

Destitute People from Abroad With No Recourse to Public Funds

A survey of local authorities

September 2006



ISLINGTON

We are extremely grateful to the local authorities and their officers who took time to provide information for this report and who contributed to the development of the NRPF Network.

The report was produced by Olivia Fellas, Adrian Smith and Frances Smith of the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Team at Islington Council.

Contact details: No Recourse to Public Funds Team
Islington Council
Refugee and Asylum Service
299 Hornsey Road
London
N19 4HN

020 7527 7107

nrpf@islington.gov.uk

<http://pubweb/Health/ServicesForAdults/nrpf/>

Olivia Fellas is Manager of the NRPF Team - 020 7527 7118, olivia.fellas@islington.gov.uk

Adrian Smith is Head of Asylum and Refugee Service - 020 7527 7146,
adrian.smith@islington.gov.uk

Frances Smith is NRPF Project Worker - 020 7527 7121, frances.smith@islington.gov.uk

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Overview	4
3. Legal and financial context	4
• Definition	
• Relevant legislation	
• Assessing eligibility	
• Financial context and risk	
4. Method	5
5. Findings	6
• Costs and numbers	
• Subsistence rates	
• Accommodation	
• Emergency support	
• Service structure and needs assessment	
• Legal challenge, advice and judgments	
• Referrals	
• Types of cases	
• The complexity of cases	
• Immigration checks	
• Potential for fraud	
• Applications for section 4 “hard cases” support	
6. The National Network	10
7. Shared database	11
8. Recommendations and next steps	11
Appendices	
• Appendix 1 - Key legislation	12
• Appendix 2 - NRPF Cost Information	13
• Appendix 3 - Local authority No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Network: Draft Terms of Reference	18

Destitute People from Abroad With No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

A survey of local authorities

1. Introduction

This paper highlights the legal framework, eligibility and cost of NRPF services to local authorities¹. The paper identifies, where possible, the number of people local authorities are supporting and the cost of service provision. This report is based on information collated by Islington Council from 26 local authority partners in July and August 2006. It makes recommendations about how the NRPF issue can be taken forward at a practice and policy level and about the role of the National NRPF Network.

2. Overview

There is increasing concern amongst local authorities about their expenditure and their legal obligations to destitute people from abroad who, as a result of their immigration status, have NRPF². Local authorities have a legal duty to support certain categories of people who have NRPF who are assessed as have community care or mental health needs or involve a child in need.

The obligation on local authorities arises as a result of Home Office policy and practice whereby support is withdrawn from refused asylum seekers but the Home Office fails to remove them at the point their asylum claim is finally refused. It also arises from Home Office failure to remove other immigrants with NRPF.

This complex area of work involves interdepartmental and agency work but is not currently strategically led and remains operationally unstructured in many local authorities. The Home Office has failed to provide guidance to local authorities and many authorities are concerned they may be acting ultra vires.

People in this situation may suffer inhumane and degrading treatment. This is the unacceptable impact of a government policy that seeks to place the onus on people to leave the UK on a voluntary basis and to use destitution to encourage people to leave. The failure to address this issue contributes to problems of social cohesion.

3. Legal and financial context

3.1 Definition

Local authorities have a duty to support certain categories of people who are subject to immigration control, have NRPF and who are “destitute plus”, that is they are assessed as having a need for care and attention that is over and above the “mere” lack of accommodation and subsistence.

¹ Local authorities have a duty to support certain categories of people who are subject to immigration control, have NRPF and who are “destitute plus”, that is they are assessed as having a need for care and attention that is over and above the “mere” lack of accommodation and subsistence.

² In these circumstances public funds refers to welfare benefits, public housing and asylum support, support from social services is not included in this definition.

3.2 Relevant legislation

This is a complex area of work involving the interface of immigration, community care and human rights law (see appendix 1 for key legislation). Interpretation of the legislation regularly changes as a result of case law.

3.3 Assessing eligibility

In order to assess eligibility, the local authority must establish whether the individual is

- a person for whom the local authority is “territorially responsible”
- homeless and destitute
- eligible under immigration law (i.e. carry out an immigration status check)
- 18 or over and, by reason of age, illness, disability or other circumstances, in need of care and attention which is not otherwise available to them or the person is an expectant or nursing mother (i.e. are they “destitute-plus”?)
- barred from support as they fall within one of the groups that are classed as ineligible for support under Schedule 3 of Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. The exception to this is when support needs to be provided to prevent a breach of a persons’ human rights.

3.4 Financial context and risk

Supporting people who have NRPF is potentially a costly area for local authorities. Two key risks face local authorities in their approach to people with NRPF

- disregarding immigration restrictions on access to public services means that authorities could act outside the law, with cost implications for authorities
- failure to provide services, where there is entitlement, could result in judicial review and claims for damages.

4. Method

During July and August 2006 the NRPF team from Islington Council met with 25 local authorities across the country and one local authority provided information by email. The breakdown of authorities were as follows

- seven London boroughs
- 19 local authorities in four regions outside London.

The authorities ranged from large London boroughs and City Councils in asylum dispersal areas to smaller metropolitan borough councils.

Meetings in London were held with individual boroughs, whereas the vast majority of meetings in other parts of the country were conducted as group meetings. Most of the meetings were set up at the instigation of Islington Council, though increasingly meetings have resulted from local authorities contacting Islington for support and advice.

The meetings involved a wide range of borough representatives including a director of social services, service managers, team leaders, a local authority solicitor, senior social work practitioners, a supporting people officer, a housing and homelessness advice officer and a planning, performance and review officer. Other local authorities who were unable to make the meetings have indicated their interest in the subject and been copied into correspondence.

In addition Islington met with the Team Manager of the National Consortia Support Team (NCCG). A representative of a regional consortium for asylum and refugee support attended one of the group meetings and Islington made contact with another five consortia in the course of this work. Four consortium indicated that they or authorities in their area

would be interested in meeting to discuss NRPF but given time constraints this has not yet been possible.

5. Findings

5.1 Costs and numbers

Local authorities are facing increasing costs in relation to NRPF as the information at appendix B demonstrates. One local authority indicated over the past 3 years it has seen a 25-30% increase in demand for service.

Whilst some authorities have identified how much they are spending on NRPF, the information is not gathered in a uniform way and many local authorities do not know how many people they are supporting or how much this costs. Eleven authorities provided no information on costs. Only three boroughs were able to provide any breakdown of community care costs.

Of the 15 local authorities that did provide cost information, one indicated that it expected to spend well over £2 million in 2006/7, six indicated they expected to spend over £1 million, four indicated they would spend between £500,000 and £1 million and 1 indicated it would spend between £250,00 and £500,000.

Actual costs are likely to be higher than stated. Many local authorities provided data covering accommodation and subsistence, but not staffing, legal and interpreter costs or funding to voluntary groups that support this people with NRPF. One authority indicated it had spent about 25% of its overall £300,000 interpreting budget on NRPF, and the budget was overspent by £123,000 in 2005/6. In addition local authorities incur education costs and there are health service costs attached to people with NRPF³.

Only one authority had a dedicated corporate budget for NRPF. Other authorities used their asylum, section 17 or contingency budgets and some indicated that they overspent on these.

Having robust procedures in place saves money for authorities as they do not support people to whom they have no duty. In order to demonstrate the value of its dedicated team, local authority S monitors those it refuses to support and calculates it saves the authority about £3 million per year, which equates with 650 unsuccessful applicants. London borough F estimates that, by having a dedicated NRPF team and clear procedures, it saved the authority £650,000 - £700,000 in the last financial year.

5.2 Subsistence rates

The subsistence rates that authorities pay varies. The figures provided range from £30pw to £40pw for single adults (£40pw is the equivalent of "NASS" subsistence rates). Some authorities had originally paid the same rate as section 4 "hard cases" support⁴, but had not increased to keep up with section 4 rates. It was suggested that people presented to local authorities where they knew that subsistence rates were highest or the overall package was best.

