



Public Accounts Committee

Sir Matthew Rycroft KCMG CBE
Permanent Secretary
Home Office
London.

By email

3 December 2024

Asylum accommodation: Home Office acquisition of former HMP Northeye

Dear Permanent Secretary,

The Committee looks forward to welcoming you to its hearing on Monday 9 December to give evidence to its inquiry on asylum accommodation and the Home Office's acquisition of former HMP Northeye.

In advance of the meeting, my Committee would welcome information from you on the following matters:

- precisely what was known about the extent of contamination at the HMP Northeye site at the time of exchanging contracts, and what was done to develop this understanding, including through discussions with former owners of the site and commissioning surveys and reports. Please include copies of any reports that were commissioned.
- a copy of the value for money assessment prepared in advance of the site purchase including a breakdown of the costs of purchasing, preparing, and operating the site against the potential savings from operating the site as asylum accommodation, as well as any subsequent value for money assessments prepared following changes of assumptions, including the change of planned use of the site.
- details on the latest status of the site, including the latest estimate of the extent of remediation required, the current position on responsibility for this and the Home Office's plans for the development and use of the site, including the latest estimate of when the site will be in operation.

My Committee seeks to make available as much information as possible for Parliament and the public. I would therefore be grateful if you would provide the information requested and where detailed information is of a sensitive nature, please label it as such and the Committee will respect that.

For information which is, for example, commercially sensitive at the current time, I would be grateful if this could be shared confidentially with the Committee. The Committee secretariat is available to discuss with your officials the most appropriate way to do this.

I would be grateful if you could provide the above information by lunchtime on Monday 9 December.

Yours Sincerely

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts