**\*Embargoed until 00.01am on Monday 13th April\***

**Who is Nigel Dodds?**

**The little known politician who could be kingmaker in election**

Stratagem and PLMR poll reveals:

·         69% of British adults have never heard of Nigel Dodds, Westminster leader of the DUP

A poll from Stratagem, PLMR and ComRes has revealed only three in ten British adults say they have heard of Nigel Dodds, the person who could be crucial in determining who walks into Number 10 in May.

Nigel Dodds MP is the Westminster leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).  The DUP are the largest party in Northern Ireland and currently hold eight seats in the House of Commons, making them the fourth largest party in Westminster.

In anticipation of the important role his party may play in May, Mr Dodds, the supposed unknown, has already outlined his party’s demands from a government partner and hasn’t ruled out working with Labour or the Conservatives. In an interview last month, he said he would want Ed Miliband to offer a referendum on Europe and David Cameron to reverse the bedroom tax, should they wish to go into partnership to lead the country. He has also stated any future government needs to commit spending a minimum of 2% of GDP on defence.

The poll, conducted before the recent seven way TV debate, also showed that Leanne Wood, the Plaid Cymru leader, is only recognised by 39% of the electorate and only half (50%) of Britons have heard of Green Party leader Natalie Bennett. However, after her recent interview gaffes, Natalie Bennett might breathe a sigh of relief about that.

**Quintin Oliver of Stratagem said:**

*“It's unusual for our MPs to enjoy the balance of power in this way. 'Our Nigel' rather than the 'other Nigel' (Farage) will negotiate robustly and hard with his eight to ten votes.*

*“The UK people and media had better get to know his policies pretty fast!”*

**Elin Twigge, Deputy Managing Director of PLMR, added:**

*“It says a lot about the fractured nature of British politics at the moment that someone who is largely unknown to the British public, may hold the keys to Downing Street for either David Cameron or Ed Miliband.*

*“Nigel Dodds is a name we should all get used to and fast; in less than a month he could be the most important person in Westminster.”*

**Notes to Editors:**

         For more information please contact Quintin Oliver at Stratagem on 07785278927

         Stratagem is a public affairs consultancy based in Belfast.  Set up in 1998, Stratagem was the first dedicated political lobbying company in Northern Ireland.

         PLMR (Political Lobbying and Media Relations) is an award winning British public affairs and PR agency. PLMR is headquartered in Westminster, London.

         Methodology:ComRes interviewed 2,057 British adults online between 31st March and 1st April 2015. Data were weighted to be representative of all GB adults aged 18+. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules

 **Poll results:**

*Q. How much, if at all, do you feel you know about each of the following politicians?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **Net: Heard of** | Heard of them and know a lot about them | Heard of them and know a little about them | Heard of them but know nothing about them | **Never heard of them** |
| Nigel Dodds | **31%** | 2% | 8% | 21% | **69%** |
| Caroline Lucas | **49%** | 7% | 20% | 21% | **51%** |
| David Cameron  | **99%** | 67% | 27% | 5% | **1%** |
| Nick Clegg  | **99%** | 51% | 40% | 8% | **1%** |
| Nigel Farage | **97%** | 46% | 42% | 8% | **3%** |
| Ed Miliband | **99%** | 59% | 34% | 6% | **1%** |
| Nicola Sturgeon | **76%** | 19% | 34% | 23% | **24%** |
| Leanne Wood | **39%** | 2% | 14% | 23% | **61%** |
| Natalie Bennett | **50%** | 6% | 21% | 23% | **50%** |

*(Base: 2,057 British adults)*