

8 November 2007

Spend ID card cash on transport, says Hopkins

The Government should abort expensive plans to introduce national identity cards and instead divert a significant share of the funding towards improving Yorkshire's transport network, Kris Hopkins has argued.

The Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley said he believed ID cards would prove to be "an enormous waste of money, particularly given the lack of evidence to suggest they will assist in the fight against terrorism or illegal working."

He was speaking after the Home Office admitted earlier today that the cost of the ID card scheme had risen by £71million over the past six months to more than £5.6 billion. The figures, which are for October 2007 to October 2017, cover set up and the operational expenses of the scheme.

Last year the London School of Economics suggested that the final figure could be closer to £20 billion.

Cllr Hopkins commented:

"In a period of increasingly scarce resources, I believe a significant proportion of this money would be much better spent on improving our region's transport system which is hugely underfunded in comparison to London and the South East.

"Our roads are approaching gridlock, our trains are massively overcrowded and still the Government remains unwilling to come forward with the levels of funding that we need to get Yorkshire moving again.

"Ignoring the problem is simply not an option – we need action and we need cash.

"The alternative for commuters and businesses in this region is complete chaos, a situation we are already approaching rapidly."

ENDS