



Euro Update

October 2009

Diane Dodds MEP

A message from your MEP

Since we won back the DUP seat in the European Parliament, I have set about using my new role to the benefit of the people of Northern Ireland. My work as an MEP officially began on 14th July when the newly elected Parliament met for the first time. Since then I have been dealing with many constituents' queries, holding meetings with key groups and speaking for Ulster in each plenary session of the European Parliament. Furthermore, I have become the first DUP MEP to sit as a full member of the Agriculture Committee. At this time of crisis for our local farming industry, it is imperative the voice of Ulster is heard where it matters. Plans for a new DUP European office, that will serve the people of Northern Ireland, are now at an advanced stage. I am proud to introduce my new staff team in this newsletter, and trust that in the weeks and months that lie ahead

you will find their service to you professional, and their record one of delivery. They are here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Whether the battle is at home or in Europe, the DUP are working for Unionism, striving to keep Unionism on top and delivering for the Unionist people of Northern Ireland. Ours is a vision of a better Northern Ireland, secure in the Union. Working together, we must face the difficult challenges and build and shape the future for our province.

The battle is never easy but we can win. Together, we must win.

Diane



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Diane Dodds MEP
Non-attached Member of
the European Parliament

Dodds outlines her agenda for Europe

On 14th July, DUP MEP Diane Dodds officially took up her role as a Northern Ireland representative in the European Parliament.

Speaking from Strasbourg, as the new Parliament began its five year term, DUP MEP Diane Dodds said:

“Being chosen by the people of Northern Ireland to represent them in the European Parliament is a huge honour. It is also a considerable responsibility. As a small region of a Europe of 27 states and nearly 500 million people it would be very easy for Northern Ireland’s interests to be sidelined or ignored. That is why it is vital that we punch above our weight.

A major challenge for Northern Ireland will be to ensure that necessary funding for important infrastructure and community projects continues to be directed towards our Province.

I will also vehemently oppose moves to further the federalist European super state agenda and attempts to erode our national sovereignty. I will work for the interests of Northern Ireland but I will not accept any attempts to weaken the sovereignty of the United Kingdom.

In a climate of increasing difficulty for our farmers, particularly in the dairy sector, delivery for the farming community is a top priority. The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy will be a major focus of my efforts in the Parliament. I want to see a strong, vibrant and sustainable agricultural sector in Northern Ireland. The Common Fisheries Policy is destroying Northern Ireland’s fishing industry. I will be lobbying, alongside DUP colleagues at Stormont and Westminster, for the Government to opt out of the policy.

As well as working hard when away in Brussels and Strasbourg, I want to engage with as many constituents and interest groups as possible from across Ulster in my role as MEP. I will have a full-time professionally-staffed office, ready to serve and deliver for Northern Ireland. I have always been passionate about serving the community. As MEP, that will remain my primary focus.”

No need for any EU President, let alone an EU President Blair

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has responded to speculation in Brussels that former Prime Minister Tony Blair will be the UK candidate for the role of European President, if the Lisbon Treaty is ratified by all EU states. Commenting, Diane Dodds MEP said:

“Speculation from Baroness Kinnock that Tony Blair will be the UK nominee for the EU Presidency only evidences further the attitude the ‘Eurocrats’ have towards the democratic process still to be served in relation to the Lisbon Treaty.

I am opposed to the Lisbon Treaty and the creation of a position of EU President adding further momentum to the EU super-state which some want to see established. Such a role would see yet further powers grabbed by Brussels and have a detrimental impact on our ability to determine our own United Kingdom foreign policy. This is not what the people of the United Kingdom want. We want to see a strengthening of the power of our sovereign government at Westminster.”



Alan Madill, Kenny Donaldson and Eric Brown of SEFF with Diane Dodds MEP

Europe must deliver for innocent victims

Speaking on a visit to South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) in Lisnaskea, DUP MEP Diane Dodds has re-iterated her commitment to seeing Europe deliver for the real victims in Northern Ireland. Commenting after the meeting to discuss funding issues and the needs of victims in the Fermanagh area, Mrs. Dodds said:

“The work that victims groups carry out with those who suffered greatly at the hands of terrorists is invaluable. On what are limited resources they do an enormous amount of work to make a real difference to the lives of many people who still bear the scars of Northern Ireland’s violent past.

It is vital that groups such as SEFF have the resources they require to continue this work and expand into new areas by which they can help victims. Today I heard of the ambitious plans SEFF have to expand their work, particularly with former members of the security forces. It is imperative that funding bodies, whether they are through Europe or the local Assembly, share the ambition of the victims sector in meeting the real need that exists.

I will be lobbying extensively for delivery for innocent victims in my new role as MEP. The DUP has made the needs of victims a priority. In government at Stormont we doubled the victims’ sector budget to more than £36 million. I will be doing all in my power to ensure innocent victims receive the maximum support through the European Union and look forward to working with groups like SEFF to achieve this end.”

MEP's Maiden Speech urges Euro Parliament to back Libya compensation claim

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has urged the European Parliament to back calls for Libya to pay compensation to the victims of IRA terrorism in Northern Ireland. Addressing the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Mrs. Dodds said:

"The European Parliament has united in recent times in the face of a global terrorist threat. In my constituency of Northern Ireland, we know only too well the pain caused by terrorism. Yes, we have witnessed a transformation in Northern Ireland in recent years, yet there are those who still seek to cause terror and bloodshed. Last week, in the

latest of a series of incidents, a 600lb bomb planted by dissident Republicans was discovered in South Armagh. Had it not been discovered multiple loss of life would have occurred.

In Northern Ireland we have not forgotten the victims of our past. That is why I would ask this Parliament to back the campaign for compensation from Libya. Libya supplied many weapons to the IRA. Those weapons took many lives and left others destroyed. For this, Mr President, they must be held accountable."



Diane Dodds discussing victims issues with Reatha Hassan of SAVERNAVER on a recent visit to Market Hill

Dodds calls for UK referendum on Lisbon Treaty

Speaking in the European Parliament following the Lisbon Treaty vote in the Irish Republic, DUP MEP Diane Dodds has called for a UK referendum on the Treaty so the people of Britain can make their voice heard.

Addressing fellow MEPs in Brussels, Mrs. Dodds said: **"As I have said on a previous occasion in the House, I stand before you as one keen to see a Europe of co-operating nations. I have consistently opposed the federalism of the**

Lisbon Treaty and the ceding of powers away from nations states.

The result of the second referendum in the Irish Republic on the Lisbon Treaty changes nothing to British national interests on 2nd October 2009 is equally as harmful on 2nd October 2010.

Ratification in Poland will not change that. Ratification in the Czech Republic will not change that. The date of a UK general election will not change that.

Therefore I call for the British people to be given a referendum, just as every European people should, on the full and complete text of the Lisbon Treaty."

Barroso must deliver for Northern Ireland

Speaking prior to the re-election of Jose Manuel Barroso as EU Commission President, DUP MEP Diane Dodds has urged the Commission to continue to deliver for Northern Ireland. Speaking in Strasbourg, Mrs. Dodds said:

"While our paths diverge completely on the Lisbon Treaty, Mr Barroso, however, you have taken a great interest in my constituency of

Northern Ireland. For this commitment I thank you. We value the support and close working relationship of Commission officials at all levels with Northern Ireland. I look forward to this relationship continuing and my constituency benefiting from it.

You will know about our past: the impact of violence on investment, and the need for new

roads and rail links. You will know about the huge potential for the economy through the development of tourism. To aid our economic development I would urge the Commission to examine what resources will be made available to redress the years of underinvestment.

As many in this Chamber have said already today, it is actions and delivery that count."

Dodds addresses West Fermanagh dinner

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has stated her commitment to delivering for rural areas in her role as a Member of the European Parliament for Northern Ireland. Addressing DUP supporters at a dinner in West Fermanagh, Diane Dodds MEP said:

"I want to see delivery for rural communities during my term as MEP. We can drive around Fermanagh and see the improvements made to our Orange Halls as a result of EU funding over recent years. Yet there are many more Lodges,

and indeed bands, that need assistance, not only from a financial point of view but also practically. I want people in that situation to use my office as their office. I want to see our community benefit from European funding and to have in place a stronger infrastructure to use to their benefit.

Yet as we plan for a better future for our community we cannot and should not forget the past. That is why I am committed to being an advocate for victims across Northern Ireland, and here in Fermanagh. Victims' needs must be met. My



Diane Dodds MEP with party representatives at Erne West Branch Dinner in West Fermanagh

party is committed to this end and have placed the needs of victims at the top of the political agenda at Stormont. Likewise their voice will be heard in Europe."

Dodds secures place on Parliament delegation to Israel

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has successfully negotiated a place on the European Parliament delegation to the State of Israel. As part of the delegation, Mrs. Dodds will visit Israel and receive priority in speaking time when debates concerning the area take place in Parliament.

Following confirmation of her place, Mrs. Dodds said:

“As a recently returned representative for Northern Ireland in the European Parliament, I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed to the EU’s delegation to the State of Israel. This appointment provides an effective platform for me to stand up for Israel at the European Parliament, which at times can be a very hostile arena for Israel. The Jewish state is the only fully-functioning democracy in the Middle East, and in my opinion, the EU has a moral, as well as a political duty, to protect Israel and its people.

I am the only UK representative to be a member of the delegation. I want to pledge now to all those who have Israel’s interests at heart in this country, that I will advocate a

consistently Israel friendly policy inside the structures of the European Parliament.

I am mindful that many in Northern Ireland identify closely with the struggle of the Israeli people. They like us have fought for years to uphold the rule of law and democracy in the face of vicious terrorism. Both countries know only too well the evil nature of terrorist groups who shield behind civilian populations in committing their atrocities, and then cynically and shamefully appeal to the international community for their rights to be upheld.

I am under no illusions that the coming months will pose many difficult problems for Israel and its supporters. The Iranian nuclear challenge is the cause of enormous international concern, and the provocation from the terrorist groups on Israel’s borders continues. The people of Israel should know that they do not stand alone in this and that their struggle to maintain democratic values in a largely hostile world is our struggle also.”



More EU Regulation for an over regulated industry

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has reacted with dismay to the latest pronouncement from Europe concerning the local fishing industry. Only a few days after proposing reduced fishing opportunities for much of Northern Ireland’s fishing fleet, the EU’s Fisheries Council meeting in Luxembourg approved the new Fisheries Control Regulation, which will be applicable from the 1st January 2010.

Commenting following the announcement, Mrs. Dodds, who is a member of the European Parliament’s Fisheries Committee, said:

“Yet again the European Commission has ignored evidence based advice and has

forced a Regulation upon our fishing industry that has the potential to cause further hardship for our fishermen, by applying rules that are unworkable. Fishermen from Northern Ireland and across Europe had worked hard to convince the European Commission that ‘Margin of Tolerance’ rules were impractical and at the same time propose alternatives that were based on evidence. Our fishermen invited the Eurocrats out on their trawlers to experience for themselves how unworkable the proposal for a 10% Margin of Tolerance was because of the difficulty of estimating small amounts of by-catch species to that level

of accuracy. The European Commission ignored the invitation and as a result of this latest decision the industry fears that infringements of the regulation will be unavoidable.

This is wrong. The fishing industry took a very responsible approach to this matter, but yet again their efforts have been dismissed. I call on the DARD Minister and her United Kingdom colleagues who will be responsible for implementing these rules to work closely with our fishermen to ensure these new rules are applied using common sense.”



Agri Focus

MEP calls on European Commission to ban all Brazilian beef

Diane Dodds MEP has called on the European Commission to impose a complete ban on all imports of Brazilian beef. This call comes following a presentation on Brazilian beef by the European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) to the European Parliament Agriculture and Rural Development Committee. Commenting after the Committee meeting in Brussels, Mrs. Dodds said:

"The latest FVO report identifies fifty per cent of the Brazilian farms inspected as having either major or minor faults, in areas such as animal identification, paperwork traceability and their non-existent movement controls. While such deficiencies are totally unacceptable here in the United Kingdom, it would appear that they continue to be common place in Brazil. Such disparity in standards only exemplifies the

unequal treatment of producers here in the UK. The new rules that came into place after the total ban on Brazilian beef are clearly failing to address serious concerns over standards. The Commission must recognise that this situation is totally unacceptable and must rethink their assessment that the current standards are adequate. Within Northern Ireland, farmers who have breached strict cross compliance rules not only would have their single farm payment

removed but their animals would not be allowed to enter the food chain. It is wrong for Northern Ireland farmers to be asked to jump through hoops and compete against product that is produced in another region of the world that has been produced under less strict rules. The only pathway for the Commission to take is a complete ban and I will be writing to the Commissioner calling for the immediate pursuance of this course of action."



DUP MEP Diane Dodds with Ulster Farmers' Union Deputy President Harry Sinclair and Policy Officer David Thompson after a meeting to discuss issues including importation of Brazilian beef

DUP delegation meets N.I. egg producers

DUP MEP Diane Dodds and South Antrim MP Dr. William McCrea have met with egg producers from across Northern Ireland to discuss the impact of an EU animal welfare directive which lays down new standards for layers in cages from 1st January 2012. Commenting after the meeting with local poultry producers, DUP MEP Diane Dodds said:

"Egg production in Northern Ireland is an important industry and one which is facing something of a crisis as a result of an EU directive that will ban the traditional cage system and enforce the use of enriched cages by 1st January 2012.



