

- 4.1. Kennedy House accommodates 56 asylum seekers being accommodated under the NASS arrangements. No asylum seeker is allowed onto the Housing Register.

Since opening 55 residents have received decisions from the Home Office in relation to their asylum claims, 14 have received positive decisions. Those receiving positive decisions are permitted to apply to the Housing Register, however they would fail the 'local connection' criteria and would be treated as 'non-qualifying'.

Of the 14 people eligible for assistance only 2 have approached the Council for assistance. It is assumed the others make their own arrangements likely in other parts of the UK.

- 4.2. Those receiving a positive decision whilst living at Kennedy House automatically have a local connection for life with the Borough for the purposes of homelessness. In the event we decide we owe a duty to house someone in this situation we would discharge that duty by securing privately rented accommodation unless they otherwise had a local connection to the Housing Register.

5. Single Person Accommodation

- 5.1. Until 2016, the number of single person general needs vacant flats were typically in single digits – perhaps 8-9 annually. There was a dramatic, albeit temporary, increase in 2016 owing to the ending of the Boulter Crescent refurbishment scheme and the new developments on Kirkdale Road and Holmden Avenue.

It is envisaged that numbers will revert to single digits in 2017.

6 The Falcon Centre

- 6.1. The Falcon Centre is commissioned by Leicestershire County Council as accommodation based support under their prevention agenda with reference to homelessness – it is a homeless hostel.

- 6.2. The referral criteria for Falcon Centre is:

- (1) Aged 18 and over;
- (2) Non-priority homeless;
- (3) Single; and
- (4) Have a local connection (Housing Register part 6) to a district or borough in Leicestershire.

As such former residents of Kennedy House with positive decisions are denied access to the Falcon Centre generally on the 4 point (though point 2 might also apply in a limited number of cases).

- 6.3. The County Council Equality Impact Assessment did not consider the needs of former Asylum Seekers. Officers have raised their concern over the lack of access to Leicestershire County Council as the commissioner of the service. A conversation started in January 2017 and continues at the time of writing.

7. Housing Options

7.1. The Council's Housing Options Team have a number of potential solutions which can be deployed at the point a homeless former asylum seeker with a positive decision approaches for help, these include:

- Access to funds to help them secure rooms in shared houses and flats in the private sector;
- Referrals to Housing Associations for available properties; and
- Referrals to other hostels operated by independent organisations such as Action Homeless and Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA).

7.2. These solutions are generally located in the Leicester City area.

8. Discussion

8.1. The Housing Options Team have a range of options available for former asylum seekers which are comparable to other applicants with the exception of:

- (1) Being allowed to stay at the Falcon Centre Hostel; and
- (2) Being allowed to bid on the relatively small number of available Council and Housing Association vacancies which occur in the Borough.

8.2. Former asylum seekers upon receiving refugee status or other leave to remain qualify for homeless assistance and are able to apply to the Housing Register. Neither right guarantees a home. The 2 former residents of Kennedy House were 2 of some 38 single people which approached for homeless assistance in 2016/17 and were found 'not to be in priority need'. All 38 people were offered a range of Housing Options, some were taken up more successfully than others. Few slept rough on the streets and of those who did all were offered bedspaces in temporary supported accommodation within a matter of some days. Sadly not all offers were taken up.

8.3. None of the asylum seekers have visited Oadby or Wigston before their arrival at Kennedy House. Many appear to have community and other close connections in other parts of the country. Anecdotal evidence suggests a strong draw towards Leicester in preference to Oadby or Wigston where they have no other strong centre of interest in the UK.

8.4. The Falcon Centre only has 30 bedspaces for the whole of Leicestershire and are purported to operate a waiting list. Access to their vacancies for former asylum seekers would provide benefits only if the support staff based there help the client to secure other forms of accommodation (not Council vacancies).

Background Documents:-

None.

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Implications	
Financial (CR)	No direct implications arising from this report.

Legal (AC)	No direct implications arising from this report.
Risk (SN)	No direct implications arising from this report.
Corporate Priorities (SN)	Not applicable.
Vision and Values (SN)	Not applicable.
Equalities (SN)	No direct implications arising from this report.
	Equality Assessment:-
	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Full Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable