



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**7 July 2014**

**For Information**

Title: **Closure of Kennedy House**

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## **1 Introduction**

The purpose of the report is to inform members of the closure of Kennedy House and the arrangements which have been put in place to date.

## **2 Recommendations**

That members note this report.

## **3 Information**

Kennedy House is a 56 bed hostel located in South Wigston adjacent to the Glen Parva prison and is operated by the Shaw Group. The Council is aware that it is mixed funded an element of which comes via Leicestershire County Council. Leicestershire County Council as part of their cost reduction programme invited tenders for their Homeless Accommodation and Support provision and the Shaw Group were unsuccessful. The new contract has reduced bed spaces from around 84 to approximately 28 and will be wholly based at the Falcon Centre in Loughborough.

The current contract is believed to run until September 2015 and at the time of writing the Council understands that the hostel will close in September 2015.

The latest update from hostel staff is that they are closed to new referrals and are seeking to re-house all the remaining 39 residents by September 2015.

Housing Options staffs are actively engaged with the staff at Kennedy House. A preliminary list of 8 cases belonging to this Borough has been identified and we are working with a number of these residents to maximise options through Choice Based Lettings.

In addition, to specifically help more of the residents being affected by the closure, an immediate consideration was given to relax the criteria for financial assistance with securing privately rented accommodation.

There is a small risk that the remaining residents may present themselves to the Oadby & Wigston Borough Council's Housing Options service in August 2015, a month prior to intended closure; however, the team are confident that with use of the homeless prevention measures and the pro-active work that is being

currently undertaken with the 8 identified residents that there is a risk of impact on the budgets.

However, a recent Supreme Court ruling increases the likelihood of having to accommodate resident's initially pending enquiries means that the Council could be faced with additional costs.

Whilst, the team is confident that other Districts will take responsibility for their residents the risk still remains that individuals may exercise their right to make their homelessness application at this Council, as it is their legal right to exercise. In this scenario, provisions have been made to provide additional housing advice on options and support, whilst budgets are closely monitored.

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| <b>Implications</b> |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Financial (PL)      | Risks identified in the body of the report. Any budget overspend should in the first instance be by virement and item by supplementary approval |
| Risk (APM)          | CR1- Decreasing financial resources and CR4- Reputational damage  |
| Equalities (AC)     | No Significant Impact   |
| Legal (AC)          | All statutory decisions need to be properly documented  |