

Full Council – 21st January 2008**Motion selected for debate by Councillor Paul Lorber,
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.****Spend money on Police and Safety, not ID Cards**

Council expresses its increasing concern at Government plans to introduce compulsory Identity Cards and a national Identity Register, and the effect these would have on Brent residents.

Among other reasons, we reject this expensive, ineffective scheme as:

- It will cost many billions of pounds. Estimates have escalated repeatedly, meaning an ever rising bill to the taxpayer and cost being passed on to anyone wanting a Passport.
- The Government's record on huge IT schemes always leads to costs over-runs; ID Card technology has not been properly tested; and many expensive systems such as those bought for the NHS do not even work properly.
- Every use of stop or question powers by the Police has seen these target black and Asian people disproportionately. Using ID Cards to access services will see this discrimination spread to GPs and Hospitals, while those refusing cards could be denied treatment.
- A central register of details such as address, age and gender will be a bureaucratic nightmare to keep updated. It will also be a paradise for hackers and fraudsters, especially if data goes missing as it has recently for millions of law-abiding citizens.
- Making one card the key to most services provides a massive target for fraudsters. Every other attempt to make systems "non-forgable" has failed.
- ID Cards did not prevent terrorism such as the attack on the Twin Towers or 2004 Madrid bombing. Good intelligence, gleaned from community policing and security, is the only way to stop "home-grown" terrorists like the tube bombers.
- The best way to reduce Crime is to invest in Police and Community Support Officers, as this Administration has done; more Police outlets; appropriate CCTV; and properly enforce laws against illegal working and activity.

Council therefore :

- asks the Chief Executive to write to Brent MPs, the London Mayor, Brent Borough Commander, Metropolitan Police Commissioner and Home Secretary advising them of Brent's formal view;
- calls on Brent Labour MPs to not break their election manifesto promise to introduce ID Cards only voluntarily;
- urges the Government to scrap plans for ID Cards and a National Database, and invest the billions of pounds this will save in better Policing and security, and more Officers.