



PHILIP HOLLOBONE MP



# KETTERING AT WESTMINSTER



MAKING SURE THE VIEWS AND CONCERNS OF LOCAL PEOPLE ARE HEARD AT THE HEART OF THE GOVERNMENT

## Rothwell House Hotel in Use as an Asylum Hotel

Philip Hollobone MP writes:

The Home Office's decision to populate the Rothwell House Hotel in Rothwell with asylum seekers from 19 April is a disgraceful, appalling and wrong-headed decision. The hotel has a maximum bedspace of 35 and currently houses 21 asylum seekers. It is the only hotel in Rothwell and is located right slap bang in the middle of what is a small, historic and much-loved market town. There is rightly local outrage at the decision. On behalf of local people I have registered my strongest possible objections to the proposal direct to the Immigration Minister himself. I stood up in the House of Commons and called for him to resign his post in November last year when the Royal Hotel in Kettering was taken over for asylum seeker accommodation and I reiterate this call. I have no confidence in the Home Office, its contractors Serco or the Minister himself that they have the first clue what they are doing in relation to asylum seeker relocation. As the local MP I want see both the Rothwell House Hotel and the Royal Hotel in Kettering back in use as proper hotels as soon as possible.

## KETTERING LEISURE VILLAGE

**Philip Hollobone MP writes:** Following a closure announcement made on 26 April, I have been heavily engaged with representing the concerns of local residents about the difficulties involving Kettering Leisure Village (KLV). KLV is a very important and much-loved and much-used local leisure facility and every effort must be made to keep it open.

**North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) has circulated this briefing to NNC councillors:**

"The Kettering Leisure Village was built in 1991/2 mainly paid for by Kettering Borough Council (KBC), it provides a 12-court sports hall, 4 squash courts, a gym and health club, conference facilities, meeting rooms, outdoor volleyball courts, a 500-seat theatre and a vacated indoor children's soft play area plus various offices, bar and catering facilities on site. Volleyball England currently have their national training centre located within the centre.

The freehold is retained by Boughton Estates (BQ Farms) with KBC taking out a 125-year peppercorn lease until 2116 which has now transferred to NNC. The lease has restricted the use of the site to leisure activities. In 2000 KBC granted a 125-year underlease which is currently owned by Phoenix Leisure Management, who in turn have provided an underlease to Compass Contract Services which was in place until 2032 to manage the facility.

KBC and now NNC have provided annual grant funding to Compass for the theatre and some of the sports provision at the site amounting to £337,000. This was to ensure that sport, arts and leisure provision were provided to the local community, the terms of which are detailed within a management schedule attached to the underlease.

The councils' relationship with Compass as the provider of leisure provision on the site has included quarterly monitoring meetings which enable collection of data of usage and auditing of the quality of the facilities and provision provided by the company. Information received has been satisfactory and no indication had been given previously that there were any concerns from the company.

NNC officers were invited to a meeting on 26 April with representatives of Compass and the Revenues Collection (the conference section of the company). At this meeting NNC was informed that Compass have negotiated the end of its underlease with Phoenix Leisure Management and will not be operating the leisure facilities on site from the end of May 2023 (this has now been put back to 3 July). This decision had been made by the company as they do not believe that it is financially viable for them to continue its operation of the site. Staff working in the facilities were informed of the decision on the same afternoon.

The relevant legal documents relating to KLV have been passed onto NNC's Assets and Legal teams to determine NNC's position and what responsibilities Phoenix Leisure Management, as the leaseholder, have in relation to the site. NNC officers are in contact with Phoenix Leisure Management to understand their plans, as the responsibility for continued leisure provision legally rests with them.

Once the full facts are known, NNC, where possible, will look to offer support for local people, clubs and organisations who may be impacted by the situation and will look to support staff where possible."

# IN THE HOUSE *Standing Up and Speaking Out for Kettering*

**9 May 2023 Philip Hollobone MP, Kettering:** What recent steps the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken to reduce the rate of inflation?

**Andrew Griffith MP, Economic Secretary to HM Treasury:** The Government's three economic priorities this year are to halve inflation, grow the economy, and get debt falling. This will require patience and discipline. Countries around the world are facing rising prices and we will not be able to make that go away overnight, but by sticking to our plan, we will halve inflation this year and help to ease the pressures that people are facing.

**Philip Hollobone MP, Kettering:** Food price inflation is increasing far faster than the overall average increase in prices. This is affecting the poorest the hardest in Kettering and across the country. Is there any good news at all from His Majesty's Treasury about the prospects for food price inflation over the next 12 months?

**Andrew Griffith MP, Economic Secretary to HM Treasury:** My hon. Friend is a doughty champion for his constituents. The Office for Budget Responsibility this year does expect food inflation to fall significantly. The Government recognise the challenges facing households due to the elevated cost of living in general, including food, so we took action at the spring statement to support struggling families. Taken together with previous action, support to households to help with bills is worth an average of £3,300 a year across this year and next.

## Record Numbers of Police in Northamptonshire

**Northamptonshire Police has reached and exceeded its target of 1501 police officers – the most the force has ever had.** Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold said: "I made a promise to work as hard as I could to increase the number of police officers in Northamptonshire. I'm proud to say we have achieved that, and more. The establishment of Northamptonshire Police – the number of full-time equivalent police officers – is now 1,501, the greatest number ever. The headcount – the number of police officers on the payroll – is 1,546 officers. The record numbers will bring a renewed focus on neighbourhood policing that delivers safer communities right across the county." The force's success at recruiting additional officers has been recognised by the Home Office, which is giving Northamptonshire Police additional grant funding of almost £2 million, that will be used to ensure that the higher number of police officers can be sustained.

## HOME SECRETARY VISITS KETTERING

**KCCA Patrons Club members enjoyed meeting the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Suella Braverman KC MP, when she visited Kettering on 20 April for a drinks and canapés evening.**



**Pictured (left to right): Cllr Anup Pandey, Laura Roberts, the Home Secretary, Ash Davies.**