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Hopkins backs plans to end Ministers meddling with Lottery funds

Plans to stop the Government siphoning off National Lottery good cause money to fill holes in Whitehall budgets have been backed by Kris Hopkins, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley.

Conservative Leader David Cameron has announced that an incoming Conservative Government will introduce legislation stopping Ministers diverting Lottery money away from the four designated good causes – arts, sport, heritage and the voluntary sector – towards other policy areas such as health and education which should be funded centrally.

“The last Conservative Government established the National Lottery as a means of opening up new sources of funding for good causes in the community,” said Cllr Hopkins.

“This was to be over and above what the Government should be providing, not instead of it.

“However, since 1998, £3.8 billion of National Lottery good cause money has been grabbed by Labour Ministers to pay for projects and services that should be funded by their respective Departments in Whitehall.

“This is simply not acceptable and it is right that the next Conservative Government will bring an immediate halt to this dishonest practice.”

Cllr Hopkins said he believed the change would have an early positive impact on local residents in Keighley and Ilkley.

“By our calculations, the money taken by Labour Ministers from the Lottery could pay for 73 swimming pools or 173 athletics tracks each year across the country, or restore funding to all organisations currently under threat from Arts Council cuts.

“Putting this money back into Lottery coffers would hugely increase the opportunity for sports clubs, community groups and voluntary organisations in Keighley and Ilkley to bid for extra money to support their activities.

“Under the new arrangements, I would be very happy to do everything I could to ensure they knew where and how to apply for these funds to improve the quality of life for local people.”

ENDS