

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

4 November 2022

Council prepares to take action amid asylum seeker hotel concerns

Fenland District Council has moved to assure Wisbech residents that it will be prepared to take legal action amid concerns that accommodation in the town may be used to house asylum seekers.

The Council said it would be unwholly unsuitable to place vulnerable people in an area where services are already overstretched, and that it must put the needs of its communities first.

It also assured residents that if the Home Office does propose to use accommodation in any inappropriate location it will not hesitate to take legal action.

Fenland District Council Leader, Cllr Chris Boden, said: “It would be irresponsible of the Home Office to consider placing vulnerable people with no recourse to public funding in a town such as Wisbech, without consideration of the impact this will have on the asylum seekers themselves or the significant support they will need.

“We are in a rural location, with limited suitable accommodation and transport links, and we already have significant issues with migrant exploitation and homelessness, which could be further impacted if contingency asylum accommodation is earmarked for Wisbech.”

Cllr Steve Tierney, District Councillor for Medworth, said: “As Councillor for the area where the majority of hotels are, I am very concerned about these proposals. There are other areas which are better placed to give these vulnerable people the support they need.”

Cllr Samantha Hoy, the Council’s Cabinet Member for Housing, added: “We fully understand and share residents’ concerns about the potential use of local accommodation to house asylum seekers and would urge the Home Office to consider more suitable locations.

“If it becomes clear that accommodation in Wisbech is being considered to place asylum seekers, we will seek legal advice and do everything in our power to fight these plans.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk