



UUP Victims Charter

May 2011

- 1. The Ulster Unionist Party is opposed to the creation of a Conflict Transformation Facility at the Maze - Code for 'Terrorist Shrine.' And we will work with the Victims sector in opposing the development.**

The former Maze Prison is a loaded political site and will never be considered 'neutral.' We are however willing to engage in dialogue around the development of a genuine Peace building Centre which would be located elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

- 2. The Ulster Unionist Party continues to believe that the current Victims definition is unacceptable and we commit to working with others over the lifetime of the next Assembly in an effort to establish a more acceptable definition which is victim centred.**

The existing definition effectively equates 'perpetrator' and 'victim' and this is politically and morally unacceptable. Those who sought to murder and maim can never be considered victims alike those that they sought to harm.

- 3. The Ulster Unionist Party is concerned at the upsurge in threats upon former members of our security forces and the unacceptable response by Government in terms of the security protection provided to such individuals. We commit to working with affected individuals and relevant agencies in a common effort to establish more acceptable arrangements.**

Those individuals who stood against the evils of terrorism are being re-victimized. We will demand that access to personal protection weapons and the ability to receive home/personal security measures is accessible for those affected. That is the least that society owes those who gave the best part of their life in defence of this Country and its' people.

- 4. The Ulster Unionist Party will seek to support those involved in securing a settlement from Libya for the purpose of ensuring that monies received are invested for the welfare and betterment of the innocent victims and survivors of terrorism.**

It is important that the administration of any financial settlement reached is independent from Government and free from political interference.

5. The Ulster Unionist Party will continue to press Central Government to agree a package of financial support for those who gallantly served within the Ulster Defence Regiment.

The Ulster Defence Regiment along with the Royal Ulster Constabulary operated as a “middle community” in Northern Ireland striving to keep order often sometimes perilous situations. It is right and proper that the UK Government acknowledges the contribution made by members who served within the Regiment via an appropriate gratuity settlement.

6. The Ulster Unionist Party commits to deepening its’ relationship with the Victims Commission which has a key role of standing up for victim’s interests and holding Government to account.

With the soon to be introduced Victims Service, it is absolutely crucial that the Victims Commission is given the latitude and support to meaningfully act as ‘an advocate’ on behalf of Victims/Survivors.

We believe that the Victims Service has the potential to deliver upon the individual needs of innocent victims but that it must take account local specific needs, which differ in communities across Northern Ireland. Appropriate funding streams must be in place which enable for proactive and strategic work to be carried out on behalf of victims departing from the reactionary policies of heretofore.

7. The Ulster Unionist Party will insist that government and funders acknowledge and redress the ‘capacity deficit’ issue which is pertinent within the sector.

There is a need for Government to put in place appropriate support measures to develop organisations ensuring that a two tier system does not become embedded. Government must also ensure that victims/survivors throughout Northern Ireland have ready access to services. Swift action is needed to support those geographical areas which have found themselves without resource support.

The Ulster Unionist Party has consistently placed the needs of innocent victims at the forefront of the political process. All evidence available states that the needs of innocent victims are becoming even more acute with the passage of time.

- 8. The Ulster Unionist Party commits to working closely with the HET (Historical Enquiries Team) in an effort to ensure that the service is appropriately resourced and financed so that it can continue and conclude the remainder of its' work.**

It is important that all families whose loved ones were murdered over the period referred commonly as; 'The Troubles' are afforded the opportunity to have their loved one's case examined. There is also a need for work to be carried out with the innocent victims sector in ensuring that appropriate advocacy structures are put in place which help aide the process for that constituency in its' engagements with the HET process.

- 9. The Ulster Unionist Party commits to examining how Peace and CORE Government monies are being spent to ensure that the limited resources available for Victims/Survivors are not being used for the promotion of other political agendas.**

Government must get tough on the immoral use of victims monies for the purpose of glamorising terrorism and must take steps to block the use of Core Government or European Union monies for such activities.

- 10. We commit to working with our MEP and the wider EU in making the case for a Peace IV support fund to ensure that current work is copper-fastened.**

Support structures and services for Victims and Survivors are at an extremely sensitive stage in development and we believe that were access to Peace Funding to stop that this could have a detrimental impact on existing work.