³ It should be noted that since the 2004 it has been more difficult for refused asylum seekers and other people not "ordinarily resident" in the UK to obtain non emergency secondary health care because as a result of regulation changes which mean health services should charge for treatment, see *First Do No Harm: denying healthcare to people whose asylum claims have Failed* (Refugee Council, June 2006)

⁴ paid by "NASS" to refused asylum seekers who have agreed to cooperate with plans to removal or who cannot be removed for a specified reason

5.3 Accommodation

Local authorities procure and provide different types of accommodation for NRPF clients. London borough F procures its own accommodation using a dedicated housing worker who works through local lettings agents. By working in this way it has been able to keep down its housing costs. Most of the accommodation it uses is shared and self-catering, but for clients who have a particular need for self-contained accommodation, such as clients who are HIV+, self-contained accommodation is provided. Another borough indicated there had been internal debates about whether it was appropriate to place people who are HIV+ in shared accommodation.

Two boroughs stated that they have used their housing departments to procure accommodation whilst another authority uses a private provider to provide accommodation. One local authority has taken on tenancies in the name of the authority and, as a result, faces difficulties in terminating these.

Some authorities use bed and breakfast or full board accommodation. London borough H noted the poor quality of the bed and breakfast accommodation it uses whilst a local authority outside London indicated it used expensive hotel accommodation.

Some local authorities indicated they had systems in place to check the standard of accommodation using environmental or other local authority officers to carry out pre-occupation inspections

The findings demonstrate a need for local authorities to have in place a strategy to provide appropriate accommodation as economically as possible.

5.4 Emergency support

Authorities varied as to whether they provided emergency accommodation and support whilst awaiting a community care assessment. The difficulty in withdrawing support once it had been provided was noted by many authorities. One London borough noted that it would try to arrange for applicants to continue staying with friends or relatives, or in a local hostel, and expedite the community care assessment rather than provide emergency accommodation.

5.5 Service structure and needs assessment

Local authorities structure and approach to service provision varied greatly. There is an absence of guidance on NRPF, statutory or otherwise, and local authorities are keen to obtain this.

Five local authorities indicated that they have a dedicated NRPF service. A further six were moving towards a dedicated service, or had a team with some oversight of NRPF. One authority had placed a social worker within its asylum team to provide a service to NRPF applicants. These authorities tended to have a focus on “case resolution” or “walking the client through the process” rather than on gate keeping. In this way they work with clients to resolve their immigration and support issue. One authority noted that the gate-keeping approach does not work and results in applicants running harder at the gate.

The remaining authorities had a largely ad hoc approach to NRPF. Individuals present at different local authority services – e.g. disability, mental health, children - where social work staff frequently did not have the expertise to deal with cases. Even local authorities

where staff had some oversight of the NRPF issue felt that some clients slipped through the net.

Many of the authorities with the ad hoc approach acknowledged that they had not or did not routinely undertake care assessments and suggested that some people who presented for service were simply turned away, whilst others who may not be eligible for service were supported.

Some local authority officers acknowledged the approach of their authority was one of gate keeping. Some authorities acknowledged that they routinely refer applicants to IND or for section 4 “hard case” support, rather than undertaking a care assessment, as the law prescribes. One local authority, where there appeared to be confusion about NRPF obligations, indicated that women who had been told they had no entitlement to local authority support had offered their children up for adoption.

Local authorities recognised that people refused a service in one authority (rightly or wrongly), sometimes presented and were accepted for support in a neighbouring authority.

Community care, mental health and human rights assessments vary by, and sometimes within authorities resulting in a further inconsistency in service provision.

5.6 Legal Challenge, Advice and Judgements

Fear or threat of legal challenge, with high cost implications, is the prompt for some local authorities to provide support rather than an assessment of need and duty. It appeared that the authorities with the most developed services were those in areas where legal representatives regularly challenged their decisions.

