

Supporting People Programme

Haringey London Borough Council

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Supporting People Inspections

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively and delivers high quality local services for the public.

Within the Audit Commission, the Housing Inspectorate inspects and monitors the performance of a number of bodies and services. These include local authority housing departments, local authorities administering Supporting People programmes, arms length management organisations and housing associations. Our key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) set out the main issues, which we consider when forming our judgements on the quality of services. The KLOEs can be found on the Audit Commission's website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing.

This inspection has been carried out by the Housing Inspectorate using powers under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999 and is in line with the Audit Commission's strategic regulation principles. In broad terms, these principles look to minimise the burden of regulation while maximising its impact. Supporting People inspections are carried out with the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP).

Supporting People is the Government's long-term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide housing-related support services, which help vulnerable people, live independently.

The Supporting People programme brings together significant funding streams including transitional housing benefit (THB), which has paid for the support costs associated with housing during the implementation phase, the Housing Corporation's supported housing management grant (SHMG), and the probation accommodation grant scheme (PAGS) into a single pot to be administered by 150 administering local authorities (ALA). Unitary and metropolitan authorities and counties are designated as an administering authority with the county taking the lead in most cases for the districts in their area.

Administering local authorities work in partnership, with districts where this is relevant, to agree Supporting People strategies and delivery mechanisms for housing related support services with housing, social services, health and the probation service providers. Negotiation and consultation is also required with service users, all housing and support service providers, other statutory service providers, the private sector and voluntary organisations to plan and commission support services to meet identified needs.

The former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)¹ has published a number of consultation papers on the developing programme and a work plan setting out what local authorities and their partners will need to achieve in order to deliver the programme effectively. All the relevant papers for Supporting People can be found on the Supporting People k-web that can be accessed through the Supporting People website: www.spkweb.org.uk.

¹ Now the Department for Communities and Local Government (Department for Communities and Local Government).

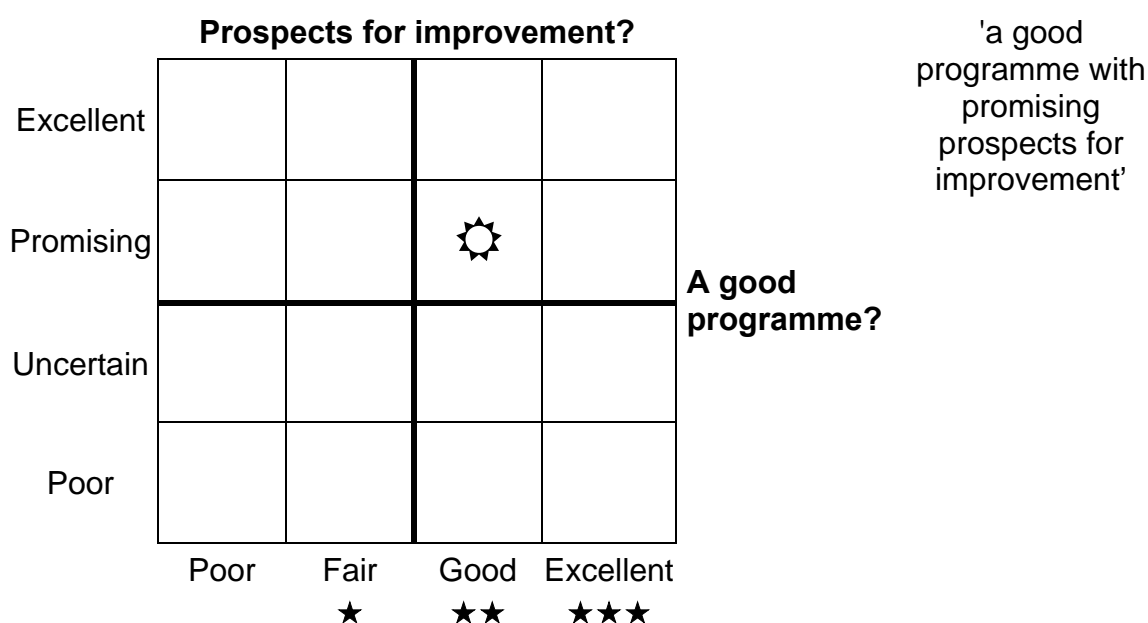
Summary

- 1 We have judged that the Supporting People partnership is providing a good 'two-star' service and has promising prospects for improvement.
- 2 Governance of the programme is strong with a clear vision and strategic direction. Haringey Council as the body responsible for the administration of the Supporting People programme has successfully integrated key partnerships from health, social services and probation in delivering services that benefit the vulnerable and those most in need in the borough. The Council has put great emphasis on performance management and the delivery of high quality services and is achieving positive outcomes for vulnerable people because of this.
- 3 Priority is given to developing and delivering services that properly respond to the diverse needs of the local population. There is a focus on ensuring that vulnerable people can access housing related support services regardless of their housing circumstances. With the provision of floating support, and direct access to services. Unmet need is identified and well researched, and some new services are being delivered to respond to existing service gaps.
- 4 The team that manages the programme is experienced and skilled and is supported by the wider social services staffing resources. There are good budget management arrangements in place and the Council has made a good start on understanding and determining value for money in the services that are provided. Value for Money is being considered carefully in terms of provider viability as well as in the context of wider health, social care, housing and probation commissioning.
- 5 However, there are a number of areas that require improvements. The Council complaints process is not robust and does not capture effectively complaints made from providers or service users in an effective way. The Council has further work to do to ensure that plans to re-shape older people services is developed in a timely manner to ensure that all key stakeholders are kept informed of future plans and can make a valuable contribution to this agenda.
- 6 The capacity of some service providers needs further development in order to ensure a targeted and seamless transition for people who are ready to move on to greater independence. This is particularly the case in homelessness and mental health services.
- 7 Future changes in the Councils management structure may affect the Supporting People programme due to a change in focus and Corporate priorities.

Scoring the Supporting People programme

- 8 We have assessed Haringey London Borough Council as providing a good, two-star programme that has promising prospects for improvement. Our judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection and are outlined below.

Figure 1 Scoring chart²



Source: Audit Commission

- 9 We found the programme to be good because it has a range of strengths.
- Strong governance that has led to improvements for vulnerable people.
 - The Council has provided effective leadership to partner agencies in jointly developing the Supporting People programme; which has delivered good floating support services for a range of service users.
 - The partnership is fulfilling the key priorities and objectives in the Supporting People Strategy in the area of commissioning new services in a range of areas.
 - Providers recognise the inclusive approach of the supporting people team in planning and developing services, their accessibility, responsiveness.

² The scoring chart displays performance in two dimensions. The horizontal axis shows how good the programme is now, on a scale ranging from no stars for a programme that is poor (at the left-hand end) to three stars for an excellent programme (right-hand end). The vertical axis shows the improvement prospects of the programme, also on a four-point scale.

8 Supporting People | Scoring the Supporting People programme

- There is good customer care by front line customer services and support staff who were able to provide appropriate signposting to further advice.
- The five-year strategy is comprehensive and has been widely consulted on with providers.
- The Council has used its resources so that service reviews deliver efficiencies that can be invested in new services that address unmet need.
- Eligibility criteria are in place and agreed and understood by all partners, with good progress made to ensuring Supporting People grant is paying for eligible services.
- The Council is addressing equality and social inclusion issues throughout the supporting people programme through the well-established Council policy of mainstreaming.
- Priority is given to developing and delivering services that properly respond to the diverse needs of the local community.

10 However, there are some areas, which require improvement. These include:

- there is not a strategic or joined up approach to the provision of move-on accommodation for vulnerable people;
- service user involvement has not been consistent;
- the decision-making around the requirements of providing steady state contracts has been slow and not fully discussed with providers;
- the current complaints system does not ensure all complainants are dealt with in a timely manner; and
- the risk register has not been recently reviewed and updated.

11 The programme has promising prospects for improvement because:

- there is clear evidence of ownership of Supporting People by senior managers and elected members. The Council has recognised the need for the programme to be an integral part of day-to-day operations across many areas of the Council;
- the team is delivering on their work programme for 2000/07 and providers of services rate their performance highly;
- the Council has made good progress in moving towards a strategically well aligned Supporting People programme;
- the Council has put great emphasis on performance management and the delivery of high quality services and is achieving positive outcomes for vulnerable people;
- the Council has the skills and capacity to re-model existing Supporting People services so that they deliver better value for money and improved outcomes for vulnerable people;

- capacity to deliver improvements is good with a strong commitment from a range of partners; and
- a range of improvement plans is in place to ensure continuous improvement and there is evidence of an effective learning culture in the way the Council conducts its business.

12 However, there are some barriers to improvement. These include:

- service user need to be involved at a strategic level within the existing well established structures;
- there is not an effective move-on strategy that has been agreed with providers and other key stakeholders;
- there is not an effective plan in place in the event of service failure of services funded by Supporting People grant; or plans in place to address failure on the part of any other Council departments that ultimately impact on the services provided by Supporting People; and
- current plans to change the existing social services and housing structures may affect the delivery of the Supporting People programme.

Recommendations

- 13 To rise to the challenge of continuous improvement, organisations need inspection reports that offer practical pointers for improvement. Our recommendations identify the expected benefits for both local people and the organisation. In addition, we identify the approximate costs³ and indicate the priority we place on each recommendation and key dates for delivering these where they are considered appropriate. In this context, the inspection team recommends that the Council shares the findings of this report with service users, service providers and Councillors, and addresses all weaknesses identified in the report. The inspection team makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation

R1 The Council needs to put an effective risk assessment plan in place that will address any potential failure of services funded by supporting people grant by:

- building in an extra risk assessment of all services that are not performing well;*
- re-visit the risk assessment register and ensure that the possible failures from internal partners are included; and*
- consulting with service providers, service users and other stakeholders in the development of this element of risks.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- the Council will be able to demonstrate the effective management of risks that may affect the programme; and
- this will assist in effective performance management of providers in ensuring that all aspects of their service are adequately risk assessed.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented by March 2007.

³ Low cost is defined as less than 1 per cent of the annual service cost, medium cost is between 1 and 5 per cent and high cost is over 5 per cent.

Recommendation

R2 Put in place a strategic and effective joined up approach to the provision of move-on accommodation by:

- *reviewing with the Practitioner Group in more detail how the Council can address their concerns around the authorities ability to address the low levels of move-on; and*
- *assessing current allocations policies for the single homeless and how these policies practically assist the ability to address the ability to move on clients quickly.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- there should be an increase in the number of move-on accommodation agreed in partnership with providers;
- the Councils allocations policies will be more realistically aligned with address the needs of the single homeless service users in the borough; and
- the Council will achieve a better understanding of the relationship between move-on and the allocations polices and the impact on providers.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with medium costs. This should be implemented by April 2007.

Recommendation

R3 Strengthen service user involvement by:

- *asking service users about the ways they would prefer to be consulted and involved with the development of Supporting People services;*
- *continuing to developing a range of ways that service users can regularly be involved;*
- *building the capacity of users and advocacy organisations in respect of service users involvement; and*
- *ensure that the service users' tool kit is widely circulated across the Council and external to providers.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- improved strategies and process that reflect service users needs and concerns together with those of their advocates and carers;
- a demonstration to partners and stakeholders that service users are at the centre of the Supporting People programme; and
- this approach continues to build on the good existing work that has already started in this area.

Recommendation

R4 Ensure that progress is made on the issuing of steady state contracts by:

- *discussing in detail with the practitioner group and the providers forum the time-table for when steady state contracts will be issued; and*
- *confirm with providers the requirements that they are expected to achieve before steady state contracts will be issued.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- providers will have greater assurance on the future arrangements of the contract arrangements in relation to their service;
- providers will be plan for the future activities of their organisations in terms of human resource management and future commissioning plans; and
- relationships with the Supporting People team will continue to be positive.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with medium costs. This should be implemented by March 2007.

Recommendation

R5 Make improvements to the existing complaints procedures by:

- *consulting with service providers, service users and other stakeholders to develop and introduce an effective complaints process for service users and link this to corporate complaints procedures;*
- *tightening the procedures to ensure that services users complaints are comprehensively addressed; and*
- *ensure that information in respect of complaints is easily accessible to potential service users and carers at access points throughout the Council.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- consistent arrangements will be in place that enable vulnerable people and carers to access a complaints service they would benefit from; and
- ensure that excluded groups are better able to obtain the services they need.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented by June 2007.

- 14 We would like to thank the staff of Haringey London Borough Council who made us welcome and who met our requests efficiently and courteously.

Dates of inspection: 30 October to 3 November 2006.

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Report

Context

The locality

- 15 Haringey Council is an outer London Borough and covers 11.5 square miles from Tottenham in the east to Highgate and Muswell Hill to the west, with Wood Green at its centre. There is a clear east/west divide and Tottenham is among the 10 per cent most deprived wards in the country. Haringey is the tenth most deprived borough in England. The borough's highly diverse population consists of approximately 225,000 people in 92,000 households. 48.9 per cent of the population are from black and minority ethnic communities and an estimated 193 languages are spoken in the borough. There are approximately 35,000 asylum seekers and refugees.
- 16 There are currently around 5,421 households in temporary accommodation (GLA 2005).
- 17 Unemployment stands at 5.8 per cent compared with the London average of 3.6 per cent. Since the decline locally of the manufacturing industry, the borough is predominantly residential with the Council being the main employer. Haringey Council has 9,000 employees.

The Council

- 18 Haringey Council has 57 members of 30 Labour and 27 Liberal Democrat covering 19 wards. A new leader was elected in May 2006. The Council is the administering local authority (ALA) for Supporting People (SP).
- 19 The Council Leader and executive committee govern the business of the Council through a cabinet model of decisions making. The executive committee, consisting of the leader and nine executive members, make decisions with input from the lead Councillor for housing. A single overview and scrutiny committee supports the Council in its business.
- 20 The overall revenue budget 2006/07 for the Council is £366.5 million of which £53.7 million relates to Social Services net revenue budget. £27.7 million relates to adult services; £24.7 million relates to older people services and £1.3 million relates to strategy and regulation service.
- 21 The Council is a member of the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP) and North London Strategic Alliance (NLSA). The HSP was formally established in 2002 to bring together many of the agencies and organisations in Haringey that deliver services, or represent particular local interest.
- 22 In 2006, the Audit Commission rated the Council 'performing well, consistently above minimum standards' via the Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection. In 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate rated older people's services as performing well.

- 23 The overarching plan is the boroughs Community Strategy 2003. This is being revisited with a view to produce a strategy to 2016; and is in development by a multi-agency project team. The corporate plan is aligned to the Councils strategic and business-planning framework and supports the Community Strategy. A Local Area Agreement is to be established in 2007 and the Council is working with partner's to ensure the agreement is fit for purpose and that it addresses the boroughs greatest needs as well as providing a focus for the HSP.

The Supporting People programme

- 24 The vision for the Supporting People Programme 2005-2010⁴ is to:
- complement and dovetail with statutory services;
 - prevent or combat the effects of institutionalism and homelessness;
 - promote social inclusion amongst deprived households;
 - meet the needs of a diverse borough; and
 - help to promote community safety.
- 25 Key priorities for the Supporting People Programme:
- reducing mental health hospital admissions;
 - reducing the number of homeless applications;
 - reducing the numbers of households in temporary accommodation;
 - preventing the social exclusion of communities newly settled in the borough; and
 - prevention of re-offending, anti-social behaviour and support for survivors and victims.
- 26 The aims and objectives of the programme are set out in the five-year strategy, which describes how the Supporting People programme will contribute to the achievement of Community Strategy objectives. There are five themes within the Community Strategy and Supporting People makes a contribution to three of the main themes.
- Improve services: providing better quality, accessible services for everyone who needs them, particularly health and social care.
 - Narrowing the Gap: improving the most deprived neighbourhoods.
 - Safer Communities: creating safe confident communities with less fear of crime and the ability to prevent crime and resist committing crimes.

⁴ Supporting People five-year strategy

- 27 The Council facilitates a Health and Housing Group to develop and improve joint working between the PCT and Council services around the health impact of housing. Current work includes joint working with the planning department on the long-term primary care needs for the borough and the health impact of fuel poverty. The local Supporting People programme in Haringey is a major element of the local health and social care economy. It is also an important element of the Borough approach towards promoting social inclusion and ensuring community safety.

How good is the Supporting People programme?

What has the programme aimed to achieve?

- 28 The links between the Community Strategy and the Supporting People programme have been mapped and priorities for improving the quality of life of local people. In 2005, the Haringey Strategic Partnership established a Well-being Partnership Board (WBPB) to build on and extend the work of the Health and Social Care Board in promoting well-being in Haringey. The Supporting People programme sits within this framework. The WBPB has agreed an aim, vision and outcomes, providing a strategic direction, which includes reducing health inequalities, protecting adults, providing opportunities for socialising and independent living and meeting housing need. The vision, outcomes and strategic objective were endorsed by the Chief Executive's Management Board in November 2005.
- 29 The Well-being framework provides a structure to reviewing progression against strategies. Updates are provided to the Well-being Partnership Board twice a year. In addition the Chief Executives group (that includes partners: probation, PCT, police and LBH senior managers) have a closer focus on plans and performance to ensure they reflect shared priorities and goals.
- 30 The Council is committed to using the Supporting People programme to tackle the problems faced by some of the borough's most disadvantaged and socially excluded people. The programme is guided by a number of challenges, which govern the needs of families faced with unemployment, low income or some form of vulnerability such as a disability. In addition, how to address the needs of frail older people that live in private tenancies or own their own homes and suffer disrepair, limited income and want to remain independent. A third challenge is how to address the needs of young people who present early signs of mental health problems, substance misuse problems, criminal convictions, no family support and who are unable to access services.
- 31 Achieving these priorities is accomplished through strong commitment at every level of the Council and through the outputs from the Supporting People team. There are very effective partnerships with other statutory agencies, including the Teaching Primary Care Trusts, the probation service and a range of partners that make up Haringey Strategic Partnership.
- 32 The total budget for Supporting People for 2006/07 is £21 million and an administration grant of £282,000. The total has reduced from £23.5 million in 2004/05. The budget helps to fund services providing Housing Related Support. These services work directly with more than 5,400 vulnerable households, community alarms and Home improvement agencies work with a further 1,100 households. SP funds services to vulnerable people ranging from teenage parents to older people requiring extra care.

- 33 There is good alignment of the Supporting People programme with addressing the needs of specific social and health care user groups. For example, there is active involvement from the Supporting People team on the Learning Disability Partnership Board's Housing and Support sub group and in developing supported housing to meet local targets such as resettlement, diversity and equality, and improving support to carers. There is a shared focus on ensuring user and carer involvement in strategy development. The annual plan 2006/07 sets out the implementation of the Supporting People Strategy during 2006/07 and ongoing developments.

Is the programme meeting the needs of the local community and users?

- 34 The assessment was based on the following key issues:

- governance and partnerships;
- grant compliance, strategy and needs;
- delivery arrangements;
- commissioning and performance;
- value for money;
- service user involvement;
- access to services and information;
- diversity; and
- outcomes for service users.

Governance and partnerships

- 35 This is an area of strength. The Council in its role as administering local authority provides effective leadership to partner agencies in jointly developing the programme. From the outset, the Council has promoted a strong partnership approach to implementation and there is evidence of robust and effective collaboration including sharing of time and expertise across agencies on a number of cross cutting agendas. The work of the Supporting People team is well planned, managed and is of a high standard. However, the communication between the Practitioners Group and the Supporting People Partnership Board is weak.

- 36 There is political and corporate support for the programme. The Council has put in place all the key strategic planning and management groups required by the DCLG to support the implementation of the Supporting People programme. A memorandum of understanding is in place that governs the work of the programme. It covers matters relating to conflict of interest and how this should be handled. There is a strong corporate finance steering group, which includes senior financial and internal audit staff that is responsible for ensuring the proper administration of all corporate finance including the Supporting people grant. This group monitors Supporting People contribution to core Council activity.
- 37 There is corporate financial commitment to the programme. Haringey's administration grant of £227k is further supported by corporate commitment of £290k (2006/07). This equates to 2.3 per cent of spend and was decided upon following benchmarking across similar sized Supporting People programmes.
- 38 Elected members demonstrate they have a good overview of the work of the programme and receive regular reports on progress made, resource implications and changes. The Council Leader and the Executive Members for Housing, Health and Social services and Safer Communities have all contributed to the development of the programme.
- 39 The Supporting People Partnership Board is the Commissioning Body, and drives the development and implementation of the five-year strategy. This is a strong and effective board, and is made up of senior managers from key strategic partnerships. These include the Council, Probation, National Health Service and a representation from a range of client groups. The board meets every six weeks and covers a range of detailed issues at these meetings. Each partner takes an equal part in the meeting and contributes constructively. From our observation of the board, it is clear that the attendance of very senior manager demonstrates commitment and the high profile afforded to Supporting People in Haringey.
- 40 The strength of the Supporting People Partnership Board has been the ability to manage successfully the operational management and the challenges of strategic decision-making. There is not a separate Core Strategy Group as the Council felt that the membership of the Supporting People Partnership Board was able to deliver both roles as they were senior managers responsible not only for the decision-making but also had budget responsibilities in their respective posts. They could also make strategic and operational decisions quickly. We found evidence of constructive challenge of policy and resource allocation, and a clear focus on the implications of actions agreed.
- 41 There are strong planning arrangements in place for the co-ordination of the Supporting People Partnership Board. The Chair meets with the lead officer to set the agenda and ensure that sufficient time is set within the agenda for decision-making. There is a clear focus to give members the opportunity to consider documents before making decisions.

20 Supporting People | How good is the Supporting People programme?

- 42 The Accountable Officer manages the Supporting People Team manager, which is good practice as this ensures control over the delivery of the programme. This is done in conjunction with the Supporting People Partnership Board that monitors the development of the Supporting People annual plan.
- 43 The board has the ability to manage the detail of the programme and function effectively as a core strategy group. An example of this is how the board closely scrutinised the review process. Clear direction was given to the supporting people team by the Supporting People Partnership Board that enables them to successfully continue to deliver the outcomes of the review. Difficult decisions are handled with care and sensitivity in particular where poor services have been decommissioned or seen not to be strategically relevant.
- 44 Supporting People is well supported through the Council and links well to other areas of work including the following.
- Safer Communities Partnership Board is responsible for issues surrounding drugs and alcohol misuse related crime, as well as having a role in ensuring the protection of vulnerable adults. (Safeguarding adults).
 - Enterprise Partnership Board is responsible for achieving economic well-being through the strategic planning and provision of training and jobs.
 - Better Places Partnership Board is responsible for improving homes, better and safer local transport and traffic management and sports and leisure opportunities.
 - Children's Partnership Board is responsible for the welfare of children and young people and links with the well-being Partnership Board around the transition to adulthood for all aspects of life, through universal and targeted services, to achieve key targets such as Teenage Pregnancy.
 - Sustainable Communities Board that address the impact of housing growth on the well-being of existing and future residents, especially on levels of demand for services.
- 45 Haringey has an active and well-represented Service Provider Forum. The Forum has been in existence since 2001, and is chaired by a service provider representative, and meets regularly. It is an open forum for service providers to voice their problems and one forum representative is on the Supporting People Partnership Board. The Forum enables the views of service providers to be considered in decision-making and in shaping commissioning decisions.
- 46 Opportunities are in place to build the capacity of small providers. A small provider's network has been established to provide on-going support and information sharing across the small providers. A Supporting People contract has been awarded to the voluntary sector team, who then sub-contract the support provision to small providers. This enables the small providers to have access to a wider infrastructure framework through the voluntary sector team, as well as access other funding streams.

- 47 Supporting People team has worked positively and constructively with providers in the development, implementation and delivery of the programme by developing a strategic providers group called Practitioners. The Practitioners Group is an effective body of experienced senior managers that performs a distinct function of representing providers at a strategic level. We found this group to be committed, generally informed and supportive of the Council's ability to deliver the Supporting People strategic priorities. However, the Practitioner Group is not used as effectively as it could be in the decision-making processes; and do not have strong links to the Supporting People Partnership Board. An example of this is around discussions on the implementation of steady state contracts and the impact this would have on their organisation.
- 48 Some providers that we met did not know a practitioner group existed and, several providers expressed a view that there is still insufficient sharing from the Supporting People Partnership Board through to the practitioners group and then out to the wider provider network. The impact of this is that key decisions are not communicated effectively. The Council accepts this and are currently reviewing their communication strategy for providers and conducting better profiling of Providers group to brief the outputs from The Supporting People Partnership Board. The Supporting People team will be reviving the Supporting People Newsletter, with the Accountable Officer formally reporting back to the Practitioners Group and Provider Forum.
- 49 The partnership arrangements with probation works well in the management of high risk offenders. The MAPPA⁵ arrangements are linked to the Supporting People programme through the criminal justice team for adults; and through representation by the Youth Offending Team. These arrangements are robust and work well.
- 50 There is a clear commitment to work with the voluntary sector. There are strong links with Haringey Association of Voluntary and Community Organisation and capacity building of the voluntary sector has been targeted in order to enhance partnership working to meet needs.

Grant compliance, strategy and needs

- 51 Strengths outweigh weakness in this area. Grant compliance has been achieved and has been implemented in a timely manner. There is a clear eligibility policy that sets out the housing related support services that are eligible and can be funded by Supporting People grant. The policy has been agreed with the providers and is fully understood by all stakeholders. There is a robust and comprehensive five-year strategy, which has a clear vision with a generally SMART⁶ action plan. However, there is lack of clarity among providers regarding the Council's approach to move-on accommodation.

⁵ Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements-introduced in April 2001

⁶ SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time specific.

22 Supporting People | How good is the Supporting People programme?

- 52 The Supporting People programme complies with grant conditions. There is a clear eligibility policy of the services that qualify for Supporting People grant and what scheme costs can be apportioned. The Supporting People Partnership Board and Providers forum has been involved in the development of the eligibility policy that was used as part of the process to review services.
- 53 Our reality checks identified that there is widespread understanding of the criteria. There are plans in place to address the £98,119.13 ineligible funding identified (as part of the Department for Communities and Local Government retraction exercise). These ineligible services were identified through the service reviews and close liaison is taking place with social care who will assume responsibility for the funding in 2007/08 (that is being incorporated into the current budget planning process for 2007/08).
- 54 The five-year strategic is comprehensive document and was developed in consultation with service providers and strategic partners. Over 160 organisations were consulted on the development of the strategy. There has been significant needs mapping undertaken that has informed the five-year strategy. The strategy contains strategic links into relevant areas of social care, health, social inclusion, criminal justice and community safety policies and practices. Providers and key stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy understand the issues. Priorities reflect local priorities across all agencies and there are outcomes for service users are identified. The strategy has a focus on achieving the boroughs Community Strategy Objectives and addressing social exclusion and there is sufficient data available, which clearly identifies the level of need.
- 55 Small providers considered that the Supporting People programme had comprehensively considered the needs of Haringey. They were aware of service provision gaps and they considered the programme had adequately prioritised funding and introduced new services or reconfigured services to meet the needs of the community.
- 56 The Council has made progress in identifying need in the borough .In developing the strategy, effective use was made of existing data. The Supporting People Team analysed socio-economic factors such as unemployment and health inequalities, which are also used to inform service delivery within other plans such as the Community Strategy. It was recognised that there were some areas where there was a lack of qualitative information about need and future provision. This included mental health, older people, offender services and substance misuse. Robust research was successfully commissioned in these areas, which had strong service user involvement including focus groups and individual interviews. This is now informing commissioning decisions.

- 57 The Council has been successful in identifying and addressing the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the borough. The following examples highlight some key achievements and how needs mapping has been used to address the needs of certain clients.
- The mental health needs analysis was reported earlier this year and included a sample survey of 250 service users (that included in-depth interviews across support networks). It has highlighted the need for more medium/high level support and is currently being used to develop the service specifications for commissioning mental health services. This also includes addressing staff skills where some weaknesses were found during the analysis.
 - There has been some consideration of the needs of older people. The jointly commissioned consultants report between housing and social services (with involvement from the PCT) identified the need for an older person's strategy. From initial needs mapping and data the Council has been aware of an over-supply of some sheltered housing, and will incorporate within the revised strategy a reduction of £1.1 million for older people's services across 2008-2018. This challenging area has not yet been directly addressed, due to the level of service user consultation that it will require.
- 58 The appointment of the two housing workers located at the housing services offices that have a dedicated responsibility for children services has made a significant positive difference to the outcome for young people. Having children and families staff based along side housing staff enables a 'joined up' response to be given to young people; ensuring that where appropriate mediation is carried out to get them back to their families, or are able to jointly able to assess and meet their housing and support needs.
- 59 The other main area of work relates to families who are experiencing domestic violence and those who are homeless but not eligible for local authority provision. The latter category of family are often amongst the most vulnerable groups see by the Council; frequently with layers of problems relating to ill health, substance or alcohol use, children will have frequently moved schools, or been unable to access consistent health care. The work here is to agree a way forward to ensure families are enabled to access some form of housing and then a straight link into mainstream social work services for either further assessment relating to childcare or child protection issue.
- 60 There are good structures and protocols in place for young people leaving care. The Supporting People programme works well in addressing the needs of young people who have difficulty in maintaining tenancy. There is a very good tool-kit jointly prepared by Support Team and Child Protection for SP providers, which assists providers in developing policy and practice around child protection.

- 61 The Council as part of proposals to improve services to the homeless have integrated floating support into the new Homelessness Prevention & Options Service. The programme aims to guarantee that every vulnerable person who is given housing has access to floating support, and arrangements are in place to help support move on. We raised concerns with the Council on how effective these new arrangements will be to support move on. It is recent and the benefits of this service not yet evident.
- 62 The level of move-on quota is low and providers are unclear how the existing allocations policy will assist with move-on accommodation. It is the view of the Council that the move-on quota set for this year and 2007/08 is influenced by current allocations policies. The Council has put in place an agreement that 100 properties are to be offered as move-on for vulnerable clients that meet the necessary criteria. The quota will be monitored by the Council on a quarterly basis in partnership with Supporting People to ensure it delivers the required moves. In support of the move-on strategy, the Council has developed a private sector housing supply, including an accredited landlord scheme for statutory homeless families. The scheme is linked to the HARTS support service for families. A similar accredited scheme for single statutory homeless and a private sector non-rent deposit scheme for the non-statutory homeless are being developed. Providers still believe that further debate needs to take place on how Haringey's existing allocations policies assist the move-on agenda.

Delivery arrangements

- 63 Strengths outweigh weakness in the delivery of the programme. The Supporting People team is experienced, well respected and fully incorporated into the Social Services directorate. The programme complements and adds value to the wide range of local housing, community care and equality priorities and strategies. The programme commissions, funds and monitors a wide range of support services throughout Haringey based on an analysis of the needs of the local people. The Council has achieved many of these aims. Performance management of providers is in development and not yet fully effective or embedded throughout the programme. Some providers also question the level of resources in the team.
- 64 The work of the Supporting People team is well planned and managed. The Council enjoys a positive working atmosphere with high staff morale. Staff are enthusiastic, and feel well informed and valued. Staff are motivated to deliver high quality services for the Supporting People agenda. The Supporting People Team has a high profile across the Council and its partners. The programme's profile has been further raised by the Supporting People team's representation at key internal Council groups, joint management boards and external partnerships.
- 65 The team has developed effective partnerships with mainstream housing, health, social care and criminal justice and where it is currently located corporately has assisted in the teams' central and key role in developing effective links. All team members understand their role and contribution through regular supervision and staff appraisals.

- 66 The relationship with providers is positive. Providers were complimentary of the Supporting People team. They were considered to be knowledgeable open to innovative ideas in delivering the programme and services that developed the Supporting People market. However, there was a consensus in our focus groups that the Supporting People team did not deal efficiently with responses to the more intensive queries.
- 67 Work programmes within the Supporting People team are linked to the annual plan and into departmental plans, with links into other service plans. The project officer in the Supporting People is currently undertaking a significant project working in partnership with Homes For Haringey⁷ on preventing homelessness by reducing evictions. Outcomes of this work are identified in a joint plan. The teams work plans are robust and efficiently guide the work of supporting people officers.
- 68 Strong partnership working has assisted the Council in achieving the alignment of Supporting People to the Local Area Agreement (LAA). A partnership board has been set up to develop the Local Area Agreements and meets every two months. There is a key officer within social services responsible for linking with corporate and external partners on the inclusion of Supporting People. This has helped ensure partners and the Council share a common objective of tackling identified needs in the borough.
- 69 Corporate performance management is strength, which has influenced the supporting people programme. There are constructive corporate structures in place for performance management and monitoring; and specifically around the Supporting People programme. An example of this is the Haringey Corporate Score Card with a specific action under the Well Being theme for the number of service users who have established or maintained independent living. Executive members, departmental finance manager and the Accountable Officer as well as the Department Management Team all have a role in ensuring the effective management of the relevant budgets.
- 70 Performance reporting to the Supporting People Partnership Board is comprehensive. Information received from the Supporting People team is thorough and detailed, and where requested by the Supporting People Partnership Board the team have provided additional information to enhance the Supporting People Partner Board's understanding and decision-making process. Elements of performance ranging from Quality Assessment Framework, Performance Indicators, financial and the balance scorecard (action plans) are discussed at each meeting. Board members clearly understand the issues and take the appropriate action to address concerns.

⁷ The Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up in Haringey in 2006 responsible for delivering the Housing Management service to the Council's housing stock

- 71 The Supporting People team has developed methods of addressing the performance and output from providers. The first set of performance Indicator workshops took place in August 2004 (from second quarter 2004/05) and these were cyclically repeated. Each provider returned workbooks were scrutinised by the team. There was an increase in successful returns from 93 per cent in the second quarter 2004/05 to 100 per cent by the end of that year and that this was successfully maintained throughout 2005/06. In addition, for most of the Supporting People Indicators there was a significant improvement in the number of services recording performance Indicators at 100 per cent and a significant decrease in the services reporting performance Indicators below the required standards.
- 72 A detailed analysis of risks has been completed on all aspects of the programme. Areas considered in this exercise included strategic, commissioning, financial, service, provider, quality, performance and procurement risks. The analysis included consultation with all key statutory and non-statutory stakeholders, including providers and the voluntary sector. Provider risks have been identified and managed through a cross-authority accreditation process that covers all north and west London boroughs. This focuses on the key areas of financial viability, effective employment policies and practices, and strong management processes.
- 73 However, the current risk register, which was established in 2005/06 and was reviewed in 2006/07 by the Supporting People Partnership Board; has only been reviewed once since the five-year strategy was introduced. Potential risks or service failures may not be easily identified.

Commissioning and performance

- 74 This is an area of strengths and weaknesses. Providers are aware of contractual arrangements although the Supporting People Partnership has been slow to issue steady state contracts. The Council has comprehensive review policies and procedures in place and all reviews have been completed on time. Areas of high risks and high costs have been identified and action plans support change to ensure higher quality and more cost effective provisions. Opportunities for cross-authority working have been explored and have delivered effective outcomes for the development of the Supporting People team. However, the complaints procedure is not effectively managed and fails to meet its own targets. The council's own services have not improved as quickly as external providers and service user involvement in contract monitoring is limited.

- 75 Service reviews were completed on time and standards in the delivery of services have improved. A number of providers who were identified as weak as parts of the review process have been supported to improve their performance. All service providers have now assessed themselves against the core and supplementary objectives set out in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework and have action plans for improvement. Quality assurance systems are in place to ensure consistency in the review process. This is in the form of multi-agency review panel for each client groups, which assists with consistency and transparency. Providers believe the panel and multi-agency approach works well. The decision to carry out desktop reviews was risk assessed (at the time) by external consultants and took account of time and motion information from the providers.
- 76 Improvement planning of services is robust. The programme of reviews has resulted in improvements in the quality of services. By the end of 2006/07, 9 per cent (13 services) will be at level D, which is down from 32 per cent (50 services) in 2005/06. Five per cent of services are currently at level B and 1 per cent is at level A. However, a number of the internal services provided by the council were assessed at level D that is of concern and has raised questions on why the internal providers appear to be not performing as well as the external providers.
- 77 The review of Key Performance Indicators is to be incorporated into the service reviews for 2006-2008, and targets have been set as a benchmark for providers. The approach taken by the Supporting People team is to monitor improvements in the performance of the provider to an agreed standard before steady state contracts can be issued. The outcome of this approach has been an improvement, where 90 per cent of providers now meet level C of the Quality Assessment Framework, only one provider has achieved level A. Providers have welcomed the approach taken by the Supporting People team in ensuring they improve in all areas. Providers who fail to achieve level C on the Quality Assessment Framework were subject to an improvement plan. However, User involvement in the contract monitoring process is still under development and is limited.
- 78 Small providers were positive about the service review process that had been completed. They found that the process had been thorough and fair, and had assisted them in improving their services as well as providing a good format for continuous improvement. Improvement plans were clear and monitored, and all providers were aware of the aim to deliver level B services.
- 79 There is good communication with the voluntary sector. The twelve voluntary sector providers under the Voluntary Community organisation umbrella were kept informed of the service review process. They were kept informed of the developments and issued all with the report although some stated they received their report late. The Supporting team was proactive and built on this relationship by hosting a focus group to discuss the way forward.

- 80 In 2005, external consultants were commissioned by the North London Group to undertake provider accreditation in Haringey. This was completed earlier this year. The Council has also been involved with the North London Supporting People and Housing Director groups. A detailed benchmarking and supply mapping exercise of the regional provision is due to be completed in November 2006 and this will determine sub-regional commissioning of this sector in 2007/08. The Council has led on a sub-regional approach to the use of existing single homeless provision linked in to offering second-stage move-on from the central London hostels.
- 81 The authority provides fair access for service providers when commissioning. Haringey does not discriminate between internal and external service providers when commissioning services under the Supporting People programme. Services are commissioned because of fulfilling the authorities' priorities while meeting value for money criteria.
- 82 The commissioning of new services is evident across the partnership. Examples include the successful work undertaken between health and probation. The outcome of this joint work has been the development of a rent deposit scheme specifically for people recovering from drug misuse and for Drug Intervention Team (DIT) clients. Plans are also in place to provide a DIT assessment worker within the Housing Service's Vulnerable Adults Team, who will assist with specialist housing assessments and housing allocations. The support and rehabilitative care is jointly funded by the DAAT and the National Health Service Teaching Primary Care Trust.
- 83 There are no steady state contracts in place and providers are unclear about the future arrangements on the issuing of steady state contracts. Providers have confidence in the team and although unclear, they are not concerned. However, our concern is that this is not a particular healthy position from a provider's perspective. This approach could lead to providers experiencing uncertainty and the inability to effectively plan future commissioning outcomes.
- 84 Partners are effectively engaged in contract management. For example, Probation service has been involved in managing contracts relating to offenders with the Supporting People team. In addition, partners are able to take part in the review process and the re-shaping of specific services. This ensures specialist skills are available and services meet joint priorities. In addition, the Supporting People Partnership Board and the review process is achieving improved services and reducing costs thorough joint commissioning of services. An example of this is the decommissioning and remodelling of single homeless provision, which is expected to achieve £420,000 of annual savings.
- 85 Reports to the Supporting People Partnership Board about the performance of providers and the outcomes from reviews are good. There is evidence of the board being robust in challenging the Supporting People team on provider performance and future strategic relevance. An example of this is the decision-making on the assessment of the suitability of housing related support for offenders and the management of and the nature of the provision for all offenders in the borough.

- 86 Quality assurance management is a strength. In 2004, the Council established multi-agency review panels for each client group in order to ensure consistency and transparency in the review process and in future service developments (including tendering). Panels are made up of partners from agencies appropriate to the client group.
- 87 Progress with cross authority working is strength. The Council has taken a leading role within the North London Supporting People and Housing Director groups. A detailed benchmarking and supply mapping exercise of the regional provision is due to be completed in November 2006 and this will determine sub-regional commissioning of this sector in 2007/08.
- 88 Recently, Haringey Council has held discussions with Enfield, Camden and Westminster on bringing together floating support services offered by the Community Housing Group into a single North London contract and service. This is projected to provide a £250,000 saving per annum, which the North London Managers Group has agreed to ring-fence for sub-regional commissioning. The Council has developed a child protection quality assurance tool for Supporting People services, which has been shared with the North London Group and the Association of Local Government (ALG).
- 89 The complaints process is not robust or fully effective. The Supporting People Team has a designated complaints officer who is responsible for maintaining a complaints database and liaising with the departmental complaints teams. There are timescales for addressing and responding to complaints and these are monitored at departmental and corporate level; but service users are advised of their right to use the provider's own complaints policy rather than the Supporting People one.
- 90 Complaints are managed in accordance with the Council's Protection from Abuse policies and the appropriate frameworks are used where an allegation of abuse arises, including joint working with other departments and services.
- 91 The Supporting People team are not handling complaints in a robust manner or using them to inform service improvements. An officer is responsible for logging and chasing responses to complaints. However, there is no reporting in place to demonstrate that the team is responding to complaints within timescales. The average time taken for a complaint to be completed is three months, which is outside of the fourteen and twenty-eight day targets. It is also uncertain that all complaints received by the Supporting People team are captured by the corporate complaints monitoring, as there is no systematic approach to informing central complaints of the receipt of a complaint. Neither does the Supporting People team analyse complaints trends.
- 92 There is an emphasis placed upon service users raising complaints locally at provider level, and an expectation on providers to advise service users of the ability to seek support through advocacy agencies and as a last resort the Supporting People team. This means that the partnership may not be aware of potential service failure and cannot learn from the complaints made to improve the Supporting People programme.

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- 93 A transparent appeals process is in place. However, the Supporting People team is left out the loop with no formal stage for providers to discuss their report with the team before it is escalated. In reality, providers do go directly to the team and the matter is often resolved. The Council's Head of Procurement Services manage the appeals process outside of the Supporting People Team. Providers are asked to submit their appeal and supporting evidence directly to the Head of Procurement, who either investigates the appeal themselves or asks one of their officers to investigate. The Head of Procurement then reports on their findings to a panel drawn from senior officers from the PCT and Probation not involved in the original Supporting People Partnership Board decision.
- 94 The appeals policy has been widely circulated amongst all providers, is available on Haringey Council's website, and was subject to consultation through the Practitioner Group, ensuring the transparency and accessibility of the appeals process. To date there have been no appeals.

Value for money

- 95 Strengths balance weaknesses in the way Haringey's Supporting People partnership is achieving value for money for housing related support services. A framework and methodology for assessing value for money is in place. The Council is committed to developing effective measures for assessing the value of services in relation to the outcomes they achieve. However, Haringey cannot demonstrate that the in house homelessness and sheltered housing services are delivering value for money and not all services have been market tested.

How do costs compare?

- 96 The approach taken by the Council in assessing cost comparison is mixed. The process is led by the needs of service users whilst taking account of local eligibility criteria. The Supporting People Partnership Board also has a clear understanding of local value for money issues with regard to current and future service provision. The five-year strategy sets out the primary drivers to the Councils approach to value for money. These were widely consulted on and are understood by stakeholders and providers.
- 97 However, there has been limited cross-authority working on the costs of services and why costs vary between ALAs. The majority of the work has been internally focussed. The Supporting People partnership understands the benefits of benchmarking and has carried out detailed work in this area, which will help reduce costs and improve services.
- 98 The Platinum Cut figures issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2003 show the average unit cost in Haringey was comparable with London and England but higher per head of population.

How is value for money managed?

- 99** Haringey is developing an effective way of assessing value for money. In determining value for money, the Council is also seeking to ensure the total cost of service provision is correctly understood. Haringey's value for money strategy is to reduce or maintain cost whilst improving services and levels of satisfaction. The challenge of cost, performance and perception runs through business planning and performance management and is the basis upon which the Supporting People programme operates.
- 100** The programme's approach to value for money is set within the Council's overall value for money framework. A value for money policy has been produced and agreed with providers and data is collected through a defined process. The partnership and providers are aware that value for money is a key objective. The outcome of this has been to reduce the cost of Supporting People services in the borough. Where value for money is highlighted as a concern for a service, providers are informed and given the opportunity to provide a rationale and or make a proposal for revised funding arrangements.
- 101** Haringey Supporting People Grant in 2003/04 was £23.7 million, which has been reduced to £22.15 million for 2005/06. The Supporting People partnership has been successful in achieving a 10 per cent cash efficiency savings through tackling service costs, and a further 9 per cent through negotiating an increase in floating support capacity (worth £2.1 million pa). In total, this represents nearly 20 per cent efficiency savings on 2003/04 Supporting People spending.
- 102** The Supporting People Partnership Board has been careful in considering the options for making the required savings and a number of specific approaches were proposed. However, the proposals that the partnership felt would bring about realistic savings and value for money were as follows.
- Decommissioning and remodelling single homeless provisions, would release £420,000 and work is underway to identify the needs of existing service users in areas such as mental health and probation services.
 - Re-configuring of older people services where there is scope to achieve savings. In particular, in the provision of low level sheltered housing. About £4.3 million is spent annually and 50 per cent is on in-house provision. The Department for Communities and Local Government comparator data indicates that a 25 per cent reduction in expenditure for this type of provision should be achievable which equates to £1.1 million annually.
 - Re-configuring generic floating support services with 30 per cent of the programme spent on the three generic floating support services.
- 103** The revised value for money policy has helped the partnership make informed decisions on awarding inflationary uplifts providing certain quality, price thresholds are met, and the authority has the resources to pay such uplifts. The Council is assuming an increase of one per cent annually from 2007/08 on existing contracts.

- 104** The Supporting People eligibility criteria has placed a clear distinction between care and support and this has resulted in some services having a managed reduction in their grant allocation in situations where the emphasis is more on care than the promotion of personal independence. Strategic relevance is carefully considered and forms a fundamental part of the service review process. Service providers are required to demonstrate how their service fits with the Supporting People strategy, grant conditions, local eligibility criteria and the key aims outlined in the Community Strategy.
- 105** Feedback from service users forms an important part of the service review process. Service users are informed in advance of the review taking place; and this demonstrates the Council's commitment to considering the views of providers and their users in ensuring positive outcomes of the Supporting People programme.
- 106** The Council has developed a mechanism, which measures how support plan objectives are achieved. This is measured in conjunction with a large local floating support provider, and has now been implemented across the three large floating support services. The Council is working with a further seven services in 2006/07 to implement this approach more widely. There is also the benefit of measuring savings from service areas governed by health and probation. This is done by examining whether action plan targets in service reviews have been met. The Council will consider all these views and outcomes and factor them in to the assessment of quality in this area.
- 107** Visits were made to 11 different service providers across a range of services and, included both high and low cost providers. Most of the services we visited are supporting people with a high level of need. We found that most currently provide good value for money in terms of their costs being competitive coupled with evidence of high quality support and positive outcomes being delivered.
- 108** The council recognises it needs to challenge the unit costs of its own directly managed homelessness and sheltered housing services as the costs of these services do not represent value for money.
- 109** The approach to procurement is mixed. Where services have been shown to be strategically relevant and at a reasonable cost, they have been re-commissioned or re-modelled. Providers are clear about forthcoming tenders and smaller organisations have been encouraged to take up procurement training and support. However, there are some services such as those for offenders that been assessed as being below standard but have not yet been fully market tested although plans are in place to do this.

- 110** The Supporting People Partnership Board has not fully considered how it can incentivise providers to improve the quality of services. The performance management framework does not include at present, a system to reward good performance against targets and performance indicators. Neither do commissioning arrangements enable the partnership to increase provision for providers who are improving services. This means that the Supporting partnership is not using innovation to drive up standards and improve services for service users. There is a plan under consideration to award inflationary uplifts like the previous inflation awarded in 2005/06, however, it is not in place as yet.
- 111** Haringey's programme has fully automated its payments administration by creating a link between its Supporting People system and finance system, which has substantially cut both provider and ALA costs, allowing the deletion of one full finance post.

Service user involvement

- 112** Service users' involvement is a mixture of strengths and weakness. Although still developing, the Council demonstrates it has made considerable progress in engaging with service users. Service users and service providers play a key role in the development of services. High priority is given to service users who are traditionally perceived to be hard to reach; and there are a range of systems in place for networking with service users and encouraging feedback. A comprehensive Supporting People user tool kit has been developed and implemented. However, the service user forum is still in early development and cannot show consistent benefits for service users.
- 113** Service provider participation on the Supporting People Partnership Board and provider forum has been strengthened and efforts have been made to ensure all Supporting People user groups are represented. There are established forums in place that is used to disseminate information and to enable the active participation of service users in the planning and review of services.
- 114** There is a comprehensive service user involvement strategy in place, which is being widely consulted on across all stakeholders. The strategy is due to be signed off by the Service User Steering Group at the end of 2007. There is an easy to understand and jargon free Service User Toolkit, which is a comprehensive document. However, we found, that it was not as widely circulated, as it should have been. This will impact on its effectiveness.
- 115** Service users have been involved in service reviews at varying levels locally to develop services. These range from consultation questionnaires on the remodelling of small providers. Some service users were involved through a method of initiatives, including one to one meetings, focus groups forums, being consulted on ground rules at scheme level and telephone contact. However, there has been a weak approach to ensure robust methods are used to enhance service user involvement in the service reviews; and there has been some reliance on providers to ensure that service users are informed and involved in the process.

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- 116 All of the service users met confirmed that they had support plans in place, and which are outcome focussed. Our reality checks identified a range of support plans some were particularly innovative and creative to ensure they captured the main concerns and actions. In some of the schemes visited service users are encouraged to take part in the delivery of service in various ways eg recruitment of staff, redesigning of the risk assessment and scheme leaflets. Service users are involved at consultative forums to look at support planning policy and access to services.
- 117 Service users have been involved in the review of single homeless services. Two service users received training from officers to participate in reviews, and assisted officers in meeting with hostel residents. The process identified a number of areas of dissatisfaction from service users that have since been addressed, including the provision of information at hostels, understanding of the benefits system. As a result, service users feel that they are actually influencing the way they want the service to be managed.
- 118 On site, we came across several users who have experienced meaningful involvement such as sitting on the Councils procurement committee. Because of the opportunities to participate in such roles, service users are actually involved in the delivery of service, influencing policies and ensuring that the needs of customers are met. Where a decision has been reached to decommission a service the programme has sensitively worked with service users, their workers and carers and have kept them involved in each stage of the decommissioning process.
- 119 In order to promote the programme the Supporting People team organised a road show with some of the providers to promote employment opportunities for those with support needs within the borough. As a result of this show, one of the providers employed four service users on one paid traineeship programme. This programme has helped the service users to acquire new skills, train and develop themselves, given them employment opportunities as well as career prospect for the future. We visited a provider where an involvement officer who works with the Youth Offending Team, provides advisory sessions to the youths in the borough.
- 120 The Council has demonstrated examples of outcomes for service users, which determine the commitment of resources to support service user involvement, and has influenced service-commissioning decisions. Examples include:
- service user views collected, as part of the mental health needs mapping are directly influencing the development of the staffing and service specification for new mental health contracts and services;
 - the commissioning decision to develop a supported shared house for people recovering from drug misuse directly arose from service user focus group sessions organised jointly with the Drugs Alcohol Advice Team;
 - developing joint work with the voluntary sector team in building the capacity of local community groups to develop and provide Supporting people services;

- funding and commissioning of a new floating support service and housing related support needs for Traveller households with the travellers service, to be in place by the end of the year; and
 - the expansion of two new BME-led services to be jointly commissioned by the Council and Haringey Association of Voluntary and Community Organisation.
- 121** The service user steering group is in its infancy. It has had five to six meetings so far (monthly) and is seen as a group for participants to put forward ideas, but does not yet have clear aims or an action plan prioritising actions. The consultation strategy was presented to the group without their significant input. In addition, the provision of capacity building for service users who are involved is ad-hoc. At the moment service users are supported by Supporting People, officers as and when required. There are plans to introduce a capacity-building programme for service users but this has not yet been implemented.

Access to services and information

- 122** Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area. Staff are helpful and knowledgeable. The website is user friendly and contains sufficient information with some minor deficits. A directory of services is available providers see the directory of Supporting People services as an essential tool. It is user-friendly and covers a comprehensive range of services. However, there is no tailored communication strategy and regular newsletters that keeps services users, providers and their carers updated.
- 123** We found good customer care responses to the reality checks we undertook with customer services and advice centres including those responding to the needs of women escaping from domestic violence. Responses were quick and staff demonstrated they knew their service areas and can offer a range of services to those presenting as in need. We found front line staff both caring and friendly in their approach. Specific cultural needs were identified as part of the assessment of need. Staff demonstrated a good level of awareness of the kinds of housing related support services that are available locally. However, we found that staff across the wider Council has a patchy understanding of Supporting People issues depending on their role and function within the service.
- 124** There was a wide range of literature on specialist support services for service users at Service Provider accommodation. There was a range of information on specialist services such for domestic violence, harassment, education, and drug and alcohol addiction services. The literature, which is readily available, and is displayed on notice boards and display stands. Supporting People information leaflets are easy to read and jargon free. Most of the projects visited have information and leaflets on Supporting People as well details on other related support services in communal areas and notice boards for service users. The information provided would give greater access to both the present and prospective service users if they want to contact the team directly.

- 125** There is a high level of direct-access floating support services that take referrals from a range of sources. These services are designed to offer quick access to low-level preventative support and to cater for any need or a combination of needs. Referral routes are signposted in leaflets that available we were informed through all customer service centres, GP surgeries, libraries, Housing Offices, and National Health Service and Social Services establishments. They are also available on Haringey Council's website and in a number of journals, including Haringey People. Translated versions are also available.
- 126** Floating support services are integrated into the Housing Service's Homelessness Prevention and Options Service and this assists with access to support for vulnerable people to prevent eviction and homelessness and reduce stays in short-term temporary accommodation. Floating support services are available to private tenants, owner-occupiers, people with no fixed address as well as social housing tenants. They are also available to anyone living in Haringey, regardless of whether they have been placed in the borough by another local authority. However, the Homelessness Prevention and Options service is a new initiative and it is too soon to judge how effective this service has and will be in preventing homelessness.
- 127** Access to referrals via the telephone is strength. Our reality checks identified that a similar telephone-based approach to referrals and assessments is also used by the borough's Community Alarm service. The Home Improvement Agency (Metropolitan Care and Repair) takes referrals and initial assessments over the telephone from all agencies and the community, as do Haringey Council's older people's supported housing assessment team, and this is done effectively.
- 128** The Council provides a strong focus on ensuring access arrangements for vulnerable groups are effectively resourced. An offender housing advisor, based within the Housing Services Vulnerable Adults Team, enables access to housing and support for offenders. All domestic violence housing-related support services, including refuge provision, is accessed through Hearthstone – Haringey's one-stop advice and support service for domestic violence survivors.
- 129** We visited a number of access points that is visited by the public and service user we found that information on Supporting People is mixed. Leaflets are not consistently available across all front line access points, and we received a varied level of knowledge of Supporting People when front line officers were asked Supporting People questions. This indicates that service users accessing the front line for the first time could be at a disadvantage if information is not easily accessible of services\provided in the borough.
- 130** Haringey maintains a register of all provider charges and proposed charges, which is reviewed each financial year and updated with full provider input. Where top-up charging is either proposed or planned by providers, this is addressed with them and corrective action taken either in terms of reviewing SP subsidy levels or through robust challenge via the contracting process. There is a rolling programme of advice and information days at day centres, other National Health Service and Social Services establishments and at service user events throughout the year. These are used to promote benefit take-up, including fairer charging entitlements.

- 131 The leaflet 'How is my service paid for' was developed in partnership with Social Services and service users were fully involved in its development. It is comprehensive and clear, particularly in relation to entitlements to passporting, how to seek a fairer charging assessment and where to get help with it, what is a fairer charging assessment and how is it done, and whom to appeal to if a service user or carer disagrees with the assessment outcome.
- 132 Fairer Charging is well embedded in Haringey and has been in place since October 2002. Financial assessments are carried out by home visits, which incorporate comprehensive benefits advice for the service user and their household. This is supported by easy to understand information leaflets and an appeal process. Service users have been informed of the implications and the outcomes of charging policies. Invoices are being issued to service-to-service users in a timely manner. The information about Fairer Charger is clear and providers understand the processes of assessment made under fairer charging. However, some providers we visited, workers were not aware of fairer charging and did not display any information about it for their service users to access this information.
- 133 The Supporting People Team monitor Housing Benefit claims through direct access to the Housing Benefit computer system and refer cases for 'fairer charging' financial assessment if the Housing Benefit application is not successful. Service users are offered direct support by the Supporting People Financial Assessment Team in completing the SP Financial assessment form if they prefer not to submit the required forms through their support provider. We identified that there is a low take up of fairer charging. On average, there are two fairer charging take-ups a month. As a result of this low take up the Council is now planning a targeted campaign to promote fairer charging assessments amongst support workers and service users.
- 134 Service users who only receive Supporting People service and who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit are routinely assessed under the Council's Fairer Charging policy and have the same access to information and advice as social care clients. Over three-quarters of the service users in long-term Supporting People services are in receipt of housing benefit and therefore automatically passported.

Diversity

- 135 This is an area of strength. The service has comprehensive data and used this to ensure systems are in place to promote equal opportunities and fair access to services. It has developed services that are appropriate to the specific additional needs vulnerable people may have arising from their age, gender, culture, faith or disability.
- 136 Given the changing nature of its population, the Council has prioritised work on understanding the needs of its communities, in ensuring different ethnic groups have the support they need to participate in the lives of their communities. A number of strategies and action plans are in place to ensure race equality and equal opportunities in terms of the Council's and the Supporting People team's performance.

- 137 There is good comprehensive equalities monitoring data is collected for all services; covering service user ethnicity, gender, religion, languages spoken, disability and sexual orientation. Equalities data is also collected on referrals and rejections. This analysis is presented to all the partners and stakeholders on the Supporting People Partnership Board. This has allowed the Council to identify and establish where gaps are in services and provisions in terms of access.
- 138 The supporting people team has been proactive in encouraging providers to be innovative in gathering information from service users and example of this is that part of the review process a slightly different approach taken was taken by providers. In addition to the main equalities areas, providers, also supply information on religion, secondary disability and sexual orientation. Providers found that the equalities form is simple and user friendly. Most providers were able to provide information on ethnicity but not on gender of their service users.
- 139 A number of key actions have been highlighted because of the analysis of the equality monitoring returns for Supporting People services 2005/06, such as feeding back to all providers the outcomes and further guidance in how to complete the forms more accurately. Other key issues were highlighted which has identified future commissioning needs and service improvements.
- 140 The diversity and equalities lead officer sits on the Supporting People Partnership Board and is able to influence the diversity agenda. A number of corporate policy officers are working alongside the Supporting People team to identify the range of services that are needed by the diverse groups identified through the equalities monitoring. The findings will continue to inform a number of key strategies.
- 141 Haringey has a strong and effective approach to dealing with domestic violence. In 2001, the Council undertook a best value review of domestic violence, which led to a borough wide, and local domestic violence strategies, which involved the Supporting People team. The Hearthstone project was established in June 2003 and is a one-stop shop for survivors of domestic violence. The project offers a full range of support and advice; and is staffed by workers from a range of services such as the police and homelessness.
- 142 The Council has an original approach to dealing with Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). They are carried out on key strategies, policies and plans that are being developed as opposed to specific services. These equality impact assessments have assisted the Council in judging how policies, plans and strategies adversely affect any groups.
- 143 There is substantial evidence of work that has been carried out corporately and within the Supporting People team in addressing diversity as part of the programme. The borough's success in enabling a broad range of services, choices and options for service users has been achieved through the following initiatives.
- The successful development of direct-access low-level floating support services with the capacity to cope with most needs and the requirement to provide support workers who can speak the borough's principal spoken languages.

- The early development of services for hard-to-reach groups and service users with more challenging needs, for example the St Mungo's rough sleeper service, the supported housing project for mentally disordered offenders and the supported housing service for people with learning disabilities and challenging needs.
 - The innovative use of the service reviews and strong partnerships to reconfigure services to address unmet needs, for example; the setting-up of a domestic violence floating support service, linked to Hearthstone (domestic violence One-Stop Shop) for survivors who need to be placed some distance from Haringey.
 - Success in achieving significant efficiencies that have been released for investment to meet gaps in provision, for example the new investment in a floating support service for Traveller households.
 - The programme also funds 11 BME-led voluntary sector providers: collectively these provide 281 units of support specifically for BME Groups. Supporting People funding in this area (£740,000) represents 3.2 per cent of the total Supporting People grant.
- 144** The Council collects good quality information from the Interpretation and Translation unit is a strength. Information obtained for the period April 2005 and March 2006 shows that of the 10,761 face to face and letter translation most requests from the Turkish community (3,613). Somali translations (1,035); Romanian (646) Albanian (547) and Vietnamese (467). Telephone translations show that 782 were made for the same period. This indicates the Council's ability to identify language needs and provide the relevant translations to meet a cross section of the local community.
- 145** Information on the Council website is accessible to non-English speakers. There is a translation facility on the website, which enables it to be read in the six most popular community languages. Speakers of other languages can obtain free translations of Council documents on request by post, in person or by e-mail. Council documents is also available free of charge in audio and Braille formats.
- 146** In order to meet the needs of those living in the borough some of the providers visited have carried out various programmes such as; Multi lingual and Turkish awareness day by CHG, Travel mate and dating agency for people with learning difficulties by HAIL, Pictorial tenancies and Visual Picture aids for people with learning difficulties. This is done in order to meet the diverse need of those living within the borough.
- 147** In order to provide adequate access and information to members of the public both the Supporting People team and the providers advertised in the local ethnic papers, and in some cases staff in some organisations reflect the ethnic composition of the borough, with one provider having access to over 25 different languages spoken in the borough. As a result of this information is disseminated to all the various ethnic groups within the borough.

- 148 Documents other than those published for the Council can be translated for a fee and interpretation services can be provided. The Council is providing access to information for its diverse communities.

Outcomes for service users

- 149 This is an area of strength. The Supporting People programme in Haringey has been developed to ensure there is a wide range of services in place to meet the particular needs of individual service users. There is a range of examples of good joint working across different agencies and service providers to secure positive outcomes. However, the council has been unable to address the ability for families and the single homeless to move on into suitable accommodation.
- 150 There has been a range of positive outcomes for service users. A number of key sectors are being reconfigured including the single homeless sector, probation and mental health sectors. The Council has been successful in using transitional housing benefit to set up new support services at a cost of £11 million from the Supporting People allocation. An example of this is the three generic floating support services was set up that focused on vulnerable families, single adults and the over 60s not in sheltered housing. The services were required to provide support teams that could speak the full range of principle community languages in the borough. They now provide over 100 support workers who work with 1,400 vulnerable households. Overall, the provision of services is more closely aligned to the objectives of within the five-year strategy.
- 151 There is a close strong partnership with the health authority, which has assisted in providing good access for a range of service users. A supported housing co-ordinator is provided at St Ann's Hospital (which provides mental health in-patient services) and this post co-ordinates and enables access to housing and support services for in-patients ready for discharge. An accommodation officer is also employed in the joint mental health commissioning service who co-ordinates move-on from residential care and access to supported housing projects.
- 152 Access to supported housing services for people with learning disabilities is managed through the care management services of the Learning Disabilities Partnership. All other supported housing projects are accessed through the Housing Service's Vulnerable Adults Team. The Team manages specialist assessments and allocations to supported housing, and offers advice and support to service users and their carers about how to seek re-housing and related support.
- 153 The flexibility of services has also improved with the Council having the ability to develop and fund new and emerging services. Examples include a health and social care service, which essentially provides support for the sick, disabled and infirm alongside their families. This service is provided to members of the orthodox Jewish community. This is a new area of work for the borough, as no Jewish Supporting People service exists in the borough. Another new service is the development of a service that caters for the needs of the emerging Eastern European Communities run by the Polish and Eastern European Family Centre.

- 154** The Supporting People Partnership Board agreed further investment in 2006/07. Despite the financial pressures and constraints, the Supporting People Partnership Board is still honouring its commitment to deliver services that will assist service users. They agreed that £650,000 of Supporting People funding should be invested in the delivery of new services. £67,000 was awarded to the Corporate Voluntary Sector Team to establish new specialist Black and Minority projects that will target BME communities not currently accessing the existing services. The Supporting Team in partnership with the voluntary sector has identified 14 providers that will potentially deliver these services. £5,000 of the funding will be made available to conduct a 10 to 15 week pilot project on health related programmes.
- 155** Significant progress has already been made with regard to reducing mental health hospital admissions. The planned re-configuration of the whole supported housing sector for people with mental health problems is underway. Through the programme's successful use of the service reviews a new service is being developed in partnership with St Mungo's which will offer specialist mental health and substance misuse support to single homeless service users and domestic violence survivors.
- 156** Good progress is also being made on reconfiguring service to single homeless to The Council is moving away from accommodation-based projects, with limited throughputs, to offering floating support that is fully integrated with the new homeless prevention and options approach, which is being put in place by the Housing Service. This is designed to reduce evictions and homelessness and is linking support with more flexible mainstream housing options currently being developed and implemented.
- 157** Better outcomes for new immigrant populations are already being addressed through the programme's supply of BME-led floating support services and this is being further enhanced by the Supporting People Partnership Board decision to commission two new projects. However, the direct-access floating support services are already meeting the changing needs of the borough's diverse communities, through the provision of support workers who can speak a wide range of locally spoken languages. The outcome monitoring of these services has demonstrated that they are succeeding in helping households where English is not the first language access special English courses, and this is enabling better access to services, benefits, training and employment.
- 158** Haringey has a good supply of local Domestic Violence Refuge provision. Locally there is strong political and cross partner commitment to providing a broad range of advice, support and other easily accessible services to survivors of domestic violence. In addition to key commitments detailed in the Supporting People five-year strategy that are linked to delivering support to survivors, the Borough has a high profile joint Domestic Violence strategy supported by a robust joint DV Partnership Board, which Supporting People is represented at and which is chaired by the Council Executive Member for Safer Communities.

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- 159** This partnership has resulted in the joint commissioning and funding (including Supporting People, Housing and other funding) of a Domestic Violence One Stop Shop (Hearthstone), which offers housing, health, legal and other advice as well as support in one place (mentioned in the diversity section). This service also co-ordinates access to Domestic Violence refuge services, Housing and other Supporting People funded support.
- 160** There have been further developments in this area. In response to what was a clear and emerging need to support survivors who need to be placed outside London (due to their safety), a new floating support service has been established that can provide long distance support and advice. This service is proving key in enabling survivors to link into the local services and support networks in the areas they have been placed. This service was as a result of strong partnership working between Supporting People providers, Domestic Violence agencies, Housing and Health.
- 161** It is a strength that the Council has enabled broad partnerships in developing new services such as a floating support service, which is being commissioned that. There will be co-ordinated housing and support services for sexually exploited men and women. There will also be specialist mental health and substance misuse support for single homeless projects. This initiative resulted from a partnership between the key local National Health Service funded agency for sex workers (SHOCC), Single Homeless Projects, DV service providers, the DAAT and through discussions with other Supporting People programmes in North and East London.
- 162** The council has strong and effective links between community safety and Supporting People and this is evident in the area of managing risk from offenders and to young people. The partnership has made provision for up to eight hours of floating support each week for three offenders being supervised in the community. This has enabled the probation service to focus on managing the elements of risk and the provider manages and supports the offender.
- 163** Through an effective Supporting People commissioning partnership with Haringey National Health Service Teaching Primary Care Trust and Haringey Social Services, a jointly funded delayed discharge project has been successfully established through Haringey's Home Improvement Agency (Metropolitan Care and Repair). The project offers technical advice and support with regard to any repairs and home improvements that are needed, without which a patient would not be able to safely return home. The service also offers a pre discharge benefit check and offers initial support before and during discharge and then works closely with one of the Borough's floating support services, which then offers on-going support. The service also offers advice on the risks related to falls and provides equipment designed to prevent further falls, for service users who have been admitted to hospital due to falls.

- 164** The Supporting team has carried out a comprehensive analysis of planned and unplanned departures from local services. Significantly reducing the number of unplanned departures from local services is seen as key in improving outcomes for service users by the partnership. Comparison of performance between 2004/05 and 2005/06 shows a marked improvement in unplanned departures from services and this is linked to the programme's successful service review programme. Continuing to address quality and practice issues likely to cause unplanned departures and lack of move-on will be a strong focus in the performance monitoring programme.

What are the prospects for improvement to the Supporting People programme?

What is the Council's track record in delivering improvement?

- 165 Strengths outweigh weakness in the Council's ability to deliver improvements in this area. Haringey Council demonstrates it has made significant and sustained progress in moving toward building a strategically well aligned Supporting People programme underpinned by effective policies, management and funding frameworks that place outcomes for service users central to the process. The Council is ambitious in seeking to deliver good quality services to the local community. This is achieved by having strong leadership, a learning culture, clear and agreed priorities, effective consultation systems, and strong management of its resources.
- 166 The Council has a good record of delivering change and improvement and achieves this through involving others. The recent Comprehensive Corporate Assessment, which rated the Council as performing well. Managers have a strong sense of personal responsibility for making improvements and a commitment and energy to achieve their goals.
- 167 The Council has been able to secure strong partners that contribute to the strategic development and implementation of the programme. This is evident in the make up of the Supporting People Partnership Board. The officers and partners involved have the ability to make decisions and influence change. This has led to the partnership delivering on key priorities in the five-year strategy. For example, it has delivered on the expansion of floating support that is widely accessible to all vulnerable households over the telephone. In addition, the provision of a good one stop advice and support service for domestic violence victims.
- 168 The service has a reasonable approach to value for money and is able to manage savings effectively. There has been £2.5 million cash efficiency savings since 2003, representing 10 per cent of the budget. The Supporting People programme has an effective and jointly agreed strategy for re-investment of resources released from reconfigured services through the service review process. This is evidenced by the expansion in floating support capacity of 500 units worth £2.1 million annually; with no further investment required, representing a further nine per cent efficiency. There has been further significant expansion in the range of services put in place since 2003. This is against a backdrop of a 7.2 per cent reduction in grant funding from £23.4 million in 2003/04 to £21.7 million in 2006/07, which represents a 9.7 per cent reduction.

- 169** The Supporting People Team and the Supporting People Partnership Board has a consistent record of improving services for service users. New investment has been made available since 2003 and released back into the programme to fund 12 new services and initiatives worth £886,000 annually. These services range from improved support to young offenders to expanding support for older people and the disabled through a 'handy person' scheme.
- 170** There has been an improvement in the standards delivered under the QAF framework. Twenty one out of 50 services originally assessed as providing below minimum standards are now at level C or above, and 11 below - standard services have been decommissioned or are in the process of being de-commissioned in partnership with providers. This means that the quality of service that service users are receiving has improved.
- 171** There has been progress made in the reduction of mental health hospital admissions. This demonstrates the Council's ability to look closely at what needs to improve and indicates an awareness and understanding of the relevance of Supporting People to the mental health agenda.
- 172** The Local Area Agreements for the Council is aimed to be agreed in February 2007. Performance against the action plan is reported to the Council and members through updates and more recently the corporate balance score-card. Two specific Supporting People targets are planned for inclusion - to decrease admissions for Mental Health clients and provision of drug treatment. The Council has initially earmarked £3.6 million and £0.5 million respectively to assist in delivering these priorities.

How does the Council manage performance?

- 173** Strengths outweigh weaknesses in this area. The performance management of the Supporting People programme is being refined and improved on. The partnership is clear about its objectives and priorities. However plans are not always SMART⁸ and outcomes are sometimes unclear.
- 174** Performance management has been slow in development in some areas but is now beginning to produce positive outcomes for service users. There is a clear performance monitoring and management framework in place. Regular quarterly management reporting against key tasks in the annual Business Plan is reported to the Chief Executive Management Board and a number of other key boards. A traffic light system shows progress. An explanation is given against each action that breaks it down in an understandable way. The Supporting People Partnership Board tracks the outcomes closely, which has enabled the partnership to make decisions on the essential aspects of the programme.

⁸ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced and Timebound

46 Supporting People | What are the prospects for improvement to the Supporting People programme?

- 175 Member support has been strong in developing and delivering the strategy. While there has been challenging debates regarding priorities between members and officers, there is clear support and direction provided. This has enabled the Supporting People Partnership Board to be effective in addressing weaknesses identified in the strategy.
- 176 There is a clear approach to future commissioning and the five-year strategy sets out the programme's commissioning intentions and provides a detailed framework for contracting and performance support procurement. This is further enhanced by an inclusive corporate procurement strategy supported by effective links with the Council's Procurement Service, which the Audit Commission has assessed as a two-star service.
- 177 There are also clear project management, risk management and performance frameworks in place which report through a framework of senior internal management boards. This enables the management structures to challenge and to ensure that key projects are delivered on target and within budget.
- 178 The Supporting People Team has placed significant emphasis on performance and over the last three years has provided considerable amount of support and guidance to providers through Supporting People Forums, dedicated workshops and intensive one to one support to individual organisations.
- 179 There is dedicated full time resource and part time administrative support to monitor and manage performance. This resource has enabled the Team to provide much of the one to one support, ensure timely performance returns (PI workbooks) and reject and advise on incomplete or incorrect returns. In addition, the resource has allowed the monitoring of poor performers.
- 180 This emphasis on performance management has resulted in improved service provision in the sector. For example:
- comprehensive work and analysis carried out by the team on planned departures has highlighted a significant improvement in overall rates of planned departures from 62.7 per cent in 2004/05 to 69 per cent in 2005/06. This has been achieved through efforts to improve provider monitoring, accurate capture and timely return of performance data; and
 - the emphasis on quality and the robust approach to assessments of quality as part of the service review process, that has included developing and monitoring improvement plans and subsequent revalidation visits has seen 27 services that were previously assessed at D re-assessed at Level C in the last 12 months.
- 181 The Team are currently building a comparative data table in order to measure quality and cost per support hour against performance. This will allow an assessment of whether better quality or services that are more expensive secure better rates of planned departures.

- 182 There is a clear Supporting People annual plan. This is underpinned by specific work plans that detail each area of the team's work and these are regularly monitored by the appropriate line manager with performance reported to the core strategy group element of the Supporting People Partnership Board that is responsible for monitoring of the day-to-day implementation of the programme. However, we found some elements of the annual plan not measurable or time specific and this could affect the programme's ability to effectively monitor delivery of these aspects.
- 183 There is some evidence of external learning in the programme. The Council has looked at better performing providers and implemented some improvements as a result eg improvements on the website and the overarching approach to service user involvement. There is close working with the sub-regional group in developing shared agendas to delivering Supporting People.
- 184 The Supporting People team has established an approach to measure service user's outcomes against specific performance indicators and targets. The impact of this will be the Supporting People's team ability to measure the small cost efficiencies across a range of service providers including probation and health achieved; by outcomes against the level of Supporting People investment in services.

Does the Council have the capacity to improve?

- 185 This is an area of strength. A review of the team will lead to additional resources being made available. There is good corporate support for the supporting people programme and appropriate training is available to support staff and providers. However, internal learning is not always fully effective and some key decisions have not yet been taken which could affect other council priorities.
- 186 The recent review of the staffing structure of the Supporting People team has focused on strengthening the capacity of the team. The review took place in 2005/06 after the completion of the five-year strategy and focused on the needs to deliver the programme including commissioning, ability to interpret national policy and experience of delivering services to specific client group. Recruitment should be complete by March 2007. The single homeless project officer is in post on secondment from a floating support provider. This has proved valuable due to the officer's experience of floating support and knowledge of housing, and her focus is on one of the biggest strategy aims to prevent homelessness.
- 187 The Supporting People Partnership has mapped its future improvement agenda and particular priority is being given to re-configuring its services for the single homeless, for older people and the mental health services. The Council has a good track record in terms of continuous improvement and shows itself to be capable of bringing about significant change in a timely manner in most cases.

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- 188** The Supporting People programme has already made improvements in the quality and availability of housing related support services for vulnerable people in Haringey. The vision is corporately owned and it is clearly understood by elected members and staff at all levels - both stakeholder agencies and service providers alike. An example of this is the strong commitment to the development of the Supporting People programme from all key partners in particular the health authority and the probation service. Both partners play a vital role in the decision-making processes.
- 189** Councillors are aware of the issues for vulnerable people, the impact of the Supporting People programme and its importance in terms of contributing to the Council's community plan priorities. The programme's focus is well connected to the needs of the local population, and is seen to be an important catalyst in enabling and supporting change. An example of this is the programme has been able to expand support to address the unmet needs of the hardest-to-reach groups including Travellers and sex workers, against a backdrop of reducing grant income.
- 190** The Council has followed through effectively changes in the governance arrangements with the appointment of a senior social services manager as the Accountable Officer. There is regular attendance at the Supporting People Partnership Board that has enabled the dual function of the board as Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group to work successfully, with clear distinction and discussion across strategic and operational delivery of the programme.
- 191** The partnership is open to learning and developing its capacity as an understanding and informed body. Exchange job shadowing has taken place with the DCLG⁹ to increase knowledge and understanding of the national agenda, and more locally, exchange shadowing is planned with HAVCO to understand the challenges both partners have in delivering and developing services.
- 192** The Supporting People team is effective and established. They are keen to deliver a successful programme and with the support of other social services department, well resourced. The team have the appropriate range of skills to continue to deliver the programme. This has been evidenced by the completion of the service review process with the assistance of additional staffing resources supporting the existing team. The team and the wider administrative framework benefits from considerable additional investment from the Council of £250,000 and the commitment of expertise and support from other services such as IT, Communications and Corporate Finance.
- 193** The supporting people team and officers use a range of networks and formats to keep up to date on Supporting People developments and good practice. Staff access internal training provision, external specialist training eg commissioning and use a range of arrangements to access and exchange information eg networking, LGA strategic forum, SPK web and the internet, AC reports and other publications.

⁹ Department of Communities and Local Government

- 194** Experience is being brought into the team through the recruitment of project officers. New post holders will bring experience of: commissioning services for people with physical disabilities (and will focus on the review of older peoples services); and performance frameworks for providers.
- 195** There has been consideration given to the need to handle the review of older people's services sensitively. The report has not yet been widely circulated, and there is acknowledgement that it will be need to be well managed - particularly given the nature of the client group, and the previous strong representation an external body. With the Corporate and political support there is clear evidence that a number of initiatives and plans will be delivered in the future.
- 196** The authority is increasing the capacity of small service providers' staff and service users. There are training courses for small and voluntary service provider's staff including Supporting People issues, committee work, minute taking and report writing. The Council also facilitates mentoring for small and voluntary service providers' staff by larger providers through the Service Provider's Practitioner Group.
- 197** Performance management for providers is improving further developments is aimed to enhance the partnerships ability to deliver. The value for money framework is aimed to improve efficiencies across a number of service areas. The improvements in these areas will not only increase the positive outcomes for services users, but also aim to assist the programme in demonstrating these outcomes more effectively.
- 198** Service user's involvement for the Supporting People programme is developing. The review process has empowered many service users to be involved and influence how their services have been provided.
- 199** Some key decisions have not yet been made regarding the future of older people's services. This not only impacts upon reconfiguring older peoples sheltered services, but also the wider asset management investment that may be required as part of the Decent Homes Standards for sheltered housing. In addition, there is still a need to break down internal barriers across the Council to enable more sharing of good practice, learning and information across the organisation. There is also a potential risk to the future capacity of the partnership to deliver the Supporting People agenda due to wider corporate structure changes. It is our view the structure changes that may affect future relationships and partnerships in particular between housing and social services.

Summary

- 200** We consider the Council to have promising prospects for improvement. The Supporting People programme has the confidence and support of a large number of its service providers and service users. It has focused on addressing the right priorities by effectively linking together service, financial and commissioning strategies to add value and ensure a holistic approach is taken to addressing the needs of vulnerable people. It has the capacity and corporate support to develop its commissioning, service review and performance management capabilities and has strategies in place to manage future risks in a number of areas.
- 201** The Council can demonstrate a significant number of areas where improvements have already been achieved and have successfully challenged the appropriateness and value for money of some existing services through an effective, robust, transparent and inclusive service review process. The Council has won the respect, support and engagement of the key partners who need to be involved in the future development of the Supporting People programme including a diverse range of providers.
- 202** There is in place robust corporate leadership and support for Supporting People. There is evidence of ownership of Supporting People by senior managers and key elected members who are understand what Supporting People is all about and focus on the further development work that is needed in this area. The senior level of involvement in the Supporting People Partnership Board and its strong links across a wide range of statutory and non-statutory frameworks provide a platform to ensure that the programme will continue to be strongly led, directed, and robustly challenged on its future delivery on targets and improvements in performance.
- 203** Some aspects need to improve. The Council need to ensure that there is a clear timeframe for all key stakeholders involved in reconfiguration of key services such as the single homeless and the older people services. It is imperative that the imminent change in the Council does not affect the delivery of the Supporting People programme.

Appendix 1 – Performance indicators

This section includes demographic information relevant to Supporting People, comparing the Council and with England.

This section highlights strong and weak areas of the Council's performance in services that are relevant to Supporting People. We have used the following information to help us reach our judgements:

- data for services funded through the Supporting People programme;
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment scores;
- star ratings for social services;
- Performance Assessment Framework indicators for social services; and
- Performance information.

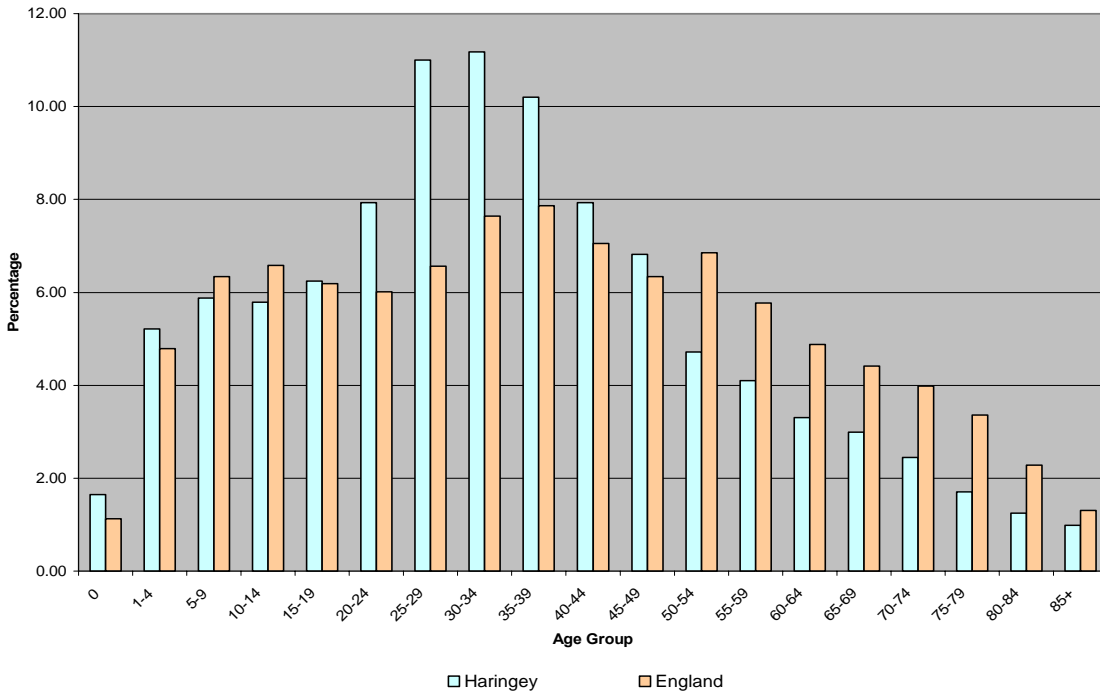
Measure	Haringey	England
Population (mid-2004) ¹⁰	224,500	57,851,100
Percentage of the population aged 65+ (mid-2004)	11.1	18.5
Percentage from minority ethnic groups (all groups other than White – British 2004)	34.4	10.44
Percentage unemployment (claimant count rate) ¹¹	5.4	2.4
Deprivation Index (1 highest, 354 lowest) ¹²	15	-

¹⁰ Source: midyear population estimates (2004)

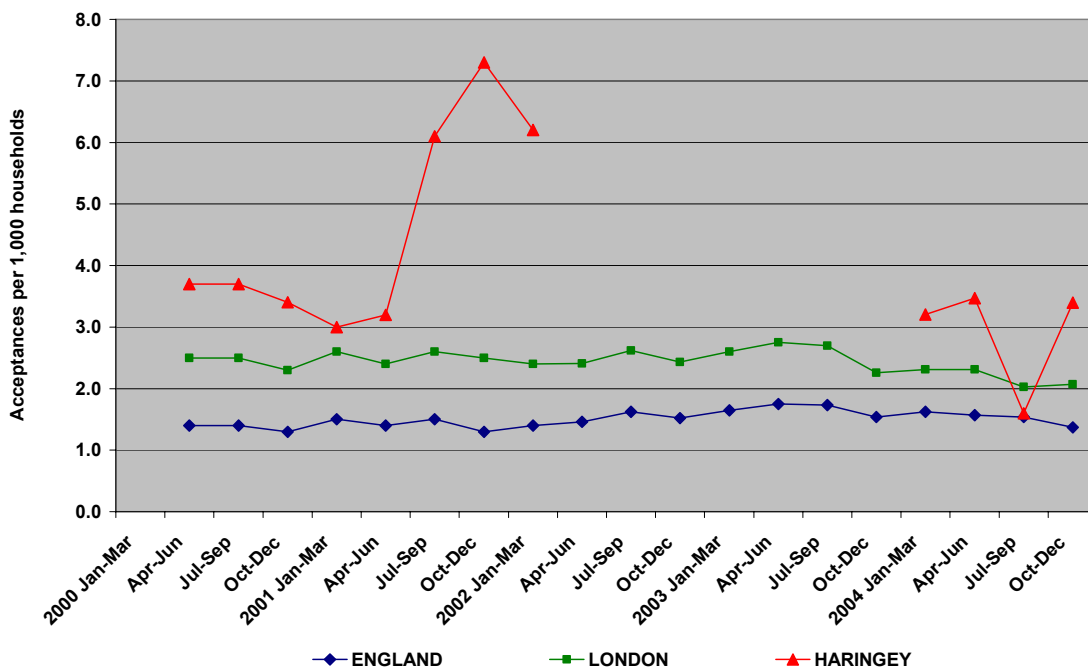
¹¹ Source: claimant count with rates and proportions (October 2006)

¹² Source: deprivation Index 2004, average ward score for the authority.

Percentage of the population¹³ in each age group compared with England



Households accepted as homeless between 2000 and 2004 compared with the region and England (acceptances per 1,000 households)



¹³ Source: midyear population estimates (2004)

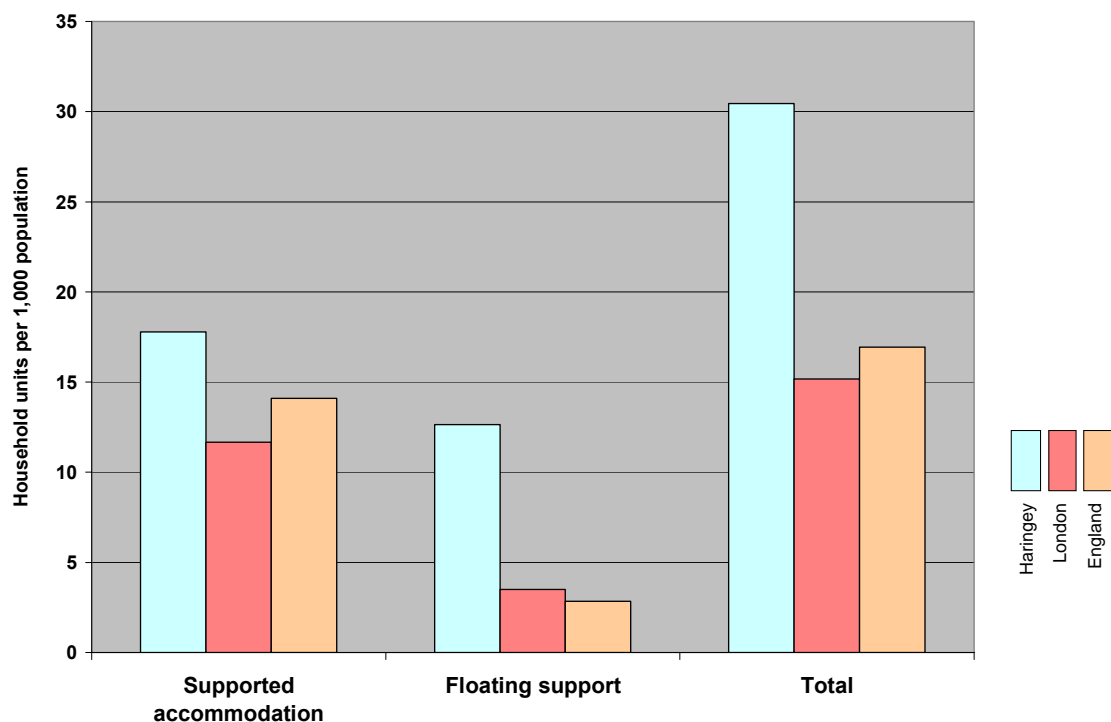
Performance information

This section highlights strong and weak areas of the Council's performance in services that are relevant to Supporting People. We have used the following information to help us reach our judgements:

- data for services funded through the Supporting People programme;
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment scores;
- star ratings for social services;
- Performance Assessment Framework indicators for social services; and
- relevant best value performance indicators.

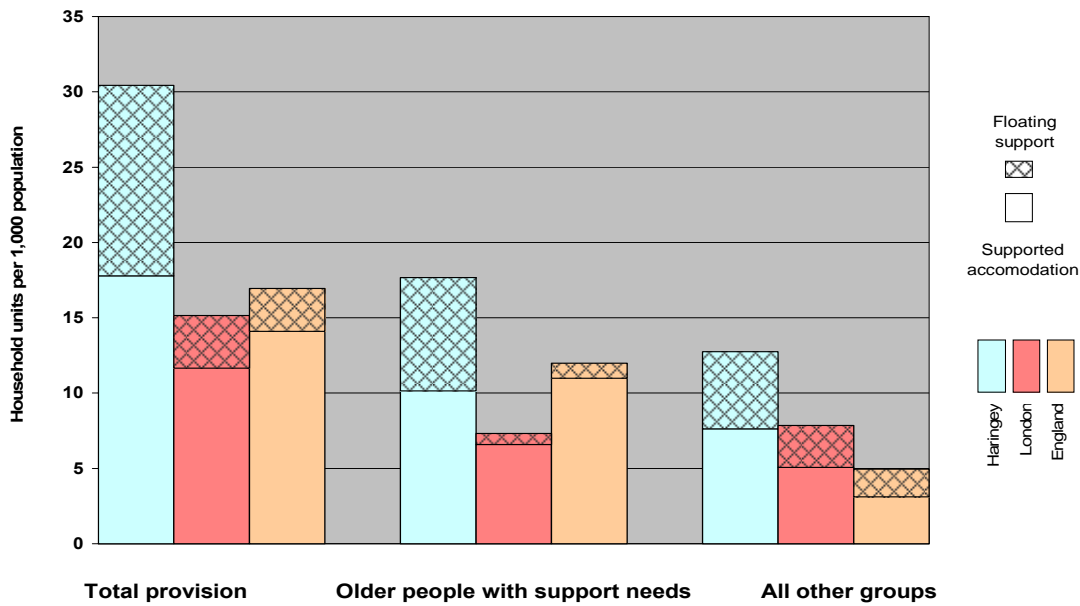
Supporting People data

Total service provision funded through Supporting People¹⁴

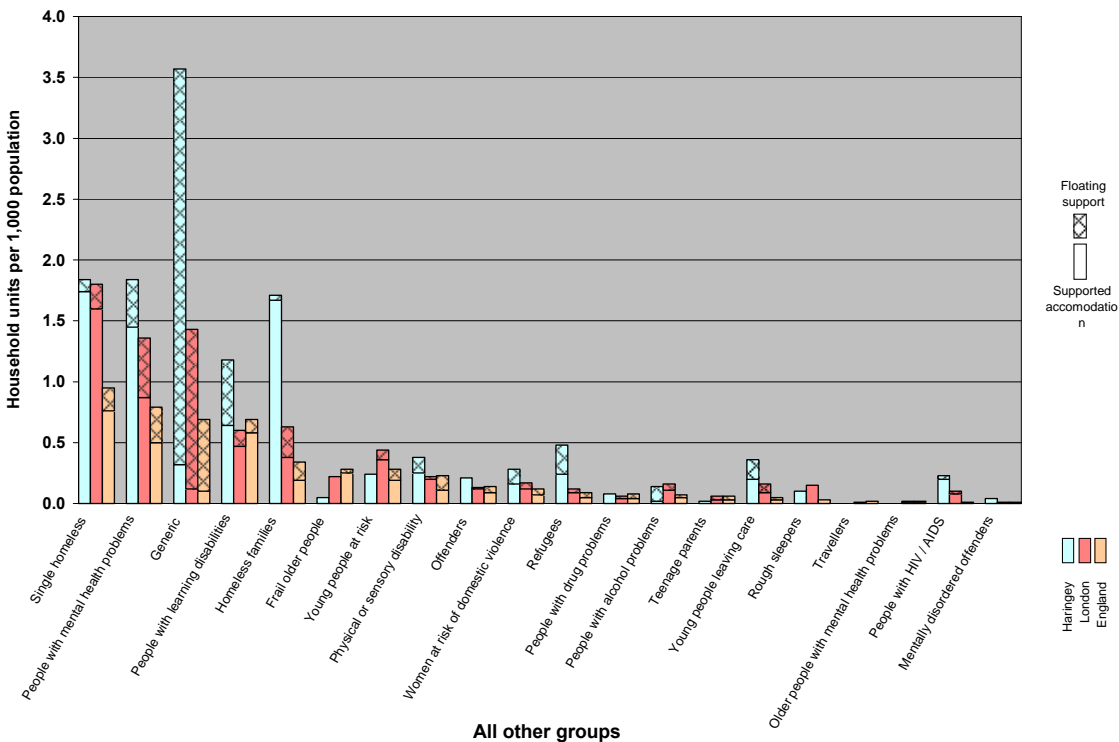


¹⁴ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Services for older people with support needs compared with the region and England¹⁵



Services for other groups compared with the region and England¹⁶



¹⁵ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

¹⁶ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Funding for Supporting People¹⁷

Haringey	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Final Supporting People grant	£ 23,700,891	£ 23,323,001	£ 22,148,323
Pipeline allocation	£ 71,418	£ 185,684	£ -
Administration grant	£ 285,163	£ 284,792	£ 227,834

Unit costs of Supporting People services in 2003/04 (£ per week)¹⁸

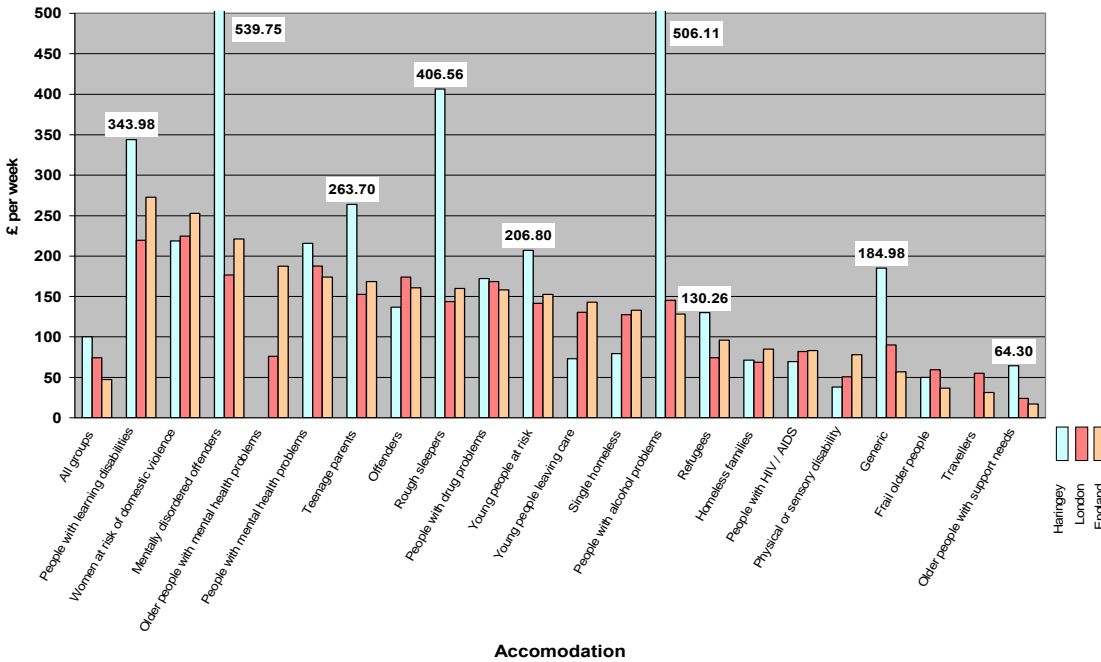
	Per head of population	Per unit	Per unit excluding community alarms	Per unit excluding community alarms and sheltered housing
Haringey	£ 2.02	£ 15.34	£ 15.37	£ 15.18
London	£ 0.97	£ 42.37	£ 48.73	£ 68.40
England	£ 0.70	£ 28.30	£ 34.71	£ 76.37

'The data quoted is taken from ODPM sourced material 2003/04. This is the only data currently available. ODPM will be able to provide updated data when it becomes available and this will then be used.'

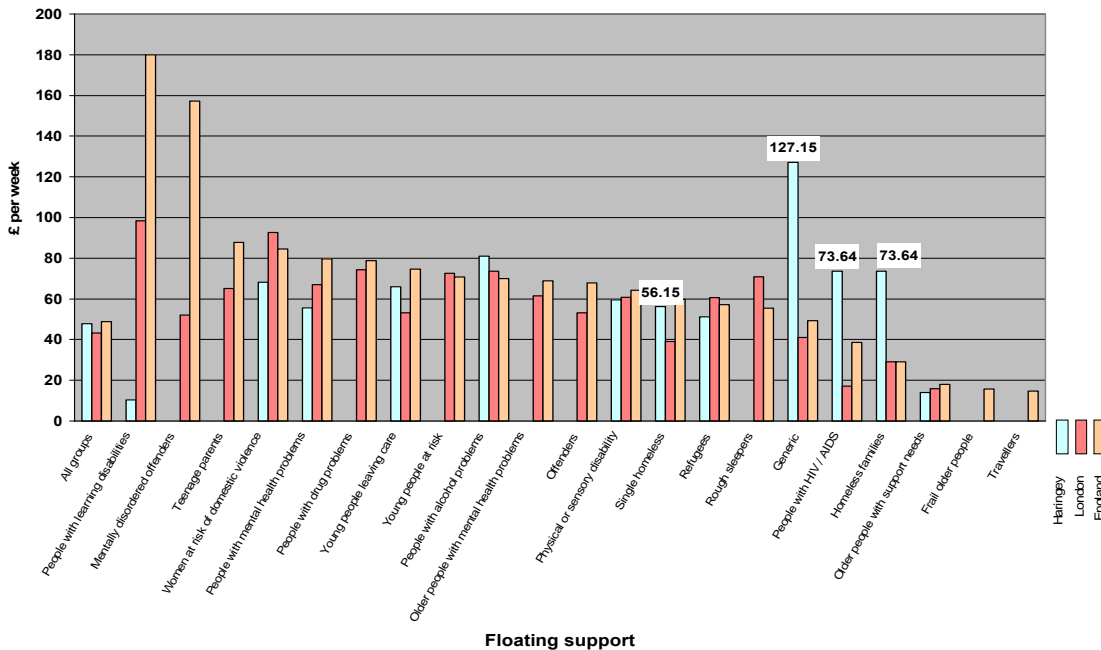
¹⁷ Source: Grant allocations, ODPM.

¹⁸ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003

Unit costs of supported accommodation compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)¹⁹



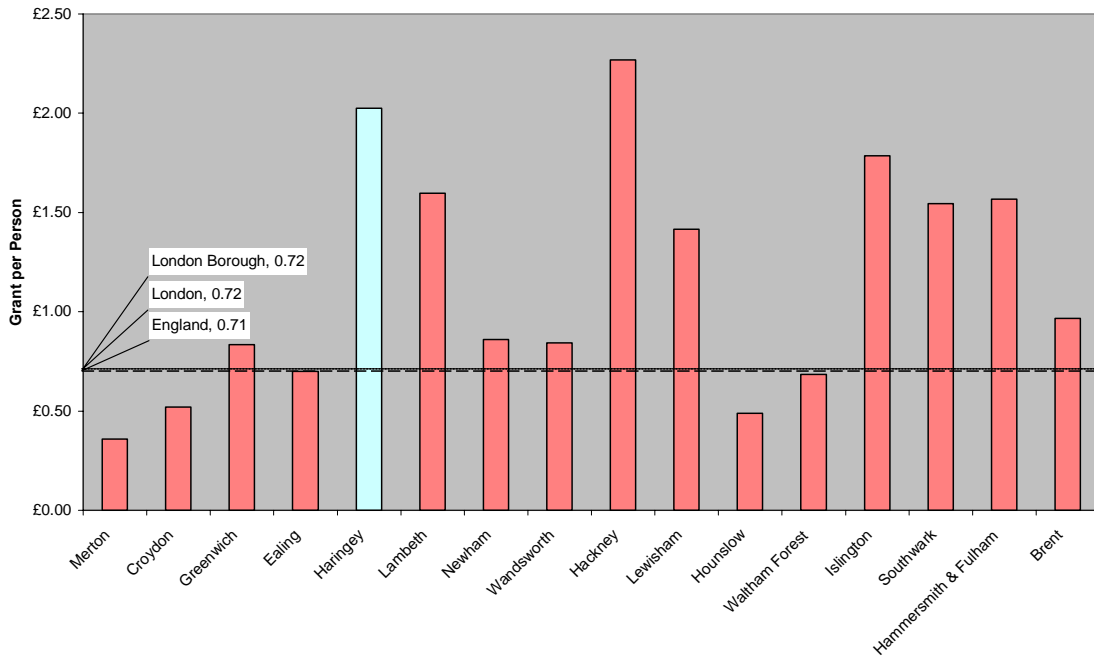
Unit costs of floating support services compared with the region and England (labels show costs in the highest 25 per cent)²⁰



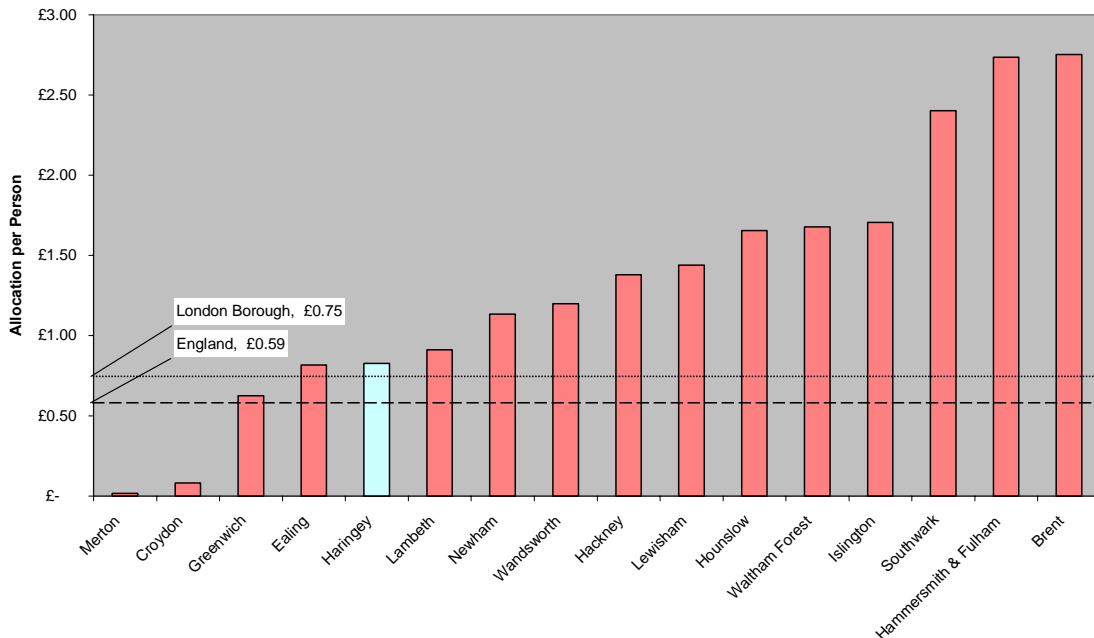
¹⁹ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

²⁰ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Supporting People grant per head of population per week compared with nearest neighbours²¹, all London boroughs and all English councils (2004/05)



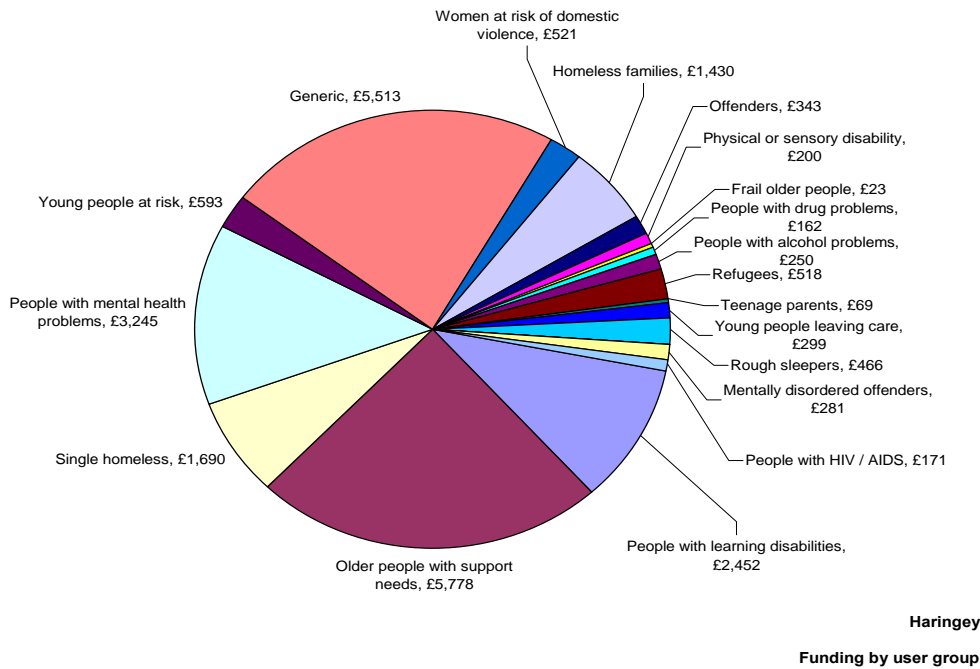
Pipeline allocation per head of population compared with nearest neighbours²², all London boroughs and all English councils



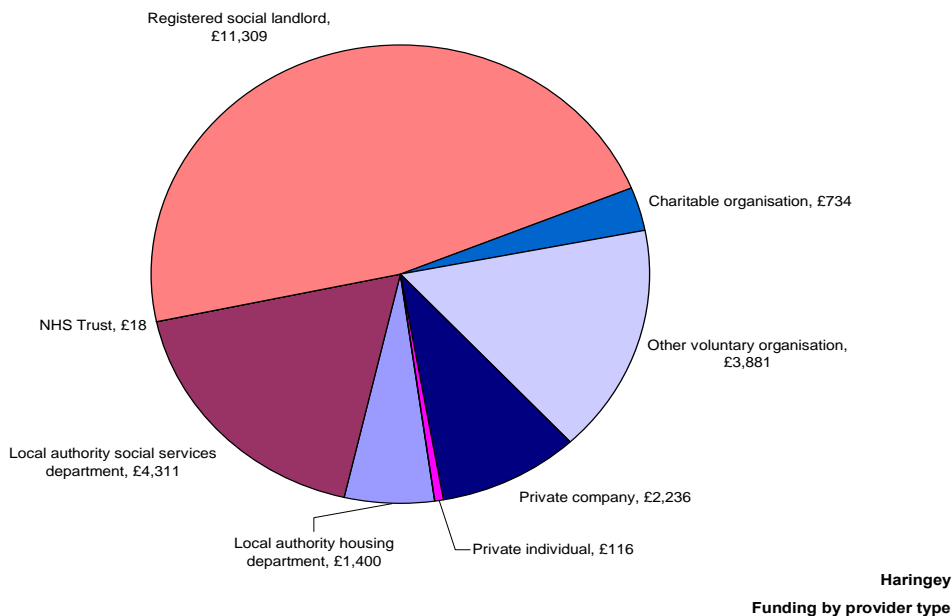
²¹ A comparator group of similar councils.

²² A comparator group of similar councils.

Share of spending between user groups (£000s)²³



Share of spending between types of provider (£000s)²⁴



²³ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

²⁴ Source: Platinum cut data, ODPM November 2003. Excludes community alarms, home improvement agencies, leasehold schemes and pipeline services.

Social Services star ratings November 2004

The table below shows the Social Services Inspectorate ratings of the Council's performance.

	Serving people well?	Prospects for improvement?	Performance rating (CPA equivalent)
Adults' Services	Most	Promising	★★ (2)
Children's Services	Some	Promising	

Social services performance indicators

Performance Assessment Framework indicators 2003/04

The table below shows how the Council's social services performed on indicators relevant to Supporting People.

Haringey	
Significantly above average (●●●●)	Adults with mental health problems helped to live at home (C31) Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home (C29) Older people helped to live at home (C32) Employment, education and training for care leavers (A4)
Above average (●●●)	Emergency psychiatric re-admissions (A6) Admissions of older people to residential/ nursing care (C26) Admissions of supported residents aged 18-64 to residential/nursing care (C27) Percentage of items of equipment and adaptations delivered within seven working days (D54)
Average (●●)	Adults and older people receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met (D39) Adults with learning disabilities helped to live at home (C30) Adults and older people receiving direct payments at 31 March per 100,000 population aged 18 or over (C51)

Haringey	
Significantly below average (•)	<p>Percentage change on previous year in total emergency admissions to hospital (A5)</p> <p>Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that their opinions and preferences were always taken into account (D57)</p> <p>Physically disabled and sensory impaired users who said that they can contact social services easily (D58)</p>

Best value performance indicators

Performance on relevant indicators in 2003/04 compared with London boroughs

The table below shows how the Council performed on best value performance indicators relevant to Supporting People.

Haringey	
Within the best 25 per cent	<p>The level of the equality standard for local government to which the authority conforms (BV2)</p> <p>Domestic violence refuge places (BV176)</p>
Average	<p>Energy efficiency of local authority owned dwellings (BV63)</p> <p>Length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation (BV183a)</p> <p>Council homes which did not meet the decent homes standard (BV184a)</p> <p>Average time for processing new housing benefit claims (BV78a)</p>
Within the worst 25 per cent	<p>Length of stay in hostel accommodation (BV183b)</p>

Appendix 2 – Reality checks undertaken

- 1 When we went on site we carried out a number of different checks, building on the work described above, in order to get a full picture of how good the service is. These on-site reality checks were designed to gather evidence about what it is like to use the service and to see how well it works. Our reality checks included:
 - focus groups of staff, partners, commissioners and providers;
 - visits to 11 services;
 - mystery shopping at key access points;
 - check on the quality of the Councils website, SPK web pages and other documents relating to access;
 - observation of the Supporting People Partnership Board; and
 - interviews with key staff and officers.

Appendix 3 – Positive practice

The introduction and implementation of a protecting adults and children toolkit

- 1 The council has produced a very good policy on the protection of adults and children, which is innovative and invaluable.