



Derby City Council

Health and Wellbeing Board 18 January 2018

Report of the Cohesion, Integration & Prevent
Manager

ITEM 6

Asylum Seeker Initial Accommodation – Laverstoke Court

SUMMARY

- 1.1 G4S Care and Justice Service has secured planning permission to convert Laverstoke Court, Abbey Ward, to an Initial Accommodation - IA – Centre for Asylum Seekers who are destitute when they first apply for asylum.

This will provide a 225 bed facility managed by their sub-contractor, Urban Housing.

The property will be leased from the University of Derby, by G4S, until the current Home Office Asylum Dispersal contract expires on 1st September 2019.

- 1.3 Throughout 2015 and 2016 there have been spikes in asylum applications which resulted in the use of hotels as emergency IA's. G4S and the Home Office are seeking additional sites for permanent Initial Accommodation and provide additional capacity.

- 1.4 G4S has indicated a go live date of 18 January 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report and the related health report (Appendix 2).

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure that the Board has appropriate awareness of the Asylum Seeker Initial Accommodation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 Asylum Support Process

The UK has a legal obligation under the Immigration Act 1999 to provide support to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute. The Commercial and Operational Managers Procuring Asylum Support Services contracts - COMPASS - managed by the Home Office, allows the UK to meet this obligation.

Individuals seeking asylum in the UK, who can prove they are destitute, are eligible for support from the Home Office. Support can be financial and in the form of

accommodation.

The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 sets out three circumstances under which asylum seekers are entitled to accommodation:

- while the Home Office is considering whether an individual is eligible for support - Section 98
- while the Home Office is assessing the asylum application - Section 95 - and
- when the application for asylum has been refused but the applicant has yet to leave the country - Section 4

4.3 Initial Accommodation – Section 98

The length of stay in IA is expected to be 19 days whilst the Home Office determines whether a person is destitute and eligible for Section 95 support. People can remain in IA much longer than this if there is a lack of available dispersal accommodation to move them to or if there are delays in the Home Office making an initial assessment of the application. This can be across the G4S contracted regions - East of England; Midlands; North East England; Yorkshire and the Humber.

There are seven IA centres in the UK and the nearest to Derby is located in Birmingham. They are typically large full-board hostels with shared bedrooms, living and social areas. Providers are contractually obliged to offer three meals a day, supply toiletries and bedding and provide transport to medical and related appointments.

Whilst in IA, service users are fully managed and supported, including

- having access to voluntary sector support
- health services
- wrap-around (advice) services
- Home Office asylum support services

NHS treatment is not a public fund for immigration purposes, so people who have No Recourse to Public Funds are not prevented from accessing NHS services and should not be refused treatment on this basis alone.

There are no requirements for GP registrations or school admissions during this time. However, it is expected that the vulnerable nature of the service users could require social care support for both adults and children. This area is being explored further.

4.5 Laverstoke Court

Laverstoke Court is a purpose built self-contained and gated complex used as halls of Residence for students of the University of Derby.

It is situated in Abbey ward bounded by Peet Street; Drewry Lane and Uttoxeter New Road.

Unlike the Initial Accommodation Centres in Birmingham and Wakefield, which are

large full-board hostels with shared living and social areas. Laverstoke Court comprises of nine individual 'lodges':

- One will be used for administration, medical and asylum support facilities.
- Eight will be used as accommodation, comprising of three floors per building.
 - With each floor containing
 - two large bedrooms,
 - four small bedrooms,
 - one communal lounge
 - one kitchen/dining area
 - two water closets and
 - two showers.

The overall use will be mixed:

- Families
- Lone parents
- Single adults.

- 4.6 Providers are contractually obliged to offer three meals a day to those in IA, but due to the layout of Laverstoke Court, the proposal will be for self-catering accommodation. Consequently, service users will be provided the financial subsistence.

The hostel is fully inspected every month by hostel staff and a routine and planned maintenance programme is adopted. The Home Office also complete a monthly audit on parts of the building ensuring standards are maintained. Derby City Council and Derbyshire Fire & Rescue will have a duty to inspect premises under HMO legislation.

The hostel will recruit and employ staff covering the following roles;

- Hostel Manager
- Deputy Hostel Manager
- Administrator
- Security staff
- Domestics
- Maintenance team.

It is a condition of Initial Accommodation that all residents reside in the building every day / night; an absence without prior agreement is not permitted. The service users sign a register every morning and every evening in order to ensure everyone is back on site. If anyone is missing then their room would be checked immediately and the Home Office would be notified accordingly.

- 4.4 Once the Home Office has determined that an asylum seeker is eligible for support under Section 95, the Provider arranges to move them into dispersal accommodation. The vast majority of people seeking asylum are housed in 'dispersed accommodation' under Section 95.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Pop Gill 01332 643044 purjinder.gill@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 - Briefing Paper – Derby Asylum Initial Accommodation Centre (IAC)

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 There are financial implications in relation to health provision. For health screening/assessments and midwifery services, the CCG is lead commissioner under delegated authority but as with other procurements, NHS England has overall responsibility. The DH has funded health provision in Initial Accommodation from 2013 but the initial projections of service users has increased – as has the complexity of their health needs – with no uplift which has led to an overspend on existing services. A long term financial solution is being sought through NHS England.

In addition, there is a requirement to provide Health Visiting services for 0 – 19 year olds. This service is funded through the LA Public Health Team. Implications for service capacity and funding the service for this cohort, is also being explored.

Legal

- 2.1 N/A

Personnel

- 3.1 N/A

IT

- 4.1 N/A

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None directly arising. Service users will access universal services as appropriate. The provider of the provision is required to adhere to the Home Office contract which incorporates relevant legislation including appropriate accessibility and language requirements.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 N/A

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 N/A

Property and Asset Management

8.1 N/A

Risk Management and Safeguarding

9.1 None directly arising. G4S and Urban Housing are bound by contractual obligations to safeguard their service users. A level of service provision and intervention may be required and referral processes to universal services are being established.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 N/A