

London Assembly

London Assembly passes Green motion condemning ID cards

The London Assembly today passed a motion proposed by the Green Party Group condemning ID cards. The motion that was tabled during a formal meeting with Sir Ian Blair, the Met Commissioner, who admitted that questions remained unanswered over the effectiveness of ID card technology.

Greens on the London Assembly believe that ID cards amount to a gross intrusion into people's privacy, that the scheme is flawed and will amount to little more than a new form of tax.

Jenny Jones, Green Party Member of the London Assembly and Member of the Metropolitan Police Authority said:

'We are being told that these cards are necessary to prevent terrorism and identity theft, among other things, but none of the 9/11 terrorists sought to change their identity and I find it hard to believe that sophisticated fraudsters won't be able to find ways around the system.'

Darren Johnson, Green Party Member of the London Assembly added:

'Already reports are starting to emerge that cast doubt on whether the government has really thought this through. We can now see that the cards may cost up to 300 per individual and trials have shown that the technology is far from flawless. The government has a very poor track record on implementing new technology systems and ID cards will be nothing more than costly chaos.'

The London Assembly Conservative, Liberal Democrat and UKIP/Vertias groups were all in support of the Green motion. The Labour Group voted against it.

Notes to Editors:

1. The wording of the motion (as amended) is below:

"This Assembly believes the Governments plans for ID cards will not prove to be a cost effective measure in combating crime, raise legitimate concerns about civil liberties and will not represent good value for money. This Assembly notes that London's share of the estimated 3 billion over 10 years that a national ID card scheme will cost would pay for an extra 7,200 police on London's streets, a much more effective way of combating crime and terrorism."

Press Release:

Review ID card plans, Assembly tells Government

A call for the Government to review its plans to introduce identity cards across the UK was made today by the London Assembly.

Assembly Members agreed a motion which read: "This Assembly believes the Government's plans for ID cards will not prove to be a cost effective measure in combating crime, raise legitimate concerns about civil liberties and will not represent good value for money.

"This Assembly notes that London's share of the estimated 3 billion over 10 years that a national ID card scheme will cost would pay for an extra 7,200 police on London's streets, a much more effective way of combating crime and terrorism."

Assembly Members expressed concern that the technology was unproven, the system would be open to abuse and there was no evidence that such cards would prevent acts of terrorism or identity theft.

Sally Hamwee AM, Chair of the London Assembly, said: "The message from the London Assembly is loud and clear. The ID card scheme being put forward by Ministers in which there is little confidence, will cost an extraordinary amount of taxpayers' money. This could instead be used to fund thousands of extra police on London's streets."