

CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY – NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE NI ASSEMBLY

Question 1

What should the future size of the Northern Ireland Assembly be?

The current number of seat is grossly excessive for the size of Northern Ireland. A maximum of 4 seats per each Westminster constituencies would be more than sufficient. This would equate to 64 after the current boundary review, and a similar number to that of Wales.

At the same time there should be a reduction in the number of government departments, which were set up for political expediency rather than effective administration. This would provide more efficient government as well as reduce the workload in the Assembly for members.

CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY – LENGTH OF ASSEMBLY TERMS

Question 2

Do you believe that there should be combination of Parliamentary and Assembly elections in 2015 or should these be decoupled?

I agree entirely that the Parliamentary and Assembly elections should be held at same time. This would provide a significant cost saving and an early opportunity to correct an over bureaucratic and weak Assembly.

Question 3

Do you think the term of the current Northern Ireland Assembly should be extended from 2015 to 2016?

Strongly disagree, the NI Assembly needs urgent reform to meet the needs of NI.

Question 4

Should the Northern Ireland Assembly move to a fixed 5-year term permanently?

Agreed, it makes sense to tie in with national elections.

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY – MULTIPLE MANDATES

Question 5

Do you believe that representatives should be prohibited from holding the offices of MP and MLA at the same time?

Strongly agree. The current system is an abuse of power, providing poor representation for the electorate and should not be allowed to continue.

Question 6

Should MLAs also be prohibited from being members of the House of Lords?

Strongly agree as per question 5.

Question 7

Is it better to use primary legislation to ban such practices outright at the earliest opportunity or to take a power to do so at a later date to allow space for agreement to be reached?

Ban the practice outright as soon as possible. Local politicians will not deliver on measures that reduce their incomes/ political strength.

CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY – GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION

Question 8

Do you think the Assembly would operate more effectively with a system which provides for a government and an effective opposition? If so, how can this system best be achieved?

Agreed, our current system of government does not provide adequate challenge or scrutiny of government decisions. It is disappointing that there are no specific suggestions/ proposals provided in the consultation document which the general public can comment on as opposed to leaving such matters to discussions behind closed doors between politicians with vested interests.