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Issue 8



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Allister Defends RUC Athletic Association

TUV has welcomed the decision to withdraw a controversial proposal to rename the RUC Athletic Association.

Earlier this month, Assistant Chief Constable Will Kerr, who is also chairman of the association, wrote to members, claiming that keeping RUC in the title "may result in the failure to secure the grants on which this association is financially dependent".

TUV leader Jim Allister said he was pleased that the preposterous proposition had been rejected.

"The decision of those behind moves to change the name of the Royal Ulster Constabulary Athletics Association to withdraw their motion is testament to the fact that members of the RUC are still courageous individuals who refuse to be bullied.

"It is evident that those who supported stripping the last trace of the RUC from the PSNI found that members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary who faced down terrorists are not easily threatened. Those who supported change – as this morning's News Letter makes clear – were fully intending to push ahead with their plans.

"The RUC served with distinction throughout the terrorist campaign of the Troubles and many of its members sacrificed their lives for Northern Ireland. The stripping of the RUC's name and badge was an issue which caused huge hurt to the men and women who served in its ranks. This attempt to erase the last remnants of its name from the PSNI's structures, therefore, understandably provoked anger among many members, some of whom contacted me.

"From what I am told there were a lot of questions from the floor which could not be answered by the proposers of the motion but it is now incumbent upon Assistant

Chief Constable Kerr to come clean and tell us something he failed to address in his letter covered in today's News Letter – where did the threat to the RUCAA's funding come from?

"In his letter of 6th March he claimed that: "In blunt terms, a perceived unwillingness on the part of the Association to change to the more generic "Police Athletic Association Northern Ireland" may result in a failure to secure the grants on which this Association is financially dependent".

"Yet no threat seems ever to have existed.

"And while ACC Kerr can write letters to the press he has yet to answer a letter which I sent to him three weeks ago asking him to spell out why he wrote to RUCAA members in such a threatening way.

"Others within the PSNI who claimed that a failure to change the name could result in the loss of an RUC memorial window also need to apologise for their blatant attends at emotional blackmail."

European Day For Victims of Terrorism

TUV leader Jim Allister MLA has hosted the first event in Northern Ireland to mark the European Day designated to remember of victims of Terrorism.

Speaking after the event which was held in the senate chamber at Stormont Jim Allister stated:

"It was an honour to host the first event to be held in Parliament Buildings marking the European Day for Victims of Terrorism. I am especially grateful to the many victims

who travelled from all over the Province to attend, some coming a great distance.

"From the comments after the event it was clear to me that they felt the event was worthwhile.

"I am especially grateful to the three victims who told their stories – Stephen Gault, Mark Kelly and Sammy Heenan. Hearing the voice of innocent victims is essential and reminds us of the horrendous cost of terrorism to ordinary

people.

"Terrorism never was and never can be justified. Nor should there be any attempt to rewrite history so as to suggest that there is some parallel between victims and victim makers."

Jim Allister MLA has further explained that he hopes to mark the European Day for Victims of Terrorism in future years.

"The row (RUCAA) became public earlier this month after members of the association contacted both the News Letter and TUV leader Jim Allister. Mr Robinson's intervention has echoes of his move to block the removal of the Royal insignia from the Northern Ireland Prison Service last year, after the issue was highlighted by Mr Allister."

Sam McBride,
Newsletter

"How are you going to emulate the opposition of Jim Allister who single handedly is puncturing the First and deputy First Ministers' Office almost weekly, dragging, forcing, forensically challenging and delivering crucial pieces of information? How are you going to emulate? Where's the power block or brain within your party to do that?"

Emonn Mallie talking to the UUP's John McAllister

"Sinn Fein says it's nothing to do with any pressure. But Jim Allister has a member's bill that would have been retrospective"

Ann Travers,
Belfast Telegraph

Allister Disappointed by DETI Disinterest in Fair Deal on Ferry Prices

Jim Allister MLA recently wrote to the Consumer Council expressing my concerns about the high price of traveling by ferry between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Mr Allister explained:

"I was advised that the Consumer Council had traced the cost of travel on ferry services from Northern Ireland and that during July, August and September 2011 the average fare for a family of four travelling with a car between Northern Ireland and Scotland with Stena Line was £261.06 and with P&O was £268.58. By comparison the average cost of travel between Dover and Dunkirk with DFDS was £67.57 – a difference of

around £200.

"While the markets in England and the Continent are much larger than those in Northern Ireland and Scotland this huge difference is simply unacceptable.

"In a report published last year the Consumer Council recommended that the Northern Ireland Executive in conjunction with the Scottish Executive and the Department of Transport should examine the potential for reducing the cost to consumers of Irish Sea ferry services.

"I am therefore surprised and disappointed to learn by way of an Assembly answer that

the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment Arlene Foster has not so much as discussed the issue with her Scottish counterparts and seems totally disinterested in seeking to obtain a fair deal for ferry passengers.

"Ferry travel is essential for Northern Ireland consumers and industry. It plays a vital role in supporting the Northern Ireland economy by facilitating trade and tourism – both of which are key concerns for Mrs Foster's department. Indeed according to DRD Transport Statistics 2.2 million passengers travelled from Northern Ireland on Irish Sea" services in 2010.

Allister comments on Moy Park job losses in Ballymena

It has emerged that Moy Park may shed a number of manager posts later this year from the company's Ballymena factory.

In a statement by North Antrim TUV MLA Jim Allister expressed his shock and disappointment following the revelation:

"Today's announcement of 19 job losses at management/ staff level in the former

O'Kane plant in Ballymena is a major blow. This represents something of the order of a 15% cut in staff jobs, which is substantial by any standard.

"I can understand seasonal swings in this industry at the factory floor level, as demand ebbs and flows, but an end to 19 long established staff jobs is a worrying sign. Having spoken today to senior management in the Ballymena

operation, I am assured that this is a one off realignment. I trust it will indeed not lead to further job losses.

"At the time of the Moy Park takeover of O'Kanes there were assurances of job security and continuity. So, to now find 19 senior staff being made redundant is a most unwelcome development in respect of one of our major employers in North Antrim."

Allister challenges Mervyn Storey and North Antrim DUP on GAA

Ballymoney DUP Mayor recently declared his support for the Loughgiel Hurling Club.

The Mayors declaration follows a decision earlier this year by DUP leader Peter Robinson to attend a GAA game.

In a statement Jim Allister has asked if DUP MLA Mervyn Storey will be supporting any future GAA games:-

"With Cllr Ian Stevenson taking the DUP's engagement with gaelic games to a new level, by now declaring he will stand

and honour the 'Soldier's Song' on his further mission to support Loughgiel hurlers, the question now is whether DUP members in North Antrim, who have been muttering disapprovingly of the Mayor's actions, will publicly say what they are saying privately.

"I challenge local MLA Mervyn Storey to say where he stands on this issue. Is he with Cllr Stevenson - if so, maybe he'll even go with him - or is he against such political posturing and pandering?"

"I know the progressive trend in the DUP's embracing of all things gaelic - to the point where they can now stand for the Soldier's Song - is causing unease at grassroots level. It's time the party's elected representatives in the constituency declared themselves.

"The lyrics of the 'Soldier's Songs' make its espousal of violence against the British very clear. It glorifies rebellion. If Cllr Stevenson and the DUP are now comfortable to honour it, then it says all one needs to know about 'Nua DUP'.

Allister Expresses Shock at Executive's £400,000 Contract for Photos

Jim Allister MLA has revealed that the Executive has spent a massive £400,000 on contracts for photographs.

Statement by TUV leader Jim Allister:

“Peter Robinson recently lamented Stormont’s lack of control of the media in spite of the fact that the Executive spends almost five million a year on press officers.

“Today we learn that Stormont awarded an “estimated” £400,000 contract split between six firms for the “provision of photography

services” on 26th January this year.

“So while Ministers float the idea of stripping pensioners of their bus passes to save money they can find the best part of half a million pounds to get photographs taken of themselves!

“It is testament to the colossal scale of Stormont’s failures that such amounts have to be lavished on PR in order to make it appear as if they are actually doing something. The fact that Ministers equate getting their photograph taken with actually delivering

something of substance for the community was recently demonstrated on the floor of the Assembly when the DETI Minister responded to my probing about the exclusion of the 12th and Scarva from a Northern Ireland Tourist Board showcase by telling me that her photograph was in a Royal Black Institution calendar.

“The next time members of the public see a Minister for photo ops beaming out of the paper at them they will no doubt remember that they paid handsomely for the privilege.”



TUV Leader Jim Allister welcomes victims to Stormont to mark the ‘European Day for Victims’

A5 could go millions over budget

TUV Leader Jim Allister has questioned if the £330m figure announced for the A5 project is accurate.

This follows confirmation to the MLA by the DRD Minister that though contractual agreements exist with two contractors, there is no contract price included in either. In fact, ‘target costs’ will be agreed in advance of construction, but there will be no definitive contract price to which the

contractors can be held.

Commenting on the Assembly Answer received from the Minister, Jim Allister said,

“I find it astounding that in such huge commitments of public funds there is no protection for the taxpayer in the form of a fixed and known contract price. At best there will be aspirational targets, leaving the taxpayer at the mercy of rising costs and

leaving the £330m looking very much like a guess, not an actual reliable figure.

“This is no way to spend public money. Such an open cheque approach may suit the contractors, but it is no comfort for the paying public.

“The more I see and hear about the A5 project, the more I am appalled with how it is being handled.”



Jim Allister MLA reveals the extent of the Executive ego as £400,000 is spent on photographers

Executive Spends £4.5 Million on Wining and Dining

Jim Allister MLA has discovered that the Executive has spent £4.5 million on hospitality over the past five years.

Commenting on the revelations Mr Allister explained:

“The public will no doubt be shocked to learn that over the past five years four and a half million pounds of their money has been spent by government departments on hospitality. The worst offender is the Office of the Joint First Ministers which has spent an astonishing £826,760 on wining and

dining since 2006.

“In one year alone (2008/09) Northern Ireland taxpayers contributed £1,228,533 to the cost of hospitality by government departments. That means that the Northern Ireland Executive was spending, on average of over £3,000 a day on hospitality. It is still spending nearly £10,000 per week.

“It is also noteworthy that most departments did not include hospitality provided by their arms-length bodies when responding to my question. So the overall figure will be much

higher. I already know from a previous answer that Invest NI alone, for example, spent £2m in just 5 years.

“Yes, there has been a measure of reduction in spending of late but across the departments the squander is still far too high.

“These figures demonstrate once again just how out of touch Stormont is with the needs of ordinary people – particularly at a time when many are finding themselves out of work or suffering pay cuts”.



Ian Stevenson declares his support for Gaelic hurling

Obituary to Pastor Stewart Dunlop



The officers and members of the TUV regret the passing away of our much loved Chaplain Pastor Stewart Dunlop.

Stewart was a loyal member of the TUV and worked tirelessly for the Party.

Stewart opened all central committee meetings in prayer and every Party conference in

the reading of Holy Scripture.

Stewart was held in the highest esteem by all within the TUV and his warm smile and words of encouragement will be sadly missed by all that were privileged to call him their friend.

Stewart was also the founding Pastor of Ballymena's Church of God and had only recently retired after 18 dedicated years of service to the Church. A native of Cullybackey, Stewart gave his life to the Lord as an 11-year-old boy and began preaching when he was 15.

Later in life, Stewart was for many years a member of

Cullybackey Elim before the Lord led Stewart to the Church of God in Ballymoney.

Being a local man, Stewart was asked to head up the formation of the Church and pioneer the work in the Ballymena area. That was in 1993 and for a time Stewart continued in his employment - for many years he had been associated with Nicholl Bros. and Moore Electrics - before his ordination to the Ballymena congregation in 1999.

The officers and members of the TUV assure his wife Isa, daughter Sonya and grandchildren Lauren and Gavin of our thoughts and prayers at this time.

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TUV Two Tie the Knot

The officers and members of the TUV wish to congratulate two Party officers on their recent weddings.

Party Vice-Chair and Lagan Valley Chairman Keith Harbinson was first to tie the knot in March to Laura Johnston.

Keith was quickly followed by Party Press officer Samuel Morrison who wed Esther Curry on Easter Tuesday.

We wish both couples a happy future together and hope that both Keith and Sammy will still be allowed to attend central committee meetings!