Diane Dodds MEP and William McCrea MP meeting a delegation of poultry producers from across Northern Ireland

While the industry in Northern Ireland is fully committed to exploring any method to improve animal welfare, it is clear that the huge cost of changing the cage system in such a short period of time is going to be too much to bear for many producers. In an economic climate where banks are extremely reluctant to lend money, particularly to those in the agriculture industry, the money required to put in place enriched cages is simply not there for many producers. As a result, as things stand, many producers will be legislated out of existence, resulting in shortages of eggs in Northern Ireland.

It is simply unrealistic to expect farmers to find the hundreds of thousands of pounds, and in some cases millions, to meet a deadline in two years time. DARD must realise this, and explore ways of supporting the industry, rather than persecute it."

Dodds calls for transparency with fish prices

DUP MEP Diane Dodds, who is a member of the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, has called for greater transparency on quayside prices being paid to local fishermen for their fish and shellfish. Commenting after a meeting of the Fisheries Committee in Brussels, Mrs. Dodds said:

"Northern Ireland fishermen have gained for themselves an enviable reputation for supplying some of the freshest fish and shellfish in Europe, yet the prices they are being paid today do not reflect this and are similar to what was being paid 30 plus years ago. As a consequence there is unwillingness for many local people to seek a career with our fishing fleet.

Recessionary pressures are complicated by European regulation, which has forced most of our fishermen to target prawns. They are unable to diversify into other fisheries, resulting in potential oversupply situations. The European Commission must wake up to the negative socio-economic effects their policies are having on our fishing communities, as well as the negative impacts upon fisheries conservation in the Irish Sea. Local fish processors and buyers are also a vital part of our coastal communities and face their own pressures and concerns about the future.

With our fishermen and fish processors we have an industry that does have a sustainable future, but there needs to be transparency in terms of the prices

being paid and I call on the European Commission and DARD to urgently examine this issue. We must provide whatever assurances we can to our fishermen that the prices they are being paid reflect the efforts they put in to bring food to our tables and that profits are evenly spread throughout the supply chain."



Disappointment over sheep EID decision

DUP MEP Diane Dodds has expressed disappointment that the Council of Agricultural Ministers rejected a proposed amendment to the EU regulations on the Electronic Identification of sheep (EID). Mrs. Dodds said that the campaign against this unnecessary extra bureaucracy must continue but the refusal to accept any degree of flexibility is extremely concerning for sheep farmers. Diane Dodds said:

"The amendment proposed by the UK would have meant that sheep did not need to be identified until they left their place of birth. Whilst I would reject entirely the need for EID to be introduced, this amendment would have represented a small degree of flexibility being introduced. It is extremely disappointing that it was not accepted despite receiving support from Ireland, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia. It seems to represent a strong determination by the Commission to press ahead with proposals which will be of absolutely no benefit and will only put a cost and time burden upon farmers.

At a time when the Executive locally has made real progress in terms of the simplification review it is very disappointing that this extra bureaucracy is being imposed upon farmers by Europe. There are still issues

under negotiation around the issue of EID so it is important that pressure is maintained upon the Commission and that support is built across Europe.

I will certainly continue to do whatever I can to oppose this kind of unnecessary bureaucracy and if we are to see its introduction then to ensure that whatever is brought forward is as workable as possible for farmers."



**Diane Dodds MEP and Ian Paisley Jnr
MLA at the National Sheep
Association event in Ballymena**



Diane Dodds MEP visiting Clogher Valley Show accompanied by Lord Morrow



Commission urged to support dairy sector

Speaking to the European Parliament during a debate on the ongoing dairy crisis, DUP MEP Diane Dodds has called for additional support for the dairy industry to overcome the current difficulties in the market.

Addressing MEPs, Diane Dodds said:

“The dairy sector is of vital importance to the rural economy in my constituency of Northern Ireland - when it is struggling, the rest of the rural economy struggles.

Currently dairy farmers receive just over 20 cents per litre for milk amid escalating costs. Not only do farmers have to contend with poor milk prices and high costs, but they also have suffered the third consecutive summer of wet weather. The cumulative impact of these factors is devastating on dairy producers in Northern Ireland. How distressing to see

farmers in Belgium, only this week, spraying their milk on their fields such is their despair.

