



Equipping Christians for the 2017 NI Elections

Northern Ireland Assembly Elections Questions for Candidates

A selection of probing questions, which you may wish to ask candidates relating to issues of Life, Family and Justice.

Further information on all topics covered can be found at www.engage17.org.uk

To find out how your MLA has voted on several key issues in the past and to send them an email, visit:

www.engage17.org.uk/yourmla

www.engage17.org.uk

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Key Dates

5 JANUARY	regulated period for non-party campaigners begins (general campaign rules apply during this period)
26 JANUARY	dissolution of the Northern Ireland Assembly
2 FEBRUARY	one month until polling day
10 FEBRUARY	deadline to register to vote by post
10 FEBRUARY	deadline to register to vote by proxy
14 FEBRUARY	deadline to register to vote
24/26 FEBRUARY	the final weekend before polling day: try to hold you hustings before this date
2 MARCH	polling day

Useful websites

Charity Commission NI	https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/
Electoral Commission	http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/
Electoral Office NI	http://www.eoni.org.uk/
About My Vote	http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/

engage17 is an initiative from Christian Public Policy charity CARE Northern Ireland to promote active engagement in the 2017 Northern Ireland Assembly Election. It provides a range of resources to enable Christian thinking about important issues and voter participation.

www.engage17.org.uk | www.care.org.uk



Questions for Candidates

See below for a list of probing questions, which you may wish to ask your candidates, relating to Life, Family and Justice.

Family

Gambling

- Will you promise to address the issue of the disproportionately high level of problem gambling in Northern Ireland and urge the Department for Social Development to fulfil their promise of long overdue new legislation on gambling?
- Do you agree that Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) - the so-called crack cocaine of gambling in relation to which someone can play £100 every 20 seconds – should not be operating in Northern Ireland under the law as it currently stands?
- Will you commit to fighting for legislation to prevent the clustering of betting shops in our province's most deprived council wards?



Marriage

- Will you commit to voting against any future motion supporting same sex marriage?
- Will you commit to seeking to protect the religious liberty and freedom of individuals who oppose the redefinition of marriage in Northern Ireland?



Marriage Support

- Given that research demonstrates that the provision of a comprehensive package of marriage support investment provides a very good return on the investment, enhancing the wellbeing of adults and children, what steps will you take to press for more Northern Ireland Executive investment in marriage support services?
- Given the huge public policy cost of family breakdown – £47 billion – and that the majority of this is driven by the breakdown of cohabiting relationships that have never involved the till death us do part marriage commitment, what will you do to highlight the current fiscal incentives not to marry (eroding the incentive not to marry) and to make the case for the Westminster Government to positively nudge people to consider marriage?



Life

Abortion

- Do you oppose the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland?
- Do you oppose the former Minister for Justice, David Ford's proposals to liberalise the law on abortion in Northern Ireland by creating an exception for the termination of children who may be born with life limiting conditions?
- Will you commit to protecting both mother and unborn child by maintaining the law on abortion as it stands in Northern Ireland?
- Will you seek to prevent private providers such as Marie Stopes from offering abortions in NI?



Assisted Suicide

- Do you oppose the legalisation of assisted suicide?
- Will you promise to protect the vulnerable and uphold human dignity by opposing any attempt to legalise assisted suicide in the next Assembly?
- Will you commit to a compassionate response by ensuring continued support for, and improvement of, palliative care provision in Northern Ireland?



Justice

Human Trafficking

- Will you seek to hold the Department of Justice and PSNI to account for how they are performing in terms of rescuing victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland and prosecuting perpetrators of these crimes?
- Will you commit to working with employers and businesses in this constituency to raise awareness of and prevent exploitation in supply chains at home and overseas?
- Will you support the work of the independent anti-slavery commissioner in engaging with public authorities to improve our response to trafficking?



Prostitution & Commercial Sexual Exploitation

- Will you commit to ensuring the full and effective implementation of section 15 of The Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act which criminalises the purchase of sex?
- What will you do to improve protection for children who are sexually exploited and what steps will you take to prevent vulnerable young people from entering prostitution?
- Will you promise to support and encourage programmes aimed at early intervention to prevent vulnerable people from entering prostitution?
- Will you seek to hold the Northern Ireland Executive to account for the quality and utility of the programmes introduced through section 19 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act to help individuals leave prostitution?
- Will you commit to working to reduce levels of prostitution in Northern Ireland?



Religious Liberty

- Will you commit to fight for robust reasonable accommodation provisions into Northern Ireland equality law, so that no minority group can use legislation specially developed to protect its interests in relation to another minority group, where doing so would have the effect of requiring people in that other group to either act in violation of their identity or risk being taken to court?

