

## Agenda Item 10a

### BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

10 MARCH 2005

#### NOTICE OF MOTION – LABOUR AMENDMENT

#### COMPULSORY IDENTITY CARDS

“This Council notes:

- That the Government is promoting an Identity Cards Bill through Parliament.
- That the Bill will establish a National Identity Register, in which the details of all UK residents over the age of 16 will be logged, alongside a single 'ID' card system with biometric data of the holder.
- *That this Council has an important responsibility as a community leader in securing the wellbeing of residents, and ensuring that Brighton & Hove is safe from terrorism and serious or organised crime.*
- *That this Council has an important responsibility to ensure that services and benefits are only provided to entitled individuals, and to protect taxpayers' money from fraud.*
- That this Council has an important responsibility in maintaining community safety and good community relations, working with other agencies including the Police.
- That this Council provides services and benefits which under the proposed legislation may require an ID card system for their operation and supply.
- *That the Government has estimated that more than 100,000 people are affected by identity theft in the UK each year, costing the British economy over £13 billion over ten years.*
- That the Government has estimated that the cost of such a scheme could reach £5.5 billion *over ten years*, with independent commentators predicting costs of ~~as much as five times that estimate~~ and that some of these costs may be borne by service-providers, including local authorities.
- That the Local Government Association in its response to the Government's ID cards consultation said: “We remain concerned about the potential for increased costs, lack of co-ordination and duplication with other Government initiatives which involve local authorities in using and maintaining data about individuals...”

- That no other common law country in the world has a compulsory ID card system (countries in which an individual's actions are legal unless explicitly prohibited by law, and in which the courts are responsible for the interpretation of law). (Source: 'Liberty')
- ~~The growing~~ *That the concerns that exist among some communities, especially ethnic minority groups, at the impact of the scheme on community relations, have been highlighted by the Commission for Racial Equality, which recognises the potential benefits of the identity card system for all communities, and which is working constructively with the Home Office to address the "safeguards that would need to be put in place to ensure that the card is not used in a way which disadvantages ethnic minorities or any other traditionally marginalised minority group." (CRE)*
- That Government ~~have recognised their agencies have a poor track record on setting up and managing national databases, as examination of the Passport Agency, the Census Office and the Criminal Records Bureau suggests., and in proposing to build this register on the existing version of the passport system, are seeking to avoid the problems that existed when that new system was introduced.~~

This Council believes:

- That ID card legislation ~~will permanently alter the relationship between the individual and the state and the disadvantages of such a scheme outweigh its benefits. and guidance for police and local authorities should be carefully and responsibly developed to ensure that the liberty of the individual is preserved, while helping to tackle the threats of organised crime and terrorism.~~
- That ~~there is reason to believe that the National Identity Register will cost more than is officially estimated.~~ *That we support the Local Government Association in requesting "a properly resourced cost benefit analysis to address in detail what impact these proposals would have on local authorities and the services they provide to the public."*
- That ~~there is a high risk that the system will be misused.~~ *That in planning and implementing the operational policy and technology for the identity register and identity cards, every effort is made to ensure that the safeguards put in place provide the highest protection against misuse.*

Accordingly, Brighton & Hove City Council resolves:

- To mandate the Chief Executive to write to the city's three MPs and to the Home Secretary expressing this Council's ~~opposition to compulsory ID cards and asking the Home Secretary to reconsider his decision to push forward with this legislation.~~ *firm conviction that both the legislative and practical implementation of a National Identity Register and identity cards should provide full consideration of individual liberty, cost implications for central and local authorities, and a powerful system of safeguards against misuse."*

- ~~To affiliate, at no cost, to the 'No2ID' campaign, which already includes MPs and other groups.~~
- ~~To make clear in any relevant forum this Council's opposition to ID cards.~~

Amendment Proposed by: Cllr Brian Fitch

Amendment Seconded by: Cllr Sue John