Steps taken by the Commission over recent months to help have no doubt put a base in the dairy market. However, we should be looking to improve dairy prices and not sustain them at uneconomically low levels.

I call on the Commission to ensure that there are short term measures to help and increase demand for milk. We must also take measures to cut production costs, and ensure that the supply chain reflects fair farm gate prices as opposed to high supermarkets prices, while farmers struggle to make any profit.

In the long term we must create a sustainable industry, one that is attractive to young farmers who are currently experiencing difficulties with low prices and aggressive banks.

I think that it would be very foolish for the Parliament to ignore the plight of these farmers at this time.”



Co-ordinated approach to benefit Northern Ireland

Diane Dodds has made history in the European Parliament by becoming the first DUP member to serve as a full member of the European Union Agriculture Committee. She has pledged to adopt a co-ordinated approach with colleagues in Westminster and the Assembly to bring benefit to Northern Ireland. Diane Dodds MEP said:

“I will be working with DUP colleagues at Stormont and Westminster to bring benefit to the people of our Province.

Working alongside Ministers, MPs, MLAs and councillors from the DUP I will be doing all I can to help Northern Ireland gain the fullest possible benefits from Europe. I am pleased that as well as a position on the Agriculture Committee of the

European Parliament, the DUP holds the chairmanship of the DARD Committee at Stormont: there is clear scope for co-ordinated action between DUP representatives in Belfast and Brussels to help ensure we speak with one voice in the interests of our agricultural and rural communities.

Never before has the DUP had a full position on the European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee. This is a vital position and one I will be using to maximum effect for the benefit of Northern Ireland. As an MEP, I will be playing my part as a member of a strong DUP team driving the agenda of Northern Ireland forward at council level, in the Assembly, at Westminster and in the European Parliament.”



Diane Dodds MEP with Ian Paisley Jnr MLA and William Irwin MLA in Brussels following a meeting with representatives of the Assembly Agriculture Committee to discuss ongoing issues in relation to the industry



Diane Dodds MEP and Mervyn Storey MLA on a visit to Rathlin Island



William Irwin MLA, Diane Dodds MEP and Ian Paisley Jnr MLA with UFU President Graham Furey in Brussels



Marking armed forces day with DUP Leader Rt. Hon Peter Robinson MP and Deputy Leader Nigel Dodds MP

Introducing the team

As a political representative, I have always made constituency service my priority. The new DUP European Office is committed to working for the people of Northern Ireland and providing a first class professional service. Let me introduce my team, ready to serve you:

Andrew Gowan

Born and raised in Fermanagh, Andrew has been an active member of the DUP since joining as a student. A graduate of Law, History and Politics from Queen's University, Andrew worked for two years as researcher to Jimmy Spratt MLA in the Northern Ireland Assembly, and was election agent to Arlene Foster MLA in the successful Enniskillen by-election last year. He is a member of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland.

As part of the team in the European Office, he will be responsible for political and communication strategy.

Alan McCulla

Alan lives just outside Annalong in County Down. He has been Chief Executive of one of Northern Ireland's commercial fishing organisations for over 17 years. This position has involved him in negotiations at local, national and European levels. In June 2008 his contribution to the fishing and wider community in Northern Ireland was recognised with the award of an OBE. Alan comes from a fishing industry family and other family members are still engaged with commercial fishing vessels.

Within the European team Alan has assumed responsibility for directing policy on Agriculture and Fisheries.

Trevor Cummings

Trevor has been actively involved in the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland for 16 years, engaged in promoting community development, networking and good

governance. Having a long term concern for victims issues, as a Pastoral Worker and as a former police officer who himself fell victim to a terrorist attack, Trevor will be working within the European Office to reinforce and facilitate the DUP response to victims organisations and the community and voluntary sector across Northern Ireland.

Mark Beattie

Growing up on the family farm near Newtownstewart, Mark Beattie has always had a keen interest in agriculture, demonstrated by completing a three year course in Agriculture at Greenmount College. Working within the local animal feed industry, and on a 1000 cow dairy unit in New Zealand, has helped give him a well rounded knowledge of the industry. Mark is Agricultural Researcher in the European Office.



Follow Diane online

At www.dianedodds.co.uk you can follow the work of your MEP at home, in Brussels and in Strasbourg. The website contains all the latest news, with an extensive video library and photo gallery following Diane in Parliament and in her work across Northern Ireland. You can also register online for regular updates, to keep up to date with the very latest from Europe. So log-on soon and please feel free to give us feedback on the site!



Watch Diane speaking for Ulster in Europe
www.youtube.com/dupchannel

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