

East Renfrewshire councillor quits Change UK

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East Renfrewshire councillor quits Change UK for Liberal Democrats

AN East Renfrewshire councillor has shocked the political landscape after he quit an anti-Brexit party for the Liberal Democrats, writes Gregg Kelly.

David Macdonald, an independent councillor for Clarkston, Netherlee and Williamwood, quit the newly formed Change UK just eight days before the EU election.

He had been the party's leading candidate in Scotland but is now urging voters to side with the Lib Dems - who are also pro-remain - in a bid to stop Nigel Farage's Brexit Party.

Mr MacDonald said: "For me it was just purely about the mathematics of this, we're looking at a very different political landscape in Scotland from the rest of the United Kingdom.

"We have a much more diluted Remain vote in Scotland, and its become very apparent close to these elections that we are in grave danger of splitting this vote and it is very clear to me now that we need to shore up the remain vote and get behind the Scottish Liberal Democrats.

"They are the force in politics in Scotland that are the clear voice for ending Brexit and for us remaining in the European ."

He added: "There comes a point in politics where you realise you have go to do something for the greater good."

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Willie Rennie welcomed the decision – which comes after postal votes for the European elections have already been sent out.

Change UK spokesman Chuka Umunna said: “It is obviously disappointing that this candidate has chosen to pledge allegiance to another party – he has let down his fellow candidates and activists.

“But we are focusing all our efforts on adding to the Remain vote in the UK and challenging the pro-Brexit Tory, Brexit and Labour parties, which is why our leader challenged Nigel Farage to a live TV debate this week.

“In the past 24 hours Labour’s former head of campaigns for the north of England has come out for Change UK, as have many former Labour voters.

“Winning voters over from the main parties and growing the Remain vote across the UK will continue to be our focus.”

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