

## **Norwich (Tue, 25 Jan 2005?)**

The following motion was passed unamended:

### **Motion - National Identity Cards**

Councillor Holmes to move -

In light of the appointment of local MP Charles Clarke as Home Secretary, a position that gives him responsibility for the proposed Identity Card Scheme, this Council notes -

That the Home Secretary is currently attempting to push an ID Cards Bill through Parliament. This Bill will have an effect upon all of the people of Norwich.

Council believes -

- That the disadvantages of such a scheme will outweigh any benefits to the people of Norwich.

- That the cards will do little, if anything, to prevent terrorism, crime or fraud. According to Government estimates, the cost of such a scheme could reach 5.5 billion, with independent commentators predicting costs of as much as five times that estimate. Norwich residents will be required to pay an estimated 35 for a stand-alone ID card or 85 for a passport and ID card together.

Council resolves to -

- 1) affiliate to the "No2ID" campaign, which already includes MPs and several political parties;
- 2) make representations at every possible stage, reiterating this Council's opposition to ID cards;
- 3) take no part in any pilot scheme or feasibility work in relation to the introduction of the national identity cards;
- 4) make it a policy of the council to ensure that national identity cards would not be required to access council services or benefits unless specifically called to do so by Act of Parliament;
- 5) only co-operate with the national identity card scheme where to do otherwise would be unlawful;
- 6) mandate the Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary expressing these views and asking him to reconsider his decision to push forward this legislation.

**Press release at the time:**

**PR: CHARLES CLARKE'S COUNCIL VOTE TO OPPOSE ID CARDS**

Norwich City Council, which covers Home Secretary Charles Clarke's Norwich South constituency, have this evening voted to oppose ID cards.

The Liberal Democrats and Greens voted to support the motion and opposed Labour's amendment. The Labour Group could not bring themselves to vote against and abstained from the final motion, striking a real blow against Charles Clarke. Labour member Councillor Waters highlighted Norwich North Labour MP Ian Gibson's decision to vote against the ID Cards Bill in Parliament.

Supporting the motion which commits the Council to affiliating to the No2ID Campaign, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Norwich South Cllr Andrew Alders-Dunthorne said:

"The Liberal Democrats strongly oppose ID cards. They will do nothing to combat terrorism or crime and will cost the tax payer billions which would be better spent on 10,000 more police and improvements to our security services.

"Finger printing ordinary people and making them feel like criminals, then charging them for the pleasure, has no place in a supposedly free and liberal society. New Labour are becoming alarmingly authoritarian, to the point where even their own Council Groups cannot support them.

"ID cards are an expensive white elephant wdesigned to pander to the Daily Mail. Once people realise what the scheme actually entails and the charge they will have to pay personally, opposition will grow."

This move is a further embarrassment to Charles Clarke whose seat is looking increasingly likely to fall to the Liberal Democrats at the next general election.

Clarke had already lost popularity amongst the constituency's large student population for introducing top up fees and now as Home Secretary has seemingly lost the confidence of Labour councillors in his seat. Lib Dem election guru Lord Rennard has already cited Norwich South as a winnable seat for the Liberal Democrats.

This Labour Government seems to have a vendetta against students and ID cards will penalise them in particular. Every time a card-holder moves they will have to shell out 20 to change the address on their ID card. If they fail to do this the government will fine them thousands of pounds. Most students change address yearly and will be especially hard hit.

Notes to editors:

The Liberal Democrats are affiliated to the No2ID campaign - [www.no2id.net](http://www.no2id.net)

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The following amendment moved by Labour Councillor Steve Morphew was defeated:

Delete everything after second paragraph and replace with

"Council believes that the impact on the people of Norwich should be fully and properly assessed so that Council can make a reasonable and responsible decision and help inform public debate.

Council therefore requests the CEO to present a full report for debate by Council within the next 6 months".