It was suggested that some local authorities had fought and lost cases that were not strong on the facts resulting in case law with far reaching impact on all local authorities.

Local authorities often noted that there was a lack of in-house legal advice on NRPF and that they did not know where to seek advice or that advice was not available locally. Some appeared unaware of the regular changes of case law and there was widespread support for a service that could provide up to date case law.

The absence of legal advice for clients is likely to mean some clients who are eligible for service do not present to local authorities. A local authority solicitor noted that where people do have a solicitor there is often a lack of liaison between community care solicitors and immigration solicitors when an asylum seeker reached the end of the asylum process resulting in poor advice to the client.

5.7 Referrals

As noted above solicitors and advice agencies are one source of referrals to local authorities of people with NRPF. Other sources include hospitals and local agencies and community groups. In local authorities where the NRPF or asylum service is well known self referral is also a major source of referrals.

The number of referrals boroughs receive vary (and those with an ad hoc approach to service had difficulty quantifying this). One London borough with a developed service indicated that it received 30-40 contacts per month, of which 10 were actual referrals, and usually agreed to provide support to about one or two applicants per month.

5.8 Types of cases

The types of cases that present to local authorities vary by nationality, immigration status and presenting need. The types of cases can vary over time and are influenced by local expertise and local communities.

The immigration status of clients varies and includes refused asylum seekers, people who have overstayed their visa and people who entered the UK on a visa under a sponsorship arrangement but the relationship with the sponsor had broken down.

Authorities with local HIV treatment centres tended to have a high number of HIV+ clients. Other authorities noted high numbers of domestic violence cases, one London authority indicated that women who had experienced domestic violence were moving from northern cities and presenting locally. One London borough supporting a high number of refused asylum seekers noted many had serious mental illness and some had, at some point, been sectioned under section 3 of the Mental Health Act.

Amongst refused asylum seekers that local authorities are supporting a high number of Middle Eastern and African clients were mentioned, particularly from countries where it is difficult for the Home Office to make removals to, for example Eritrea.

Some London boroughs indicated that they were supporting people with high care needs, such as people who had been in road traffic accidents who were in care homes or who had experienced a serious illness whilst in the UK. One London borough raised the case of a man who has daily kidney dialysis and returns home from hospital after midnight, whom the Home Office had indicated they would remove. Another London borough indicated that elderly overstayers from the Caribbean, who had been in the UK for many years, regularly present to the local authority.

Pregnant women from the European Accession countries or women who had overstayed their visa were another group mentioned by some authorities. A few authorities indicated that they were supporting people who were drug or alcohol users.

5.9 The complexity of cases

Local authorities noted that cases can be very complicated, difficult to resolve and are likely to involve authorities providing support for many years.

Some authorities discussed the likelihood of reactive depression, with destitute people developing mental health problems over time as a result of the uncertainty of their immigration status and destitution. The difficulty of making the decision to withdraw support when someone has recovered from a mental health problem, resulting in their destitution was pointed out, and the risk that some people might self-harm.

One London borough had faced the threat of industrial action by social workers who were having to withdraw support and argued such action went against their professional training.

5.10 Immigration checks

Local authorities face various process problems in assessing whether applicants are eligible for service. These revolve around access to information.

A key obstacle is obtaining information on immigration status. Where people had claimed asylum, local authorities are able to check their immigration status through the Home

Office Local Authority Communication Team (LA Comms) or through their local immigration office. However, where an applicant has never claimed asylum there are often difficulties in verifying their status. Local authorities were keen to gain access to a facility like LA Comms for non-asylum seeking applicants.

One London borough indicated that it always asked clients to sign a “Conditions of Service” or consent form, which facilitated the exchange of information about clients with other agencies and organisations.

5.11 Potential for fraud

Another information problem faced by local authorities is they have no way to establish whether another authority is already supporting an applicant, or whether another authority recently assessed an applicant for service. One London borough suggested that the “Notify” scheme, implemented in the wake of the Victoria Climbié enquiry, might serve as a model for ensuring vulnerable clients receive support if they are eligible, and that support is only provided by one authority. The National Register of Unaccompanied Minors might also provide learning.

Another authority, where the majority of clients are HIV+, indicated that because information held by Genito Urinary Medicine (GUM) clinics is confidential, they have no way of knowing whether the people they support are accessing medication from both of the local hospitals. This issue and how to address it warrants further investigation.

Two authorities specifically mentioned that they had uncovered fraud in relation to their NRPF service. One of these authorities indicated that it has come across cases where clients have sublet their accommodation or are working and it routinely checks with Inland Revenue whether clients are working.

5.12 Applications for section 4 “hard cases” support

Problems and delays with accessing section 4 support places added pressures on local authorities. One local authority noted how clients had been refused section 4 support because they had misunderstood the application form and ticked the wrong box. The result is they are denied section 4 support and then present to the local authority as destitute.

In one region it was noted that there are delays of five weeks in obtaining section 4 support, partly because there is a waiting list to see the Refugee Council which provides assistance in completing section 4 applications. In the same region it was noted that the roll out of the New Asylum Model (NAM) means that asylum applications are being processed more quickly. As a result asylum applications are refused more quickly and, with no contacts to turn to for support, refused asylum seekers turn to local authorities for support.

6. The National Network

There was widespread support for a local authority NRPF network to improve practice and work at developing a strategic response to NRPF. Draft terms of reference for the Network are attached at appendix 3.

Through close local authority collaboration the national network has now been established to work on the statutory response to this issue (see www.islington.gov.uk/nrpf from mid-October 2006). The Network is co-ordinated by Islington Council’s NRPF Team and works through local authority representative bodies to provide guidance to authorities and provide a strategic response. The Network operates across different sectors, working

closely with the Home Office and voluntary sector agencies to find a solution to the issues that have arisen.

7. Shared database

In a related initiative Islington's legal department is working with a small number of local authorities and the Home Office on data protection issues with a view to establishing a shared database containing information about individuals' immigration status and whether they have made an application for support to, were or are currently supported by a local authority.

8. Recommendations and next steps

On the basis of the findings of this report Islington Council make the recommendations set out below.

- Local authorities need a steer from their political leaders and representative bodies on this issue.
- The NRPF Network should be established as a sub-group of the ADSS Asylum Taskforce, while continuing to work in collaboration with strategic partners.
- The ADSS Asylum Taskforce should consider making a priority the recovery of costs for local authorities and the establishment of a funding stream pending resolution of immigration issues by the Home Office.
- The Home Office should issue interim guidance to and regulations for local authorities.
- The Home Office should set up a shared database that provides information about who local authorities are supporting, as a way of minimising the risk of fraud and that individuals are supported adequately.
- NRPF needs to be seen in the broader context of the cost to local authorities of supporting people from abroad and of increasing destitution amongst refused asylum seekers. Local authorities should work with the Home Office and partners in the voluntary sector to encourage a humane approach to refused asylum seekers focusing on finding a solution to their destitution and immigration problem.

Appendix 1

Key legislation

Local authorities' duty to support a person with NRPF may arise in the context of the following legislation

- section 21 of the National Assistance Act 1948 – providing residential accommodation to vulnerable adults with Community Care needs
- section 17 of the Children Act 1989 – providing rent and subsistence payments to families with children under 18 who would otherwise be destitute
- section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1995 – people discharged back to the care of the community under section 117 after being sectioned under section 3 of the Mental Health Act 1983 (involuntary admission to hospital)
- Articles 3 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) ⁵ - where cases do not meet the four key stages for eligibility (see below) they may still be eligible for local authority support under human rights legislation.
- Local Government Act 2000 – local authorities have the power to do anything that promotes the well-being of a person, including economic, social and environmental well-being
- Section 54 and Schedule 3 of the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 – people excluded from local authority support as a result of their immigration status may still be entitled to support to avoid a breach of their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- Articles 3 and 8 of the ECHR – right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment and right to family life
- Section 4 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 – Home Office powers to support refused asylum seekers unable to leave the United Kingdom temporarily.

Appendix 2
NRPF cost information

London Boroughs	Cost	Number supported in July/August 2006	Subsistence paid	Comment
London borough A	No information provided			
London borough B	£720,000 (£480,000 on Children and Families & £240,000 on adults) in 2005/6. £750,000 (£450,000 on Children and Families and £300,000 on adults) projected spend in 2006/7.	30 adults, just over 30 families	£30pw for adults in B & B; £36pw for single adults in self-contained; £43.50pw for mental health clients.	Cost includes staff costs & subsistence & accommodation but not overheads
London borough C	£601, 371 spent in 2005/6 £559,844 projected cost in 2006/7 £258,120 spent in the financial year to date	56	£30pw in vouchers for single adults, + travel costs to appointments and an annual clothing grant of £40/50.	Cost does not include legal costs.
London borough E	Projected cost of service in 2006/7 is £1.3 million	128	Not provided.	
London borough F	£1.1 million in 2006/7 budget £850,000 spent in 2005/6	52 singles 12 families (incl. 19 children)	£35 pw for single adults; £50 per couple; £28.26 per single parent; £21 per child.	Cost includes staffing and legal fees.
London borough G	Projected spend in 2006/7 about £1 million. A further projected £1.1 million spend on cases which are to be reviewed following the end of the interim arrangements in April 2006, some of whom will be people with NRPF who are eligible for support.	101 + about 120 cases which were previously supported under the interim arrangements but which the authority is continuing to support whilst	£40.11 pw for adults (pays NASS support rates)	Overall cost would be much higher if health, voluntary sector grants and staffing were included. NB this LB supports a small number of people with profound needs, including an individual who had a road

		reviewing the cases, & for which it receives no HO grant.		accident and costs £33,000 pm to support.
London borough H	Not provided	18 HIV cases (figures not available for mental health)	£31pw for adults and £15pw for children (based on 2/3 of benefits), plus council tax & utilities.	The authority indicated that overall figures could be extracted from databases but this would be time consuming.
London borough I	About £1million	About 100 adults families where the parents have community care needs Children & Families is supporting a further 70 families	£30 if breakfast is provided, £35 if it is not (paid by Sensory & Adult Disability Unit)	Overall costs: £800,000 is spent by community care teams but when mental health teams are included the borough spends > £1million. This does not include staffing costs. Different teams within Social Service pay different subsistence rates.

Local authorities in other areas of the country	Cost	Number supported in July/August 2006	Subsistence payments	Comment
Local authority A	No information provided to date.			
Local authority B	£1.14 million spent in 2005/6 £1.4 million in 2006/7 budget £357,000 in the financial year to date	256 cases (334 people) in June 06	Single adults £39.34 pw; Couple £61.71 pw; Each dependent child is £30.72 pw	Pays 70% of JSA/IS rates
Local authority C	Information awaited			
Local authority D	No information provided.			
Local authority E	No information provided.			
Local authority F	Nil in budget for 2006/7 and nil spent this year. £10,000 spent in 2005/6	0 in 2006/7 2 families supported in		The authority is known to take a "hard line" and claimants tend to approach a neighbouring authority.

		2005/6		
Local authority G	No information provided.			Does not know how many people with NRPF it is supporting or how much this costs.
Local authority H	No information provided.			It appears that people with NRPF tend not present to the authority, & there is an absence of legal representatives working in this area, even though the city has a large refused asylum seeking population.
Local authority I	Projected spend for 2006/7 is £440,000	30 adults + about 12 families with 24 children	£40pw for adults £45pw for children < 16 £34 for 16-17 yr olds	£220,000 is for 30 adults, of this £160,000 is for rent, utilities and council tax, & a further £60,000 is for subsistence. The breakdown is similar for families. Subsistence rates are the equivalent of NASS rates.
Local authority J	£468,000	37 (including 12 DV cases)	£30 pw for adults	Cost information does not include DV and only covers accommodation & subsistence costs. Each of the non-DV cases costs £130 pw, with £100 pw spent on accommodation.
Local authority K		2-3?		The authority does not yet have a system for collating numbers & costs, but is reviewing its work in this area & anticipates in the light of recent case law it will support increased numbers.
Local authority L	£230,000 spent in 2006/7	44	£40.22 pw for adults (pays	

	Projected spend in 2007/8 £250,000		NASS rates)	
Local authority M	No information provided.	5 DV victims		It appears that the authority may be refusing people with NRPF who are eligible for support.
Local authority N	Not available	2 families.		Unaware of any adults with NRPF receiving support from the authority.
Local authority O	Budget of approx. £28,000 Budget of £79,000 for families.	20 families were supported in 2005/6.		The adult budget was is significantly overspent year on year. The figures cover accommodation, subsistence and welfare. There are hidden costs including legal fees.
Local authority P	Not available	8 families		There is no central oversight of adult cases and it is unclear how much of the cost of work involving children can be claimed back from the HO.
Local authority Q	£809,000 spent in 2005/6 (on adults only - £429,000 on physical disability, £380,000 on mental health) Projected spend on adults in 2007/8 is £1,258,000, but budget only £125,000 (£563,000 on physical disability & £695,000 on mental health)	128 adults (63 physical disability, 60 mental health, 3 older people) 5 families with a total of 9 children	£39 pw for single adults	Cost for adults does not include cost of social work time, community psychiatric nurses, management, legal support, administration time etc. Two families are supported at a cost of £230 pw including utilities, five families are supported at a cost of £523.60 pw.
Local authority R	£235,000 projected spend in 2006/7	32		Cost is for subsistence & accommodation but not staff
Local authority S	£1.95 m in total spent in 2005/5	128 families	£40.11 pw for	Calculates it has saves the

	<p>£1.204m spent on 124 families in 2005/6</p> <p>£917,000 spent on 174 single adults in 2005/6</p> <p>Projected cost in 2006/7 is £2.6 m</p>	<p>180 single adults</p> <p>3 unaccompanied minors who were not asylum seekers</p>	<p>adults (pays NASS support rates)</p>	<p>authority £3 m a year in refusing cases that do meet criteria. Also indicates high "hidden" costs such as interpreting, which cost about £210,00 in 2005/6</p>
--	---	--	---	---

Appendix 3

Local Authority No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Network Draft Terms of Reference

Network Focus

The Network is concerned with the statutory response to destitute people from abroad with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

Aims and objectives

The Network works at practice, policy and strategic levels to promote a humane approach to people with NRPF focussing on finding a solution to the destitution they face. It aims to

- share information and good practice amongst local authorities and other agencies working in this area
- work with Government departments to raise the practical and policy issues of NRPF
- obtain reimbursement for local authorities of the costs of providing support to people with NRPF
- develop a strategic response to NRPF.

Activities

Network activities include

- providing guidance and information on service provision, legal obligations and entitlement to services
- providing information on developments in case law, research, policy and training
- researching and monitoring the scale of the issue and the associated costs to local authorities and to other agencies
- making the case to Government for reimbursing local authorities the cost of providing support to people with NRPF
- working with stakeholders to identify a strategic policy response to NRPF.

Membership

The Network is open to all local authorities and their representative bodies. Other statutory and voluntary sector organisations with an interest in the statutory response to NRPF may be invited. Members have access to all information on the NRPF web pages.

Notes

1. Definition

By no recourse to public funds we mean people who are subject to immigration control who have no access to entitlement to welfare benefits, to Home Office asylum support or to public housing.

2. Support

The Network will be coordinated and supported by a small team based at Islington Council.