

24 February 2010

**Labour move on early release scheme 'politically motivated'**

The timing of the Government's decision to end the prisoner early release scheme has been criticised by Kris Hopkins, the Keighley and Ilkley Conservative Parliamentary Candidate, who said Labour ministers were motivated only by the prospect of a coming General Election rather than any desire to "do the right thing."

Cllr Hopkins said:

"The Labour Government introduced the scheme in 2007 as a direct result of Gordon Brown's refusal to fund more prison cells.

"As a direct result of this, 80,000 criminal were released early from custody including 15,000 violent offenders and two terrorists.

"These individuals went on to commit 1,500 additional crimes including rape and murder.

"I therefore strongly welcome the ending of the scheme. However, I do not believe for a moment that the Labour Government are doing the right thing for the right reasons and have serious issues regarding the timing of the announcement.

"Only two weeks ago, a Labour Minister denied the Government had any plans to scrap the scheme, saying that it would only happen 'as soon as practically possible.'

"But then, last Saturday, Gordon Brown launched Labour's General Election campaign and, two days later, we see Jack Straw announcing that the scheme is to end.

"There appears to be no limits to the cynical, politically motivated approach adopted by this Government in their desperate quest for votes.

"Thankfully, come polling day, I believe the people of Keighley and Ilkley will see right through them."

ENDS