometry and subject matter.

Governments/Elected Regional Administrations will be represented at Council Meetings by their Ministers/Heads of Committee, each of which shall be a delegate to the Council. All decisions are to be taken by unanimous votes of Delegates present.

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Council Meetings may take decisions on Agreed Policies/Actions to be taken by the Perspective Administrations. Such decisions are however, only Recommendary and have no Legal Basis, until ratified by the respective Assemblies/Parliaments.

Agreed Policies/Actions shall be implemented by appropriate agreed mechanisms. Such mechanisms must also be subsequently ratified by the respective Assemblies/Parliaments.

The Council shall be serviced by a single small Administrative Unit.

The Northern Ireland Assembly shall only be represented at a Council Meeting when there are at least two Ministers/Heads of Committee, with at least one drawn from each of the two main traditions.

Where meetings between the British and Irish Government are held which discuss Non Devolved Issues for Northern Ireland, representative of the Northern Ireland Assembly shall be invited to participate.